

Claimed And Marked By Her Stepbrother Mates

- Chapter 127-Goodbye!

Chapter 127-Goodbye!

Chapter 127: 127-Goodbye!

Helanie:

"Guys, she's waking up!" I heard a loud scream that jolted me awake. I was taking my time opening my eyes, but the way Lucy's voice pierced through my ears, I opened them with my fists clenched, as if I could fight a Lycan with two soft punches.

However, before me stood all the people I call friends—or acquaintances, or ex-lovers to each other, probably.

I'm not sure.

They were just there, huddled around me near the river. Why was I near the river?

"What's going on? Are we all dead?" I asked, a loud gulp running down my throat, so difficult to swallow.

"No, but you almost got my sister killed," came Penn's voice. He stepped into view, his body bearing a few injuries that seemed to be in the process of healing. He was only wearing pants, his abs and muscles on full display. Apparently, he had been taking a shower in the river.

"Did you not hear your sister tell you that Helanie threw herself before the Lycan to save her friends?" The voice belonged to Lamar, who stood next to him in khaki pants, also wet. Both had sustained injuries, but like Penn, Lamar was already healing.

"What happened?" I whispered under my breath, utterly lost.

"Last night, after you passed out, the boys came to help," Jenny began, her voice soft. Lucy sat beside me, holding my hand between hers, constantly trying to comfort me.

"Who was the first werewolf—" I had just opened my mouth when Penn smirked in a taunting way, turning his head to look at Lamar, who rolled his eyes.

"Tossed away like a little bi**h," Penn commented, causing everyone to turn their heads to him and then back at me. He should have taken the hint to stay quiet.

"Then my brother came, and then—" Jenny paused as Gavin emerged from the river, wearing blue pants.

"I should have known you'd do something reckless," Gavin remarked, his hands on his waist.

"You came looking for us?" I asked, genuinely impressed. I wasn't too happy with myself, but the fact that he still came to look for both Lucy and me, even after we betrayed him, left me speechless.

"That's what friends do, Helanie. He didn't do anything remarkable. You're the one who's crazy for making the Lycan go after you. It's one thing to wander somewhere and risk stumbling upon something deadly, but it's an entirely different thing to call danger directly to yourself to save your friends," Jenny said, silencing everyone with her statement.

She then turned to the group, as if seeking their approval to continue. "However—"

I frowned as I checked my body, realizing that I hadn't sustained any injuries, apart from a few scratches.

"However what?" I asked, narrowing my eyes at Jenny.

"The Lycan tried to take you away with him," Lucy blurted out, cutting to the punchline.

"Huh?"

"Maybe he wanted to save me for later?" I tried reasoning it out, still unable to comprehend what she meant.

"Lycan don't save their food. They eat fresh," Penn interjected. "I mean, the live person." He added quickly, ensuring no one thought he was only mocking me.

"Are you all alright? How did you guys fight the Lycan?" I asked curiously, looking at the boys. They exchanged smug looks, but Jenny scoffed loudly.

"They all got their asses beat. They were wailing like—" She shut up abruptly when her brother shot her a harsh glare. "The sun came up, and the Lycan had to retreat. It'll stay in hiding until the next full moon," she said with a shrug.

That's when I remembered the detail I should have noticed earlier.

I felt the mate bond—with a monster. And that monster was now in hiding.

What the fuck?

"Helanie, are you okay?" Lamar quickly knelt down to check on me as I zoned out.

"Of course she is. She got my sister kill—" Penn began another tantrum, but Gavin and Lucy hissed at him simultaneously.

"Your sister is fine," Lucy nearly yelled, clearly annoyed.

"Huh, says the one who's the reason everyone even went into the woods last night," Penn replied, showing no ability to read the room.

"What? Am I saying anything wrong? These two fight, she cheats on him, they fight again, she runs into the woods, and gets everyone's life in danger. Wow! You really are a troublemaker, aren't you? The devil in disguise," his comments directed at Lucy silenced everyone for a moment.

I stood up to face him, but Lucy's tug on my shirt held me back.

"We should head back to the hostel," Lucy said softly, perhaps admitting her guilt. But what hurt the most was that her mate didn't come to her defense—and he couldn't be blamed for it.

She had brought this upon herself, but she never asked any of us to come looking for her. I did it on my own, as did Jenny and the rest of them.

"Guys, let's get ready for Professor Emmet's class. I heard he's only teaching today, and then his brother, Professor Kaye, will be taking over for the next three weeks," Jenny said, trying to change the subject.

As she spoke, I began feeling strange—almost like I was going to throw up.

When we reached the hostel, I took a quick shower before joining the others outside, acting as though we hadn't almost been killed in the woods the night before.

We all silently agreed not to talk about what happened, at least not where anyone else could hear us.

The warden wouldn't be very pleased to hear we had an encounter with the Lycan.

We silently walked to our classroom, but I noticed Penn holding Jenny back from approaching us. I guessed he thought we were troublemakers and that his sister would get hurt if she kept hanging around us.

However, the minute we sat down, I saw Sydney stand up to announce something.

"Today, we will receive our class monitor badges—" her words started to fade as a sharp pain began to grow in my stomach. I felt oddly dizzy, to the point where I knew I needed to make a run for the bathroom.

So I did.

While Sydney stood beaming, I rushed past her, hearing her offended exclamation, but I had no time to stop. In fact, I even ran past Professor Emmet without giving him more than a fleeting glance.

"Helanie—" I heard him call after me, but I was in too much of a hurry.

I dashed straight to the bathroom and locked myself in a stall. That's when something terrible hit me, freezing me in place.

There was so much blood between my legs.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 128-Once A Pregnant She-Wolf

Chapter 128: 128-Once A Pregnant She-Wolf

Lamar:

"What a bitch! Did you guys just see that?" I heard Sydney's comment and raised my head to see what was bothering her now.

I just knew something had offended her. Everyone nodded, but then I turned my head all the way to the back, where my frenemies sat.

I don't even know what to call them. It just seems like I like hanging around those misfits because I'm one too.

Then I realized Lucy and Gavin looked confused—the seat beside them was empty. I wasn't sure what had happened between Gavin and Lucy after my fight with Gavin. Had they rejected each other or not? I didn't care.

But Helanie was gone.

"She must be dying to poop," someone commented, clearly trying to appease Sydney. I watched Lucy get up to check on Helanie, and Jenny started to follow, but her brother was quick to grab her wrist and force her back down without even looking at her.

I had a very bad feeling about it.

I managed to get out of my seat too, rushing towards the door and stepping outside.

"Lamar, you too?" Sydney complained, but I was already in the hallway when I spotted Professor Emmet standing there, his back turned as if he was looking at something. He must have seen Helanie. Where did she go?

I had a feeling that if Professor Emmet saw me going after Helanie, he would stop me. So I changed my route and hid behind the wall until he had re-entered the classroom. That's when Lucy couldn't leave the room anymore.

But I walked freely, running towards the end of the hallway and looking around. Helanie was nowhere to be seen.

I was worried.

"Dammit, answer your phone." I called her several times, but there was no response. Was she well? We should have let her rest for the day.

My heart was pounding hard. She was pregnant and far too ignorant of her own health.

I had a bad feeling that she might have gotten herself into trouble again.

'Why the heck do we care?' My wolf finally woke up and questioned me.

'I just don't know,' I answered him, hoping he would understand.

'She's quite sweet, isn't she?' Marl had never felt this kind of compassion for anyone except our family. But he wasn't wrong—Helanie was different.

'Let's find her and hope she's fine.' I knew that if Helanie were in trouble, Marl would feel terrible about it.

It wasn't sexual tension or anything like that. Nothing of the sort. It was more like—

'Family.'

Marl said it perfectly.

'She feels like family, doesn't she?' he was right. She did feel like family, and I couldn't understand why.

That's when her message popped up on my screen after I had called her so many times:

Hell-To-Me: I dooont jwbo what to ddo

I frowned at the mess of a text. In that moment, I knew she was not okay. So I called her again, hoping she would be able to talk now.

"Helanie, where are you?" Thankfully, she picked up.

"I'm in the bathroom... I—I'm bleeding," she stammered between hiccups, crying and sobbing.

Her words sank into me like a weight in my chest, leaving me unable to ask her anything else.

I didn't have any experience with this kind of thing, but I knew this wasn't a good sign for a pregnant woman.

"I'm coming," I said, then paused as I realized I wouldn't even be allowed near the girls' bathroom. "Does Lucy know?" I inquired cautiously, thinking about who I could tag along.

"No! Jenny—does," she sniffled on the other side.

"Got it, we'll be there. Don't worry." I nodded to myself, then rushed back to the classroom to fetch Jenny.

I entered the classroom, breathing heavily, and felt everyone's eyes on me.

"Yes, Lamar. Where were you?" Professor Emmet's voice rang out as he immediately questioned me. However, I was quick to notice that he didn't look like himself that day.

He seemed weak, almost like he had been through hell. His face was bonier, his jawline sharper, as if he had lost weight overnight. His long hair was disheveled—too messy. His shirt was untucked, and I could tell he was hiding a small bottle of wine in his pocket, probably wishing for the class to end so he could sulk.

His usual confident and mysterious aura was completely off that day.

"Umm, I was... umm—I want to take a half-day leave with my umm—" I scratched the back of my neck, scrambling for a way to get Jenny to come with me, "my friend—helping me with my health."

I placed a hand on my chest and coughed, pretending to be unwell.

"What is going on? Where is Helanie?" Professor Emmet suddenly shifted his focus, seeming to lose interest in my excuse. Perhaps it was unusual for students to leave his class early—his lectures were always captivating.

"She skipped class," Sydney chimed in, making me squint at her for implying that Helanie wasn't interested.

"Why? And what friend do you need to help you with your health?" Professor Emmet's uncharacteristic behavior gave me some hope. Usually, he was highly observant, but today, he seemed distracted, brushing things off and struggling to focus.

Taking a deep breath, I prepared myself to say the friend's name, knowing it might come as a surprise to her—and her overprotective brother. "Jenny!" I declared, extending my arm dramatically and pointing at her.

Her brother almost did a double take, his eyes darting from me to his sister, who now had her narrowed gaze fixed on me.

"Helanie!" I mouthed silently, making sure to be quick before anyone noticed.

"Yes, sir, can I please help my friend?" Jenny jumped to her feet, her pale face showing that she understood the seriousness of the situation.

"Are you serious?" Penn muttered under his breath, but his words were loud enough for nearly everyone to hear.

Professor Emmet sighed, looking utterly exhausted. He waved a hand towards Jenny, allowing her to leave with me.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 129-The Cozy Cabin

Chapter 129: 129-The Cozy Cabin

Helanie:

"Come on, lean on me," Jenny said the moment she walked in and saw my state. She immediately went into full commando mode.

I had been in the bathroom for what felt like ages, staring at the blood pooling between my legs. The sight alone was enough to make me feel faint. Then, out of nowhere, I broke down crying—overwhelmed with fear.

The first person to check on me was the last person I expected: Lamar.

Strangely, I trusted him. Somehow, he managed to calm me down just enough to bring Jenny to me.

Now, Lamar was waiting outside while Jenny did her best to take care of me. She cleaned my legs and coaxed me to stand, her voice firm but kind, trying to encourage me. She wanted to get me out of there to get Lamar's help, though I had no idea what they had planned.

"I don't want to go to any hospital," I whispered, clinging to Jenny's shoulder for support.

"You don't have to," she assured me, her tone steady and comforting.

The next few minutes were a whirlwind. Jenny helped me out of the bathroom, and Lamar was waiting just outside the corridor. Without a word, he scooped me up into his arms and began rushing downstairs. Jenny followed close behind, running to keep up.

The academy's dark, narrow corridors seemed endless, their vintage wallpaper and massive windows casting eerie shadows in the dim light. The faint smell of chemicals wafted through the air as we passed classrooms where senior students were studying herbs and poisons.

I could hear Lamar's heart pounding—quick and loud in the silence. His grip was steady, but his urgency made him keep going.

Finally, I saw the light streaming from the exit ahead, and relief washed over me. We had made it out without being stopped.

But just as Lamar was placing me in Jenny's car—a car I didn't even know she had parked right outside—a voice called out to him, stopping him in his tracks.

"What is going on?" Kaye's voice cut through the tense air as he tried to peek over Lamar's shoulder to get a glimpse of me. I felt a pang of guilt—every time he saw me, I was with someone else.

"Umm, Helanie wasn't feeling well, so we decided to take her out for a meal," Jenny stepped forward, her voice steady as she tried to explain. Lamar, on the other hand, was silent. I could only imagine why.

"Step aside. Let me take a look," Kaye said firmly, gesturing for Lamar to move away from the car door. As he approached, I instinctively pulled Lamar's jacket tighter around my legs, shielding myself.

"Can we please leave?" I whispered the moment Lamar stepped aside.

Kaye's steps halted, and I could see the hurt flash across his face.

"Fine. You can leave—with me. I'll take care of—"

"No!" I interrupted before he could finish, shaking my head desperately. "I want to go with my friends." My voice trembled with guilt.

"Helanie—" Kaye closed his eyes, took a breath, and then looked at Lamar. Of course, my choice of friends would be questioned.

"Can we please leave?" I repeated, more urgently this time, sweat beading on my forehead.

"Fine," Kaye grunted after a tense pause. "But Lamar—you'd better take care of her."

With that, he stepped aside. Jenny climbed into the car, followed by Lamar, but Kaye lingered outside. His eyes stayed fixed on me, filled with unspoken emotions, until we drove out of sight.

Exhausted, I leaned against Jenny's shoulder, letting my eyes close. Silent tears slipped down my cheeks as I listened to them talk, thinking I was asleep.

"I'll arrange for someone to come take a look at her," Lamar said, his voice low and firm.

"My cabin will be fine for her," Jenny replied, her words spilling out quickly. "It's a gift from my dad—a private space in the rogue community. There are plenty of guards outside, so she'll be safe there. But I just need to know something—what do you think happened?"

Her voice was breathless, and though I couldn't see her face, I could imagine the worry etched across it.

"Jenny! You'll need to console her," Lamar said, his voice tight with tension. "There's no easy way to put this, but with that much blood—and her current state—I think... she's lost the baby."

The moment I heard those words, my eyes flew open. A wave of anguish hit me, and I began sobbing uncontrollably.

Jenny wrapped her arms around me, pulling me into a hug, while Lamar turned away, staring out the window. His fists clenched and unclenched, his jaw tight as though wrestling with his own demons.

It was strange seeing him like this. He looked so worried, so... human. It was hard to believe this was the same person who once wanted me dead.

And then there was me.

I hadn't even realized how much I cared about this baby until now—until it was gone. Maybe I didn't care in the traditional sense, but some deep, primal part of me did. A motherly instinct I didn't know I had.

Still, I couldn't deny it: I had lived with this trauma for too long. I should feel relieved to be free. But instead, I felt hollow.

At some point, the exhaustion overtook me, and I passed out. When I woke, I was in a small, cozy cabin. the IV hooked up to my arm. The sterile smell of medicines hung in the air.

The past two days had been a blur. Jenny stayed by my side the entire time, a constant source of comfort. Lamar visited intermittently, balancing taking care of things at the academy with checking in on me.

I hadn't touched my phone at all. I just couldn't bring myself to face the outside world.

I knew that once I healed and returned to the academy, everything would be different. It would be Kaye's class by then. The thought of seeing him again—of trying to explain everything—was unbearable.

The pain of losing a child was immense, but for me, it went deeper. It wasn't just the loss of a baby—it was the weight of everything that had led to this moment.

"What?" Jenny's sharp voice jolted me from my thoughts. She was on the phone, her tone heated. "Whatever!" she huffed before hanging up.

When she turned back to me, her expression softened into a smile.

"You're awake," she said gently, holding a piece of paper with a few strands of red hair clinging to it.

"Yeah," I croaked, my throat dry and raspy.

"I lost... my baby, right?" Even though I already knew the answer, I needed to hear it. To confirm it.

It wasn't that I wanted to give birth or had planned for a child, but after carrying it inside me for so long, a connection had formed. It was undeniable.

Jenny hesitated before speaking. "Do you want to maybe... contact the father? To cope together?" Her voice was careful, compassionate. She was just trying to help, not knowing the complexities of my situation.

"There is no father," I said sharply, then paused. "And not because it was a one-night stand."

I realized I'd said too much. I didn't want to explain. There was no point.

Jenny nodded, offering a gentle smile. "I understand. We won't talk about him again."

I appreciated her attempt to comfort me, even as my heart felt heavy.

"By the way," she said, shifting gears, "Professor Emmet took his last class and left for a month. Professor Kaye is stepping in. But since it was a full moon night, Kaye decided to take a break. I don't get why those brothers always take breaks, but at least we got some free days."

She was trying to distract me, yapping about academy gossip, and I gave her a weak nod.

"I want to go back to attending classes again," I murmured, though the thought filled me with unease. Lucy and Gavin had been trying to contact me—apparently so persistently they were practically threatening Jenny for information on my whereabouts.

I couldn't fathom how Lamar and Jenny had managed to fend off the questions and suspicion. They truly had been my saviors.

"What's that?" I asked, noticing the strands of red hair in her hand.

Jenny let out a scoff. "This? It's from the girl he—ugh, his one-night stand. I found these on his coat." Her tone shifted, her frustration bleeding through. "And guess what? I can't even ask for a DNA test because of my dad and the packs questioning everything I do!"

For a moment, I saw fear in her eyes. It struck me—an Alpha's daughter, someone who should have the world at her feet, was just as trapped as the rest of us.

I reached for her hand weakly. "Jenny, thank you so much for taking care of me," I said with a small, sincere smile. I'd been alone most of my life, so someone stepping up for me like this meant more than words could express.

Jenny pouted dramatically, her voice lighthearted as she hissed, "That's what friends do, Helanie! I swear, if you thank me one more time..."

Her exaggerated frustration brought a faint smile to my lips. Over the past few days, I'd been drifting in and out of sleep, and every time I woke, I would thank her again. Maybe I was overdoing it, but I couldn't help it. I was truly grateful.

"And who were you yelling at on the phone?" I asked, my curiosity finally getting the better of me.

She rolled her eyes so hard I thought they might get stuck. "That was my dad," she groaned. "He was telling me that my oh-so-loyal Alpha boyfriend has transferred academies after acing all the RVS tests. So, yeah, in one week, my Alpha mate will be my senior."

She hissed the last word, her irritation clear.

For some reason, my chest felt heavy. A strange ache settled deep in my heart, one I couldn't quite explain. Why did the thought of her Alpha mate affect me like this?

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 130-My Forbidden Mate

Chapter 130: 130-My Forbidden Mate

Helanie:

"You look so weak. Are you sure you want to take the first class and not a day off?" Lucy stood by my bed as I fixed my shoelaces.

"Let me do that." She finally unwrapped her arms from around her chest and squatted down to help me with the shoes. I knew she had been upset with me.

I was gone for two days but ended up staying for almost a week. I heard everyone else left for their homes during the holidays. Well, I guess my child sacrificed himself to give me shelter for the holidays.

But Lucy was upset. I arrived late last night, and she only stared at me. I guess she had so many questions but couldn't ask any at the time, as Lamar kept insisting I rest.

"I'm sorry I wasn't there for you. I heard about Gavin breaking up with you," I said softly while she kept her head lowered.

"It's okay. The only thing that bothers me is that you were sick, and you left with Jenny without even telling me anything. How could you be so unwell that you had to leave class midway? Did you three... plan a trip? Because that was Professor Emmet's last class for the month," she finally stood up and spoke, her tone devoid of gestures. She looked so defeated.

"No, we didn't. I just wasn't feeling well and had no other option but to leave," I replied, concealing the real reason I left like that.

"You could have at least asked Jenny to take me to you, but you didn't." She was right to complain. She didn't know the truth, so all of this was, of course, upsetting to her.

I couldn't expect her to magically believe me when I had given her no good reason to trust me.

"I was already feeling guilty for becoming a burden on her. Anyway, let's head out. It's Kaye's class, and I don't want him to get upset," I said, recalling our last interaction.

He didn't look too pleased.

"Okay, let's go." She held her hand out to me, and I took it. I was sure we would be able to fix our broken friendship.

We walked out together while Jenny was with her brother. Ever since she took me in, her brother had been so angry with her. I understood he was worried for his sister. I just hoped he realized her troubles were more about her alpha mate than me or anyone else.

The seniors were still on holiday, so it was just our class. Which also meant her alpha mate would probably arrive next week.

The minute we stood in the third row to wait for Kaye, I noticed him fix his gaze on me. Kaye wore a black shirt and khaki pants, his hands clasped behind his back.

"Welcome back, Helanie. I hope you're feeling well," he called out to me in front of everyone, turning all heads in my direction.

I nodded my head in appreciation for the acknowledgment and lowered my gaze.

"I hope you don't have a fever," Kaye said as he took long strides toward me. Before I knew it, he had the back of his hand on my forehead.

I raised my head, and our eyes met. "Missed you so much," he mouthed, making my heart skip a beat.

"Good, you're feeling well," he mumbled flirtatiously. It was also his way of letting me know he didn't misinterpret my leaving with Lamar that day. That was a relief.

Even though I wasn't considering dating him or expecting to be accepted by him, his words still lingered in my mind.

"There's something about me that you all should know—I like practical work more," he began, wandering around with his hands clasped behind his back. "And I also enjoy good challenges, trips, and exciting ways of studying. So, I've decided to take you all on a little trip. I hope your families don't mind me stealing you guys for some time."

As he mentioned that part, he turned to me and smirked. "Go pack your bags. I'll be taking you to the Red Crown Pack, my mother's pack. Let's find some exciting new herbs!" he announced.

Everyone started cheering. I guess they all really wanted to go on a trip for a while.

"Go!" He clapped his hands, and we all scattered to pack.

Lucy and I hurried to pack our bags, while Lamar, of course, was already packed. He never really unpacked; he would take clothes out as needed and put them right back in his bag.

Before long, we were all seated on a bus. Kaye sat in the passenger seat next to the driver, while I silently took a back seat with Lucy. She had been doing her best to get Gavin to talk to her.

"Do you know we'll be staying at Lady Darcy's guesthouse?" Gavin suddenly turned to speak to me excitedly, causing Lucy to smile brightly.

"Really? It'll be amazing to meet our trainer's mother!" Lucy exclaimed, bouncing up and down in her seat.

I could tell she wasn't that excited, just trying to engage with Gavin. Unfortunately, he ignored her completely, turning his head straight again. Lucy's energy faded.

I held her hand to reassure her, silently eyeing her to give him some time. They hadn't rejected each other yet, so I figured Gavin needed time to work things out.

As for Lady Darcy, I was a bit skeptical. I wasn't sure how she'd react to me being in her guesthouse.

Would she hate me, like her sons did?

I hoped not.

I sat as comfortably as I could, though my body ached far too much. That had been happening a lot ever since I lost the baby. I had been seeing wolves in my sleep too—far too often for comfort.

"You know, I've been looking up sightings of lycans, and it seems like... we're not the only ones who've encountered one," Lucy said.

Her mention of the lycan reminded me of the cursed mate bond I had felt with that beast.

"I don't understand why the academy doesn't mention the lycan. It's not just some creature—it's a cursed someone," she added, making me turn my head toward her.

She had really been doing her research on the lycan—or, should I say, my forbidden mate.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 131-The Bitter Mother-In-Law

Chapter 131: 131-The Bitter Mother-In-Law

Helanie:

"Welcome to my home," said a tall lady standing beside Kaye the minute we arrived. The guards had already prepared for our meeting with the alpha queen of the Red Crown Pack.

I was guessing the woman beside Kaye was not only the alpha queen but also his mother. She was tall and broad, making it almost obvious that she was the mother to those tall and crazy rogue kings of the west, south, north, and east.

But that was for the future. They would be crowned accordingly. It made me wonder where I would be in my own future.

"I am Darcy—," she said with a sleek smile, her red lipstick glistening, "this handsome trainer's' mother."

The way she turned to talk about Kaye was odd. It seemed forced, but Kaye's reaction was even stranger. He looked shocked, as if he couldn't believe his mother had spoken about him at all.

"I have opened my arms for your arrival and have prepared my guesthouse for you all. I hope your stay here is meaningful and that you learn a lot about the grass and bushes," she said. However, that little mention, which seemed like a joke to everyone and caused them to chuckle, appeared to mean much more to Kaye. His smile briefly faded before he forced it back and gulped.

What was he swallowing down?

Was it a defense mechanism? Was it something he wanted to say about his passion for poisons and herbs?

I guess we would never know.

The warrior now gestured for us to move in the direction of the guesthouse, which was a little farther in the huge yard. The narrow alley leading to the guesthouse made the whispers louder.

"Umm, Helanie and Sydney—stay over there," Kaye called to us, making us both stay behind while the others marched ahead.

"Why did you have to wait with me?" Sydney muttered under her breath.

"That's right. You should be in prison, not here waiting by my side," I snapped.

Ever since I had lost my baby, I realized something had changed in me. The shift could be for better or worse, but it was definitely not for the better for those around me. I had lost my sense of subtlety—the ability to not say things directly.

"I have been spared; I shouldn't be punished again by words—," she turned to hiss at me just as Kaye arrived.

"Sydney, back off. You are now a monitor; gain some class," he growled, stopping next to us. He was so tall, with broad shoulders and a slim waist, that I couldn't help but admire his physique with one quick glance.

"But sir, she was talking about—" Sydney lowered her head when Kaye raised his hand to silence her.

"You know what, you should go back. I will only introduce Helanie as a monitor to my mother for now," he said, dismissing her with a hand gesture.

I saw the look of utter shock on her face. She seemed offended, but what could she have done? Kaye wasn't the type to listen to arguments.

She shot me a deadly glare before turning to look at Kaye, then walked away. Once she was out of sight, I noticed Kaye smirk and lower his head toward me.

"I wasn't going to introduce her to my mother—or your future mother-in-law—anyway," he said in a flirtatious tone that made the hairs on my skin stand up.

"Why would you say that? What makes you—" I began to complain, but his narrowed eyes and the deep stare on my face confirmed there was nothing I could say to stop him.

"Let me answer that for you. You're my mate, and there's no choice of rejection or me wanting anyone else. So, in that case, you'll have to end up with me. Which means my mother will become your mother-in-law one day," he shrugged casually, gesturing for me to follow him.

I didn't know how his mother would react to me. I was sure she wouldn't like me.

I walked behind Kaye, watching as his mother stood on the porch. He must have told her he was bringing the class monitor to introduce her.

"Mom, this is Helanie, our class monitor."

He stepped aside to let me be seen, looking so proud as he did. His mother, however, wore a huge, fake smile. She sized me up and down before raising an eyebrow in acknowledgment.

"You're Helanie. The daughter of my husband's mistress?" she asked bluntly.

The way she jumped straight to the point was eerie, almost confrontational.

"I am—," I replied, my voice hesitant.

"She's not like her. She's actually the best student—" Kaye started, only to be silenced as his mother cut him off.

"The best student who is a rogue? I doubt that. Anyway, why on earth is she a class monitor when I'm certain she can't even handle combat?" Her tone dripped with mockery, as if she was trying to provoke me.

I didn't need to read her mind to know she hated me.

"I actually agree with her," I said calmly. "I didn't deserve to be the class monitor. But I'm glad I passed the test and became one. I promise not to disappoint Professor Kaye or any of my other professors."

As I looked at Kaye and said that, his face lit up with pride. But at the same time, his mother's face darkened. She clearly didn't like the way her son was smiling at me.

"Sure, we'll see about that. I'd love to ask Norman for your report," she said, the glint in her eyes sinking my heart into my chest.

I closed my eyes briefly and took a deep breath, trying to calm my nerves. Her words felt more like a threat than a concerned alpha queen simply checking on her son's student.

"Like she said, she will not disappoint," Kaye declared loudly and resolutely this time.

But I could tell—his support for me only made her dislike me more.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 132-The Change In Me

Chapter 132: 132-The Change In Me

Helanie:

"Everyone, please go to your assigned rooms, take a shower, and then come out to the garden for dinner with the Alpha Queen," Sydney was yelling when I arrived at the guesthouse.

It was an enormous space with many rooms inside. A big wooden staircase stood in the center, and a massive window displayed a stunning view of the mountains as the living room's centerpiece.

There were a few bedrooms on the ground floor, while the rest were on the second and third floors, each with balconies, and finally, a rooftop.

"Why are you not obeying me?" she screamed again, her fists clenched. I could tell she was struggling to make everyone listen to her.

And for the first time, I agreed that she needed to be heard. The students had turned the guesthouse into a fish market.

"EVERYONE, GO BACK TO YOUR FUCKING ROOMS!" As soon as I yelled, the entire place went dead silent.

Their heads turned toward me, slow whispers beginning to spread, but it was their actions that mattered. They all grabbed their stuff and rushed to their rooms.

I don't know what happened, but I had grown so tired of people not listening.

After everyone had scattered, I realized Sydney had been watching me with her arms folded across her chest.

"You can thank me later," I said tiredly, not even stopping to look at her as I walked away.

My room was next to the backyard, which I shared with my classmates and Jenny this time. I could tell Kaye had been observant and had chosen Jenny as our fourth roommate because he knew I would be comfortable with her.

Once I was in the room, I noticed all eyes were on me—except for Lamar, who had a smirk on his lips as he sat on the couch, playing a game on his phone.

"What happened?" I asked Jenny and Lucy, who were standing next to the window, probably discussing me.

"Exactly! What happened to you? You came in there with all your guns out," Lucy commented, referring to me yelling at everyone earlier.

"Ah, that? I was just trying to warm up my voice for the next few days," I shrugged. After a few seconds of silence, the two of them burst out laughing.

Lucy rushed over to give me a hug when the door opened again. This time, Gavin walked in with his bag. I was surprised—I hadn't known he would also be sharing the room with us.

His arrival immediately changed the atmosphere.

Lucy stepped away from me, her entire attention now focused on him, while Jenny awkwardly walked over to her bed. The room had three king-sized beds: Lucy and I were probably sharing one, Gavin and Lamar would share another, and Jenny would sleep alone.

It was also extremely cold in this pack.

"Don't look at me like I'm an outsider. Remember, we used to be friends before," Gavin said, breaking the silence. He would make a comment here and there, and then things would go back to normal before turning awkward again.

"It's not that. I was just wondering why I have to be the one to sleep alone," Jenny pouted, pointing at Lucy and me.

Lucy had warmed up to Jenny, though not completely. At least she wasn't accusing her of sleeping with her mate anymore, so I guess that was a good start.

"You can always share the bed with me—I'm single," Gavin said with a smirk, patting the empty side of his bed.

The room fell into an awkward silence the moment he made that remark. I watched as Lucy's face turned pale before she clenched her fists.

"You are so shameless," she muttered, voicing her emotions openly this time.

"How? I'm single. It's not like I'm jumping into someone's bed after believing in my delusions that my mate cheated," Gavin's voice still carried hurt. And why wouldn't it? They were still fated to each other.

"I was talking about—" Jenny tried to softly clarify, but Lamar ended up cutting her off.

"Me? Did you want to sleep with me?" he joked, making Jenny roll her eyes, but instead, his remark caught the attention of the wounded bear in the room.

"Haven't you slept with enough she-wolves already? Or do you plan to sleep with everyone present in this room?" That was it. Gavin had taken it too far. He could argue with Lucy all he wanted, but dragging Jenny and me into the mix wasn't fair.

"Don't ever mention me like that again, Gavin," I said with a stern voice, making my point clear. Once again, everyone turned to stare at me.

"I was just—forget it," Gavin muttered, his voice laced with defeat as he dismissed us all with a wave of his hand.

"Gavin and Lamar will be sharing a bed," Jenny quickly said before shutting up. She wasn't the type to stir up issues, but this was something that needed to be discussed. The boys could pretend they weren't aware of the arrangements, but they had to accept it.

"I'll sleep in the bed with Helaine. She has plenty of space or we can put pillows between us. Or I'll sleep alone. You guys should share beds," Gavin disagreed quickly, wagging his finger in refusal.

"I'll sleep on the couch. I'm fine there. No need to take your anger out on sleeping arrangements," Lamar finally gave up his spot.

He wasn't always troublesome—it was only when he wanted to do something that he wouldn't listen to anyone. For example, coming back to the dorm drunk and wasted, doing drugs in the room, or sleeping with literally anyone who looked sad.

Once that was settled, I took a shower and got ready, slipping into the black tracksuit that Jenny had insisted I accept as a gift.

With the clothes sorted and a desire for some fresh air, I walked out of the room and into the backyard. That's when I saw someone splitting wood.

It was a shocker to see him here—or in fact, to see him in front of me after so long.

In the cold, chilly weather stood Maximus, shirtless, his muscles pumped as he raised the ax and split the wood with precision. Then his eyes fell on me, and he stopped what he was doing.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 133-Deem Demeaned

Chapter 133: 133-Deem Demeaned

Helanie:

I straightened my posture, hid myself, and looked around to make it obvious I was there for the fresh air—cold but fresh air.

"Congratulations on becoming the class monitor," he voiced from afar, his tone heavy with restless breaths as he took another hit on the piece of wood.

"Thank you," I replied under my breath, not sure if he even heard it.

The backyard was lush green with tall trees and an even bigger open area.

In the distance, if the fog cleared, I could see the faraway mountains. But it was so foggy that one could barely see anything past a few miles.

"You know what that means?" Maximus continued, causing my body to squirm uncomfortably.

"That means I will get to make you work firsthand in my class." There was a scoff he let out that I wanted to avoid, but that scoff made me believe he was waiting to make things difficult for me.

"Okay," was all I said before turning around to leave for the guesthouse. There was no point in talking with him since he barely ever acknowledged that his behavior was so inconsistent.

"Run, run, run!" I heard him say, and as I turned just a little while still walking, I watched him swing the ax playfully in the air, almost as if he were threatening me.

It was the oddest encounter I had ever had with him. He had turned really aggressive toward me over time. When I worked in the garage for him, he wasn't aggressive or hateful at all. But I guess Norman had really rubbed off on him.

"Everyone ready?" I asked, standing in the living room and watching everyone nod their heads. It was just a casual dinner, so everyone was dressed in their warm and cozy clothes. But that didn't mean Sydney and Salem weren't dressed up.

They wore matching red tracksuits, their hair curled to perfection, and their makeup done nicely.

I wasn't going to judge them, though. If I had the means, I would dress up too. I liked doing my makeup and wearing good, fancy clothes. However, I never really had any of it, so all I could do was watch Sydney and Salem and admire their fashion sense.

"Let's leave for the main mansion, but remember, don't make Professor Kaye regret bringing us here. Don't go wandering around the rooms or any area that you are not introduced to or asked to go to," I ended my announcement, and thankfully, everyone nodded their heads. I hoped they understood too.

However, Sydney started chuckling, which made me turn to her and raise an eyebrow.

"You know, I'm allowed to walk around freely. My father knows the Alpha of our pack and Lady Darcy. I've visited her before too," she said in a rather giggly tone, acting sweet and full of life—as if I didn't know she was only telling me this to make me feel small.

Sydney loved talking about her status and rank. In fact, that's what she does most of the time: using her father's rank and his association with other Alphas as leverage in every situation.

We all began to walk in a line toward the mansion, and once we arrived at its dining room, we were immediately impressed by the setting.

It was a huge hall with tall ceilings and beautiful chandeliers. The space felt narrow, though, like a long train carriage connected to the mansion.

The walls were made of glass, allowing us a clear view of the outside.

Then, the gorgeous Lady Darcy arrived, wearing a fancy red dress. Her hair was curled into what seemed like a vintage hairstyle, paired with long eyeliner and bold red lipstick.

She appeared to be the inspiration behind Sydney and Salem's style—I could tell just by looking at how they carried themselves.

"Sit down," she gestured for us to take our seats.

We all sat down, with Kaye on her left and an empty space on her right. Kaye had made me sit on his side, while Sydney sat next to the empty chair. I had a feeling the seat was meant for Maximus, but I was wrong.

Soon, a young girl entered the hall, wearing black leggings and a golden dress. She had striking brown hawk-like eyes and a short brown bob. Her jawline was so sharp that I bet everyone's eyes lingered on her face for longer than they realized—if only to admire the sharp angles of her jaw.

She was tall, probably around 5 feet 8 inches, and her high heels made her appear even taller.

She walked over to Lady Darcy, kissed the back of her hand as she was offered to, and then silently sat in the empty seat, making Sydney look small and insignificant in comparison.

"Kaye, you remember Kesha, right?" Darcy turned to her son, who had been constantly sneaking glances at me by turning his head, pretending to check on the students. He straightened his back to acknowledge his mother's question.

His eyes lingered on the girl being mentioned as Kesha for a moment before he nodded his head promptly.

"Kesha Unns?" he asked, and the girl smiled—her expression a little odd as if to confirm she was indeed the person being referenced.

"She has been crowned as the Alpha of her pack recently," Darcy announced, which made Kaye watch Kesha with an impressed look on his face.

I shamelessly felt jealous, even though I wasn't officially with Kaye. My wolf wasn't active, so none of the scent or bond-related pains worked for me. The jealousy I felt had nothing to do with a mate bond—yet I still liked to blame and accuse the mate bond for my jealousy.

"And what are you doing these days? I heard you're making amazing—" Kesha began in her beautiful accent, but Darcy interjected in a way that made my heart sink in my chest.

"Doing the same useless shit of becoming Dora the Explorer and wandering around with his students," her comment was so demeaning that Kaye gulped loudly—loud enough for me to hear.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 134-I Got My Mate's Back

Chapter 134: 134-I Got My Mate's Back

Helanie:

It was the oddest interaction ever. His mother outright insulted his work, and I could tell from the look on Kaye's face that he didn't like it.

However, it didn't make Darcy take her words back. She seemed almost proud of her snide remarks.

"I'm sure he does take part in the family business," Kesha's tone the second time was harsh; her voice was much deeper and raspier. Yet, she would almost chew on her words when talking.

"He does not. He spends most of his time on things that anyone can do," Darcy shrugged, gesturing for everyone to start eating. A maid was specifically standing by her side to fill up her glass of expensive wine or even refill her plate.

"That is so sad," Kesha uttered, folding her arms behind her plate and not even taking a bite as she showed interest in the topic.

"I like doing what I do," Kaye finally opened his mouth, but I felt like there could have been a much better response.

"But do you think that will be enough? Suppose you find a mate tomorrow—what will you do for her? Don't you think your brother's mate will feel happier because they are more successful and popular than you? You should think about all these things before

choosing a path. It is not only about you but also your mates and your kids," she finally unfolded her arms from her chest and took a bite of the steak on her plate.

I noticed Sydney watching her with big eyes, almost as if he were admiring the rings and bracelets Kesha wore.

Of course, Kesha talked about Kaye's achievements as if they were nothing because she was all about material goods.

Even the utensils used for her were made of gold. Darcy knew how to cheer her up by making her feel special. But why?

Which pack was she from, and why was Darcy so fond of her?

"I don't think my mate will care about all that," Kaye said determinedly, but a laugh from his mother soured his mood again.

"If you keep going into the woods and spending full moons next to those poisonous trees—Goddess knows doing what—you will never find a mate. Or at least not one good enough to raise your social status and make people envious of you," Darcy seemed to pass such crude comments.

Kaye's status? As if he were nothing and needed a rich mate to elevate his confidence and position.

"Actually—" Once Kaye didn't open his mouth, I felt the urge to defend him.

Everyone suddenly fell silent while Darcy narrowed her eyes at me. It was a clear hint that I needed to shut up and not interfere.

But they were talking in our presence, so I guessed it was fair that we got to comment.

"He doesn't just spend his time around the poisonous trees. He makes medicines that are now wanted and used in literally every big pack's hospital and pharmacy. He creates scents and perfumes that all the rich people enjoy. He also produces poison-laced weapons that can be extremely useful during wartime. I understand that he needs to be more active in his family business, but that doesn't mean he's doing nothing. He is a business himself, and I can assure you, everyone sitting here knows about his brand that produces medicines, perfumes, and many other useful things."

The way I spoke with such confidence and knowledge left Darcy and Kesha watching my face in silence. However, Kaye lowered his head and smiled before raising it again to face them confidently.

"That is true. Our pack only uses his medicines," Jenny spoke up, giving a boost to her trainer and also supporting my words.

"I used to work at a pharmacy, too. We would always showcase Professor Kaye's medicines in the front row, and they would go out of stock so quickly—whether it was for skincare or deadly injuries," Lamar added, making me smile to myself.

Just a few weeks ago, I had no one. And now, I have friends who quickly join hands to form a protective circle around me the moment they feel like I need it.

If they hadn't started talking, Darcy would have shut me down angrily.

"True, I only use his perfumes. They just suit me," Salem giggled, moving her shoulder up to her ear and blinking her eyes repeatedly.

"And our pack's alpha only relies on Professor Kaye's poisons for border security," Lucy added, and Gavin nodded in agreement with her.

"We are huge fans of his work," Gavin spoke up loudly.

The way everyone had started cheering for Kaye was such a slap to Darcy's face. Such a shame for a mother to not recognize and praise her own son's achievements.

"Okay, thank you everyone for reminding me that I don't know my son," she said, making it sound like a joke. "But you should know that I was the one who supported him when he first showed interest in the... herbs." I bet she wanted to make another taunting comment but changed her mind. Her appearance and fake facade were far more sacred to her than being honest and appreciating her son.

"Anyway, have your food," she added, giving us all a smile, though her eyes lingered on me a little longer.

Once we finished our meals, I suggested we help the maids with the cleanup. However, Sydney and her followers, along with half of the class, left with her to take a stroll before heading back to rest.

"You are such a kind little girl," the old maid gently ran her hand through my hair as she praised me for washing the dishes. Everyone else who stayed was doing their best to clean up the kitchen and living areas so that the maids, who had worked hard to prepare such an amazing meal, could get some rest.

After I was done washing the dishes with Jenny, I noticed a text on my phone.

Professor Kaye: Come meet me behind the big tree in the backyard after midnight. I really need my mate to be with me for some time.

I quickly put my phone screen down so nobody saw the text. I felt worried about his request. If I went to meet him, he might think I had accepted being his mate. And if I didn't go, not only would he be hurt, but I would feel restless too.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 135-The Midnight Kiss

Chapter 135: 135-The Midnight Kiss

Helanie:

"I don't want to be rude, but his mother is so weird," Jenny agreed with the rest of us as we made it back to our room and sat down near the window to talk about the dinner.

"Maybe she just wants her son to be more popular like her other sons?" Lucy mumbled, trying hard to understand Kaye's mother's side as well.

"Of course, we can expect that from you. You're quick to defend or find reasons for messed-up actions," Gavin muttered under his breath, souring everyone's mood.

"Lucy, that's not true. Kaye has achieved a lot. It's just weird how none of his parents seem to acknowledge it. It's like they turn a blind eye to his achievements and then shame him in public. No parent—" I suddenly stopped as I recalled my own parents, "who loves their child would do that."

"His mother is a bitch. I've heard a lot of stuff about her," Lamar said, sitting up after lying straight on the cold floor for a few minutes.

"What kind of stuff?" Jenny turned to him, the two girls showing way too much interest in what he had to say.

"About how she was when she was still married to Lord McQuoid," he continued but gave no useful information.

So the girls scooted closer to him, their ears practically perked up as Lucy whispered, "What kind of stuff did she do?"

I shook my head in disbelief because I noticed a small smirk on Lamar's face. He was clearly enjoying the attention on himself. I couldn't even be certain if he knew anything at all or was just making things up to keep them listening.

"All sorts of things," he replied vaguely.

"What—" Before Jenny could ask again and he gave her the same non-answer, I intervened.

"Haven't you two figured out by now that he knows nothing?" I rolled my eyes and teased playfully, making Jenny slap Lamar's thigh. She immediately pulled her hand back when he narrowed his eyes at her.

The way the two looked at each other before she shyly slid away was... odd. I hoped she wasn't on his to-do list.

"Anyway, aren't you guys going to bed now? We have to leave early in the morning to collect herbs," I said, half-honestly. I wanted them to go to bed before midnight so I could figure out what to do about Kaye's message.

But if they didn't go to sleep, I could always come up with an excuse to Kaye and get out of the situation. The question was—did I even want to get out of this situation?

"We're not really sleepy," Lucy whispered, her eyes glancing toward Gavin. I could tell she wanted to use tonight, with us all staying under one roof, to somehow reconcile with him.

"I am sleepy. I'll head to bed," Gavin said, clearly not in the mood. The moment he stood up, Lucy looked down and sighed.

"I can stay with you," Jenny offered with a smile, but I could tell Lucy wasn't having it.

"No, I think Helanie is right. We should sleep so we can wake up early," Lucy uttered defeatedly.

We had already changed and were in our pajamas. I was assuming it would take them an hour to fall into a deep sleep, and then I'd wait another hour just to make sure they were truly out before I left.

I'd leave?

So maybe I'd made up my mind then. The reason wasn't the Moon Goddess; it wasn't why I was feeling this pull toward Kaye. Since my wolf had been dormant, I had just figured—or, more so, made excuses—for why I was feeling a little possessiveness toward him and it surely wasn't because of the mate bond.

Steadily, everyone went to their beds and laid down. None of us spoke, and I was hoping they would fall asleep soon.

In the meantime, I wondered why Kaye and his mother's relationship was so strained. I'd be a fool not to notice, especially since everyone else had picked up on it, too.

After about two hours, when the clock struck midnight, I got up and looked around at everyone. I was going to lie about needing water if anyone caught me leaving my bed.

They were all sleeping peacefully. Since I shared a room with Lucy and Lamar, I already knew their sleep patterns and how to tell if they were in a deep sleep. Thankfully, Gavin's little snores and Jenny curled up like a cute teddy bear were signs they were out cold, too.

I carefully opened the bedroom door and slipped out, glancing around. Since our room was the last one near the backyard exit, it wouldn't be too hard for me to sneak out. I opened the door to the exit and stepped outside, instantly feeling like sneezing as the cold wind brushed against my nose.

My skin started to itch—a sign I should have brought my sweater with me. The inside had been much warmer, thanks to the fireplaces running separately in every room.

But I needed to see Kaye. I thought he wanted to talk about what had happened at dinner last night.

With my legs shaking, I made it to the tall trees far ahead in the backyard and stepped behind one. That's when I spotted Kaye sitting on the big rocks with a blanket wrapped around his body.

I had never seen him look so miserable.

The Kaye who always looked like he was ready to walk down a runway was now covered in a blanket like a child.

"Hey," I uttered softly, watching as he snapped out of his thoughts and acknowledged me with a warm, cozy smile.

"I knew you would come," he whispered, raising his arm to offer me a place under his blanket.

I hesitated, staring at the open space. Sitting under the same blanket as him would mean sitting too close. But the spot beside him looked so welcoming that I couldn't bring myself to reject the offer.

I sat down, close enough for him to wrap the blanket around me, too.

Suddenly, it was the warmest place in the world. Then, I felt his hand slip into mine under the blanket, his touch soft and warm. Slowly, he leaned closer and, before I knew it, crashed his lips against mine.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 136-The Acceptance I Didn't Expect

Chapter 136: 136-The Acceptance I Didn't Expect

Helanie:

His lips were soft and comforting. I could have pulled away, but in that moment, I just couldn't. I enjoyed how good they tasted— a hint of cherry with a subtle touch of honey. His lips felt like a journey to heaven. I smiled against his lips as he pressed his mouth harder on mine, deepening the kiss.

However, I didn't participate much, which made him slowly pull back. He lingered close, his breath warm on my face, until a snapping twig interrupted his next attempt to kiss me.

I got so scared that I instinctively pulled away, breaking the cozy blanket circle and looking in the direction of the noise.

"Hey, easy! Maybe it was just a squirrel," he laughed, raising his arm to reassure me.

"Maybe we should check. What if someone saw us?" I asked, still shaken, dismissing the comfort of his warm embrace.

"For your peace of mind, I'll check it out," he said, getting up. Before leaving, he wrapped the blanket snugly around me.

The way he took care of me felt almost unreal. I wasn't used to such gentle gestures anymore.

After a few minutes, he returned. He must have been freezing in just his white long-sleeve shirt and black pants, which explained why he had wrapped himself in a blanket earlier.

"There's no one around, and the guesthouse doors are closed," he uttered.

This time, I raised my arm to offer him some comfort. He had been so sweet to me, and it didn't hurt to be nice to him in return.

He smiled widely before sitting back under the blanket with me. Our heads peeked out like two eggs from a cozy nest.

"Back when I kissed you in the office and you ran out on me, I was scared you might be disgusted with me because of the 'step-sibling' title," he said, recalling that day. I didn't expect him to bring up something I thought he had long forgotten.

Of course, he hadn't forgotten. But I guessed he wasn't the type to push for answers impatiently. Instead, he waited for the right moment to bring it up.

"I was afraid someone would catch us," I lied. The truth was, it had been the haunting memory of other, unwelcome touches that came crashing down on me like a wrecking ball, making me react the way I had.

"Yeah, I figured something was up. Anyway, are you okay now?" he asked gently, as expected. He was addressing another incident that needed explaining.

"I'm fine now," I replied, quickly looking away. But because we were sharing the same blanket, I couldn't move much and was still within his sight.

"What happened, if you don't mind me asking?" he whispered, almost like he was making sure not to offend me. Then, before I could answer, he added, "I was worried. Jenny told me you had digestion issues because you skip meals so often."

It was clear he didn't believe Jenny's excuse.

"Why trust Lamar again, Helanie? People don't change that quickly," he continued without waiting for my response.

I felt so guilty that he had to leave without real answers.

"I had thought about that too, but recently, Lamar has shown some real growth," I replied to his concerns. "And don't worry, I'll be careful."

I watched him reluctantly nod his head. "Umm, the dinner was awkward, but thank you for standing up for me. I didn't know you saw me as a perfect man with so many achievements."

The more he spoke softly, his fresh minty breath fanning over my face, the more I realized how badly he needed someone to talk to about what he was dealing with.

"You really are a great guy and doing an amazing job in your field. I just think your mother doesn't know much," I tried to explain gently, attempting to convey my thoughts about his mother in the nicest way possible.

He stayed silent, making me wonder if he was going to defend her.

"I'm the last child from when they were still married and things hadn't turned ugly between them," he began quietly. "When I was born, I had complications. My mom suffered so much during her pregnancy with me. And once I was born, I ruined their peace because I wouldn't stop crying all the time. My messy state took a toll on their marriage as well. Things got ugly pretty quickly."

He sighed deeply before continuing.

"However, they managed to ignore the chaos for a while and act like a family. But it didn't last. Things fell apart again—and this time for real. Somewhere along the line, taking care of me became too much for them. It was like I was cursed, constantly in pain and restless. I can't even explain it. So, after a while, my parents concluded that suffering because of me was too much. And when I didn't 'return the favor' by achieving big things for them, they started resenting me. That's why... you saw what happened tonight."

He smiled awkwardly but never made eye contact during the whole conversation. I swear, if he had looked me in the eyes, he would have started bawling like a child. He sounded so meek and broken.

"But how was that your fault? Some kids are just a bit more restless and fussy than others," I mumbled softly, my voice filled with concern.

"That's how you think. Not everyone is as understanding as you are. That's why..." He slid closer to me, his hand resting on my thigh while his eyes lingered on my face for a moment too long. "I want you as my mate and my forever."

Maybe he was studying my reaction. When I didn't object—partly because I wanted to overcome my lingering fear of touch—he seemed to take it as a sign that I was okay with it.

His hands moved up my thighs, reaching my waist. He held my tiny waist firmly in his hands, pulling me onto his lap.

"I, Kaye McQuoid, accept Helanie as my beautiful mate," he whispered against my lips.

Before I could process my shock or respond, he closed the gap, crashing his lips against mine. This time, he quickly slid his tongue into my mouth, silencing me with an intensity that left no room for words.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 137-Kissing The She-Devil

Chapter 137: 137-Kissing The She-Devil

Norman:

"I think Maximus is staying with his mother so that he can go out and date around easily," I heard one of the maids say. As soon as I turned my head toward her, she fell silent.

Her meek reaction was because she knew she wasn't supposed to gossip about my brothers.

But she wasn't lying. I had heard about Maximus throwing wild parties while he moved out to "test the weapons."

We had just finished dinner, and these days, I was more concerned about Emmet. He had been drinking a lot. Usually, he did that after a full moon night to numb the pain, but this time, his drinking had become unusually frequent.

Dinner had been quiet as none of my brothers joined us. Earlier, I had found Emmet passed out in the forbidden corridor. I carried him to his room and tucked him in nicely.

Maximus was staying with Mom, probably out on a date for the night. Kaye had his students staying at the guesthouse in Red Crown Pack.

I couldn't shake the feeling that I should have been there too—or at least visited for a few minutes.

Then my mom called, and what she said left me stunned.

"Kesha is there?" I asked, skimming through the office file I had brought home to work on.

I was barely getting any sleep these days. With my brothers wandering around unhinged, I needed to stay alert. They might need my help anytime, and I wanted to be available.

"Yes, she arrived for the feast, but that b*tch ruined everything." My mom's tone turned so harsh that I set the file down to ask what she meant.

"Kesha?" I asked, confused, since my mom loved her dearly.

"No!" she snapped, sounding offended. "I'm talking about that stepsister of yours."

My body tensed at the mention of her. I had been avoiding her name for a while, but now it was back, and I couldn't help but wonder why.

She had been out with her friends on the full moon night. I instantly shut myself down, unwilling to face the fear of knowing what had happened that night.

"What has she done now?" I asked, trying to sound nonchalant.

"She started reminding me how to appreciate my son's work." The minute she said that, my muscles tightened—not because of Helanie, but because I feared the implications.

Why would Helanie need to remind my mom of something so obvious? Did Mom demean Kaye in front of his students again?

"Mom, did you hurt his feelings by belittling his work?" I closed my eyes and muttered through clenched teeth. She better not have.

"That's not the point. He is my son, and I can give him any kind of advice. Why the heck is Helanie interfering?"

The fact that my mom still tried to defend herself after admitting she had bullied my brother in front of his students was shocking.

"You know how sensitive Kaye is about his work. Why would you do that? And now you're upset because someone stood up for him?"

My annoyance at the mention of Helanie shifted slightly to relief—relief that, for once, she had done something good.

It was shocking that she stood up to my mother, the Alpha Queen, for Kaye. How courageous was that? Did she not fear the consequences of her actions?

"Can you come over? I need my son who understands my concerns," my mom said. Her tone had softened, no longer angry at Helanie.

Perhaps she realized she was at fault and had been unfairly blaming Helanie for something I couldn't be upset about.

She took a stand for my baby brother—it completely changed my mood. I wished for everyone to support and stand against the evil that came my brother's way. He had been through enough torment.

"Fine, I'll be there in a few hours," I whispered, already on my feet and heading out to her pack.

"Take your private jet. I want you here before midnight," Mom demanded. I nodded, as if she could see me through the screen.

I ended the call and headed for the exit. I was looking forward to seeing both my brothers and, hopefully, taking control of the situation to ensure Mom didn't disrespect Kaye again.

It took me a few hours, but I made it there before midnight. I had already decided that I would defend Helanie's actions this time.

She earned a pass for standing up for Kaye. My brothers always came first for me.

However, when I arrived at the mansion and saw Kaye heading toward the guesthouse with a blanket wrapped around him, I couldn't help but feel worried.

He looked weak and upset. Was he okay?

I started following him to make sure he was fine, but I was soon stopped as the guards caught up with me.

"Your Highness, your mother is waiting for you in her study," one of them declared.

"I'll meet her in a minute," I said, brushing them off as I rushed ahead. I had already lost sight of Kaye.

Leaving the guards behind, I made my way to the backyard, feeling confused and restless.

Why was he heading there at this hour?

When I finally reached the area where he was, I was hit with a sight that completely blew me away.

Right before my eyes, my brother stood wrapped in a blanket, and Helanie was ready to sit and share the blanket with him, and then before I knew it, they shared a kiss.

My body shuddered as I took it all in. For the next few moments, I stood frozen, processing what I had just seen.

All this time, I had been so worried about Maximus being her mate that I never thought to check on Kaye.

His behavior toward Helanie had changed so drastically that we couldn't even mention her without him becoming defensive.

I had been afraid Emmet was giving her too much attention, but here I was, watching my baby brother kiss the she-devil.

Suddenly, it all made sense. Mom wasn't just worried about Helanie defending Kaye in front of her—she was trying to protect him. Helanie was attempting to position herself as the better person while simultaneously starting a war with my mother.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 138-Ending The Affair

Chapter 138: 138-Ending The Affair

Norman:

The sight had left me deeply unsettled. I didn't even know how to process it. All this time, I had been worried about the wrong brothers. Kaye was always the quiet one. He never shared his concerns or secrets with anyone except Maximus.

So, I wondered why he hadn't discussed anything with Maximus. If he had, Maximus would have at least told me.

"Norman, my son!" The moment I stepped into the open door of my mother's office, I was greeted by a distressed mother.

A few hours ago, I had come here intending to argue with her. But now, my focus had shifted to Helanie and Kaye.

"Come, have a drink with me," my mother gestured. Mr. Larry quickly filled my glass to the brim.

He handed it to me, and I sat across the table, staring at my mother and then at the glass in my hand.

"Do you have any idea what you've done today?" I began, taking a small sip as the alcohol burned my throat.

"I understand you're upset, but I've always tried to motivate my children. That girl highlighted it in a negative light and made a whole scene about it," she said, waving her hand as she swirled the wine in her glass before taking another large sip.

I could tell she had been drinking even before I arrived.

"It was a big deal for Kaye. And Helanie stepping up to defend him has made him softer toward her," I explained, watching her frown. Before she could ask any further questions, I added, "She's clearly hitting on Kaye, and your son, who has always craved acknowledgment for his hard work, has surrendered to her beauty and antics."

I watched as she straightened her back and set her glass down.

"So, congratulations. Your resentment toward your son over the years, blaming him for your failed marriage, has finally pushed him to find someone he sees as a better mother," I muttered, recalling the kiss I had witnessed. He wasn't looking for romance; he was looking for a mother figure—someone who would take care of him.

And he had found one.

I'm sure Helanie had been showing him care and concern.

"That can't be. She's his stepsister," my mother almost hissed, biting her tongue angrily.

"But she's not. I saw them kiss tonight. And I'm certain it stemmed from the fact that she values him and his hard work, unlike you. So, congratulations again—you've successfully pushed him away. He's no longer your problem," I said, setting my glass down and clenching my jaw with every word.

"They kissed? What a slut. Who even kisses their stepbrother—oh, I see. She must have learned it all from her mother," Mom growled, slamming her fist on the table.

It was the first time I'd seen her lose her temper like this over Kaye.

She had always neglected him, accusing him of being the reason she had so many miscarriages after his birth. Something that wasn't even his fault.

They called him a curse on our family. But my brother was not a curse at all—just someone caught in the crossfire.

"You think I hate my boy?" She finally turned to me, her voice sharp. "I don't hate him. I just—was angry at him. But I will not let him be taken away from me. That girl—I need to do something about her. I will eliminate her from my son's life," she declared as she stood up, her words brimming with anger and hatred.

"I hope you don't mean physically. I'm all for you separating them, but don't hurt her," I said. I wasn't sure why it slipped out, but as soon as my mother turned to scrutinize my face, I added, "She's been through a lot already. If anything else happens to her, we'll be questioned. Besides, now that she's a student of our academy, the rules and laws apply to her."

"Hmm, then I know what I need to do," she sighed, placing a hand on her forehead.

I had a feeling she still didn't care much about Kaye. She seemed more upset about losing control over him to Helanie—her ex-mate's new chosen mate.

"Anyway, I'll go take a rest for now," I said, getting up from the chair. I wasn't in the mood to return home. I had to stay here and keep an eye on Kaye and Helanie before things escalated between them.

"Your room has been cleaned," Mom called out as I walked out of her study.

Once I reached my bedroom—we all had a room at Mom's place—I dialed Kaye's number. I needed to pull him away from her.

"I'm at Mom's place. But you're not in your room? Where are you?" I asked in one breath, making sure to sound stern enough to unsettle him and compel him to return to the mansion.

"I was on a walk outside. I'm just coming back now," he replied. The urgency in his voice clearly indicated that he was rushing back, leaving whatever he had been doing with Helanie.

"Okay, I'm waiting for you," I lied before hanging up. I didn't have anything to discuss with him. I just wanted to see him return to his room, after which I'd head to bed. I'd been awake for nearly forty hours, and my mind was racing with so many thoughts.

"Maximus claimed to have felt the mate bond with her on the ground. Emmet treats her like no one else ever has. And now Kaye! Kaye has been having an affair with her. What is going on? Is she doing this on purpose? Is she here on a mission? What if her mother knew about it and that's why she kicked her out of the mansion? Perhaps she feared her daughter having an affair with my brothers could jeopardize her own relationship with my father?"

I stayed outside, pacing back and forth in the hallway until Kaye arrived. He didn't take long, but I noticed he was missing the blanket. I had a feeling he'd left it with Helanie.

"Yeah, you wanted to talk?" Kaye asked, looking sheepishly grim.

"Nah! I just wanted to say goodnight," I said. While patting his back, I noticed a long blond hair on his white shirt but decided not to confront him about it—at least not now.

"Okay, night, brother," he replied, avoiding my gaze as he entered his room before me.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 139-A Little Spice!

Chapter 139: 139-A Little Spice!

Helanie:

He had his hands under my shirt, gently reaching for my breasts. There were moments when I felt like I might freak out or repeat what I did in Emmet's office the other day—push Kaye away and run out on him.

But his tender kisses on my lips eased my nerves, making me feel more comfortable with him. Yet, a lingering fear remained in the back of my mind.

What if some Alphas arrived and tried to touch me? Would Kaye run away like Altan did?

Would I be left on my own?

Even though I knew Kaye was far more powerful than Altan in both strength and presence, I couldn't shake the fear that he might not step up for me. What if he was too afraid of being known as romantically associated with me?

His hand softly caressed my bare breast, and a moan escaped my lips into his mouth. Embarrassed, I quickly felt a flush of heat rise to my cheeks. Somehow, he must have noticed because he suddenly stopped and pulled his hand back from under my shirt.

"Did I do something wrong?" I asked quickly, our lips only inches apart.

"No! Absolutely not," he smiled warmly. "I just don't want to do anything out here in the open air. I can tell you're a bit shy about intimacy. Take your time—I'm in no rush," he added, his tone sweet and reassuring as he gently tucked a strand of hair behind my ear.

"Thank you for being so understanding," I uttered in disbelief. For a moment, I'd been scared he would get angry with me.

"But I do want to talk about us," he said softly.

The moment those words left his lips, I straightened my back and turned my head to the side, avoiding his gaze.

"I—," I began, but the words caught in my throat.

As much as I would have loved to have a mate like Kaye—an absolute dream for any she-wolf—I couldn't accept him. Not just because of the vow I'd made to defy the Moon Goddess until I'd exacted my revenge, but because Kaye wasn't the only one who was my mate.

How could I tell him without triggering him that his brother was also my mate?

And what about Emmet? What if he denied it altogether? I wasn't even sure if he still remembered anything about our bond.

And then there was the Lycan—the beast I'd felt a mate bond with. I didn't even know who he had been before he turned into that creature.

I was losing my mind, suffocated by the complexity of my life and the challenges it constantly threw at me.

"I haven't thought about it," I murmured in a shaky voice.

"Will you give it a thought after tonight?" Kaye asked gently, almost desperately.

My fists clenched beneath the blanket, and my lips quivered under the weight of my misery.

"I don't know. I don't want to think about anything right now," I said, my voice trembling. "My mother is marrying your father, and if we got together... her relationship would be doomed."

I wasn't sure how she would react if she found out I was the reason they couldn't be together.

But I was certain Lord McQuoid wouldn't choose me over her. He would likely demand that his sons forget about me. There were too many complications.

If I stayed tied to his sons, it would spark a fight between them. And then there was the Lycan—what would happen if the truth about him came to light? I'd be questioned endlessly about why I was fated to him as well.

"Why do you keep zoning out? What's bothering you?" Kaye asked, snapping his fingers in front of my face to grab my attention.

"Why are you worried about your mother? She never loved you. She doesn't even care about you. She already had a mate, and my father is her chosen mate—" Kaye continued to argue, but I had to cut him off.

"Kaye, she has known your father for many years and has dated him. I don't think it would be fair to ask her to leave him just like that. If she truly loves him, it would be incredibly difficult for her to let go," I said, quickly lowering my gaze.

Even though my mother didn't care about me, I still cared about her. She had been through hell with my dad, and I believed she deserved a happy ending.

"So you want me to wait for many years so we can compare our relationship to theirs? Just tell me how long," he whispered, his voice tinged with frustration.

I stayed silent, not daring to look into his eyes.

The awkward silence lingered for a while until his phone started ringing, breaking the tension. He turned his attention to the call, and I sighed in relief while noticing how tense he looked.

I watched him talk to his brother, Norman, over the phone. I couldn't help but wonder why Norman was calling at this hour. Was he always so involved in his brother's business?

Once the call ended, Kaye let out a tired sigh, lowering his head.

"Do you have to go?" I asked, piecing together what I could from the one-sided conversation.

"Norman is here," he announced, making me feel even more uncomfortable. Why was Norman here?

Would he try to cause trouble for me?

"It's okay. You don't have to worry about anything. I'm here to take care of you. But right now, I have to go," Kaye said, steadily unwrapping the blanket from his body and draping it around mine instead.

It was only then I realized how small the blanket had seemed on him, yet how enormous it felt wrapped around me.

"Come on, let me drop you at the guesthouse," he insisted as he got up.

"It's right there—" I murmured, gesturing toward the guesthouse in the distance.

"It'll make me feel better to see you enter through the door," he insisted again, his words making my heart skip a beat.

I gave him a small nod and followed behind him. He led me to the guesthouse, waiting patiently until I had locked the door behind me and was safely out of his sight.

Once inside, I leaned against the door, my mind racing.

How would things go between us? How long would I have to wait?

And when would I finally put those Alphas behind bars? As I thought about all that, I hugged his blanket for

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 140-The Evil Woman's Evil Daughter

Chapter 140: 140-The Evil Woman's Evil Daughter

Norman:

Flashback:

"Why are you doing this? Don't you see I'm with child?" my mother's voice broke as she asked the evil lady that question.

I wish I hadn't been hiding under the bed. It was Kaye's turn to seek his brothers, and unfortunately, I had come here.

Or maybe I had done so on purpose, so I could witness the evil woman taking a step forward in her brutality.

"I'm not doing anything. I just believe you shouldn't be sitting around like this. Pregnant women should keep working too," I could see the red heels of Ursula as she hissed at my mother.

"The doctor told me I would lose my child if I didn't rest," hearing my mother plead with her was so painful.

"So? Is that my fault? Listen, I'm not the babysitter anymore. I'm not your caretaker either. I'm soon to be his queen. The rogue queen--that will be so amazing. So, you'd better get used to this life now. I mean, why bring more life into the world when your existing kids are going to live a life of hell?" Her voice was always filled with hatred for me and my brothers.

It was still tolerable until Ursula started terrorizing my brothers.

"If I were you, I'd kill these babies. They're not going to save your relationship," she scared me when she advised my mother to 'take care' of the babies.

End of flashback:

"Good morning." I had the worst night but had to greet my mother since it looked like she had been through hell as well.

She looked so disturbed, as if she hadn't been able to blink even once.

The morning, though, was amazing. The sun was peeking through the clouds, and the fresh morning breeze filling our lungs as we sat in the garden for breakfast was refreshing.

"It will be a great morning for us indeed," she said, rubbing her eyes. No makeup on her face--that was new. She was definitely bothered.

"Tell me you've decided to change your behavior with Kaye," I said, grabbing a glass of fresh orange juice to clear my throat. My voice was raspy today.

The full moon always came with such a worry. And when it left, I felt like so much had happened, but I wouldn't know exactly what until someone told me.

"I've decided to finally give love to my son," there was a smirk on her lips as she mentioned Kaye. It was always a smirk, never a smile of appreciation.

It hurt.

But I wouldn't let her hurt him.

"I hope you're not planning to hurt my brother with any of your games," I said, my tone harsh and far from gentle.

"I'm not. I'm just going to give him what he's always wanted--my undivided attention, extreme love, and affection," she murmured confidently. Her tone had changed again, but this time it seemed like she was genuine about bringing happiness to Kaye.

Of course, her giving him attention would mean a lot to Kaye. I just hoped she wasn't doing it to gain control over him.

"I want to know what you're up to," I demanded. She smiled and shook her head at me.

"Norman, I'm his mother. I've always loved him. I was just strict with him because I was afraid I had done so much for nothing. Anyway--" her tone softened noticeably as she continued, "I've decided to arrange a date between him and Kesha."

I was in shock.

It was so strange to hear her mention Kaye and Kesha in the same sentence. Among all the she-wolves, she loved Kesha the most.

I had always heard her talk about Kesha for Maximus because he was the most adored and perfect son for both her and my father.

So of course, it would mean a lot to him.

"Really? So, you just changed the guy for your precious Kesha overnight?" I asked, making sure she could hear the sarcasm in my voice.

"I've met that girl--what's her name? Ah! Helanie," she nodded to herself, saying the name through gritted teeth.

"She's a pretty one. Not at all like her mother. The platinum-blond girl with big blue eyes. Have you seen her hands? Did you notice how small and soft they look?" she continued, describing Helanie in unnecessary detail.

"Did you ever notice her body? All the weight in the right places. But one must wonder if she's as soft and sweet-smelling as her breath?" she asked, and I rolled my eyes.

"Mom! I haven't paid attention to her in such detail," I lied, feeling a twinge of guilt for being so blatant about it.

It was a huge lie.

I remembered that one day when I got a good look at her breasts. Even now, just thinking about it made the hair on the back of my neck stand up.

I felt so guilty and disgusted with myself because, no matter what, I couldn't forget that sight.

"Hmmm, she smells amazing--at least her breath does. Those rosy cheeks and plump red lips. Even living as a rogue didn't harm her beauty. Norman, if my son kissed her, he'd need a major distraction to forget about a beauty like her," Mom said.

She was right about everything. She had made a good decision after thinking it through.

"But you need to be subtle about it. I'll take care of Helanie. I need to distract her somehow," I straightened in my chair, scratching the back of my neck in worry.

"That's good. We won't let another one of us get distracted by those wicked women, you hear me?" she muttered under her breath just as Kaye showed up, smiling brightly.

"Good morning," Kaye cheered, completely unaware of what had been happening behind his back.

Watching him look so happy made me feel guilty.

What if we stole Helanie from him and he lost his charm?

But it needed to be done. It had to be.

Kaye had no idea what else was going on. I couldn't bear to watch my brothers fight with each other over her.

And then there was her mother.

I couldn't believe Helanie wasn't like her.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.