

Claimed And Marked By Her Stepbrother Mates

Chapter 41-My Stepbrother Is Sweet And Sexy

Chapter 41: 41-My Stepbrother Is Sweet And Sexy

Helanie:

"I did—" I didn't get to finish before Emmet spoke up. He had a charming presence. Every time he talked, I found myself falling silent, just so I could listen to his voice.

"If a she-wolf without an active role managed to get my brother almost killed, maybe we should be questioning my brother's strength. What happened to all those years of training?" Emmet slid his hands into his coat pockets, briefly jingling his keys before pulling them out.

"Emmet—" Norman rolled his eyes. "She got herself into trouble, and while trying to save her, Kaye nearly got trapped in the dream prison."

Well, he clarified that quickly. Before this, he made it sound like I had run after his brothers with a knife.

"Is that why you were asking me all those questions about the dream prison?" Emmet had a mild smile on his lips, almost as if he'd expected Norman to tell him about what was going on.

"Yeah, I just didn't want to worry you," Norman quickly explained, trying to justify why they hadn't involved Emmet earlier. But that's when Emmet showed me he wasn't so easily read.

"I'm sure you had your reasons. But I'm just glad my brothers are fine—and she's safe," Emmet said, gently touching my arm as he motioned toward me.

I felt the gesture resonate deeply within me, and I swallowed hard.

Oh, I knew why.

He is my mate.

But not just him—his brother is my mate too.

I almost coughed at the memory of the dream. But then again, it was just a dream. What if it wasn't true?

"As for you, let me take you to the shelter," Emmet said, turning his attention back to me as he gestured toward his car.

I nodded, despite Norman's lingering glare, silently warning me not to get in the car with his brother. Ignoring his stare, I walked over to the vehicle.

Emmet exchanged a few words with Norman that I couldn't catch before he returned, holding his keys.

Unlike his brother, who made me sit in the back seat, Emmet opened the passenger door for me, and I calmly slid inside.

Once he started the engine, I found myself shifting uneasily in my seat.

"I was working for Maximus," I muttered, turning slightly toward him.

His hands gripped the steering wheel, the veins prominent under his skin, as he kept his eyes on the road.

"Norman told me," he mentioned, referring to the brief conversation they had before we got in the car.

"I have to be a part of this academy. I don't want to lose this opportunity," I rambled, wondering if Maximus had already fired me. I wouldn't be surprised if he had. I had caused complete chaos for them.

"I admire your ambition. As for the admission fee, don't worry about it. Don't worry about any money—I'll take care of it," Emmet said calmly, making my heart skip a beat.

"I don't want to be a burden on anyone. I'm not comfortable borrowing money from you or my mother," I repeated, voicing the same sentiment I'd expressed earlier.

"I wasn't lending you money. Think of it as your brothers' allowance," he replied, slowing down just enough to pass me a quick glance. Hearing him strictly call himself my brother was a bit hard since we were mates.

"No! I don't want that either. I want to work," I insisted again.

"Fine. How about this—you take the money for the admission now, and when you start earning, you can pay it back? How does that sound?" His tone was so reasonable that I felt foolish for continuing to refuse his help.

"That would work," I mumbled, relieved that he didn't follow up with anything to make me feel like I had given in too easily.

"Helanie, I've said it before, and I'll say it again—if you ever need help, you can come to me anytime." As he parked the car on the side of the road, his deep, husky voice softened. He wasn't using that tone to sound a certain way—that was just how he naturally spoke.

"I don't know why you're so different from your brothers, but your kindness surprises me," I admitted, feeling the need to tell him how much he'd helped me.

I took off my seatbelt and turned to him, not getting out yet, and he didn't seem in a rush either.

"And thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of the candidate list," I finally expressed my gratitude, something I should have done days ago. He unbuckled his seatbelt and turned to face me, his eyes carefully observing me.

"I don't want to upset you or make you feel bad, but you don't have a wolf. There will be four stages of the tests—two physical and two educational. You need to pass at least three of them. How do you plan to—" He paused, showing how thoughtful he was, even when stating the obvious.

"I honestly have no idea. But I know I'll give it my 100%," I said confidently, watching as a smile slowly formed on his lips.

"Then go ahead and give it your best shot. I want to see you in my class next week," he teased, making me laugh along with him.

Wow! I can laugh?

I shocked at the thought and immediately stopped. When was the last time I'd laughed like that?

Then my eyes drifted back to Emmet. He was so handsome—his long hair falling perfectly against his strong neck, his chiseled jawline, and his high cheekbones. He could easily make anyone's heart race.

"Now go, rest well, and be prepared for tomorrow," Emmet said, finally breaking eye contact and straightening his posture, focusing back on the steering wheel. I nodded, slowly got out, and gave him a quick wave before walking through the woods.

"You know you can be disqualified for trying to use one of the brothers to get into the academy."

The voice sounded familiar, but I didn't recognize it until I turned around.

"You!" I hissed, my eyes locking on his face, a flood of memories and anger blurring my vision.

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

Chapter 42-A Crazy Gang Bang!

Chapter 42: 42-A Crazy Gang Bang!

Helanie:

"Whoa! Easy there, why are you looking at me like you're about to kill me?" He raised his hands dramatically, pretending to surrender, though I knew it was just his way of mocking me.

"You knew if I participated in that kind of activity, I'd be disqualified, didn't you?" I hissed, a frown etched on my forehead, my eyes glaring at him.

He shrugged, adjusting his jacket with one hand before wrinkling his nose. "One less competitor."

"You're an asshole, Lamar," I muttered under my breath.

"Okay, fine. I heard what happened. You chickened out and escaped. Key word: escaped. So what's the big deal?" He sounded so nonchalant, as if the game he played with me didn't matter. Of course he didn't know that I ended up in my stepbrother's private room.

"Oh, so just because I didn't get caught, everything's fine?" I wanted to lash out, but he seemed too strong. I kept my hands to myself and maintained a safe distance.

"Hmm, you're acting like I meticulously picked you. You were desperate, and I thought, why not? It's not like I felt personally threatened by you. Others might, but you?" His voice dripped with sarcasm as he looked me over from head to toe.

What an arrogant jerk!

"You know what? Screw you!" I muttered, turning away to leave when he rushed after me.

"What were you doing in the car with Emmet McQuoid? Or should I ask, how did you convince him to sit with you? He's not someone who's easily persuaded," Lamar kept

rambling. One thing I'd learned in the past few days was that Emmet had a completely different reputation in other people's eyes.

To me, he was the easiest person to talk to. Or was he just like that with me? Could it be because he remembers that I'm his mate? But he always insists on the whole stepbrother thing. Ugh!

"You seem to have grown a backbone these last few days. I remember when you were so sweet and timid," Lamar laughed as he continued to follow me.

"And I thought you were a decent person. First impressions really aren't worth much, huh?" I rolled my eyes, even though he couldn't see my face.

"I was just trying to help you. Anyway, you still didn't answer my question. Where have you been all this time? And you're coming back with Emmet Mc—" He stopped mid-sentence when I swiftly turned to face him.

There was a nasty smirk on his lips as he licked them, staring at my face.

"Got a problem? Why don't you go ask Emmet yourself?" I shot him a tight-lipped smile, and I could tell he didn't like being outmatched.

His smirk instantly faded when mine appeared.

"Oh wait, you can't. You're scared of him. As for me hanging out with him, we're family. So stop annoying me about it," I warned, wagging a finger in his face before turning on my heel and walking away briskly.

I didn't hear any remarks from him after that. Soon, I arrived at the shelter where I had to deal with other people. Ugh. I was beginning to realize just how much I enjoyed being alone.

People can be so deceptive. They lure you into situations and emotions that are nothing but illusions.

"Oh, you're back. I thought you'd run away," Sydney stood beside her mattress, wiping off her makeup in front of the mirror. Her side of the wall was now fully decorated. She'd gotten far too comfortable and didn't hold back from flaunting her stuff.

Her sister, Salem, was already in bed, either sleeping or pretending to. Salem wasn't much of a talker.

I wished Sydney had taken after her.

Ignoring her, I headed straight to the bathroom.

"What a stuck-up bitch," Sydney muttered loud enough for me to hear. I stayed in the bathroom until I was done showering, trying to block out the annoyance. I didn't even have a uniform for the tests. I remembered Maimoxus mentioning it.

"Oh, crap!" I groaned, realizing it would be another problem to deal with in the exam ground tomorrow. When I came out, Sydney was already asleep, and Lamar had also dozed off.

"Hey," a soft *psst* caught my attention. I glanced over at the far end of the mattresses and saw a couple sitting together, enjoying food by the dim light of a cellphone.

"Come over here, we got you some food too," Lucy smiled warmly, her dimples making her look even more charming.

I reluctantly walked over to tell her I wasn't comfortable sitting with anyone new, but the sight of lasagna and sushi was enough to change my mind.

I was starving, and this food had come from the academy.

People in the past had deceived me with their false sweetness and fake kindness. Now, I am much more cautious.

"Come, sit with us," Lucy insisted, making room for me and serving a little bit of everything on my plate.

"Hey, I noticed you don't have anything to wear. Why don't you try one of Lucy's tracksuits? She brought a few extra. You can use them," Gavin suggested, sliding a folded tracksuit in my direction.

"Yes, please. I don't mind sharing," Lucy added, flashing her signature dimples.

I wasn't sure why they were being so kind to me. I wasn't used to people offering me anything out of nowhere. But they seemed so sweet and not evil. I watched the help, and then felt a little tug in my heart.

"Thank you," I managed to say, choking on the tears I was trying to hold back. I didn't want them to see me cry, so I made it seem like nothing was wrong. I sat with them in silence, eating while they giggled and laughed over each other's silly memories.

They were so full of life.

After we finished, I headed to my bed, hoping to get a good night's sleep and wake up refreshed. But before I could, my mind was left spinning.

"Ahmm!"

I woke up to the sound of someone moaning outside the shelter. It was strange because everyone else was still sound asleep.

Who could be out there, having the time of their life? And why outside our shelter?

I counted heads—all the candidates were in their spots. Cautiously, I made my way outside.

It was so cold outside that my skin began to turn red, and I was sure my cheeks were flushed crimson too. The hair on the back of my neck stood on end. But even the biting cold couldn't prepare me for the shock I was about to experience as I left the shelter.

As I stood in the opened door, what I saw made my heart stop.

It was the four brothers.

They were all naked, and it felt like I was witnessing something I shouldn't be. A ritual of some sort but it was not a ritual. A girl was on all fours. Emmet was lying on the ground while she rode him, Norman taking her from behind. Kaye had his length in her mouth while she clutched Maximus' soldier in her hand.

"Ah!" I gasped, the worst shock hitting me like a punch to the chest when I recognized who the girl was.

It was me!

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

Chapter 43-The First Round

Chapter 43: 43-The First Round

Helanie:

I shook myself awake, but the nightmare seemed to have scarred me for a lifetime. Very soon, my mother would officially be marked and married to the father of the men I had dreamt of having a gangbang with.

I shook my head again while showering. I didn't dream of it—it just happened to become part of my nightmare.

Instead of getting a restful night, I ended up waking and falling back asleep multiple times. I wanted to wake up feeling refreshed, but instead, I woke with overwhelming guilt. It felt like, subconsciously, I must have thought the brothers were very attractive.

But then there was Norman.

He was handsome—extremely handsome—but I hated him with every inch of my being. There was no way I would dream of him like that.

After slipping into the brown tracksuit Lucy had given me, I left the bathroom to find everyone ready to go.

"Let me braid your hair," Lucy smiled warmly. She was so kind, with her beautiful hazel eyes that had a hint of violet in them.

Her pixie-cut black hair made her look even more adorable, especially when she tied it up into two small pigtails.

She sat behind me and started braiding my hair while I noticed Sydney and Salem exchanging looks, silently communicating with each other. As always, the two were dressed impeccably. Salem's black sports bra and waist up black leggings complemented her sharp features, while Sydney's pink chrome leggings and deep V top made her look ethereal.

Lamar sat comfortably with a smirk on his face. He knew I was still annoyed with him, and I wondered how I would perform in today's training.

"Hey, don't stress. I'm sure you'll do just fine," Lucy reassured me, adjusting my hair and helping me stand.

I had never had friends who were so gentle with me. Lucy being so polite and kind felt a little unusual. I wanted to trust her kindness and believe she genuinely wanted to be my friend. But then, my eyes kept drifting to Lamar and Sydney, and I couldn't help but wonder—what if Lucy turns out to be just like them?

We all stood in line outside our shelter, waiting. The awkward silence made me feel uneasy. We were told to stay there until we were called. There were other shelters and many other candidates participating, but I had heard that ours was the last group of the session for today's tests.

"Listen, no matter what, don't give up, okay?" I felt a light tug on my shirt and turned to see Gavin, who was holding his girlfriend's hand to get her attention as well.

"As long as you make it to the final line, you're fine. You'll only be disqualified if you don't return before midnight. Sure, you might lose the test, but at least you won't be disqualified. You'll just finish last, and if there are others who also finish last from other

sessions, you'll all be grouped together. That way, you still have a chance to win if you do better in the other tests," Gavin whispered, giving us a helpful insight.

"So, giving up isn't an option," Lucy echoed, nodding to herself as I bobbed my head softly in agreement.

After a few more minutes, we saw the brothers arrive and quickly formed a line, standing side by side.

"Welcome, everyone," Norman approached first, making me secretly clench my jaw. He was wearing a gray shirt, his muscles straining against the fabric of his rolled-up sleeves. He was broad and bulky—pure muscle and arrogance. Sometimes, I wondered if he looked at others and thought to himself, 'What a peasant!'

"I hope you're all ready for the first test," Maximus said, his gaze sweeping across the group. I could have sworn his eyes lingered on me for just a moment too long. He was dressed in a blue shirt, neatly buttoned and tucked into black pants, with his sleeves rolled up. He held some papers in his hand, likely a score sheet.

"Ahem!" Emmet cleared his throat as he arrived, wearing a white shirt that was half-tucked into his pants, the other half hanging out. His long hair was pulled into a bun, with a few loose strands framing his face.

I expected him to say something, but he remained silent.

I felt a twinge of discomfort when Kaye joined the group. Dressed in all black, he stood with his brothers but didn't say a word.

"This is the first round, and it's all about stamina," Maximus announced, oddly focusing on me as he said the word. "You'll run 20 miles and return to this spot. Follow the white track markers and make sure you arrive before midnight. Anyone who finishes last will be considered fail."

My heart began to race in my chest. I glanced around and noticed Sydney growling, already hyped up to win the race. Salem looked equally excited. Everyone seemed eager—except for me.

"And no one is allowed to shift. You can rely on your wolf's strength, but you must remain in your human form throughout the race," Norman added in a stern voice, his gaze filled with arrogance as it swept over the group.

"Now, everyone, prepare yourselves," Maximus instructed, stepping aside with his brothers. Anxiety churned in my stomach.

There was no way I could beat any of them. I wasn't even sure I could make it to the finish line. Compared to the others, I was just a human. Nervously rubbing my palms together, my eyes landed on Emmet. I noticed he was already looking at me.

Our eyes met without any expression at first, but then he gave me a small, reassuring nod, and I found myself smiling slightly. He looked so comforting. That simple nod was enough to give me a sliver of strength.

"Go!" Maximus waved the papers and stepped back, turning to speak with his brothers.

The moment the race began, everyone burst into motion, their feet pounding against the rocky trail with powerful, confident strides. I followed, my steps awkward and unsteady as I tried to find a rhythm, though it felt forced rather than natural. For a brief moment, I dared to hope that maybe I could keep up. But that hope quickly faded.

It wasn't long before I realized how far behind I had fallen. The gap between me and the others widened with every painful step. My legs were the first to betray me, a dull ache creeping in, slowing me down as they surged ahead. My heart pounded loudly, the sound echoing in my temples, a constant reminder of how hard my body was fighting just to keep moving.

Still, I kept going. The ache in my muscles grew into a sharp burn, but I refused to stop. My breaths came in ragged, shallow gasps, yet I pushed on. The trail twisted ahead, but when I glanced up, all I saw was empty space—the others were long gone, not a single person in sight. The silence of the mountain weighed on me, hinting at the loneliness of being so far behind.

"Ah!" I groaned, frustration and exhaustion mingling in my voice as I glanced up at the sky. Dark clouds loomed, slowly devouring the blue, casting shadows over the path. The storm brewing in the distance seemed almost like a curse. It was clear now what the outcome of this race would be, but even with that certainty sinking in, I couldn't bring myself to stop. Not yet.

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

Chapter 44-Maybe I Did It

Chapter 44: 44-Maybe I Did It

Helanie:

I wasn't sure how long I had been running. Time had blurred, and the pain in my chest struck me sharply. At least, I assumed it was my lungs—it was hard to tell anymore. My whole torso burned, forcing me to slow down. I could hear my muscles cry for help. My bones were cracking too. At one point, my mouth was so dry that I stopped entirely just to lick my lips to moisten them.

Not that I had been moving quickly to begin with. I just needed a break, a moment to catch my breath. Winning? That hope had already slipped away. Now, all I wanted was to finish. Just cross the finish line and make it to the meeting point.

I sank to the ground, my legs trembling beneath me. Each breath escaped in ragged gasps as I tilted my head back, stretching my neck. A single raindrop splashed on my face. I wasn't sure if it was a blessing or a curse. Rain would only make things more difficult. The ground would turn slick, and the cold would creep in. Still, it had been over an hour already, and I should have covered most of the distance. But I hadn't even reached three miles yet. Three miles. My heart sank.

I felt so weak. I had never been active, never trained for something like this. Doing chores around the house wasn't remotely the same as actual physical exertion. What was I thinking? After a few more deep breaths, I forced myself to stand. I couldn't stay here forever. I had to keep moving.

The race had started late because the other candidates from different shelters had to be examined first. I had no idea how many of them had passed or how many had been disqualified. What if... what if I was the only one left? The thought crept into my mind like a shadow, filling me with a deep sense of dread. What if I failed too? What if I was the last one standing, and I couldn't even finish?

The weight of it all made my chest feel even tighter, as if I were being crushed from the inside. I wanted to collapse. I wanted to scream. My legs felt like they might give out at any second, and it didn't help that the world was growing darker. The night seemed to be swallowing me whole, and with it, every ounce of hope I had left.

Could I even make it twenty miles by midnight? Doubt swirled in my mind. The dark path ahead felt like it was closing in on me. Fear gnawed at me. I wasn't the only one who would be terrified—many would give up simply because of the shadows lurking in the woods. This race was as much a test of courage as it was of endurance.

I glanced down at the red smoke bomb they'd given me. It was my escape, my signal to quit if things became too overwhelming. My fingers hovered over it, tempted to pull the pin and end this nightmare. But then I shook my head, withdrawing my hand as the memory of their smug faces resurfaced. The ones who had laughed, doubted me, said I wouldn't make it.

"I can't give up," I muttered through gritted teeth. Frustration, anger—it all surged inside me, driving me forward. I wasn't going to let them win. Not like this.

By the time I was back on my feet, I was already drenched in sweat, though the rain quickly washed it away. Moving was a struggle, but I kept going. Finally, after many long hours, I could see the finish line. Lanterns lit the path, and warriors stood beside the brothers, holding umbrellas over their heads. I took a deep breath and lifted my gaze, seeing the area ahead deserted. The others must have been sent back to the shelter. The brothers were standing just outside the shelter's grounds—the same place they had used to lecture us earlier that morning.

I reached the finish line and collapsed onto my knees, wheezing like crazy. The crowd remained silent as Norman stepped forward, crouching beside me. The warrior shifted the umbrella, ensuring the rain didn't dare touch the rogue king's son.

"And you think you deserve to be part of the academy?" Norman asked, lifting my chin so I had to meet his gaze.

"I finished," I corrected him, breathless.

"Last! You failed. That's not finishing," he sneered, wrinkling his nose in disgust. His aura was menacing, his narrowed eyes drilling into mine, daring me to challenge him. In that moment, I felt a surge of anger, not just at him, but at myself—for not winning this race.

"It was only twenty miles. Even those who finish last don't take this long. This has never happened before until now—you've set a new low," Norman continued, while his brothers stood silently behind him. I kept glaring into his eyes, refusing to look away.

Just then, Emmet finished a phone call and walked over. "Helanie! That was impressive. I'm glad you didn't give up. Keep pushing forward, you have potential." His words hit my ears like music.

I glanced from Norman to Emmet, noticing the prideful smile on Emmet's face.

Norman clicked his tongue in irritation, took a deep breath, and then walked off toward Maximus and Kaye. Emmet was different from them.

"But I failed," I said, sitting up, my back straight. I watched as Emmet gestured to the warrior to hold the umbrella over my head instead. He didn't care that his suit was getting soaked, which wasn't ideal since the heavy rain instantly drenched him, making his white shirt almost see-through. He had tossed his coat aside earlier, so now I could practically see the outline of his muscles. There were tattoos on his body, but I couldn't make them out clearly.

"You still have three more tests to go. Besides, the ones who finished last from other groups are in the same position as you. So, if you pass the next tests—and hopefully excel in one or two—you're in," he reassured me, his tone surprisingly kind. His deep, heavy voice might make someone think he was harsh, but he wasn't.

"Just head inside and rest. Tomorrow is the intelligence test, and I'm sure you'll pass with flying colors." He didn't even look at me as he spoke; his eyes were fixed on the sky above.

He was kind, a different kind of kind. I wasn't even sure if he realized how much his words meant to me.

"Really?" I asked, and he nodded, a warm smile spreading across his face.

"Just have faith in yourself. Look at what you accomplished today. It was a tough challenge, and you did it. I'm sure you can achieve anything if you put your heart into it," he said, gently pressing a finger toward my chest. He didn't actually touch me, but it felt like his words had reached my heart.

Then, without another word, he stood and walked away to rejoin his brothers. But I continued to watch him, wondering why I felt an odd connection with him—a mate bond, perhaps?

And then my gaze shifted to Kaye, who quickly looked away, almost as if he had been caught watching me.

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

Chapter 45-Witnessing A Sin

Chapter 45: 45-Witnessing A Sin

Helanie:

I stepped into the shelter, drenched and with my head down. However, sudden cheers erupted, and before I knew it, Lucy was jumping towards me.

"I'm so glad you made it!" She hugged me tightly, and as much as I wanted to share her happiness, I couldn't.

"Congratulations," Gavin called out from across the room, offering me a smile. They had already changed. I guessed Sydney was the last one still in the bathroom.

Salem sat comfortably against the wall, wearing a purple dress, her attention focused on her phone.

"So, Helanie—twenty miles? Seriously?" Salem finally spoke, her voice dripping with sarcasm. She shot me a condescending look before scoffing at Lucy for acting as though I had won a medal.

She wasn't wrong, though. There was no reason for us to be celebrating this. I was last and felt like I had died a thousand times just trying to cross the finish line.

"Don't listen to her," Lucy whispered in my ear.

I hadn't seen anyone argue with the twins, and I could easily guess why.

Nobody wanted to deal with a bully.

"The water was so refreshing," Sydney remarked as she walked out, drying her hair with a towel that she carelessly tossed onto my mattress before heading to hers.

"Oh, Helanie! Gosh, you actually made it. I was so worried about you! I was like—wow! I used to run twenty miles when I was just a kid. And here's this grown woman struggling to finish!" Yep, that was Sydney's way of mocking me. She was more subtle about it than her sister.

"Oh, by the way, do you know who won?" she giggled, doing a little shoulder shimmy. "Me!" She pointed a finger at her chest, and my faint smile quickly vanished.

Not only were they blessed with a good family, luxuries, a powerful pack, and beauty—but also strength?

"That's because you two sisters were clawing at anyone who tried to pass you," Lamar said, taking off his hat to reveal his scratched-up face.

I nearly gasped, but Sydney merely straightened her posture, unfazed by her own actions.

"You came at me first. You were checking me out, mister," she accused, pointing her fake acrylic nails at him, the pink design glinting under the light.

"Huh? I wasn't checking you out! I was trying to pass you, and you didn't like it. Imagine if I had shown the same aggression," he retorted, almost lunging at her. Sydney narrowed her eyes at him, fists clenched tightly. Her nails must have been digging crescent marks into her palms.

But she was so confident in her strength, I wondered if her wolf was as powerful as she seemed to think.

And that's when I began to recall Norman's words.

These are what the candidates look like. How well-trained and strong will the students at the academy be?

Am I getting ahead of myself by even applying to this academy? But then, how else would I get my revenge?

"Step back, Baldie. You mess with my sister, you mess with me."

Salem's voice was calm but filled with menace as she delivered the threat from where she sat. Her skin began to turn a faint purple, a warning of what she was capable of. Her wolf must have been ready to surface.

"I'm not scared of two Barbie dolls. You want a fight? Meet me in the backyard after midnight," Lamar sneered, brushing past Sydney and nearly knocking her with his shoulder. She cursed under her breath but didn't retaliate.

"Go change, or you'll catch a cold," Lucy quickly urged, gently pushing me towards the bathroom before Sydney could focus on me again.

Once inside, I peeled off my tracksuit and quickly washed it, hoping it would dry by morning. I wasn't sure it would, especially since it was still raining outside.

After taking a shower, I returned to my mattress and lay down, staring at the ceiling. I didn't have the appetite to eat anything.

So many thoughts and memories kept swirling in my mind. After a few minutes, I began to doze off, only to wake up past midnight with my stomach growling, begging for food.

"Ugh!" I groaned, curling up and trying to ignore it, but the toll of those ten miles had caught up with me. My back ached, my legs were cramping, and my whole body felt weak. I wondered what it must feel like to have an active wolf.

Why wasn't I given one? The Moon Goddess had granted me these pheromones without hesitation, so why not a wolf?

I realized if I stayed lying there, ignoring my hunger, I'd spiral into yet another angry rant against the Moon Goddess.

I just wanted to grab something to eat and go back to sleep.

I quietly slipped out of my mattress, careful not to disturb the others. The shelter was dark, and I made my way to the backyard. The rain had eased, but it was still coming down steadily.

I silently wished for clear skies by morning. Emmet mentioned tomorrow would be an intelligence test, and he expected me to excel. Or maybe he just said that to make me feel better?

I guess I'd never know.

Yawning and rubbing my eyes, I made my way to the kitchen. But before I could reach for the door, I realized it was already wide open.

What I saw inside was a sight I did not want to witness.

I remembered Lamar challenging Sydney to a fight earlier. Well, it seemed they had decided to settle their differences in a very different kind of "battle."

Sydney was sitting on the counter, with Lamar standing between her legs, his dick going in and out of her in a rough manner. His hands roamed freely on her naked body, biting her nipples while she moaned, and her fingers gripped his back, pulling him closer as their bodies moved in sync.

"Faster," she whispered, leaning back, her eyes half-closed, urging him on. He responded with a hard lick of her tit, his lips trailing around her areolas.

Their movements grew more intense as she demanded more from him, and with a swift turn, he positioned her differently, turning her around on the counter and smacking her ass hard. The kitchen was thick with tension, their voices low but filled with urgency.

"You want it rough?" Lamar muttered under his breath, his tone dark and challenging as he tightened his grip on her hair, his hand lightly slapping her asscheek yet again.

Sydney responded with a breathless moan, her body arching into him as she whispered, "I like that," a satisfied smirk playing on her lips.

That's when I instinctively stepped back, and the floorboard beneath me creaked. The sound shattered their moment, freezing them in place. Slowly, their heads turned toward me, expressions shifting as they realized they were no longer alone.

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

Chapter 46-Thrown Away!

Chapter 46: 46-Thrown Away!

Helanie:

I clenched my fists in anxiety, stepping back, unable to tear my gaze away from them. I could tell they weren't pleased to see me standing there.

Quickly, I turned to leave, but a commotion behind me stopped me in my tracks. As I hurried, I slipped on the slick steps and nearly landed on my butt. However, I didn't hit the ground.

Lamar had grabbed me from behind. I didn't know how he reached me so fast, but the distance was short.

"Where do you think you're going?" he muttered in my ear, pulling me back into the kitchen and slamming the door shut.

He tossed me across the room, my body flying and landing lightly, like a feather.

Sydney was hastily pulling on her pink gown while Lamar finished adjusting his pants. He didn't bother to button his shirt, revealing his abs.

"So, you ruined our fun, huh?" Lamar sneered, cracking his knuckles, looking disturbingly unhinged.

"I was just looking for... food," I mumbled, keeping my head down, avoiding eye contact in an attempt not to provoke them.

"Well, consider yourself lucky tonight because you found more than just a snack," he snickered, his fingers slowly and deliberately tracing his abs, his voice dripping with arrogance.

"I'll just go back to the shelter," I said, trying to stand up, but the way Sydney shoved Lamar from behind made it clear I wasn't supposed to move.

"What? You want her to join us?" Lamar joked, glancing at Sydney while she grunted. She hadn't even looked me in the eye the whole time.

"She saw us! She's going to tell everyone I was messing around with you in this run-down kitchen," Sydney hissed, her voice rising before she caught herself, lowering it to avoid waking anyone in the shelter.

I doubted that would happen.

"So, what do you want me to do about it?" Lamar rolled his eyes at her, placing his hands on his hips. They both stood in front of the door, making sure I didn't move.

"I won't tell anyone. I don't gossip," I quickly assured her, genuinely meaning it. I had no intention of spreading rumors. But she shook her head furiously.

"No! I won't let her walk through the hallways and give me that look, like 'Oh, I know your secret,'" she said dramatically, shrugging her shoulders, trying to paint me as some kind of nosy gossip.

"But I wouldn't. And why would anyone believe me, even if I did say something?" I asked, confused about what she was trying to accomplish by keeping me here. It wasn't like she could make me forget, so what was she really up to?

"Lamar, you don't get it. If she says anything, everyone will start watching us. Anytime we talk or meet, they'll assume something's going on," Sydney folded her arms across her chest, hinting at some hidden paranoia behind her words.

"I'll walk out of here and never mention it. I have secrets too, I know what it's like to keep them," I said, my voice trembling. My entire body was shaking; their stares were terrifying. I couldn't tell what was running through their heads, but it wasn't good. Sydney seemed determined to convince Lamar that I would go out and spread the news of their encounter.

"Fine. What do you want me to do?" Lamar finally understood her silent plea, and that's when I knew I had to act quickly.

I sprang to my feet, rushing towards the door. My plan was simple: shove them out of the way and escape. But I didn't make it far.

"No! Don't!" A hand grabbed my hair, yanking me back with brutal force. I fell onto my back, wincing in pain as Lamar loomed over me, shaking his head. He crouched down, resting his hands on his knees while Sydney stood tall beside him, her expression cold and calculating.

"Make sure she doesn't take part in the rest of the tests so she gets disqualified and kicked out of the program. I don't want her in my academy, spreading rumors," Sydney demanded, and I was in shock. I couldn't believe what she was asking.

"There's only one way to make sure of that," Lamar said, straightening his back with a sigh.

"I know. Let's mess her up," Sydney sneered, and before I could react, she kicked me hard in the stomach.

"You're crazy!" I screamed, but it didn't matter. The next thing I knew, they were both on me, kicking and punching relentlessly. I tried to defend myself, flailing my arms to fight back, but it was no use. Their blows kept landing until darkness began to close in on me.

It wasn't fair. They didn't even give me a chance to call for help. It all happened so fast that I couldn't even fight back—not that I could have overpowered them anyway.

But I couldn't land a single punch.

I wondered if they planned to kill me. But why? It wasn't that big of a secret, and it's not like anyone would believe me without proof.

My whole body ached, and I was barely conscious when I felt myself being lifted and carried.

"Dump her far away. We just need to make sure she misses today's test. She'll be off the list and never allowed near the academy again," I heard Sydney whisper as I was placed in the backseat of a car.

I could feel blood trickling from my nose and lips. My eyes were so swollen that I could barely open them.

"We should've just given her wolfsbane and let her sleep through the day. Why did you have to ruin such a pretty face?" Lamar complained as the car started moving. I had no idea where they were taking me.

I desperately wanted to get up and fight back, but my life was far from a perfect dream.

"Pretty face? Then why didn't you beg her for her dry vagina instead of fucking me?" Sydney shot back, her voice laced with bitterness. Lamar let out a teasing laugh in response.

They were having a casual conversation, as if they weren't in the middle of committing a crime. After what felt like forever, the car came to a stop, and I felt myself being lifted out again.

Lamar slung me over his shoulder, carrying me down a dark, rough path. When he finally set me down, he slapped my cheek lightly to wake me up.

"Sorry, you should've minded your own business. I really can't afford to lose my connections with the higher-ups," he muttered before shoving me forcefully. My body rolled down a steep hill, the thorns and jagged rocks tearing into my skin. I landed at the bottom, barely able to keep my eyes open before losing consciousness completely.

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

Chapter 47-The Broken Brother Bond

Chapter 47: 47-The Broken Brother Bond

Maximus:

"She is so dull and foolish," I commented as I entered the mansion with my brothers. It was raining heavily, so we had informed the maids to prepare soups and other meals for us. We planned to spend some quality time as a family.

"I wonder how everyone feels about our academy giving a chance to a wolf-less creature like her?" I continued, noticing Norman fixing his shirt, which made me wonder if he had a plan.

"I have already taken care of it," he shrugged, stepping onto the terrace where a beautiful gazebo awaited us. The weather was pleasant now. It was still raining, but it only added to the beauty of the night.

Emmet had been left behind, and I knew what he was doing before arriving here. The three of us sat down, watching the maids serve us delicious food just as Emmet showed up.

"I didn't let anyone know about each candidate from the shelters this year. They are completely in the dark about who is joining and who isn't. So when she gets rejected, she will be out of our lives, and no one will know our admission criteria dropped so significantly," Norman quickly explained before Emmet reached us. He had three bottles of wine in his hands, looking all smiles and cheerful.

"But this happy drinker over here had promised to pay for her admission fee. If he hadn't been so generous, she would have been out by now," I complained, noticing how Emmet didn't even pay attention to my words as he sat down and focused on the bottles first.

"Hey, not tonight. Enjoy the feast with us first, and then we'll all drink together," Norman reached for his hand and shook his head, his eyes meeting our brother's gaze, who nodded steadily before leaning back away from the alcohol.

"But—have you guys ever wondered what might be making her so desperate that she wants to become part of the academy where she will only get bullied for having no wolf?" Kaye's statement really surprised me.

I guess we had promised we wouldn't even want to focus on her life. Our only goal would be to send her back from where she had come.

And then I remembered how Kaye acted when he returned from sharing his dream. He had been very silent and didn't comment much whenever Helanie's topic was brought up.

"Once she is in the academy?" Norman let out a laugh, his large frame looming over the table as he started on the entrée.

"She will never get to be a part of the academy. Not just because we don't want her to be, but because she cannot pass these tests. You saw how terribly she performed in the first test, right? I thought she wouldn't even make it by midnight. And I will tell you what she is thinking. She believes that if she gets into the academy, she will tell everyone she is the stepdaughter of the rogue king and the stepsister of the academy trainers and will be treated differently. But she is mistaken. I will never let her take advantage of our hard work." Norman filled his mouth with cheese tarts, looking very pleased with the taste of the food.

"But she did reach the finish line. And that's what matters the most. She doesn't have a wolf, yet she is so determined. I really don't understand why you brothers are so against the idea of your own stepsister doing well in her life?" I knew Emmet would say something completely ridiculous.

I just didn't understand why we had to sit with this drunkard and talk about important issues when he never acted like a family member or thought like one. If we hated someone, shouldn't he hate them too?

"Yeah, like we would pay attention to what you say," I grunted under my breath, earning a head shake from Norman.

"I mean—," Kaye cleared his throat, his fingers dripping in sauce as he picked up a dumpling, "what if it's something else? She—um—might be dealing with some issues." The brother who never thought twice before speaking his mind was now stuttering.

I raised my eyes and glanced at Norman, who was looking back at me. We understood each other very well. We were communicating with our eyes, already grasping what was going on. Whoever spends time with her starts to feel something for her—either sympathy or maybe something else. Is she a witch or something?

I wanted to argue with Kaye and tell him that everyone is going through something in life. The omegas mainly, so why should we give Helanie so much privilege?

"Alright. Let's talk about our own bigger issues. She shouldn't be a topic of our important discussions," Norman straightened his back, no longer hunched over the food, and gestured to Emmet to pour us all a glass.

"Umm! I will not drink much tonight," Kaye scratched his neck, his eyes squinting slightly as he avoided making eye contact with us. This was not good. I was worried about my brother.

"Why not? Are you going somewhere?" I inquired, and he steadily shook his head.

"I'll just sleep. I don't feel like staying awake," he replied. He had been so different ever since he returned. I heard these were signs of stress and worry of returning from the dream prison. That damn girl had really messed up my brother's head. But why the heck was she not showing any signs of trauma from the dream prison? It was her dream prison, and she spent time there; how come she was fine?

"Sure, whatever feels right," Norman said, not even looking at Kaye as he patted his back. After we had one drink, Emmet and Kaye left to do their own things. This had never happened before.

When we sat down like this, we talked and cherished these moments for hours, sometimes even until dawn. We knew we had fairly busy lives, so whenever we got a chance, we really made the most of it.

"Something is up with him," Norman sniffled, staring at the wine glass in his hand. I could tell my brother did not expect Emmet and Kaye to leave our meeting like that.

"Do you think—maybe—" I shifted uncomfortably in my seat, "Helanie is doing something to them?" I didn't want to say it outright, but I had a very bad gut feeling that she was responsible for how distant our brothers were becoming.

"Hope not," there was a clear warning in Norman's eyes as he finished his drink.

"We should head back to our rooms too." The disappointment and sadness in Norman's gaze really upset me. He had done so much for us, so my brothers leaving this family meetup really hurt him. He walked over to me, bent down, and gave me a kiss on the head before parting ways. He had never been just our brother; he always took care of us as if he were our father.

"I am going to confront that cunning girl tonight," and that's when I couldn't hold it in any longer. I got up to go grab Helanie out of her shelter and make her answer my questions.

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

Chapter 48-Her Scent Of Blood

Chapter 48: 48-Her Scent Of Blood

Maximus:

I drove to the shelter, not keeping the time or the rain in mind. Since Kaye refused to talk about Helanie's perfect dream, I wanted to ask her myself. Something must have happened in that dream prison that changed Kaye so much. He looked so lost.

"I have a very bad feeling about this. What will you even say when calling her out of the shelter at this time of night?" Xim questioned, showing his reluctance to support my idea of confronting her.

"I will say we brothers decided to ask her one last time if she still wants to be part of the tests after what happened—" I paused mid-sentence, "I'll just make up some excuse. It's not like anyone can dare to ask me any questions."

I was growing impatient; my veins felt like they were about to explode. Why wouldn't Kaye want to talk about what happened in the dream prison? Did he really not remember anything like he claimed? If that were true, then why the change of heart?

Once I reached the road where we parked our cars to head toward the shelter, I sighed and remained in my seat. The way my two brothers had changed worried me. Emmet and Kaye were the most dangerous people anyone could come into contact with. Emmet had spent many years of his life showing no feelings or emotions to anyone around him, and Kaye simply hated everyone. If they could be convinced by her stupid games, then I was a very weak person when it came to women.

"Just think—we cannot do anything with her because she is our stepsister," Xim spoke up, voicing what I wasn't saying out loud.

"Of course I'm not tempted by her," I felt offended that he even brought it up. But was it a lie?

Suddenly, a flashback of us washing my car together came to mind. I remembered when her dress became see-through, revealing her bra. It was so difficult to look away from her. If she weren't my stepsister, I would have ripped her clothes off and chewed that bra off to suck her nipples—

"No, no, no! She is my stepsister!" I instantly yelled in my car, taking deep breaths.

"She is taking over everyone's heart," my wolf shocked me when he phrased it that way.

"Not mine," I refused to believe that and got out of the car to confront her. As I marched down the dark trail, I prepared my questions in my head. Once outside the shelter, I watched it stand tall. All the students had their cars and bikes parked on the road except for Helanie. She had nothing. I walked over to the shelter and knocked on the door.

I expected everyone to be fast asleep, but it was surprising how quickly Sydney opened the door. I recognized her because she was the first one to cross the line the other day.

"Maximus McQuoid?" Her eyes grew wide, and her lips quickly rubbed together to look presentable. She ran her fingers through her wet hair and then smiled widely.

Did she just take a shower, or was she out in the rain?

"You must have a candidate here who was last in yesterday's test? What is her name—"
"I pretended to think, even though it would sound strange that I arrived at this time to speak to a candidate, "Helanie."

Sydney raised her brow, checking me out from head to toe.

"Can I see her?" I asked, trying to appear confident.

"Umm, she left," she shrugged, and no matter how hard I tried to hide my surprise, I couldn't. My jaw dropped. I quickly cleared my throat and adjusted my jacket, trying to process her statement.

"What do you mean by she left?" I questioned her.

Sydney came from a wealthy background. I had always seen her wear branded clothes from the admissions to the test day. But today, she wore something less appealing.

Her confidence was shaken, which shouldn't have been the case since she came first in yesterday's race. My eyes thoroughly examined her body language; she was shaking, either from the cold or nervousness.

"I don't know. She was crying a lot that —she let everyone down by coming last. We tried to comfort her and told her that it wasn't the case and that she should at least try, but she refused. She said she was wasting her time and that she didn't even have money for the main admission," Sydney yapped on until she finished, then took a deep breath, almost as if she were trying to calm herself down.

"Huh? Really? She left?" I tilted my head, examining her as she nodded again.

"Okay. I came here to talk to her myself. I thought I could try to convince her not to be a part of this academy and save her money—" However, just when I was trying to clarify why I had come, I focused on my own words.

She didn't pay a dime. She wasn't going to pay either. Emmet had already informed her that he had paid for her entry and had even promised her admission fee.

"Oh, well, she saved you the trouble," Sydney kept holding the door a little too tightly.

"Okay, have a good night, and best of luck for tomorrow." I didn't stick around and quickly turned to leave. I heard her close the door, but I wasn't satisfied with her reasoning. Helanie quit? That girl was crazy stubborn.

"Do you smell something?" Xim uttered, causing my body to freeze in my steps. "It smells like blood in here."

My body twitched at my wolf's words. I looked around and took a few steps toward the backyard when I found one of the candidates cleaning the kitchen.

"You're cleaning the kitchen in the rain?" I asked the guy, making him jump in shock. He turned around and smiled awkwardly, clearly not expecting me to arrive. He was Lamar, the one with sketchy actions and background. He was in my mind and I planned to keep a close eye on him once he is in the academy.

"We went a little crazy and spilled all the marinara sauce here," he let out a nervous laugh, making me glance around the kitchen. He was really going at it with the mop.

His shirtless body seemed tense, and if he thought he could fool me with the fresh scent of blood and call it marinara sauce, he was mistaken.

"Okay, good job," I patted his shoulder, walking out of the kitchen and heading straight to my car.

"We need to find Helanie," I told my wolf with determination. Something happened here tonight, and I wouldn't rest until I found Helanie and ensured she left on her own, just like Sydney said she did.

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

Chapter 49-Cradled In My Arms

Chapter 49: 49-Cradled In My Arms

Maximus:

Rain pounded against the windshield as I gripped the steering wheel, my eyes scanning the dark road ahead. The wipers struggled to keep pace, but I barely noticed. I couldn't get my interaction with Lamar and Sydney out of my head.

'They were lying,' my wolf caught on and I hissed under my breath. The strange thing was that I felt incredibly odd. I quickly checked my messages from Norman and realized the next full moon was in exactly four days. It made sense.

My chest tightened, but not just from frustration. A dull ache spread through my body, a warning I couldn't ignore. My muscles were tense, and my joints burned as if I'd been running for miles. The full moon was still four days away, but the pull was already there, making every movement harder and heavier. That's what happens every full moon.

Tonight, however, I felt as if I could sense Helanie's scent. That was peculiar. I didn't typically respond well to the scents or odors of living beings. Something was amiss.

My chest constricted. I had left the windows open to keep my focus on the aroma, as it had somehow become my greatest power tonight.

I floored the gas. The tires skidded on the slick road, but I didn't care. I had to find her.

'I just have a very bad feeling about this,' I knew I wasn't freaking out over nothing.

The scent grew stronger as I drove deeper into the mountains. I couldn't shake the feeling—she was close, and someone had harmed her. My gut twisted with anger and concern.

Recalling Sydney's words only made me feel more uneasy. Could it be that those two had done something to her? There was no way.

They were going to be students at our prestigious academy; they wouldn't do something so reckless and jeopardize their futures. Rain hammered on the roof, a steady, maddening rhythm. I followed Helanie's scent as best as I could, but it kept fading in and out, swallowed by the storm. I slammed the brakes as the road split ahead, the tires skidding on the wet gravel.

Left or right?

I growled in frustration, trying to concentrate, but the rain was washing her scent away. I turned left, hoping for a breakthrough. After a mile, the road ended abruptly, leading to nothing but dense trees and mud.

"Damn it!" I slammed my fist against the steering wheel.

"Calm down. Remember, it's just Helanie?" Xim noticed my agitation and quickly tried to remind me that if she had left, it would be good for us.

"I don't understand. Why the heck are you looking for her? Sydney said she left. Isn't that what we brothers wanted? Weren't you worried about Kaye?" I hated it whenever Xim referred to Kaye as just my brother and not his.

This was what Xim did whenever the full moon was approaching; hence, I avoided him. I reversed, trying the other road. For a moment, I caught her scent again, stronger this time—then nothing. Another dead end.

Then another wave of pain surged through my body, making me bite my bottom lip. I gritted my teeth, trying to shake it off. I didn't have time for this. Helanie was out there—hurt, afraid. I couldn't let the pain slow me down. Not now.

I slammed the wheel and turned the car around again, battling the stiffness in my arms. The tires skidded as I rounded the bend, and then I slammed the brakes. I just had a feeling she was here.

I closed my eyes and tried to focus on anything but the rain. Then I heard a soft whimper.

"Ah!" It was filled with pain and misery.

I jumped out of my car, drenched by the rain, and looked around, reaching a slope where the whimpers grew stronger. I hastily grabbed my phone and turned on my flashlight to look down.

There she was.

At first, I barely recognized her through the blur of rain and darkness. Her small form lay at the bottom of a slope, struggling, barely moving. She was trying to crawl up—her fingers digging into the mud, her body shaking. Even in this state, with wounds painting her skin red, she was still fighting.

A whimper broke through the storm, faint but desperate. It tore through me, sharp as a blade. I was in disbelief. How the hell did this happen?

It was also proof that Lamar and Sydney lied.

Did the candidates do something to her? Of course, the smell of blood in the kitchen was similar to the scent of blood on Helanie.

"Helanie!" As soon as I yelled her name, I watched her slowly raise her head, and my heart twisted at the sight. She had swollen eyes, one of which was even shut. Her split lips were swollen, and her nose was a mess.

There were many more injuries, but they faded into the darkness.

"I can do this," I focused on her trembling lips and saw her trying to muster some courage. It broke my heart.

Without wasting another minute, I rushed down.

"We can let her die here," Xim whispered creepily, but I blocked his voice out. That wasn't even an option.

I dropped to my knees beside her, my hands hovering for a moment, afraid to touch her, afraid of hurting her more. She tried to speak, but all I could hear was her ragged breathing and her struggle to stay conscious.

For the first time, I felt something snap inside me, something I didn't even know I had. Protectiveness. Rage. A need so deep it hurt worse than any transformation ever could.

"I am here, Helanie. I will take care of you," I whispered, cradling her as gently as I could. My hands trembled, but I lifted her and made my way up to my car. Once I laid her down in the backseat, I sped off to take her to the hospital.

"Uhhhh! I am—fine. I have done this before," she muttered in her semi-conscious state. Every word that came out of her lips sounded like a tragic story.

I felt so terrible and guilty. We knew she was a vulnerable creature among crazed young wolves, and we didn't warn them about treating her right.

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

Chapter 50-Maybe I Am Heartless?

Chapter 50: 50-Maybe I Am Heartless?

Norman:

The sadness had consumed me entirely. I had worked so hard all week to spend this time with my brothers like I always did. But now it was all ruined. Emmet and Kaye were barely present. I knew they were grown up now, but we were still committed to our time together--until Helanie arrived.

Once they brought her up, their moods changed.

Throwing my phone on the bed, I stood before the large mirror and began taking off my shirt. My eyes lingered on my abs and the prominent scar on the left side of my ribs. It had healed, but the scar remained. Some scars are left on our bodies to ensure we don't forget the tragic past. So every time I stripped naked and saw the scar, I was transported back in time.

But the ringing of my phone pulled me back to reality. I turned my head and stared at the screen.

"Oh! Jessica," I groaned as I realized I had forgotten to text her back. I reached my bed and dropped onto the hard mattress with my arms spread wide and my shirt wide open. I held my phone up and sighed as I opened her text.

Jessica: I got the work done myself. But I'm sure you've been busy, and that's why you couldn't reach me back.

I felt terrible for forgetting about her. I couldn't recall a single thing when it came to my brothers. Jessica had asked me to do a simple task of getting information on someone, and I couldn't even manage that for her.

She was the daughter of Lord Louise, the wealthy rogue from North. He was as big a name as my father but couldn't secure the title of Rogue King because of us brothers. We seemed more suited for taking over the duties of the future Rogue King in the North, South, East, and West.

That's when Lord Louise returned to his pack and decided to be a part of it again. He became the Alpha King of the North. Then an alliance was formed between my father and him. They decided I should choose Jessica as my mate. We had been dating for some time before we got engaged last year. She was confident, powerful, and a royal beta in line with her pack. I had a great understanding with her since we had known each other for years.

Instead of texting her back, I decided to call her instead.

"Hello?" I could barely sound normal. That was my problem; I couldn't fake my emotions. When I was upset, it showed in my body language, my tone, and even my words.

"Hey, you okay?" she asked after only hearing a word.

I felt like smiling.

"I'm fine. Just tired. We had an exam today. The new candidates took their first test," I uttered, staring at the ceiling.

"Oh, you guys have already started new admissions?" I could tell she must be pouting or rolling the strands of her brown hair around her finger.

"Yeah, the new semester is starting," I mumbled.

I knew why she didn't like hearing about our academy. Her brother wanted to be a part of it, but he failed the tests, especially the educational ones. Not only that, he was slated to be the alpha of his pack before he could become the Alpha King.

"Hmmm, my brother is doing very well. He stays late on the training ground and goes back to his hostel early in the morning. His teachers are praising him a lot," she began with her usual chatter. I didn't mind her talking about her brother, but it had become quite repetitive at this point. She wanted her brother to be a part of our academy so he could become the next Alpha King of the North.

The academies usually trained Alphas for the final battle between Alphas for the selection of the Alpha King title. It took place every five years. But that's not all. They have to fight the existing Alpha King in the final battle, and if they don't win, the reigning Alpha King remains the crowned king.

"Yeah, you know what? I'm kind of tired," I said, cutting her off. I didn't have time to hear about her brother's accomplishments. He was very arrogant, and whenever we met, he acted like he was a big deal.

"Oh, I'm sorry I bored you with all the talk about my brother," she replied in a much bitter tone before adding, "Okay, tell me how I can change your mood."

I waited in silence, contemplating how to avoid offending her. But there was no other way. Her remark hinted at the fact that I cared a lot about my brothers, too.

"By letting me rest?" I groaned. "We'll talk in the morning. Good night!" I hung up, but before I could even put my phone down, she called me again.

I didn't even open my eyes and answered the call. "Jessica, can we please talk tomorrow?" I grunted through clenched teeth.

"Brother, we've got a problem." My eyes shot open when I heard Maximus instead. I pulled my phone away just to check the caller ID--it was Maximus calling me.

"What happened? Are you okay?" I asked, hearing some noises in the background, and goosebumps spread across my skin. Why wasn't he at home?

"I'm in my car right now, taking Helanie to the hospital," I said, unsure whether to be shocked or concerned.

"Helanie? Why is she in the car with you? What the fuck!" I stood up, holding my phone between my cheek and shoulder while buttoning up my shirt.

"It's umm--she was attacked by someone and thrown into the deep mountains to die." My phone almost slipped from my grasp as I tightened my hold to focus on my brother's words.

A defenseless creature was attacked by someone in the shelter? Wasn't she supposed to be safe there? Why would she be targeted?

"Listen, I'm coming over. Just send me the address," I told him, knowing he had to drive her to the nearest pack to get her proper treatment.

"Okay, I'll admit her until then--" I cut Maximus off because I had to.

I hated to be that person who was heartless, but I really didn't feel good about this girl. Ever since she had shown up at our door, she had only gotten herself into trouble and wasted my brothers' time.

"Don't admit her. Let me come over first," I uttered with difficulty, not happy that what I was about to do would make my brother see me as a heartless creature.

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