

# HIS REJECTED MATE'S REVENGE

## Chapters 1

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Astrid's POV.

They say twins are supposed to be inseparable, like two halves of the same soul. That's cute in theory, but in reality? My twin sister and I might share a birthday, the same red hair, and identical hazel eyes, but that's where the similarities end.

Ariana is the star. The beautiful one. The one who walks into a room and somehow everything dims around her just so she can shine brighter.

And me? I'm the shadow that follows quietly behind, clutching books like a shield and pretending not to notice when people compare us.

Spoiler alert: they always compare us.

It was a constant everywhere, she was Ariana and I was "Ariana's sister".

Mother and father spoiled her to bits and somehow forgot that Ariana was my twin.

As we got older, Ariana's hair began to turn lighter, close to orange, while mine went from normal red to fiery red, just like my maternal grandmother's hair whom everyone apparently hated as she was pure wicked.

"Astrid, seriously?" Ariana's voice cuts through my thoughts like nails on a chalkboard.

I glance up from my sketchbook just in time to see her rolling her eyes dramatically in the full-length mirror. She's standing there in a tiny denim skirt and a crop top that probably costs more than my entire wardrobe.

If I had good clothes, they were Ariana's disposed clothes she probably wore once and lost interest.

Not that our parents couldn't afford it, the pack was wealthy, but I was just never a priority to them.

"What?" I ask, pushing my glasses up the bridge of my nose.

She spins around, hands on her hips.

“You’re wearing that?”

I look down at myself.

An oversized hoodie with faded jeans. My sneakers even had paint splatters on them from last week’s art project.

“Yeah,” I mutter.

“What’s wrong with it?”

Ariana’s laugh is sharp, like glass breaking.

“What’s right with it?” She struts across the room and plops onto my bed without permission, her perfume clouding the air—sweet, expensive, suffocating.

“You know Mom and Dad are taking us to brunch after school, right? You could at least try to look like you’re related to me. Stop acting like an attention-seeking lone wolf.”

My wallflower nature was apparently attention-seeking to them.

“I am related to you,” I reply dryly, going back to shading the wings on my sketch.

“Unfortunately.”

“Ha-ha. Hilarious.” She leans over and snatches the pencil from my hand so fast it scrapes across the page, ruining the drawing.

“Hey!” I snatch it back and growl. “What’s your problem?”

“My problem,” she says, flipping her perfect hair over her shoulder, “is that you keep acting like a freak. You’re seventeen, going to eighteen, Astrid. No one cares about your little doodles. Try living in the real world for once. Soon, you will shift, and all these nonsense doodles will go. Dad will simply not allow it.”

“They’re not doodles. They’re—” I stop myself because it doesn’t matter. She wouldn’t get it. She never does.

She was very capable of tearing my dreams apart.

I wanted to go to Edom University to study art after school and I was working towards a full scholarship because there was no way I was leaving my "precious twin" behind while wasting my time in Edom, they would say.

I didn't want to depend on them for anything.

I will go to Edom, meet my mate, and be happy with him and my art.

Hopefully, my mate wasn't in this pack, so I can be as far away as possible.

Ariana sighs like my existence is exhausting and stands, grabbing her designer bag.

“Whatever. Don’t embarrass me today, okay? People already think it’s weird that we’re twins.”

“Trust me,” I mutter, closing my sketchbook carefully. “You do enough embarrassing for the both of us.”

She gasps.

“Excuse me?”

“Nothing,” I say quickly, sliding my sketchbook into my bag. There's no point in arguing. Ariana always wins, especially when Mom and Dad are around.

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Breakfast is a war zone—if wars were fought with passive-aggressive comments and the constant ping of Ariana’s phone notifications.

Mom sets a plate of pancakes in front of me without looking.

“Eat up, Astrid. You’re so thin. It’s unhealthy.”

“Good morning to you too,” I mumble, stabbing a piece of pancake with my fork.

“Don’t mumble,” Dad says from behind his newspaper. “It’s unattractive.”

Right. Because my biggest goal in life is to be attractive.

Ariana breezes in like the queen she believes she is, kissing Mom on the cheek.

“Morning, Mom! Love your blouse. Is that new?”

Mom beams.

“It is! You have such an eye, sweetheart.”

I sip my orange juice quietly, invisible as usual.

Ariana slides into the chair across from me and starts scrolling through her phone, her nails tapping against the screen.

“Oh my gosh, Madison just posted about her party tonight. It’s going to be huge.” She glances at me with a smirk.

“Don’t worry, Astrid. You’re not invited.”

“I wasn’t planning on going,” I say flatly.

“Good,” she chirps. “Wouldn’t want you scaring people off with your creepy bookworm vibes.”

“Ariana,” Mom says in that fake-scolding tone that means nothing. “Be nice to your sister.”

“I am nice,” Ariana insists, flipping her hair again. “I’m just honest like you taught me to.”

Dad chuckles like that’s the funniest thing he’s ever heard.

I push my chair back before they notice the way my hands tremble under the table.

If I had had my first shift, I would have just gone for a run.

Soon, though.

“I’m done,” I say quietly, grabbing my bag.

“Wait,” Mom calls. “Don’t forget to smile today, Astrid. You look prettier when you smile.”

I don’t answer. I just walk out the door and let it slam behind me.

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School isn’t any better. It never is.

I slide into my usual seat in the back of English class, hoping to disappear. My safe zone: books, notebooks, and the quiet hum of my thoughts. But peace is short-lived because Ariana walks in, surrounded by her pack of friends, all laughter and lip gloss.

“Oh my God, look at her,” one of them whispers loudly. Madison, I think. She’s the worst. “Same hoodie, three days in a row?”

I clench my jaw and keep my eyes on my notebook.

“Leave her,” Ariana says, but her voice is dripping with amusement. “She likes being invisible.”

Laughter erupts around me.

I bite down hard on my lip until the metallic taste of blood fills my mouth. If I look up, they'll see the tears burning behind my eyes. And I refuse to give them that satisfaction.

So I do what I always do—I hide. I shrink into myself, into the pages of my book, into the worlds I create with pencil and paper. Because in those worlds, I'm not the weird twin. I'm not the disappointment. I'm someone.

But even as I sketch the outline of how my wolf would look like during my first shift, in the margin of my notes, I can't drown out Ariana's voice echoing in my head.

You're going to be eighteen, Astrid. No one cares about your little doodles.

Maybe she's right. Maybe no one cares.

But that doesn't stop me from drawing anyway.