

Alphas Regret, the luna is secret heiress

Whisper 241

Chapter 169: New Friendship

Chapter 169: New Friendship

(Third person's POV)

On Saturday morning, Olivia Winters returned to the Winters Family Estate with a specific purpose in mind. She needed to speak with Dr. Victoria Sterling about Grace's recovery progress.

The renowned werewolf psychologist had been working with Grace since her k*****g ordeal. Her golden blonde hair caught the morning sunlight as she reviewed her notes in the estate's study.

"Dr. Sterling, how is Grace's emotional state?" Olivia asked, settling into the leather chair across from the therapist.

"She's making steady progress," Dr. Sterling replied, her blue eyes reflecting professional concern. "However, I believe social interaction with peers would significantly accelerate her healing process."

The doctor closed her notebook and leaned forward. "Having friends to play with would help Grace regain her sense of normalcy and security."

Olivia nodded thoughtfully. "What kind of social interaction would you recommend?"

"Supervised playdates with children her own age," Dr. Sterling explained. "The key is creating positive experiences that rebuild her confidence in trusting others."

After the consultation, Olivia climbed the grand staircase to Grace's room. She found her half-sister sitting by the window, quietly reading a picture book.

"Grace," Olivia said softly, approaching with gentle steps. "How about I introduce you to a new friend to play with?"

Grace looked up with those large amber eyes that mirrored Olivia's own. Her expression showed cautious curiosity mixed with uncertainty.

"Who is the new friend?" Grace asked shyly, her voice barely above a whisper,

Olivia sat on the edge of the bed, her tone warm and reassuring. “Her name is Sophie Turner. She’s about **your** age and very sweet.”

“Do you like her, sister?” Grace asked, her eyes searching Olivia’s face for approval.

“Yes, I like Sophie very much,” Olivia confirmed with a gentle smile. “She’s kind and thoughtful, just like you.”

Grace’s face brightened considerably at this endorsement. “Then Grace is willing to be good friends with Sophie. If sister likes Sophie, then Grace also likes Sophie.”

The innocent trust in Grace’s voice made Olivia’s heart swell with protective affection. Her **little sister’s** dependence on her approval was both touching and heartbreaking.

Back in her room, Olivia pulled out her phone **and** composed a message to Adrian Sinclair. **She typed carefully**, wanting to sound professional yet friendly.

“**Adrian**, when would Sophie **be** available **to come over and** play **with Grace**? I’d **be happy to buy some snacks and** fruits that she might **enjoy**.”

< Chapter 169: New Friends...

+8 **Pants**

Adrian’s response came within minutes. “This afternoon would work perfectly. Let me confirm **the specific** time with my aunt and get back to you.”

Another message followed quickly. “My aunt is busy with her literary work today, so I’ll bring Sophie **over** myself if that’s acceptable.”

Olivia smiled at his thoughtfulness. “That sounds wonderful. Thank you for arranging this.”

Around 3:30 in the afternoon, Adrian’s elegant sedan pulled up to the Winters Family Estate. Olivia watched from the window as he helped a small girl out of the car.

She hurried to the grand entrance, her honey–brown hair catching the afternoon sunlight streaming **through** the tall windows. The sight of the approaching visitors filled her with anticipation.

“Adrian, Sophie, welcome,” Olivia greeted them warmly at the door.

Sophie was a petite girl with bright eyes and a sweet smile. She wore a pink spring dress that complemented her cheerful demeanor perfectly.

“Thank you for having us,” Adrian said, his gold-rimmed glasses reflecting the afternoon light. “My **aunt**

sends her apologies for not coming herself.”

“Please, come in,” Olivia gestured toward the elegant sitting room. “I’ll go get Grace.”

As they settled into the plush furniture, Agnes Turner appeared with her usual efficiency. The loyal housekeeper served herbal tea to Adrian and Sophie with practiced grace.

“Miss Olivia will be right back with Miss Grace,” Agnes said kindly to Sophie.

Sophie nodded politely, her small hands carefully holding the delicate teacup. Olivia noticed she was wearing the rose gold designer hair clip with pink crystals that she had given Grace during their previous meeting.

Soon, Olivia returned leading Grace down the staircase. Grace immediately hid behind her older sister upon seeing the stranger, her wolf instincts making her cautious.

“Grace, this is Sophie,” Olivia said gently, placing a reassuring hand on her sister’s shoulder. “Sophie, meet my sister Grace.”

Sophie stood up with a bright smile, her enthusiasm genuine and infectious. “Hello, Grace! I’m so happy to

meet you.”

She presented a carefully wrapped gift that she held in both hands. “My mother and I chose this for you. It’s colored pencils and a sketchbook for drawing.”

Grace looked **up at** Olivia with her large amber eyes, seeking approval. Olivia nodded encouragingly, **her** expression warm and supportive.

“Thank you, Sophie,” Grace said **softly**, accepting the **gift** with both hands. “**That’s very thoughtful of you** Sophie’s face **lit** up with delight. “Would you **like to** play in your **room? We could draw together, or play with dolls, or** whatever you’d like **to do**

For the first time
in **weeks, Grace’s face showed genuine happiness. The cautious fear in her eyes began to fade, replaced by curiosity and excitement.**

“I’d like that,” Grace said, her voice growing stronger. “I have lots of toys upstairs.”

The two children walked toward the staircase hand in hand, creating a heartwarming scene that made

< Chapter 169: New Friends...

Olivia's heart swell with relief.

"It seems that they get along very well," Adrian smiled, his gold-rimmed glasses catching **the light as he** watched the children disappear upstairs.

Olivia observed the backs of the two lovely children with satisfaction. "Yes, I didn't expect them **to bond so** quickly. Your suggestion was very thoughtful."

Adrian felt a warmth in his chest at her praise, though he kept his expression professionally pleasant. **Any** excuse to spend time helping Olivia was worthwhile, especially knowing how much Grace needed **this**

normalcy.

Olivia settled gracefully on the plush sofa, gesturing to the seat beside her. "Adrian, please have some **tea**,

don't be polite."

She turned to Agnes Turner who was tidying the room. "Agnes, please send some fruits and snacks to Grace and Sophie upstairs."

"Of course, Miss Olivia," the elderly housekeeper replied with a warm smile before bustling away.

Adrian took the initiative to shift their conversation to work matters. "Olivia, has court **date for the** Hengyang territory dispute case been confirmed?"

"Yes, the fifteenth of next month," Olivia replied, her professional focus immediately engaging.

"How is the preparation going?" Adrian asked, leaning forward with genuine interest.

"Almost complete, there are still some minor issues in certain areas," Olivia explained. "Since you're here today, let's discuss them."

"My pleasure," Adrian said with a genuine smile, pleased to have found the perfect opportunity for extended

conversation.

Once Olivia started discussing legal strategy, she became completely absorbed in the work. Adrian had found exactly the right topic to engage her full attention.

The two werewolf attorneys spent the entire afternoon discussing case law, territorial disputes, and pack legal precedents. Their conversation flowed naturally from one complex legal issue to another.

The sun was setting when Agnes appeared in the doorway. “Miss Olivia, I’ve prepared dinner. **Since** Mr. Richard and Mrs. Natalie are attending the pack alliance dinner, I made enough for your guests.”

Grace pulled Sophie downstairs excitedly, their faces glowing with happiness. “Sophie, you can **have** dinner at my house tonight, let’s sit together!”

“Sister Grace, I have to ask my mother first,” Sophie said politely. “She’s **still waiting for me to have dinner at home.**”

Adrian suddenly **interjected** with perfect timing. “Your mother **just called while you were playing. She said if** you want **to** stay here for dinner, you can eat **and then go home.**”

“**Really?**” Sophie’s grape-like eyes **lit up with delight**. “**Then I want to stay here and have dinner with Grace! Grace cheered joyfully, clapping her hands together. “Yes!”**

At the dinner table in the elegant dining room, the two children sat together chatting happily Adrian sat **across from them, next to Olivia, acutely aware of her warm presence.**

< Chapter 169: New Friends...

“I’m really sorry, Olivia,” Adrian said with a smile, though inwardly he was thrilled. “When we started discussing the case, I completely lost track of time, and now I’m imposing on your family’s hospitality.”

Only he knew that while he was apologizing, his heart was racing with satisfaction. This was exactly **what** he had hoped would happen.

Olivia smiled warmly, her amber eyes reflecting genuine gratitude. “Why are you being so formal? It’s just a meal. Today I should be thanking you—I haven’t seen Grace this happy and carefree in a long time.”

“I’m also very pleased to see the two children having such fun together,” Adrian replied.

Agnes finished serving the last dish of roasted venison with moonlight herbs. Adrian gave a subtle look to Sophie sitting across from him.

The little girl looked at Olivia with curved eyebrows. "Sister Olivia, can I take a photo with Sister Grace?"

"Of course, sweetheart," Olivia replied warmly.

Sophie looked at Adrian expectantly. "Adrian, please take a photo for us?"

"Certainly," Adrian said, taking out his phone and capturing several pictures of Sophie and Grace together, their faces glowing with happiness.

"This meal looks so delicious, I should take a picture too," Adrian added casually. He photographed the elaborate spread of food, making sure Olivia's elegant profile was "accidentally" captured in the frame.

Adrian felt deeply satisfied as he put away his phone, a slight smile playing on his lips. The evening had exceeded his expectations in every way.

After dinner, he drove Sophie home through the moonlit streets of Riverdale. The little girl chattered excitedly about her new friend during the entire journey.

"Sophie, did you have fun today?" Adrian asked as they pulled into her driveway.

"Yes! I really like Sister Grace," Sophie replied enthusiastically. "She's so nice and we played so many games together."

"Sophie, you were wonderful today," Adrian said with satisfaction. "The limited edition *doll* I promised to buy for you will be delivered to your home tomorrow."

He was referring to the photo request that Sophie had made—something they had planned in advance. He had asked Sophie to find a natural moment to request photos, with the reward being a coveted collectible

doll.

Little Sophie had happily agreed when she heard she could get the doll she'd been wanting for months. That night, Adrian posted on Howlr, the werewolf social media platform. The caption read: "Sophie has found a wonderful new friend, and I enjoyed a delightful dinner."

The first picture showed Sophie and Grace together, their faces bright with *joy*. The second was the one that "accidentally" captured Olivia's profile while photographing the dinner table.

When Olivia saw the post, she liked it without hesitation. Soon, this Howlr post, along **with** Olivia's like, was screenshotted by Gabriel Andrews.

He sent it to Connor Rivers via text message with a simple question: "What's the situation with this?"

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Whisper 242

Chapter 170: I Don't Love You Anymore

Chapter 170: 1 Don't Love You Anymore

(Connor's POV)

I emerged from the bathroom at Shadow Den, water droplets still clinging to my dark hair. My phone buzzed on the marble countertop with an incoming message from Gabriel Andrews.

The screenshot made my blood run cold. Adrian Sinclair's Howlr post showed him dining at the Winters

Family Estate with Olivia and Grace. The second photo captured Olivia's elegant profile as she sat at the

dinner table.

My wolf snarled with territorial fury. That calculating lawyer had maneuvered his way into spending an entire

evening with my mate under the pretense of arranging a playdate for the children.

The timestamp showed they had dinner together last night. While I was handling pack business, Adrian was

sitting beside Olivia in her family home, playing the role of the perfect gentleman suitor.

My ice-blue eyes darkened as I studied every detail of the photos. The intimate domestic setting. Olivia's

relaxed smile. The way Adrian positioned himself next to her at the dinner table.

I dialed Dr. **Victoria** Sterling's number immediately. The werewolf psychologist answered on the second ring.

"Alpha **Connor**, how can I help you?"

"Dr. Sterling, I wanted to check on Grace's recovery progress. How is she responding to social interaction?"

"She's making remarkable improvements," Dr. Sterling replied warmly. "Yesterday's playdate with Sophie

Turner was particularly beneficial. Grace showed genuine happiness for the first time since her ordeal."

"What activities bring her the most joy currently?" I asked, my mind already formulating plans.

"Art supplies, children's books, and anything that helps her express creativity. She's also drawn to healing

crystals and nature-themed items."

"Thank you, Doctor. This information is very helpful."

I immediately called Frank Langley. "Frank, I need you to prepare an elaborate gift selection for Grace

Winters, Premium art supplies, rare children's books, healing crystals, and anything else that would delight an eight-year-old girl recovering from trauma."

"Understood, Alpha. When do you need these prepared?"

"Within the hour. I'm visiting the Winters Estate today."

The next morning, I arrived **at the** Winters Family Estate with a mountain of carefully chosen gifts. Frank had outdone himself with the selection everything from imported colored pencils to first-edition fairy tale books.

Agnes Turner opened the grand entrance door, her expression warm but cautious. "Alpha Connor, Miss Olivia is in **the** sitting room."

I found **Olivia** arranging flowers in a **crystal** vase, her honey-brown hair catching the morning sunlight. **She** looked up as I entered, her amber eyes notably **cold**.

"I'm **here to see Grace**," I said gently, despite the tension radiating from her.

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< Chapter 170 1 Don't Love

"Thanks," she replied curtly, not even looking at the gifts I carried.

"How is Grace's recovery progressing? Is she sleeping better now?"

"She's fine." Olivia's response was clipped and distant.

My wolf whined with confusion at her coldness. Something had changed dramatically since our last conversation at her law firm.

"Has she been having nightmares? Dr. Sterling mentioned-"

"She's managing well," Olivia interrupted, her tone making it clear she didn't want to discuss Grace's

condition with me.

The sound of approaching footsteps made us both turn. Adrian Sinclair appeared in the doorway, his gold-rimmed glasses reflecting the morning light.

40 Poets 3

"Alpha Rivers, what brings you here?" Adrian asked with deceptive politeness, though his territorial challenge

was unmistakable.

"Why shouldn't I be here? I'm visiting Grace," I retorted coolly, my ice-blue eyes flashing with warning.

Adrian smiled with false warmth. "You misunderstood. No one said you couldn't come. I'm simply curious about the timing."

"I can see I'm indeed unwelcome in your presence," I replied, my voice carrying dangerous undertones.

The tension in the room became suffocating. Both our wolves circled each other metaphorically, neither

willing to back down from this territorial dispute.

Before either of us could escalate further, Natalie Winters descended the grand staircase with Grace and

Sophie Turner in tow. The children's laughter broke through the oppressive atmosphere.

Grace's amber eyes lit up with genuine delight when she saw the mountain of gifts. "Are those for me?" she

asked with wonder.

"Yes, sweetheart. I thought you might enjoy some new art supplies and books," I said warmly, my demeanor

softening completely in the child's presence.

Grace clapped her hands together with joy. "Thank you, Alpha Connor! Can I open them now?"

"Of course," I smiled, watching her happiness with satisfaction.

Natalie approached with polite reserve. "Alpha Connor, how thoughtful of you to visit Grace."

Her response was courteous but distant – a marked change from her previous warm acceptance of me as

Olivia's intended mate. The shift in family dynamics left me puzzled and concerned,

"Mrs. Winters, I hope Grace continues to recover well from her ordeal."

"She's been much better lately," Natalie replied carefully, her eyes flickering toward Adrian with subtle

acknowledgment.

In **the** formal living room, Adrian and I sat rigidly on opposite ends of the expensive furniture. The atmosphere crackled with unspoken rivalry as we maintained our territorial standoff.

Olivia attempted to alleviate **the** uncomfortable tension by engaging Adrian in detailed professional discussions, “Adrian, have **you** reviewed the precedent **cases** for the Hengyang territorial dispute?”

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Chapter 170:1. Don't Love

“**Yes, I** found several relevant rulings from the Northern Territory **courts,**” Adrian replied smoothly, his

attention focused entirely on her.

Their easy rapport and intellectual connection made my jaw clench with barely restrained jealousy. My wolf prowled restlessly beneath my controlled exterior as I watched them discuss complex legal theories.

“The jurisdictional issues are particularly complex,” Olivia continued, her amber eyes bright with professional

enthusiasm.

“Exactly. The territorial boundaries established in 1987 create significant complications,” Adrian agreed,

leaning forward with obvious interest.

I sat in silence, excluded from their specialized conversation, my hands clenched into fists on my knees.

As lunchtime arrived, both Adrian and I remained for the meal, neither willing to concede ground to the other.

The dining room atmosphere remained tense throughout the elegant lunch service.

After the meal, Adrian seemed to sense Olivia's growing discomfort with the territorial tension. He graciously decided to leave with Sophie, demonstrating his tactical awareness.

“Sophie, we should head home now,” Adrian said gently. “But we'll arrange another playdate soon.”

“Thank you for bringing Sophie,” Olivia said warmly, her relief at his departure barely concealed.

Once Adrian departed with Sophie, I turned to Olivia with urgent intensity. The political developments I’d learned couldn’t wait any longer.

“Livvy, the political situation in Blackmoor Territory is shifting. Frederick Warner’s supporters are losing power rapidly.”

Her amber eyes widened with surprise. “What do you mean?”

“The current administration is facing massive corruption scandals. Harrison Blackthorne’s government is

collapsing, and Frederick’s network of protection is crumbling with it.”

I leaned forward earnestly. “With the impending downfall of Frederick Warner’s allies in Blackmoor Territory, dealing with the exiled threat will become significantly easier.”

“This suggests hope for our future safety,” I continued, my voice filled with conviction. “The possibility of a peaceful life together without constantly looking over our shoulders.”

Olivia’s face crumpled with overwhelming pain. **She** struggled visibly with her emotions, her hands trembling as she gripped the armrest of her chair.

Finally, she whispered the words that shattered both our worlds: “I don’t love you anymore.” The link to the origin of this information rests in

My face turned ashen, the color draining completely from my features. My ice-blue eyes filled with raw

anguish as my wolf howled in denial deep within my chest.

“Livvy, what-”

“I’m sorry,” she whispered quickly, tears streaming down her cheeks. “I’m so sorry.”

She fled from the room before I could respond, leaving me devastated and alone in the elegant sitting **room**, **my** world crumbling around me.

3/4

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Whisper 243

Chapter 171: The Alpha's Rejection

(Ethan's POV)

+9 Points

The financial reports spread across my mahogany desk painted a grim picture. Silverridge Holdings had lost three major contracts this month alone, and our quarterly projections showed devastating losses.

My ice-blue eyes scanned the numbers with growing frustration. The Grey pack's business empire was crumbling beneath my feet, and I couldn't seem to stop the hemorrhaging.

"Sir, the Morrison Group has withdrawn their investment," my assistant informed me through the intercom."

They cited concerns about our recent project failures."

I rubbed my temples, feeling the weight of pack leadership crushing down on my shoulders. The stress was

affecting my wolf, making him restless and aggressive.

Another major investor had pulled out yesterday. The Blackwood Corporation followed suit this morning.

Word was spreading through the business community that the Grey pack was no longer a safe investment.

My phone buzzed with another message from our accounting department. The construction project in Harbor

City had encountered unexpected complications, requiring additional funding we didn't have.

The door to my office opened without warning. Cassandra Evans swept in, her green–gold eyes bright with

excitement and her cheeks flushed with anticipation.

“Ethan, I have wonderful news,” she announced, clutching a manila envelope against her chest.

I looked up from the financial disaster on my desk, my expression already darkening. “Cassandra, I’m busy.

Whatever it is can wait.”

“No, **it** can’t wait,” she insisted, approaching my desk with determined steps. “This is important.”

She placed the envelope on my desk with trembling hands. “I’m pregnant, Ethan. We’re going to have a pup.”

The words hit me like a physical blow. My wolf recoiled in shock as I stared at the pregnancy test results

she’d pulled from the envelope.

“You’re certain?” I asked, my voice hollow.

“Completely certain,” Cassandra beamed, her face glowing with maternal joy. “The doctor confirmed it yesterday. We’re going to be parents.”

I stood abruptly, my chair scraping against the hardwood floor. “Get rid **of it**.”

Cassandra’s smile faltered, confusion replacing her excitement. “What did you say?”

“Terminate the pregnancy,” I said coldly, my ice–blue eyes hard as steel. “I don’t want this child.”

Her face went pale, the color draining from her cheeks. “Ethan, you can’t be serious.”

“I’m completely serious,” I replied, turning away from her shocked expression. “Now isn’t the right time for me

to sire **an** heir.”

“Not the **right** time?” Cassandra’s voice rose with disbelief. “This is our pup, Ethan. Our future.”

Chapter 171 The Alpha's.

+0 Points Y

“My future is falling apart,” I snapped, gesturing at the financial reports. “The pack is hemorrhaging money, **investors** are fleeing, and you want me to celebrate a pregnancy?”

Cassandra’s green–gold eyes filled with tears. “You’re being heartless. This is your responsibility.”

“My responsibility is to the pack,” I retorted harshly. “Not to an unwanted pregnancy that will only complicate everything.”

“Unwanted?” Cassandra’s voice cracked with pain. “How can you call our pup unwanted?”

I turned back to face her, my expression unmoved by her tears. “Because that’s exactly what **it** is. An

inconvenience I can’t afford right now.”

Cassandra’s shock transformed into blazing fury. “You’re a coward, Ethan Grey. A heartless Alpha who refuses to take responsibility for his actions.”

“I’m being practical,” I replied coldly. “Something you clearly don’t understand.”

“Practical?” she screamed, her wolf pushing against her human restraint. “You’re talking about our child like

it’s **a** business transaction.”

“Everything is a business transaction when your pack is failing,” I said with brutal honesty.

Cassandra wiped her tears with the back of her hand, her expression hardening with resolve. “Fine. I’ll carry

this pregnancy to term and raise the pup as a single mother.”

“How much do you want?” I asked, reaching for my checkbook.

Cassandra stared at me in horror. “Excuse me?”

“Compensation for the inconvenience,” I explained matter-of-factly. “Name your price.”

The slap came so fast I barely saw it coming. Cassandra’s palm connected with my cheek with a sharp c***k

that echoed through the office.

“You bastard,” she hissed, her green-gold eyes blazing with rage. “You think you can buy your way out of

fatherhood?”

I touched my stinging cheek, my wolf snarling at the physical assault. “I’m offering you a practical solution.”

“You’re offering me blood money in exchange for our pup’s life,” Cassandra spat. “I wouldn’t take a penny

from you if I was starving.”

She grabbed the pregnancy test results from my desk, clutching them protectively against her chest. “This child will know exactly what kind of Alpha their father really is.”

“Cassandra, wait-”

But she **was** already storming toward the door, her heels clicking angrily against the hardwood floor. The

door slammed behind her with enough force **to** rattle the windows.

I **sank** back into my chair, the silence of my office suddenly oppressive. My wolf whined with confusion and

regret, but I pushed those feelings aside.

I **had** bigger problems than Cassandra’s pregnancy. The Grey pack’s survival depended on my ability to **salvage** our business empire, not on playing father to an unwanted pup.

(Cassandra’s POV)

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2/4

Chapter 171 The Alpha’s

I drove through Harbor **City's** downtown district with tears streaming down my face. Ethan's cruel words **echoed** in my mind, each one cutting deeper than the last.

The pregnancy test results sat on my passenger seat, a reminder of the life growing inside me that its father **had** just rejected. My wolf whimpered with pain and protective fury.

I pulled into the parking garage of Moonstone Legal Partners, my hands shaking as I turned off the engine. Olivia Winters worked here now, and I had a message to deliver.

The receptionist looked up as I entered the elegant lobby. "How can I help you?"

"I'd like to see Olivia Winters," I said, my voice still thick with emotion.

"Do you have an appointment?"

"No, but please tell her Cassandra Evans is here. It's important."

While waiting, I pulled out my phone and composed a message to Margaret Grey. Ethan's mother needed to know about her future grandchild immediately.

I attached a photo of the pregnancy test results and typed: "Mrs. Grey, I have wonderful news to share. I'm carrying Ethan's pup, but he's asked me to terminate the pregnancy. I thought you should know."

The response came within minutes. Margaret Grey's number appeared on my screen, and I answered

immediately.

"Cassandra, dear, is this true?" Margaret's voice was breathless with excitement.

"Yes, Mrs. Grey. I'm pregnant with Ethan's pup," I confirmed, allowing my voice to tremble with vulnerability.

"And he wants you to terminate?" Margaret's tone turned icy with maternal fury.

"He said now isn't the right time for him to sire an heir," I explained, letting tears color my words. "But I want

to keep the pup."

"Of course you do," Margaret said warmly. "This is wonderful news, Cassandra. A grandson to continue the Grey bloodline."

"You're not disappointed?" I asked, feigning uncertainty.

“Disappointed? I’m thrilled,” Margaret assured me. “Ethan will listen to his mother’s guidance. I’ll arrange a proper meeting between our families.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Grey. Your support means everything to me.”

“Don’t worry, dear. Everything will work out perfectly. I’ll handle Ethan.”

I ended the call with satisfaction, a smile playing at my lips. Margaret Grey was exactly the ally I needed to

secure my position in the Grey pack.

(Olivia’s POV)

I returned to Moonstone Legal Partners after a client meeting **to** find Cassandra Evans waiting in the

reception area. Her presence immediately put me on guard. This chapter is updated by

“Cassandra,” I said coolly, approaching with measured steps. “What brings you here?”

She stood gracefully, her green–gold eyes bright with barely contained excitement. “Olivia, I wanted to share some wonderful news with you personally.”

III

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3/4

Chapter 171 The Alpha’s.

“Oh?” I **kept my expression neutral**, though my wolf bristled with suspicion.

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Cassandra reached into her purse **and** pulled out a familiar manila envelope. “I’m pregnant **with Ethan’s pup**.”

She handed me the pregnancy test results with a triumphant smile. “We’re planning **to** complete our **mating**

bond soon.”

I glanced at the test results with complete indifference. “Congratulations.”

My lack of reaction clearly frustrated her. “Aren’t you going to say anything else?”

“What would you like me to say?” I asked, handing the papers back to her.

“I thought you might be jealous,” Cassandra said, her voice carrying a hint of disappointment. “After all, you **and** Ethan have history.”

I laughed, the sound genuinely amused. “Jealous? Cassandra, have you forgotten about your upcoming court

date?”

Her confident expression faltered slightly. “What court date?”

“The defamation case,” I reminded her with a cold smile. “For your online harassment campaign against pack

members.”

Cassandra waved dismissively. “That’s nothing. I’m pregnant now, and Ethan will use his pack influence to

resolve any legal troubles.”

“Will he?” I asked, my amber eyes glinting with knowledge she didn’t possess.

“Of course he will,” Cassandra insisted, though uncertainty crept into her voice. “He’s the Grey pack heir.”

I leaned back in my chair, studying her with pity. “Cassandra, you’re living in a fantasy.”

“What do you mean?”

“Ethan is facing his own serious problems within the pack hierarchy,” I explained calmly. “His business

empire is crumbling, investors are fleeing, and his Alpha status **is** in question.”

Cassandra’s face flushed with anger. “You’re just jealous and unable to accept reality.”

“I can’t help but feel sorry for you,” I said with genuine pity. “You’re still living in a dream.”

“What are you talking about?” Cassandra demanded, her composure finally cracking.

I smiled coldly, savoring the moment of revelation. “Now **that** Malcolm Wilson and Vanessa Reed are

imprisoned, and Frederick Warner’s supporters in Blackmoor Territory are about **to** fall, no one can save him

now.”

13

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111

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Whisper 244

Chapter 172: Seeds of Doubt

Chapter 172: Seeds of Doubt

(Cassandra’s POV)

I left Moonstone Legal Partners with Olivia’s words echoing in my mind like a persistent drumbeat. Her cold confidence had planted a seed of doubt that I couldn’t shake.

“Ethan is facing his own serious problems within the pack hierarchy,” she had said. “His business empire is crumbling.”

I pulled out my phone as I walked to my car, scrolling through my contacts. If Olivia was telling the truth, I needed to know immediately.

My first call was to Miranda Blackwood, whose family had extensive business connections throughout Harbor City’s werewolf community.

“Miranda, it’s Cassandra. I need to ask you something about the Grey pack’s business situation.”

“Oh, Cassandra,” Miranda’s voice carried a note of sympathy. “I was wondering when someone would tell you. Silverridge Holdings has been hemorrhaging money for months.”

My stomach dropped. “What do you mean?”

“The largest shareholder pulled out completely last week,” Miranda explained. “They liquidated everything and transferred their holdings back to Ethan. The company is technically his again, but it’s practically worthless now.”

I gripped the phone tighter. “How bad is it?”

“Bad enough that my father’s investment firm won’t touch anything Grey pack related,” Miranda said bluntly. “Word is spreading that they’re on the verge of bankruptcy.”

I ended the call with trembling hands. My second call was to Victoria Sterling, whose family owned several luxury hotels in Harbor City.

“Victoria, have you heard anything about Ethan Grey’s business troubles?”

“Cassandra, where have you been?” Victoria’s voice was incredulous. “Everyone’s talking about it. The Morrison Group withdrew their investment yesterday. Blackwood Corporation followed suit this morning.”

My wolf whimpered with growing anxiety. “Is it really that serious?”

“Serious enough that my mother cancelled our partnership with them,” Victoria confirmed. “She said. investing with the Grey pack right now would be financial suicide.”

I hung up and sat in my car, staring at the pregnancy test results on my passenger seat. The reality of my situation was becoming clearer with each conversation.

If Ethan’s pack was truly facing financial ruin, what kind of future could I expect? What kind of life would my **pup** have?

I thought about Ethan’s recent behavior – the dark circles under his eyes, his constant exhaustion, the way his alpha wolf seemed perpetually on edge. It all made sense now.

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Chapter 172 Seeds of Do

The stress of watching his empire crumble was destroying him from the inside out. this chapter is updated by

40 Points 5

I started my car and drove through Harbor City's downtown district, my mind racing with possibilities. If the Grey pack couldn't maintain their position in the hierarchy, mating with Ethan would be like jumping into a fire pit.

My phone buzzed with a text from Margaret Grey: "Cassandra, dear, I've arranged a family dinner for this weekend. We need to discuss your future with Ethan."

I stared at the message, wondering if Margaret knew about her son's business failures. Did she understand that her precious Grey pack legacy was crumbling?

Another thought struck me with chilling clarity. If Ethan's pack faced bankruptcy, the pup growing in my belly might be better off never being born into such instability.

I pulled over and called my doctor's office. "I'd like to schedule a consultation about my pregnancy options."

The receptionist's voice was professional and kind. "Of course, Miss Evans. When would you like to come in?"

"As soon as possible," I replied, my voice steady despite the turmoil in my heart.

I needed time to think. Time to evaluate whether binding myself to a failing Alpha was worth the risk.

(Third person's POV)

On Wednesday evening, Olivia Winters arrived at Crescent Moon Auction House wearing an elegant navy dress that complemented her amber eyes. The exclusive venue buzzed with Harbor City's werewolf elite, all eager to bid on rare artifacts and luxury items.

She hadn't expected to encounter Connor Rivers here. The Alpha usually sent Frank Langley to handle such matters rather than attending personally.

Connor stood near the registration desk, dressed in a black shirt and trousers that emphasized his commanding presence. Other werewolves circled him like moths to a flame, eager for even a moment of his

attention.

Olivia glanced at him briefly before looking away. She didn't want to complicate their current arrangement any further.

Connor noticed her presence immediately. His ice-blue eyes tracked her movement through the crowd as he pushed past his admirers.

“Liv,” Connor approached quickly, his voice warm despite her obvious reluctance to engage. “You’re here for

the auction too?”

He had come specifically for the jewelry pieces being auctioned tonight. Several exquisite items had caught his attention in the catalog, and he wanted to bid on them personally as gifts for Olivia.

“Yes,” Olivia replied curtly, not meeting his gaze.

Adrian Sinclair appeared beside them with perfect timing, his gold-rimmed glasses reflecting the auction house’s crystal chandeliers. He had the same idea as Connor several pieces in tonight’s catalog would make perfect gifts for Olivia.

Connor’s expression darkened immediately. “What are you doing here?”

Adrian smiled elegantly, adjusting his glasses. “It’s a small world, isn’t it?”

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Chapter 172 Seeds of Do.

46 Points

Olivia sensed the tension building between the two Alphas. “You two can chat. I’m going inside first.”

“I’ll accompany you,” Adrian responded quickly, falling into step beside her.

Connor’s ice-blue eyes flashed with territorial displeasure as he followed them into the main auction hall.

The auction began promptly at eight o’clock. Victoria Blackwell took her position at the podium, her navy blue suit impeccable as always.

“Welcome to tonight’s exclusive auction,” Victoria announced. “Our first item is a pair of Sapphire Moonstone

Earrings with a starting bid of five hundred thousand dollars.”

Olivia studied the earrings displayed on the screen. The sapphires caught the light beautifully, and the

moonstone accents would enhance her natural werewolf abilities.

She raised her paddle immediately. “Five hundred thousand.”

Adrian noticed Olivia’s interest and raised his paddle without hesitation. “Six hundred thousand.”

He wanted to purchase them as a gift for her, a gesture that would demonstrate his growing affection.

“Seven hundred thousand,” Connor followed closely, his voice carrying across the auction hall.

“One million,” Connor added decisively, increasing the bid by three hundred thousand and showing his

determination to win.

Olivia frowned in Connor’s direction. This wasn’t how auctions were supposed to work.

Other bidders joined the competition. “One million two hundred thousand.”

“One million three hundred thousand.”

“One million four hundred thousand.”

Adrian raised his paddle again. “One million six hundred thousand.”

Connor’s response was immediate. “Two million.”

Olivia stopped bidding entirely. She realized that Adrian and Connor were now competing against each other

rather than focusing on the actual auction.

Adrian raised his paddle without hesitation. “Two million two hundred thousand.”

Connor’s lips curved in a cold smile. “Two and a half million.”

Adrian stared at him in disbelief. Was this still an auction or had it become a personal confrontation between

two Alphas?

“Two million six hundred thousand,” Adrian continued, his voice strained.

Connor turned to look at Olivia. Her expression showed clear disinterest – she had obviously lost enthusiasm for the earrings entirely.

He stopped bidding.

Victoria Blackwell’s gavel fell. “Sold to paddle number forty–seven for two million eight hundred thousand dollars.”

The earrings with a starting price of five hundred thousand had been purchased by Adrian for nearly six times their opening bid.

III

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3/5

Chapter 172 Seeds of Do...

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The next item appeared on the display screen. “An Imperial Jade Bracelet of exceptional quality, starting at

five million dollars.”

Olivia found the bracelet very appealing. The jade’s deep green color would complement her amber eyes perfectly.

“Five million two hundred thousand,” she bid.

Other werewolves began raising their paddles. “Five million three hundred thousand.”

“Five million four hundred thousand.”

“Five million five hundred thousand.”

The bidding quickly reached six million. Olivia found the constant competition exhausting and decided to wait until others stopped before making her final offer.

“Seven million,” Adrian suddenly announced. He could tell that Olivia genuinely liked the bracelet, and since Connor had competed for the earrings, he wanted to secure this piece for her.

Connor’s cold voice rang out immediately. “Eight million.”

Victoria Blackwell could barely contain her smile. Someone had just added one million dollars to the bid in a single increment.

“The current bid is eight million. Do I hear any higher offers?”

Adrian’s eyes narrowed with determination. “Nine million.”

Connor didn’t hesitate. “Ten million.”

Pack members began turning their heads to observe the competition. Connor maintained his usual composed expression while Adrian remained equally calm.

“Eleven million,” Adrian countered.

Connor’s lips curved in a cold smile. “Fifteen million.”

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Olivia’s annoyance was reaching its breaking point.

“Sixteen million,” Adrian continued competing.

Connor calmly raised his paddle. “Twenty million.”

Adrian thought to himself that if Connor wanted to be foolish with his wealth, he could have the bracelet. The color was too mature anyway, not suitable for someone of Olivia’s age.

The jade bracelet was ultimately purchased by Connor for twenty million dollars.

Olivia was on the verge of losing her temper completely. She showed little interest in the next three auction items, knowing that the necklace she desired most was coming up soon.

She pulled out her phone and called Connor.

Seeing her call, Connor felt overjoyed. It had been so long since Olivia had taken the initiative to contact him. His lips curved upward and his ice-blue eyes filled with pleasure.

However, as soon as he answered, a stream of angry words came through the phone.

The smile on his face froze instantly. He realized he had made a terrible mistake – he had bid on those items

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4/5

to make Olivia happy, but instead had made her furious.

Connor felt a pang of regret in his heart.

He lowered his voice and spoke soothingly. “I was wrong, Livy. I won’t bid recklessly anymore.”

“Shut up.” Olivia said angrily. “Who gave you permission to call me that?”

“You’re my intended mate,” Connor replied gently.

The line went silent. Olivia hung up directly.

Connor obediently refrained from bidding again. Adrian noticed Connor’s sudden change in behavior and turned to look at Olivia.

Sitting diagonally in front of her, he could clearly see her expression – she looked very angry. Was it because their competitive bidding had disrupted the auction?

Connor’s bidding behavior had indeed been unusual. Realizing this, Adrian wisely put away his bidding paddle and stopped participating.

Olivia finally won the necklace she wanted.

The auction ended, and Olivia stood up and walked straight toward the exit.

Connor quickly chased after her. “Liv, please wait.”

Olivia didn’t stop, walking out of the hall into the open-air parking lot outside.

Adrian followed behind but stopped at a distance when he saw Olivia confronting Connor.

“Connor Rivers, when did you become so childish?” Olivia’s amber eyes flashed with anger. “Do you have to

compete with Adrian? He's already made it very clear that he doesn't have romantic feelings for me!"

Adrian stopped where he stood, a complex expression crossing his features as he overheard this declaration.

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

Whisper 245

Chapter **173**: The Alpha's Gambit

Chapter 173: The Alpha's Gambit

(Connor's POV)

My ice-blue eyes were deep, and my tone was low as I faced Olivia in the auction house parking lot. "Livvy, you don't understand men too well. Adrian's eyes for you are full of undisguised love, can't you see his intentions towards you?"

The words came out harsher than I intended, but my wolf was still snarling from watching that calculating lawyer compete with me all evening.

Olivia suddenly smiled. The expression caught me off guard – it wasn't the warm smile I remembered, but something cold and bitter.

"You're questioning my understanding of men?" she asked, her amber eyes glinting with dangerous

amusement. "That's rich, coming from you."

Her smile widened, but there was no warmth in it. "Tell me, Connor, what kind of man tells the woman he

claims to love that she's nothing but a replacement? That she'll never measure up to his first love?"

My blood turned to ice. Those words – the cruel things I'd said during our breakup when I was drowning in grief and anger.

"What kind of man," she continued, her voice gaining strength, "looks into a woman's eyes and tells her she's convenient? That she's just filling void left by someone better?"

(Olivia's POV)

I watched Connor's face drain of color as I threw his own words back at him. The pain I'd buried for months

came rushing back with crystal clarity.

"You told me I was pathetic for thinking you could ever love me," I continued, my voice steady despite the tears threatening to fall. "You said I was delusional to believe I meant anything to you."

Connor stepped forward, his ice-blue eyes filled with anguish. "Livvy, those weren't my true feelings. I was—"

"You were what?" I cut him off. "Honest? Because that's what it felt like. Pure, brutal honesty."

"I was hurting," he said desperately. "I was angry and grieving and I lashed out at the person closest to me. But I never stopped loving you."

I laughed, the sound hollow and bitter. "Love? You call that love?"

"Yes," he said firmly. "Even when I was cruel, even when I pushed you away, I loved you. I've always loved you."

"Your love feels like poison," I whispered, the words cutting through the night air like silver blades.

Connor flinched as if I'd physically struck him. "Livvy, please—"

"No." I turned away from him, walking toward my car. "I'm done with this conversation."

He followed me, his footsteps/quick on the asphalt. "Wait, please. Let me explain—"

I spun around, my hand raised to stop him. "Don't touch me."

III

Chapter 173 The Alpha's.

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Connor froze, his hand halfway extended toward me. The pain in his eyes was almost unbearable, but I

couldn't let it affect me anymore.

"I gave you everything," I said quietly. "My heart, my trust, my future. And you threw it all back in my face."

I pushed past him, my shoulder connecting with his chest as I headed for my Glacier Blue Bentley.

"Livvy!" he called after me, but I didn't turn around.

I climbed into my car and started the engine, my hands shaking on the steering wheel. Through the windshield, I could see Connor standing alone in the parking lot, his powerful frame somehow *looking* broken

and defeated.

I drove away without looking back, leaving him in the darkness.

The next day, I was reviewing case files at Moonstone Legal Partners when my assistant knocked on my Follow current novels on

office door.

"Miss Winters, there's a Mr. Frank Langley here to see you. He says he has a delivery from Alpha Connor."

My stomach clenched. "Send him in."

Frank entered carrying two elegant jewelry boxes, his expression apologetic. "Miss Winters, Alpha Connor asked me to deliver these to you."

I stared at the boxes without moving. "I don't want them."

"Please," Frank said, his voice strained. "Alpha Connor flew to Blackmoor Territory early this morning. He

insisted I deliver these before he left."

My heart skipped a beat. “Blackmoor Territory? Why?”

Frank’s expression grew troubled. “Pack business, Miss. But he was very specific about these gifts reaching

you.”

I shook my head. “Take them back.”

“I can’t,” Frank said desperately. “He’ll fire me if I return empty-handed. Please, Miss Winters. Just accept

them.”

The desperation in his voice made me pause. Frank had always been loyal to Connor, and I didn’t want him to suffer for his Alpha’s stubbornness.

I sighed heavily. “Fine. Leave them on my desk.”

Frank’s relief was palpable. “Thank you, Miss Winters.”

After he left, I stared at the jewelry boxes for a long moment before opening them. The Sapphire Moonstone Earrings caught the office light beautifully, and the Imperial Jade Bracelet was even more stunning in person.

I sighed again, my fingers tracing the edge of the bracelet box. Despite everything between us, Connor was in Blackmoor Territory – a place where Frederick Warner’s allies still held power.

The political situation there was volatile and dangerous. What was he thinking, going there alone?

I walked to the television in my office and turned it on, flipping to the international news channel. The

headline made my breath catch.

“Victoria Ashford, Blackmoor’s prime minister candidate, won more than half of the support from the Lower

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Chapter 173 The Alpha’s

House, elected as Blackmoor's new prime minister..”

I stared at the screen, my mind racing. Connor had mentioned that Frederick Warner's backers would **fall**. Was Frederick's supporter the previous Prime Minister Harrison Blackthorne?

If so, what was Connor doing in Blackmoor Territory now? Was he there to ensure the political transition went

smoothly? Or was he walking into a trap?

My phone rang, interrupting my worried thoughts. The caller ID showed Connor's number, and my heart

began racing.

“Hello?” I answered with slight nervousness.

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Whisper 246

Chapter 174: The End of the Hunt

Chapter 174: The End of the Hunt

(Olivia's POV)

“Livvy, it's over.” Connor's voice was low and slightly hoarse through the phone.

“Frederick is dead, it's all over.

My heart suddenly beat faster, my wolf stirring with relief and concern. The words hit me like a physical blow, **leaving** me breathless.

“Are you... are you okay?” I asked, my voice barely above a whisper.

There seemed to be a moment of pause on the other end as Connor processed my genuine worry for his safety. I could hear his breathing, steady but tired.

“I’m fine,” he said softly. “Completely unharmed. Frederick’s operation has been dismantled entirely.”

Relief flooded through me so intensely that my knees nearly buckled. I gripped the edge of my desk for

support.

“The political situation in Blackmoor Territory is stabilizing, Connor continued. “Victoria Ashford’s government is already implementing reforms. Frederick’s supporters are being arrested one by one.”

“What about his other allies?” I asked, my legal mind automatically focusing on the details.

“All neutralized. The criminal network he built is collapsing without his leadership.” Connor’s voice carried a note of satisfaction. “The threat to our packs is over.”

I closed my amber eyes, feeling a weight I hadn’t realized I was carrying finally lift from my shoulders. For months, Frederick’s shadow had loomed over everything.

“Livvy, wait for me,” Connor said, his voice becoming gentler. “I’ll be back tomorrow evening.”

The tenderness in his tone made my chest tighten with conflicting emotions. Part of me wanted to tell him I’d be waiting. Part of me wanted to hang up immediately.

“Connor, I-”

“Please,” he interrupted softly. “Just wait for me.”

I couldn’t handle the vulnerability in his voice. The relief of Frederick’s death, the ongoing tensions with the Rivers pack, and my own unresolved feelings toward Connor crashed together in an overwhelming wave.

I ended the call abruptly, my finger hitting the disconnect button before I could change my mind.

My phone immediately began ringing again. Connor’s name flashed on the screen, but I turned the device face down on my desk.

I couldn't deal with this right now. Not when my emotions were so raw and conflicted.

The office felt suddenly suffocating. I gathered my things quickly, needing to escape before Connor called again.

Back at **the** Winters family estate, I tried to lose myself in reviewing case files. But my mind kept drifting **to** Connor's **voice**, **to** the relief in his tone when he told me Frederick was dead.

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Chapter 14 the Fist of f

Olivia, dinner's ready" Natalie called from downstairs, pulling me away from my thoughts.

I sighed and closed my laptop. Family dinner was the last thing I wanted right now, but avoiding it would only

create more drama.

(Third person's POV)

At the Grey pack estate, Margaret Grey hummed cheerfully as she arranged moonlight herba in an elegant basket. Her blue eyes sparkled with maternal joy as she prepared for her visit to Cassandra Evans.

"Finally, a grandchild," she murmured to herself, carefully selecting the finest herbs from her collection. "The

Grey bloodline will continue."

Margaret had spent the morning consulting with the pack healer about the best nourishing broths for expecting mothers. She'd also arranged for fresh venison and organic vegetables to be delivered to Cassandra's apartment.

Her son Ethan had been strangely absent lately, but Margaret attributed it to the pressures of pack leadership. Young Alphas often became consumed with business matters.

What Margaret didn't know was that Ethan was desperately trying to salvage the Grey pack's crumbling financial empire. He'd been meeting with potential investors all week, hoping to secure emergency funding.

The Grey pack's bankruptcy was imminent, but Ethan couldn't bring himself to tell his mother. Margaret's pride in their family legacy would be shattered.

Margaret climbed into her silver Mercedes, the basket of moonlight herbs secure in the passenger seat. She'd

also brought a selection of pregnancy vitamins and herbal teas.

"Cassandra will be so pleased," she said aloud, her voice filled with anticipation.

At Cassandra's downtown apartment, Margaret knocked enthusiastically on the door. She could hardly contain her excitement about becoming a grandmother.

Cassandra opened the door wearing a simple black dress, her green-gold eyes lacking their usual sparkle.

She looked pale and tired.

"Mrs. Grey," Cassandra said politely, stepping aside to let her enter.

"Cassandra, dear, you look exhausted," Margaret observed, immediately switching into protective mode. "Are

you eating properly? Getting enough rest?"

"I'm fine," Cassandra replied, though her voice lacked conviction.

Margaret set down her basket and began unpacking the moonlight herbs. "I've brought everything you need for a healthy pregnancy. These herbs will strengthen both you and the pup."

Cassandra watched with growing unease as Margaret fussed over her. The older woman's enthusiasm felt overwhelming.

"I've also arranged for our pack healer to prepare special nourishing broths," Margaret continued. "She'll **deliver** them fresh every morning."

"That's not necessary," Cassandra said quickly. "I can manage on my own."

Margaret looked surprised. "Nonsense. You're carrying the Grey heir. You need proper care and protection."

"I appreciate your concern, but I prefer my independence," Cassandra insisted.

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Chapter 174 The End of t

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Margaret attributed Cassandra's distance to pregnancy hormones affecting her wolf. **First-time mothers**

often became territorial and moody.

"**You** should move into the Grey pack estate," Margaret suggested. "We have a beautiful suite **prepared for you**. Round-the-clock care, the finest food, complete security."

Cassandra's stomach clenched at the suggestion. Living under Margaret's watchful eye would make her

plans impossible.

"**I'm** comfortable here," she said firmly. "My own space helps me relax."

Margaret frowned but didn't push the issue. "Very well. But I insist on the pack healer's assistance. She'll prepare the strengthening broths and monitor your health."

Cassandra nodded reluctantly. She could always find excuses to avoid the healer's visits.

"How has Ethan been treating you?" Margaret asked, settling into the living room chair. "I hope he's being

attentive to your needs."

Cassandra's expression darkened slightly. "He's been... distant. Very focused on pack business."

"Business pressures," Margaret said dismissively. "Young Alphas often become consumed with their responsibilities. It's temporary."

Cassandra pressed carefully. "The pack seems to be facing some challenges lately. Ethan appears very

stressed.”

Margaret waved her hand airily. “Every pack faces business fluctuations. The Grey family has weathered far

worse storms.”

Cassandra studied Margaret’s confident expression. The older woman clearly had no idea how severe their

financial crisis had become.

“Perhaps Ethan should spend more time with family,” Cassandra suggested. “Especially now that we’re

expecting.”

“Absolutely,” Margaret agreed enthusiastically. “I’ll speak with him immediately. A future father should

prioritize his mate and pup.”

Cassandra inwardly cringed at being called Ethan’s mate. Their relationship was far more complicated than Margaret understood.

“I don’t want to cause him any trouble,” Cassandra said carefully. “When he’s finished with this crisis, he

probably will come to see me.”

Margaret’s expression softened with approval. “Cassandra dear, you’re so understanding. No wonder I chose

you to bear the next Grey heir.”

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Whisper 247

Chapter 175: The Alpha's Return and Lingering Tensions

Chapter 175: The Alpha's Return and Lingering Tensions

(Olivia's POV)

Points

Connor Rivers returned to Riverdale a week later, bringing with him the warmth of late April. The black shirt **and** trousers he wore emphasized his commanding presence, yet his ice-blue eyes softened the moment **they**

found me.

I was reviewing case files at my desk when his familiar scent reached me. My wolf stirred restlessly, recognizing her mate despite everything between us.

"Liv," Connor said, his voice carrying that gentle tone he reserved only for me.

I looked up, offering him a casual nod. My amber eyes remained guarded as I assumed he was here for his

usual "inspection" of my work at the law firm.

"Alpha Rivers," I replied formally, keeping my voice neutral.

Connor's gaze shifted briefly to the new face in the office. Aria stood near the filing cabinets, her short

haircut and muscular physique making her presence unmistakable.

My father had hired Aria as my bodyguard following recent security concerns. She was a beta werewolf with

an impressive build and an expressionless demeanor that spoke of serious training.

"I brought you something," Connor said, producing an elegant box from his jacket.

I remained indifferent, my wolf instincts still wary. “I don’t need anything from you.”

Connor opened the box anyway, revealing a beautiful silk scarf that seemed to shimmer under the office lights. The fabric caught the afternoon sun streaming through the windows, creating an almost ethereal

glow.

Despite my resolve to stay distant, I couldn’t help but admire the scarf. My fingers moved almost involuntarily, lightly touching the luxurious fabric.

“You have good taste,” I admitted reluctantly.

Connor’s expression brightened at my acknowledgment. “I chose it because the brand is popular among

female werewolves in Blackmoor Territory. I immediately thought you would like it.”

My amber eyes flashed with suspicion. “So, Alpha Rivers, you’re so well-versed in female preferences?”

The question came out sharper than I intended, but I couldn’t help the jealousy that crept into my voice.

Connor quickly raised his hands in defense. “Layla Lawrence recommended it during our fake relationship

arrangement.”

I **felt** my wolf bristle at the mention of another woman. “It’s beautiful, but I won’t accept it. It would be more

appropriate to give it to Layla.”

Connor chuckled, his icy Alpha demeanor melting away completely. The sound was warm and patient, **so** different from the cold authority he usually projected.

“Layla is my distant cousin through my maternal grandmother’s pack lineage,” he explained gently. This content belongs to

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Chapter 175 The Alpha’s.

I **huffed**, my **wolf** still **bristling** slightly. "I have no interest in your family connections. **It's** none of **my business**."

Connor's smile transformed his usually stern features. "I'll arrange a proper introduction between you two

later."

He placed the scarf on my desk before I could protest further. "Keep it, Livvy. It suits you."

With that, he turned and **left** the office, leaving me staring at the elegant box.

After Connor left, I sighed silently. My amber eyes lingered on the scarf as conflicted emotions swirled within

1. **me.**

Aria approached my desk, her expression as neutral as always. "Your father was right to be concerned about security."

"What do you mean?" I asked, looking up from the scarf.

"Alpha Rivers' behavior suggests he's still very invested in your wellbeing," Aria observed. "That could make you a target for his enemies."

I nodded, understanding her point. The recent threats from Frederick Warner's network had made everyone

more cautious.

"We should head out soon," I said, checking my watch. "I promised to have dinner with the others."

After work, I went out to eat with Jade Mitchell, Emma Thompson, and Aria at a casual restaurant in Riverdale. The evening air was pleasant as we walked through the territory's main district.

Emma kept stealing glances at Aria throughout our walk. "You're the perfect example of a strong female

warrior," she said admiringly.

Jade laughed, nudging Emma playfully. "Are you questioning your preferences in mates?"

Emma's face turned bright red, her wolf scent shifting with embarrassment. "I didn't mean it like that!"

Aria replied expressionlessly, "I have no interest in romantic entanglements with anyone, male or female. My duty is solely protection."

Emma blurted out, "Completely focused!" which made me feel slightly embarrassed at my assistant's

boldness.

"Emma," I warned gently, but she was already moving on to another topic.

"Coming to our law firm has elevated my standards completely," Emma continued enthusiastically. "With Olivia so beautiful, Adrian Sinclair and Connor Rivers so impressive, and now Aria so striking, my

expectations are top high. I can't find a suitable mate."

Jade comforted her with a laugh. "You're still young. There's plenty of time."

Emma's expression turned mischievous. "Speaking of romance, Jade and Noah Pierce seem to be developing

something."

Jade blushed deeply, her wolf scent shifting with embarrassment. "Noah is courting me properly, but I haven't

accepted his advances yet."

I was surprised, my amber, eyes widening. "Really? When did this start?"

III

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2/3

Chapter 175 The Alpha's

"**It's a recent** development," **Jade** explained, her voice **soft**. "He's been very respectful and patient."

"**How** is Leah **doing?**" I asked, remembering Noah's sick sister.

Jade's expression brightened. "Much better. She was discharged from Harbor City Memorial Hospital **recently** and is attending school normally now."

Relief flooded through me. "That's wonderful news. Was the financial support I provided earlier sufficient?"

"More than sufficient," Jade assured me. "Noah is incredibly grateful. He says you saved both their lives."

The group of women walked and talked through the Riverdale streets. The evening breeze played with our hair as our laughter echoed through the territory.

The sunset painted everything in golden hues, casting long shadows as pack life continued peacefully around us in the growing dusk.

Emma was in the middle of telling a funny story about her latest case when it happened.

No one expected the accident to happen so quickly.

10

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Whisper 248

< Chapter 176. The Ambush

Chapter 176: The Ambush

Chapter 176: The Ambush

(Olivia's POV)

The evening air was pleasant as we walked through Riverdale's main district, our laughter echoing **through** the territory. Emma was in the middle of telling a funny story about her latest case when everything **changed**

in an instant.

Two men wearing black masks and caps suddenly charged out from behind the Shadow Memorial Statue. The first was a heavily muscled beta werewolf in a white tank top, his intimidating tattoos visible even **in the** streetlight. The second was shorter but equally dangerous, his movements predatory and vicious.

My werewolf reflexes kicked in immediately. "Move!" I shouted, grabbing Jade and Emma as Aria and I dodged to the side.

Aria's protective instincts flared as she positioned herself between us and the attackers. "Get them out **of** here!" she barked, her usually stoic expression hardening into something deadly. "I'll handle this!"

Jade's face went white with terror, her wolf cowering at the sudden threat. I could see her reliving the silver dagger attack at the Grey Law Center, traumatic memories flooding back and freezing her in place.

Emma whimpered beside me, her hands shaking as she stared at the approaching men.

"Run!" I yelled, my amber eyes flashing with alarm at the coordinated assault. I grabbed both Jade and Emma, pulling them toward the street. "Now!"

Jade snapped out of her daze, her survival instincts finally overriding her panic. She stumbled forward, following my lead as we tried to escape.

But Emma, overwhelmed by the situation and wearing high heels that hindered her movement, twisted her ankle badly. She cried out in pain and fell hard onto the pavement, her hands scraping against the rough

concrete.

Behind us, Aria engaged the attackers with deadly precision. I could hear the sound of combat, but these weren't common street thugs. Their fighting techniques and

coordination spoke of professional training – they were trained mercenaries. Chapters first released on

The muscled man broke away from Aria's defensive position, running toward us with predatory intent. His eyes locked onto Emma's fallen form, and I saw the cruel satisfaction in his gaze.

"Emma, can you stand?" I asked urgently, my amber eyes flashing with concern for my assistant.

Emma winced, trying to put weight on her injured ankle. "I can't walk properly," she gasped, tears streaming

down her face. "It hurts too much."

Without hesitation, I pushed Emma toward the Moonlit Roadside Gardens. "Get to safety," I ordered, then turned to face the approaching man.

My werewolf upbringing had included combat training, and now those lessons came flooding back. I dropped into a defensive stance, my wolf nature emerging despite remaining in human form.

Emma, now seated on the nearby roadside grass, watched in disbelief. Her usually gentle boss **was**

III

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1/3

Chapter 176 **The Ambush**

transforming into a fierce protector,
amber **eyes blazing with supernatural intensity.**

The man lunged at me with professional precision. His **military** training complemented **his supernatural abilities**, making him a formidable opponent. I blocked his first strike, **but the force of** it sent **shockwaves** up

my arms.

"You're **coming** with us," he snarled, his voice muffled by the mask.

"Like hell I am," I shot back, dodging his next attack.

We exchanged blows in the streetlight, my basic werewolf combat skills barely keeping **pace with** his

relentless assault. He was stronger, more experienced, and clearly trained for this exact scenario.

Aria delivered a powerful kick that sent the other attacker stumbling backward, then **rushed to my aid**. **Her** beta wolf strength gave her an advantage, but she was fighting two opponents while trying to protect **us**.

The man I was fighting suddenly produced a silver blade, the metal glinting wickedly in the streetlight. He

aimed it directly at my heart with lethal precision.

I tried to dodge, but he was too fast. The blade sliced through the air toward my chest.

Swiftly, Aria's hands grasped the man's wrist, her grip tightening with supernatural strength: The man winced in pain as her fingers dug into pressure points, but I could see the silver burning against her skin.

"Boss!" she grunted, her loyalty to me overriding her own discomfort with the harmful metal.

Aria arrived just in time, averting what could have been a fatal blow. With practiced efficiency, she twisted **the** man's wrist until he dropped the weapon, then caught it before it hit the ground.

She held the silver blade to his neck despite the weapon's harmful properties to werewolves. Her hands were already showing red marks from the contact, but her expression remained determined.

Considering our location on a public street where human authorities might intervene, she refrained from lethal force that could expose our supernatural nature.

Instead, Aria retrieved a small ampule from her tactical vest. She quickly applied the liquid – a specialized werewolf sedative – to the blade's edge.

With a flick of her wrist, she hurled the knife at the other man who was trying to flee. The blade lodged in his calf, and he stumbled but kept running.

The powerful anesthetic designed for werewolf physiology quickly entered his bloodstream. Within seconds, he collapsed face-first onto the pavement, unconscious.

The man in front of us attempted to escape, but Aria tightened her grip on his throat. She applied pressure **to** specific nerve points, rendering him unconscious without permanent damage.

“Boss, are you alright? Are you hurt?” Aria asked, her usually stoic expression replaced with genuine concern.

I shook my head, relieved that the immediate threat was neutralized. But something felt **wrong**. **My werewolf** sixth sense was triggering a warning of imminent danger.

I scanned the area carefully, my wolf detecting a threat my human eyes couldn’t yet see. Then **I spotted it** – the barrel of a firearm protruding from behind the Shadow Memorial Statue, reflecting **the streetlight**.

“Bang!” A gunshot rang out, echoing through the night.

“Careful!” I shouted, pushing Jade aside as **the** bullet flew toward us,

2/3

Chapter 176 The Ambush

Almost simultaneously, I felt the **impact**. The bullet **struck my shoulder**, and for a moment there **was** only

numbness **from** shock.

Then, **in the** next second, heart-wrenching pain spread from the gunshot wound throughout **my body**. **The** silver-laced ammunition designed specifically to harm werewolves made it nearly impossible **for** my natural healing to begin.

The burning sensation of silver poisoning coursed through my veins, making it difficult to remain **standing**. My legs buckled as the toxic metal fought against my werewolf constitution.

Aria cried out in shock and fury, her protective instincts flaring as she reached out to catch me as I fell. Her amber eyes were already scanning for the hidden shooter while supporting my wounded form.

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Whisper 249

Chapter 177: The Price of Protection

Chapter 177: The Price of Protection

(Third person's POV)

Pack enforcers and ambulances swiftly arrived at the scene outside Moonrise Grand Restaurant. The two rogue werewolf assailants were apprehended by Ravenwood Police Station officers who specialized in

supernatural incidents.

At Harbor City Memorial Hospital, outside the emergency room, Emma Thompson and Jade Mitchell were filled with anxiety and worry about their Alpha-born friend.

Jade paced back and forth in the sterile corridor, her wolf restless with concern. "Olivia will definitely be okay.

definitely be okay..." she muttered repeatedly, her voice breaking with each repetition.

Emma's expression was solemn, her lips tightly pursed as she leaned against the wall with her eyes

downcast. She remained silent while her enhanced senses strained to detect any news from the operating

room.

The fluorescent lights cast harsh shadows across their worried faces. The antiseptic smell of the hospital

mixed with the scent of fear and desperation that clung to both women.

Soon after, Richard Winters and Natalie Winters rushed over from the Winters Family Estate. Richard's

ice-blue eyes flashed with barely contained fury as his paternal instincts and Alpha authority took control.

"What happened to my daughter?" Richard demanded, his voice carrying the weight of an Alpha's command.

Emma's eyes lowered in shame as she struggled to find her voice. "Alpha Winters, I'm so sorry. Olivia was

shot in the chest with a silver bullet."

Her voice strained with guilt and remorse. "It's uncertain whether the projectile struck her heart. The silver is preventing her natural werewolf healing abilities from engaging."

Richard staggered upon hearing this devastating news. His powerful Alpha frame barely managed to stay upright as the possibility of losing his daughter overwhelmed him.

"No," he whispered, his voice cracking with disbelief and pain. "Not my Olivia."

Jade Mitchell's eyes were reddened from tears, her wolf whimpering with distress. She spoke through choking sobs as she explained the horrific sequence of events.

"The silver bullet was meant for me," Jade cried, her voice breaking. "But Olivia pushed me away with supernatural speed. She took the deadly projectile herself to protect me."

She apologized profusely, her guilt overwhelming her. "I'm so sorry, Alpha Winters. She nearly died saving my life. Her protective instincts kicked in without hesitation."

Richard's hands clenched into fists. The noble spirit of the Winters bloodline had nearly cost him his

daughter. Content originally comes from

Emma Thompson somberly stepped forward with crucial information. "Alpha Winters, the attackers weren't ordinary rogue werewolves. They were professionally trained mercenaries from Blackmoor Territory."

She revealed a photo she had secretly taken before the pack enforcers arrived. "This **man** has a distinctive

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Chapter 177 The Price of

tattoo mark – a **symbol** associated with Frederick Warner's criminal organization.

The photo captured a tattoo of a black wolf's head on the neck of one attacker. **Richard** studied it with his Alpha's tactical mind, beginning to piece together the larger conspiracy threatening his **daughter**.

Before Richard could complete his analysis, Connor Rivers arrived with urgent speed. His **voice** was **stern and** filled with barely controlled rage as he revealed the truth.

"It was Frederick Warner's doing," Connor declared, his ice-blue eyes blazing with **fury**.

He explained that he had been careless in believing Frederick was truly eliminated. "Frederick **faked** his **death** after the Shadowfall Ruins confrontation. He made arrangements during the Blackmoor Territory Prime

Minister election."

Connor's voice grew darker. "I traveled to Blackmoor myself to hunt him down, but there was a security **leak** in my operation. Frederick escaped and is now planning his final revenge against *me*."

His fists clenched with rage. "He's targeting Olivia as the most devastating way to destroy *me* emotionally."

Connor continued his grim explanation, his voice heavy with responsibility. "Frederick Warner's criminal network in Blackmoor Territory had been systematically eliminated by my forces. We believed Olivia would **be**

safe in Riverdale."

He ran a hand through his dark hair. "That's why I grew closer to her again and proceeded with our engagement plans. Now Frederick has returned to the Northern Territory to seek his ultimate revenge."

Richard noticed fresh bandages visible beneath Connor's torn shirt. The scent of silver burns still lingered **on** his skin from recent confrontations.

"The mercenaries who attacked them are among the most dangerous operatives who escaped with Frederick from Blackmoor," Connor admitted.

Jade, overwhelmed by the revelation of this supernatural war, urged Connor to seek immediate medical attention. "Alpha Rivers, you need treatment for those wounds."

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Even the usually stoic Emma was stunned by the scope of the conspiracy. Her face had gone pale as she processed the international implications.

Richard's eyes became bloodshot with Alpha rage and paternal fury. He glared at Connor with the full force of his territorial dominance.

"If anything happens to Olivia, I will make the entire Rivers pack pay," Richard vowed, his voice carrying the weight of an Alpha's oath. "This is war."

Connor responded with equal intensity, bowing his head in submission to Richard's paternal authority. Frederick Warner has finally been apprehended by my elite forces. He will not escape justice this time."

His voice broke with emotion. "I pledge to give my own life for Olivia's if she doesn't survive. Her survival is more important than my own existence."

Richard rejected Connor's offer with cold finality. "Your life would not bring Olivia back. Such **gestures are** meaningless in the face of potential loss."

Natalie tried to offer comfort through her Luna's wisdom. "Olivia is such a kind and strong werewolf. **She will** survive this trial with her natural resilience."

< Chapter 177 The **Price** of

Her gentle voice carried the authority **of** a pack matriarch as **she tried to calm her mate's rages**

Soon, a **stream of** concerned **pack** members **began** arriving.

Adrian **Sinclair** and **other lawyers from** Moonlaw **Legal** Services rushed in, their faces etched with worry.

Rebecca Frost and Ethan Quinn appeared next, followed by Lily. Even Noah Pierce and Leah **Pierce came** despite their ongoing recovery.

The hospital corridor filled with worried werewolves from everyone's hearts were weighed down with anxiety.

multiple packs. Yet **it** remained eerily silent **as**

The air grew thick with the scent of fear and desperate hope for their beloved Alpha-born friend.

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Whisper 250

Chapter 178: Blood and Blame

Chapter 178: Blood and Blame

(Ethan's POV)

I was reviewing case files in my office when Maxwell Cooper burst through the door, his face pale with

urgency.

"Sir, you need to see this," he said, holding up his phone with trembling hands.

The news report showed footage from Riverdale's main district. My blood turned to ice as I recognized the

familiar figure fighting desperately against masked attackers.

Olivia.

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My wolf howled in anguish as I watched her protective instincts flare, pushing her friends to safety while engaging the mercenaries herself. The camera captured her amber eyes blazing with supernatural intensity

as she fought with everything she had.

Then came the gunshot..

The footage showed her falling, blood spreading across her shoulder as she collapsed onto the pavement. My chest constricted with panic and regret as I watched the ambulance arrive.

"Get the car," I ordered Maxwell, my voice hoarse with desperation.

I frantically tried calling Olivia's phone, but every attempt went straight to voicemail. My wolf was clawing at

my insides, demanding I find her immediately.

Maxwell drove us to every hospital near the incident scene. At Harbor City Memorial Hospital, I finally caught

familiar scents outside the emergency room.

The corridor was filled with worried pack members. Fear and anxiety hung thick in the air like a suffocating

blanket.

I spotted Connor Rivers immediately, his ice-blue eyes fixed on the operating room doors. Blood stained his

hands and clothes from his own injuries.

Desperation overwhelmed me. I grabbed Connor's arm roughly, my wolf's protective instincts overriding all rational thought.

"How is she?" I demanded, my voice breaking with emotion. "Tell me Olivia is going to be okay!"

Connor's eyes flashed with barely contained fury as he turned to face me. His Alpha dominance radiated dangerously, making my wolf instinctively want to submit.

"She's **still** in surgery," he replied coldly, his voice carrying the weight of his authority.

I noticed **the** fresh bandages beneath his torn shirt, the scent of silver burns still lingering on his **skin**.

"Was **it** Frederick Warner?" I pressed, my mind racing. "The guns, **the** silver bullets – **this** has **to** be his revenge

against the Rivers pack!"

Connor's expression darkened further. His wolf's dominance pressed against mine with crushing **force**.

"Shut up," he growled, his Alpha command making even my proud wolf **bow** its head.

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Chapter 178 Blood and BI

But I couldn't stop myself. The sight of Olivia's blood on the news footage had shattered something inside.

1. me.

"Connor Rivers, if you can't protect Livvy, why do you keep putting her in harm's way?" I accused, my voice

rising with desperate anger.

The entire corridor fell silent. Every pack member turned to stare at us.

"If it weren't for your pack's enemies, she wouldn't be in danger again and again!" I continued, my wolf's protective rage overriding all sense. "Is the Rivers pack Alpha so incapable? He can't even protect the woman

he loves!"

Connor's ice blue eyes blazed with lethal fury. His Alpha presence pressed down on me like a physical weight.

"What are you good for?" I demanded, my voice cracking. "You used to say that I was not worthy of Livvy and not qualified to love her, so what about you? What qualifications do you have as her mate?"

Before Connor could respond, Lily stepped forward. Her voice was sharp with accusation as she defended

Connor.

"And what about you, Ethan?" she shot back, her amber eyes flashing with anger.

"What about **the** harm you inflicted on Olivia with Cassandra Evans? You have no right to question anyone's qualifications!"

Her words hit me like a physical blow. The truth of my own failures silenced me completely.

The corridor fell into heavy silence as the evening grew darker. Fluorescent lights cast harsh shadows on the worried faces of pack members gathered around us.

(Katherine's POV)

William and I arrived at the hospital to find chaos in the emergency corridor. The scent of fear and desperation was overwhelming.

My heart broke seeing Connor's bloodied hands and the anguish in his ice-blue eyes. Olivia had become like a daughter to me, and the thought of losing her was unbearable.

"Connor, you need medical attention," I said firmly, noticing the fresh bandages beneath his torn shirt.

"It's nothing compared to what Olivia is going through," he replied, his gaze never leaving the operating room

doors.

"Don't be stubborn," I insisted, my Luna authority coming through. "You can't help her if you collapse from

blood loss."

I flagged down a nurse and practically forced Connor to get his wounds properly treated. He reluctantly complied, but his eyes remained fixed on where his mate fought for her life.

After Connor left for treatment, I grabbed William's arm and dragged him outside the hospital. The cold night air hit us as we stepped onto the pavement.

My fury, building for years, finally erupted. I slapped him hard across the face, my Luna strength behind **the**

blow.

"This is all your fault!" I screamed, my voice echoing in the empty parking lot.

William staggered from the impact, his hand moving to his reddened cheek. "Katherine, what are you?"

"Frederick Warner **is** your son!" I interrupted, my amber eyes blazing with decades **of** suppressed rage. "Your

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III

Chapter 178 Blood and Bt.

illegitimate son who you showed leniency toward for years!"

William's face went pale. "I didn't know what he would become when he was born," he said weakly.

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“You should have prevented his birth!” I continued, my voice rising with each word. “Or dealt with the threat he posed years ago! You are the one to blame for everything that has happened!”

My hands shook with fury as I faced the man I had once loved. “Because of your past mistakes, Connor almost lost his life! The Winters family almost broke down!”

William tried to defend himself, but I cut him off with a gesture.

“Because you are at the root a cold-blooded, unfeeling Alpha,” I said, my voice settling into deadly calm. “You” **are** the culprit, but you have taken yourself out of it.” Google search

I slowed my voice, each word deliberate and cutting. “Because of your past mistakes, Connor almost lost his life, and the Winters family almost broke down, but you are here to accuse me of forcing you to face consequences? Blame your parents for not allowing Frederick to be acknowledged?”

My voice dropped to a whisper. “William, do you still have a conscience?”

“I’m severing our mate bond,” I declared, my Luna authority making the words binding. “I’m leaving the Rivers pack forever.”

William’s face crumpled as the weight of my words hit him. The mate bond between us began to fracture, causing physical pain to shoot through both our bodies.

“Katherine, please-” he began, but suddenly doubled over.

Blood spilled from his mouth as he coughed violently. The stress and guilt had finally overwhelmed his Alpha

constitution.

He collapsed to the pavement, his body convulsing as more blood stained the concrete beneath him.

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Whisper 251

Chapter 179: The Alpha's Poison

(Katherine's POV)

"Poisoning?" I was shocked and couldn't believe what I was hearing.

The pack doctor used a lot of professional terms about silver toxicity and wolfsbane compounds. I didn't quite understand the medical terminology at all.

"Doctor, please explain it again in simpler terms," I requested, my voice trembling with confusion and fear.

The doctor nodded patiently. "It turned out that William Rivers had chronic poisoning from a rare wolfsbane derivative."

He continued his explanation carefully. "This kind of poison was soluble in water and was colorless and

odorless."

"Taking a small amount occasionally would not cause obvious symptoms in a werewolf's body," the doctor said gravely. "But long-term use would invade the internal organs and slowly kill even an Alpha."

My mind raced as I recalled recent details that now seemed clearer. William's recent hair loss, his worsening appetite, the dark circles under his eyes.

His overall listless appearance suddenly made sense. I hadn't paid much attention, assuming it was just old

age and the stress of pack leadership weighing on him.

How could I have been so blind? The signs were all there, but I had dismissed them as natural aging.

With Olivia Winters still in emergency care and now William Rivers also in the emergency room, the hospital issued a critical condition notice. I signed it, feeling dazed and overwhelmed.

I contacted Gerald Rivers about William's poisoning via secure pack communication. Gerald Rivers, who was in the capital city, expressed his shock and concern over the encrypted call.

"Katherine, this is impossible," Gerald's voice crackled through the secure line. "Who would dare poison an

Alpha?"

I suspected Vanessa Reed and Frederick Warner were involved, given Vanessa's past actions for Frederick." Gerald, I believe Vanessa is behind this."

That's a serious accusation," Gerald replied, his voice heavy with authority. "But given recent events, **we**

cannot ignore the possibility."

Gerald instructed me to contact the pack enforcers immediately. He said he would apply to return to Riverdale to confront Frederick Warner and Vanessa Reed personally.

Eleanor Rivers, overhearing the conversation, became upset. She refused to believe Vanessa would poison

William

"Vanessa is fundamentally good," Eleanor insisted, her voice shaking with denial. "She wouldn't harm her

own foster father."

I felt exasperated by her continued delusions. "Eleanor, Vanessa kidnapped Grace Winters and showed

Chapter 179 The Alpha's..

capacity for cruelty against pack members."

"You're wrong about her," Eleanor protested, tears streaming down her aged face. "She's just **misguided**, not evil."

Seeing that Eleanor was still immersed in her own delusions, I shook my head in silence. There was no point arguing with someone who refused to see reality.

I called the detention center, arranging a visit with Vanessa Reed. I wanted to confront the ungrateful foster daughter with another charge: attempted murder of an Alpha.

(Connor's POV) The source of this content is

After a long wait, the emergency room doors finally opened. I rushed forward along with Adrian Sinclair and Richard Winters.

"Doctor, how is she?" I asked urgently, my heart pounding with desperate hope.

The doctor, removing his mask, smiled wearily. "Olivia Winters is out of danger and will be transferred to the intensive care unit."

"Visitation will be allowed in three days," he added, his voice carrying relief.

Everyone sighed in relief around us. My ice-blue eyes, previously empty with despair, finally showed a glimmer of light.

"Thank you, doctor," I said, my voice hoarse with emotion. "Thank you for saving her."

The others expressed their gratitude as well. Adrian Sinclair clasped the doctor's hand gratefully.

As the nurses wheeled Olivia out, I watched her pale, unconscious form. A sharp pain pierced my heart seeing her so vulnerable and still.

The others also wanted to see Olivia, but pack protocol limited ICU visitors to immediate family and mates only. They would have to wait.

The nurses wheeled Olivia to the ICU carefully. The tense atmosphere that had gripped us for hours finally

eased.

Emma Thompson, Rebecca Frost, and Lily cried tears of relief. Their wolves finally settled after hours of

anxious pacing.

"She's going to be okay," Emma whispered through her tears. "Our Olivia is going to be okay."

Rebecca hugged Lily tightly, both of them shaking with relief. The nightmare was finally over.

Ethan Grey turned to me, his amber eyes blazing with accusation. "Connor Rivers, Livvy almost lost her life

being with you."

His voice was filled with venom and blame. “Don’t harm her anymore!”

I remained silent, overwhelmed by guilt and self-reproach. My Alpha pride was wounded by his **accusation**, **but I** couldn’t deny the truth in his words.

Every word he spoke cut deep into my soul. Olivia had nearly died because of the enemies my pack had

made.

Richard Winters glared at me, echoing Ethan’s words with paternal fury. “Connor Rivers, he’s right.”

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Chapter 179 The Alpha’s.

48 Points

His **ice-blue eyes** burned **with** protective rage. “Stay away **from** Livvy **from** now on, and **don’t** come **harming** her **again.**”

I felt **my** heart clench with pain, my wolf whimpering at the rejection from my mate’s father. The weight **of** their accusations settled on my shoulders like a crushing burden.

My breathing hitched, and my heart cramped as the reality hit me. They were right – I had brought nothing but danger into Olivia’s life.

15

III

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Whisper 252

Chapter 180: The Alpha's Final Hours

Chapter 180: The Alpha's Final Hours

(Katherine's POV)

Olivia Winters narrowly escaped danger, a stroke of luck from her werewolf healing abilities. But things weren't as promising for William Rivers.

The pack doctor's words echoed in my mind like a death sentence. "Alpha Rivers has been poisoned for

months with a rare wolfsbane derivative. His organs are severely damaged by the silver-laced toxin."

"There's no hope for recovery," the doctor continued, his voice heavy with finality.

Eleanor Rivers, the pack matriarch, swayed on her feet. Her face went ashen as the reality hit her.

"My son," she whispered, her voice breaking. "My William."

She collapsed to the floor in a dead faint. The shock of losing her son had overwhelmed even her strong Alpha bloodline constitution.

Two nurses rushed to help Eleanor while I stood frozen. The woman who had raised William, who had guided the Rivers pack for decades, was crumbling before my eyes.

My own heart felt like it was being torn apart. Despite our marital troubles, William was still my mate. The

bond between us, though strained, still existed.

The following day, I visited Vanessa Reed in the detention center. The reinforced glass between us was

designed to contain supernatural prisoners.

Vanessa wore a standard detention uniform, but her violet eyes still held that dangerous gleam. She greeted

me with a mocking smile.

“Well, well. Mrs. Rivers,” she said, emphasizing the formal address. “What an unexpected visit.”

Gone were the days when she called me “Mom,” Our fractured relationship had shattered completely since

her obsessive affections for Connor had surfaced.

“Did you poison William Rivers?” I asked coldly, cutting straight to the point.

Vanessa’s eyes widened in feigned surprise. “Poison? Whatever do you mean?”

“Don’t play innocent with me,” I snapped. “Frederick Warner was the mastermind behind the systematic

poisoning. You were his accomplice.”

Vanessa’s violet eyes gleamed dangerously. She leaned forward against the glass.

“That’s quite an accusation, Mrs. Rivers,” she said with a sweet smile. “Do you have any evidence?”

“Evidence will surface through pack investigation,” I asserted firmly.

Vanessa laughed, a cold sound that sent chills down my spine. “But none exists yet, does it?”

I felt my jaw clench with frustration. She was right, and she knew it.

“Frederick Warner has been apprehended by pack enforcers,” I revealed. “He tried to kill Connor Rivers.”

For the first time, Vanessa’s composure cracked slightly. Alarm flashed across her features.

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Chapter 180: The Alpha’s...

“Is Connor hurt?” she asked, her voice betraying genuine concern.

I dismissed her worry with cold disdain. “Your concern for him is pathetic and unwanted.”

“Confess to poisoning William Rivers,” I urged. “The pack council might show leniency.”

Vanessa’s defiant smile returned. “The Rivers family would never forgive me anyway. Why should I confess to something I didn’t do?”

Our visiting time was ending. Vanessa gave me a meaningful smile that sent chills down my spine.

There was something in her expression that suggested she knew more than she was revealing. Something that made my wolf instincts scream danger.

(Connor’s POV)

After learning about William’s terminal condition, I stayed by his bedside. I only left to check on Eleanor, who

remained unconscious from the shock.

William was moved from the ICU to a private room in the pack’s medical wing. He would spend his last

moments with family, away from the sterile hospital environment.

Katherine joined me after having lunch. Her amber eyes were red-rimmed from crying.

“Have you eaten anything?” she asked, her voice gentle despite our family’s turmoil.

“I have no appetite,” I replied, my ice-blue eyes hollow with grief.

The thought of food made my stomach turn. How could I eat when my father was dying?

“Gerald Rivers will return to Riverdale tomorrow afternoon,” Katherine informed me.

“He’ll handle pack

succession matters.”

I nodded numbly. The weight of impending leadership felt crushing on my shoulders.

William stirred in his hospital bed. His once-powerful frame looked frail and diminished.

“Eating is pointless,” he said weakly. “Death is inevitable for even an Alpha when silver invades the

bloodstream so thoroughly.” IF YOU WANT TO READ MORE CHAPTERS, PLEASE VISIT

Katherine moved to his bedside. “You should eat something to maintain your strength.”

William's laugh was bitter and hollow. "Strength for what? A few more hours of suffering?"

He turned his gaze to Katherine, his eyes filled with pain that went beyond physical agony.

"Are you happy that I'm dying?" he asked bitterly. "After all our conflicts over Frederick Warner and Vanessa

Reed?"

Katherine's face crumpled with grief. Despite their marital troubles, his words cut deep.

"I'm not as malicious as you think," she declared, her voice breaking with emotion.

The tension between my parents was suffocating. I could feel their decades of unresolved conflicts hanging

in the air like a toxic cloud.

I stood up from my chair, sensing they needed privacy. This might be their final conversation as mates.

"I'll give you two some time alone," I said quietly.

I left the room, closing the door behind me.

III

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Whisper 253

Chapter 181: The Alpha's Investigation

Chapter 181: The Alpha's Investigation

(Connor's POV)

After visiting my father at Harbor City Memorial Hospital, I returned to Riverdale that night. The weight of his condition pressed heavily on my shoulders as I drove through the familiar territory.

I had invited two leaders from the Northern Territory Werewolf Registry Office and Detective Thomas Harrison to Rivers Pack Headquarters. This meeting couldn't wait any longer.

The formal meeting room felt cold despite the warm lighting. I sat at the head of the mahogany table, my ice-blue eyes reflecting the gravity of the situation.

The three men entered with the deference due to a new Alpha. Their postures were respectful, acknowledging

my recent ascension to pack leadership.

"Alpha Rivers," the first registry official said, bowing slightly. "Thank you for meeting with us during this

difficult time."

I gestured for them to sit. "Please, take your seats. We have much to discuss."

Detective Thomas Harrison, a stern-faced man in his forties, introduced himself first. "I'm Detective Harrison, lead investigator on your father's case. I've handled supernatural cases for over a decade."

The registry officials followed with their introductions. Their experience with werewolf law would be crucial

for this investigation.

"What progress have you made?" I asked, leaning forward with intense focus.

Detective Harrison opened his file. "Based on Katherine Rivers' statement, Vanessa Reed is our prime

suspect."

He continued methodically. "We've learned that Miss Reed often prepared healing broths and moonlight herb supplements for Alpha Rivers."

"She also had access to his morning routine," Harrison added. "Your father drank black coffee with

wolfsbane—neutralizing herbs every morning."

I nodded grimly. Vanessa's access to my father's food and drink made her the perfect suspect.

"What evidence do you have?" I pressed, my wolf demanding answers.

Detective Harrison presented two forensic reports. "One is the testing report of the pot used for healing broth. The other is the cup used for coffee."

He slid the documents across the table. "The pot contained the same wolfsbane derivatives found in your

father's bloodstream."

My hands clenched into fists. The systematic poisoning had been happening right under our noses.

"The healing broth was systematically poisoned," Harrison confirmed. "The wolfsbane compounds seeped into the pot's material even after thorough cleaning."

"What about the coffee cup?" I asked, though I suspected the answer.

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"We traces of toxins." Harrison replied. "But the pack servants confirmed that Vanessa Reed personally prepared the morning coffee every day"

The betrayal cut deep Vanessa had used her position as foster daughter to slowly murder my father.

"What did Vanessa shy during interrogation? I demanded, my Alpha authority bleeding into my voice.

Detective Harrison's expression darkened. "She remained completely silent invoked her right to remain quiet until pack council proceedings

"Frederick Warner also refused to cooperate with human authorities, he added. "But we believe he's directly

involved in the poisoning conspiracy."

I wasn't surprised. Frederick's revenge plot ran deeper than we had initially realized.

"Have you reviewed security surveillance footage?" I asked, hoping for visual evidence This chapter is updated by

Harrison nodded. "We examined all available recordings. Unfortunately, the footage doesn't reveal anything

conclusive."

He explained further. "The surveillance showed Vanessa preparing the healing broth, but she strategically positioned herself to block the camera's view."

"If she poisoned the coffee, she did it in the kitchen's blind spot," Harrison concluded.

My jaw tightened with frustration. Vanessa had been careful to avoid detection.

Detective Harrison hesitated before continuing. "Katherine Rivers suggested you might know the true motives

behind Frederick Warner and Vanessa Reed's actions."

He paused respectfully. "She felt it was inappropriate to elaborate on pack family matters to human

authorities."

I took a deep breath. The truth needed to come out, regardless of family shame.

"Frederick Warner is my father's illegitimate son," I revealed, watching their expressions change.

"His mother was Victoria Price, my father's mistress over twenty years ago," I continued. "She was sent abroad when she became pregnant."

The registry officials exchanged meaningful glances. Illegitimate offspring often caused pack complications.

"Frederick grew up with resentment toward the Rivers pack," I explained. "His revenge plot included using Vanessa Reed as his accomplice."

"I believe Vanessa systematically poisoned my father under Frederick's direction," I concluded. "This was part of their coordinated attack on our pack."

Detective Harrison nodded grimly. "That provides clear motive for both suspects."

"We'll pursue this angle in our investigation," he assured me.

"The human authorities will do our best to investigate within legal boundaries," Harrison promised.

My ice-blue eyes grew heavy with grief and determination. "I need you to uncover the complete truth."

"My father deserves to know who betrayed his trust and slowly murdered him," I said, my voice thick with

emotion.

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Chapter 181 The Alpha's L

The officers acknowledged my request solemnly. "We'll pursue all available leads, Alpha Rivers."

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"I'll deploy pack investigators to cooperate with the human Investigation," I added. "We'll respect territorial law enforcement protocols."

The meeting concluded with plans for coordinated efforts between human and werewolf authorities..

Three days later, after coordinating additional pack resources for the investigation, I received news that lifted my spirits.

Olivia had finally awakened from her recovery rest. My heart raced with desperate hope as I drove to the hospital.

But when I arrived at Harbor City Memorial Hospital, Richard Winters blocked my path. His ice-blue eyes held

firm resolve.

"Connor," he said respectfully but firmly. "Olivia needs more time to heal before receiving visitors."

My wolf whimpered with disappointment. I needed to see her, to know she was truly safe.

"Please, just for a moment," I pleaded, my Alpha pride cracking.

Richard's expression remained unmoved. "She's still recovering from the trauma. Give her space."

I could only leave reluctantly, my heart heavy with unfulfilled longing. As I departed, heated voices echoed

from my father's hospital room.

Katherine's voice rose with desperate pleading. "William, you have to fight this!"

My father's voice was hoarse from wolfsbane damage to his throat. "What's the use of fighting it?"

"The pack healer said I have at most one month left," William's voice rose slightly, rough and pained. "The wolfsbane has spread too far through my system. I'm going to die anyway!"

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Whisper 254

Chapter 182: Ashes of the Past

Chapter 182: Ashes of the Past

(Connor's POV)

I stood outside the hospital room door for a while, but in the end I didn't go in. The sky was gloomy, and it began to drizzle.

I walked to the entrance of Harbor City Memorial Hospital, looked up at the oppressive and dull sky, my mind wandering. I thought to myself that Olivia and I might really have no chance anymore.

William Rivers, my father, was only fifty-two years old, and he was about to leave this world.

I recalled my childhood. When I was five years old, the matter of William's illegitimate son was exposed.

My mother Katherine had a fierce fight with William about severing their mate bond. But in the end, due to the pressure from the elders of the two packs, the mating was not broken.

I clearly remembered all the grievances my mother had suffered. The scenes of my mother hiding in the room and crying.

Every quarrel between my parents. The disgust in William's ice-blue eyes.

I knew that William did not love my mother, nor did he love me. I had never felt fatherly love since I was a

child.

From childhood to adulthood, my relationship with William had never been close. I thought that I would not

be sad if William died.

But at this time, I realized that I simply could not be indifferent.

Not far away, a middle-aged man was holding a little boy in one hand and Olivia's Storm Shelter Umbrella in

the other. He was hurrying towards the hospital gate.

When he reached the hospital entrance, the man put away his umbrella. He lowered his head and softly

coaxed the little boy in his arms.

"Baby, don't cry, Daddy will take you to see the doctor, it won't hurt soon."

My heart trembled. My gaze seemed glued, unable to move away.

The little boy looked only one or two years old. The man was wearing a factory uniform, dark blue, with the

name of the factory embroidered on the chest.

I noticed the man's hands, rough and dark, covered with calluses. It was these rough hands that were

extremely gentle when holding the little boy.

They revealed a strong fatherly love. His weathered face was full of anxiety and worry.

I had almost never seen such an expression on William's face.

Oh no, I had seen it before. That year, William brought Frederick Warner back to the Northern Territory.

He requested his grandparents to allow Frederick to return to the Rivers pack. His grandparents disagreed

and did not even allow them to enter the pack territory. READ LATEST CHAPTERS AT
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Chapter 182: Ashes of the

William knelt in front of the gate with Frederick in his arms. The weather that day was the same as **today**: gloomy and oppressive.

Soon it started to rain. William took off his coat and covered Frederick's head, sheltering him from the wind

and rain.

But Frederick still caught a cold and had a fever. William's anxious expression was exactly the same as this

father's.

I silently watched, my heart aching dully.

The man hurried away with the child in his arms. I looked away and glanced at the misty rain in front of me.

Several young women at the entrance, their faces flushed, occasionally stole glances at me. They were whispering something.

I was indifferent to everything. I raised my foot and stepped into the misty rain.

At night, at my secret base Shadow Den. "Alpha, we have found the location of Victoria Price's grave."

Dominic Reeves stood in front of me and reported in a low voice. "Frederick Warner has built a cemetery for

Victoria Price in a remote village in Shadowmere City, Blackmoor Territory."

Dominic handed the file folder to me.

"This village is where Victoria Price and Frederick first settled when they arrived in Blackmoor Territory. They

lived here for five years, and Victoria also died here."

I opened the file folder. It was a thick stack.

Inside were photos of the small wooden house where they lived. There were also some old photos of

Frederick and Victoria.

Dominic said, "This house is where Frederick and Victoria lived at that time. Frederick has been sending

people to clean it all these years."

"According to the people who clean it, there is no custom of burial in the local area. After a person dies, they

must be cremated."

"After Victoria died, the villagers cremated her. Frederick collected some of Victoria's ashes and set up a

memorial tablet."

"When Victoria died, Frederick did not have the ability to build a cemetery for her. The cemetery was built

later, and it is a cenotaph."

"Buried in the tomb are some of Victoria's clothes and jewelry."

"Later, Frederick went to many places, but Victoria's ashes were always kept in that wooden house. He also

specially sent people to guard it."

“He would go back to worship every year on Victoria’s birthday and death anniversary.”

“Has the tomb been dug open to see?” My ice-blue eyes flashed with cold light, my voice stern.

Dominic replied, "It has been checked, it is indeed a cenotaph."

“What about Victoria’s ashes?” My eyes churned, my emotions obscure.

"They have been moved back." Dominic gestured to his men.

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Chapter 192. Ashes of the

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The men immediately trotted out, and soon, they came in holding a black urn. Dominic took the urn **from the**

men.

"Alpha, these are Victoria Price's ashes."

I stared at the urn in Dominic's hand, my dark eyes deep as the sea.

Victoria Price, the woman who, more than twenty years ago, went to my mother Katherine. Katherine had not yet recovered from childbirth.

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Victoria came with a bastard in her belly, causing my mother to suffer from postpartum depression. My mother almost jumped off a building.

She had turned the Rivers pack upside down. More than twenty years later, her bastard had turned the Rivers pack upside down again.

Everything Frederick Warner did to the Winters pack and the Rivers pack was for revenge. All to vent his anger for Victoria.

Since he was so filial, wouldn't he be heartbroken if he knew that his own mother's tomb had been dug up?

He almost killed Olivia Winters, and also instructed Vanessa Reed to poison William. So it wouldn't be too

much to scatter his own mother's ashes in front of him, right?

I smirked. "I want to see Frederick Warner."

After making arrangements and going through some procedures, I met Frederick.

Frederick Warner was now being held in custody, awaiting sentencing from the court. His case was very

complicated.

It involved multiple other serious crimes besides intentional homicide. The Rivers pack had put pressure on

the authorities.

We specifically instructed that Frederick's case should be thoroughly investigated and severely punished.

At this moment, in a small, cramped interrogation room, a dim light was shining. Frederick sat across from

1. me.

His hands were in silver-laced handcuffs and his feet were in silver shackles.

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Whisper 255

Chapter 183: The Mother's Ashes

Chapter 183: The Mother's Ashes

(Frederick's POV)

Harsh fluorescent lights poured down from above in the prison visiting room. The metal table between Connor Rivers and me felt like a battlefield,

My head throbbed from the bandages wrapped around my skull. My arms ached where the silver-laced restraints had burned my skin during the failed assassination attempt.

But seeing Connor's ice-blue eyes filled with cold fury made every injury worth it.

"Well, well, the mighty Rivers Alpha comes to visit me in this cage," I sneered, rattling my silver handcuffs deliberately. "How... touching."

Connor's jaw tightened. His perfectly pressed suit looked out of place in this grimy interrogation room.

"You look terrible, Frederick," he said with mock concern. "Prison life doesn't suit you."

I laughed bitterly. The sound echoed off the concrete walls like a death rattle.

"Better than being a coward hiding behind pack politics," I shot back.

My wolf paced restlessly beneath my skin. Even in these silver restraints, my Alpha blood burned with defiance.

I had calculated this downfall carefully. The moment I learned from a traitor in Connor's security team that my end was near, I set my final plan in motion.

Harrison Blackthorne, my powerful patron in Blackmoor Territory, was about to be ousted from office. Victoria Ashford's reform movement was gaining unstoppable momentum.

The tides were turning irrevocably against me. My criminal empire was crumbling.

But I refused to go down quietly. If I was going to fall, I would drag Connor Rivers down with me.

"You could have lived quietly in exile," Connor said, his voice deceptively calm. "Why choose this path?"

I spat on the floor between us. "I'm not one to cower like a beaten omega."

"My mother deserved better than exile and poverty," I continued, my voice rising with decades of suppressed rage. "Your father destroyed her life."

Connor's ice-blue eyes flashed dangerously. But he remained composed, which only fueled my anger further.

"Speaking of suffering," I said with a cruel smile, "how is dear old William Rivers doing these days?"

I leaned forward as much as the restraints allowed. "I'm guessing the wolfsbane poisoning is taking its toll?"

My wolf snarled with vindictive satisfaction. Even from this prison cell, I could still inflict pain on the Rivers

family.

"The systematic poisoning was quite elegant, don't you think?" I taunted. "Slow and agonizing, just like my

mother's death."

(Connor's POV)

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Chaphor 183: The Mother.

Frederick's words hit their mark, but I refused to give him the satisfaction of seeing my pain.

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"It was you who directed Vanessa Reed to administer the poison," I stated coldly.

Frederick feigned ignorance, that cruel smile never leaving his lips. "I have no idea what you're talking about."

His wolf paced restlessly beneath his skin. I could see the predatory gleam in his eyes.

I reached into my jacket and pulled out a photograph. I slid it across the metal table.

“Do you remember this place, Frederick?”

The change in him was immediate. His face contorted with rage as his wolf snarled within. For original chapters go to

The photograph showed a small wooden house in Shadowmere City. The place where he had lived with his

mother Victoria Price.

“Where did you get this?” he demanded, his voice dropping to a dangerous growl.

“I’ve been very thorough in my investigation,” I replied, my voice dripping with ice. “Tell me about your

mother’s resting place.”

Frederick’s eyes turned bloodshot. Veins bulged on his forehead as his Alpha instincts roared in protective

fury.

“What have you done?” he whispered, his voice filled with dread.

I smiled coldly. “I had my people visit Victoria’s memorial shrine. Very touching, really.”

“The way you’ve maintained that little wooden house all these years,” I continued. “Such devotion to a dead

woman.”

Frederick lunged at me, but the silver-laced restraints held him back. The guards stepped forward, ready to

intervene.

“You bastard!” he screamed. “If you’ve touched my mother’s grave, I’ll kill you!”

I remained perfectly calm. “Interesting thing about graves, Frederick. Sometimes they’re not what they appear

to be.”

I signaled to Dominic Reeves, who had been waiting outside. He entered carrying a black ceramic urn.

Frederick's eyes widened in horror. "No," he whispered.

"I exhumed Victoria's grave," I revealed calmly. "Imagine my surprise when I found it empty."

Frederick's face went white. "That's impossible."

"A cenotaph," I continued. "Containing only clothes and jewelry. Very clever, really."

Dominic set Sarah Winters' Memorial Urn on the table between us. The black ceramic gleamed under the

harsh lights.

Frederick screamed, his eyes filled with murderous hate. His wolf howled in anguish as he recognized what I

was holding.

"These are your mother's real ashes," I said softly. "Victoria Price's remains."

Frederick's breathing became ragged. His silver restraints burned his skin as he struggled against them.

"You sick bastard," he gasped. "Those are sacred."

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Chanter 193 The Mother.

Bhavy> I leaned back in **my** chair, studying his anguished expression. "I'm offering you one last chance, Frederick."

"Reveal the truth about the wolfsbane poisoning of William Rivers," I continued. "And I'll ensure your mother's ashes remain undisturbed."

Frederick's wolf warred between protective instinct and burning hatred. I could see the internal struggle tearing him apart.

"Choose wisely," I warned. "This offer expires in thirty seconds."

Frederick's hands shook with rage. "You have no honor," he spat.

“Neither did you when you tried to murder Olivia Winters,” I replied coldly.

The seconds ticked by in tense silence. Frederick’s breathing grew more labored.

Finally, he shook his head. “Go to hell, Connor Rivers.”

I kicked him violently. The silver restraints burned his skin as he fell backward.

“Fine,” Frederick gasped, blood trickling from his mouth. “I’ll tell you the truth.”

“I did instruct Vanessa Reed to poison William Rivers with wolfsbane,” he confessed. “But only on one condition.”

My blood ran cold. “What condition?”

Frederick’s eyes gleamed with malicious satisfaction. “That Olivia Winters had to die first.”

My face paled as his words sank in. The targeting of Olivia wasn’t just about inflicting pain.

It was part of a deadly bargain with Vanessa Reed.

“You see,” Frederick continued, laughing maniacally, “Vanessa was obsessed with your precious fiancée.”

“She agreed to poison your father slowly,” he revealed. “But only if I eliminated her romantic rival permanently.

His wolf howled with vindictive satisfaction. “How does it feel, knowing your father’s death was the price for

Olivia’s?”

My Alpha fury reached dangerous levels. The air in the room grew thick with my rage.

Frederick reveled in my pain. “The look on your face is worth every moment in this cage.”

With a cold gaze that promised retribution, I signaled to Dominic Reeves.

Dominic raised Sarah Winters’ Memorial Urn high above his head. Then he smashed it onto the concrete

floor.

The black ceramic shattered into countless pieces. Victoria Price's ashes scattered across the prison floor

like gray snow.

Frederick screamed in anguish. His wolf's protective instincts shattered along with the ceramic.

"No!" he wailed, falling to his knees despite the silver restraints. "Mother!"

I watched his breakdown with icy satisfaction. "Clean up this mess, Dominic."

Dominic produced a broom and dustpan. Frederick watched helplessly as his mother's sacred ashes were

swept into a waste bin.

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Whisper 256

Chapter 184: The Alpha's Justice

Chapter 184: The Alpha's Justice

(Third person's POV)

* Points >

Two prison guards stood outside the interrogation room, their ears pressed against the reinforced door. Every word of Frederick Warner's confession echoed through the metal walls.

"Did you hear that?" the first guard whispered urgently. "He just admitted to instructing Vanessa **Reed to** poison William Rivers."

The second guard nodded grimly. "Every word is being recorded. This confession will make the police investigation much easier."

The entire meeting between Connor Rivers and Frederick Warner was under constant surveillance. As Frederick was a criminal suspect in custody, his confession constituted admissible criminal evidence.

Detective Thomas Harrison reviewed the surveillance footage with satisfaction. The case against both

Frederick and Vanessa was now ironclad.

Meanwhile, Connor had deployed his pack investigators to assist the police. Their efforts quickly uncovered

a crucial witness at Rivers Pack Mansion.

A servant named Martha Wilson had witnessed Vanessa Reed adding something suspicious to William's

healing broth. Choosing to avoid trouble, she had remained silent for months.

Now that the truth was exposed and Vanessa had severed all ties with the Rivers family, Martha confessed

everything to the police.

"I saw Miss Reed adding white powder to Alpha William's broth," Martha testified tearfully. "I thought it was

just extra healing herbs, but something felt wrong."

"She always made sure no one else was watching when she prepared his food," Martha continued. "Now !

realize she was poisoning him all along."

This news reached Eleanor Rivers at Harbor City Memorial Hospital. The elderly matriarch's face contorted

with fury and disbelief.

"A sin! A real sin!" Eleanor cried, her voice breaking with anguish. "I thought she was just temporarily misled by bad people, that she wasn't inherently evil!"

Tears streamed down Eleanor's weathered face. Her hands shook with the devastating betrayal.

“How could this be? How could she be so vicious!” Eleanor wailed. “I raised her like my own granddaughter!”

Katherine Rivers sat expressionlessly by Eleanor’s bedside. Her amber eyes held no sympathy for her

mother-in-law’s distress.

“Elder Rivers, I told you long ago that Vanessa’s intentions were impure,” Katherine said coldly. “**But you never took it** seriously.”

Katherine had cautioned Eleanor about Vanessa’s suspicious behavior since **she started targeting Olivia. Her** warnings **had** fallen on deaf **ears**.

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Chapter 184 The Alpha’s...

Eleanor had never really liked Katherine as a daughter-in-law. In her view, Victoria Price was **morally** corrupt for seducing a married man.

But that didn’t excuse Katherine’s inability to control her husband. Katherine was useless for not **being able to stop** William from his affair.

Katherine had long sensed her mother-in-law’s dislike. Over the years, she had only maintained **a** superficial peace with Eleanor.

She frequently visited the hospital to make an appearance. But she didn’t really care about Eleanor’s

well-being.

It wouldn’t be long before she lived a happy life when the old matriarch died. So Katherine was **the one** who

told Eleanor about Vanessa poisoning William.

After venting her emotions, Eleanor turned her fury toward Katherine. The blame needed to go somewhere.

“Look at the good daughter you raised!” Eleanor questioned Katherine sharply. “What have **you** taught her **all** these years?”

“Ha.” Katherine laughed bitterly. “You’re really good at passing the buck.”

“Wasn’t Vanessa with you more often? Wasn’t she your beloved granddaughter?” Katherine didn’t want **to** pretend anymore and confronted her directly.

“So you’re saying I turned her into this?” Eleanor was furious, her face flushing dangerously.

“How capable you are at raising children,” Katherine said sarcastically. “William and Vanessa, one is more outstanding than the other.”

“You, you, you...” Eleanor almost couldn’t catch her breath. Her chest heaved with rage and shock.

At that moment, a knock came at the door. It was mealtime, so it must be Martha Wilson bringing food.

Katherine composed herself, smoothing her expression into polite neutrality. “Come in.”

Martha Wilson entered with a thermal container. She set up a small table and took out the dishes practiced efficiency.

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“Elder Rivers, I’ve been simmering this moonlight herb and healing bone broth for five hours,” Martha said gently. “It’s been slow-cooked over a low flame. Try some...”

“Take it away! I don’t want it!” Eleanor said angrily.

She was speaking to Martha, but her eyes were fixed on Katherine. They burned with **accusation** and hatred. Katherine smiled coldly, picked up her bag, and turned to leave. The confrontation was finally over.

At Harbor City Memorial Hospital, Adrian Sinclair brought Sophie Turner to visit Olivia Winters. **Pushing open** the door to the ward, it was quite lively inside.

Rebecca Frost and Lily Chen had arrived together just a few minutes earlier. Lily was **playfully showing off a** Hermès bag to Olivia.

“Baby, I flew to France specifically to buy this bag **for** you,” Lily said with **excitement**. “**You can’t even find it in** the country **yet**. It’s a cure—all

“**If** you accept this bag, you’ll **recover quickly**,” Lily **added with a mischievous grin**.

< Chapter 184: The Alpha’s

Rebecca stood to the side, holding a Cartier box. “Olivia, this is a bracelet I bought for you.”

Olivia smiled warmly at her friends' thoughtfulness. "Why are you buying gifts? It's not even a holiday."

+ Points

"We're hoping you'll recover soon and come hang out with us," Lily said with a smile. "Without you, I feel like the male entertainers I order aren't as appealing anymore."

Ethan Quinn's expression darkened immediately. He knocked Lily on the back of the head with *mock* severity.

"You're still ordering male entertainers?" he demanded.

"Ouch, that hurts," Lily said as she rubbed the back of her head. She glared at Ethan playfully.

"I was just joking with Olivia to lighten the mood. Why are you being so serious?"

"Why do you always say things that anger me?" Ethan retorted with exasperation.

Olivia smiled at their familiar banter. She noticed Adrian and Sophie at the door out of the corner of her eye.

"Adrian and Sophie are here," she said gently.

Adrian led Sophie over with quiet dignity. Sophie handed a bouquet of flowers to Olivia with shy politeness.

"Olivia, I wish you a speedy recovery," Sophie said softly.

Olivia smiled and took the flowers. She gently stroked Sophie's head with maternal affection.

"Thank you, Sophie."

"This is for you." Adrian reached out to Olivia with something in his palm.

In his palm lay something bright yellow. It looked like a folded good luck charm with intricate symbols.

Adrian said calmly, "A blessed charm from Moonrise Temple." New novel chapters are published on

"Moonrise Temple?" Emma Thompson looked at the charm in Adrian's hand with surprise. "My mom went to get one last month too. It looks exactly like this one."

Adrian's lips thinned slightly. He didn't say anything in response.

Emma looked up at Adrian with a strange expression. "This charm is hard to get."

"My mom said you have to climb the three thousand steps outside Moonrise Temple on your knees before midnight," Emma explained. "You have to reach the entrance of the sacred grove, then kneel silently until the

sun rises."

"Only when the Moon Goddess sees your sincerity will the temple keeper give you this charm," Emma

finished.

Emma didn't expect Adrian to go to Moonrise Temple to kneel and pray for Olivia's safety. Even Emma, a staunch supporter of the Connor–Olivia pairing, felt a little swayed at this moment.

Hearing Emma's words, Olivia looked up at Adrian with new understanding. The man was still as gentle and

refined as ever.

Behind his wire-rimmed glasses, his beautiful eyes held some emotion she couldn't quite decipher. Didn't he say he only saw her as a good friend?

If they were just good friends, why would he go to such lengths? Adrian didn't speak, only met Olivia's gaze quietly.

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Whisper 257

< Chapter 185: Sacred Bond

+ Points >

Chapter **185: Sacred** Bonds and Final Judgment

Chapter 185: Sacred Bonds and Final Judgment

(Third person's POV)

Just then, Natalie Winters pushed the door open with a thermal container. Her eyes immediately fell on the blessed moonlight charm from Moonrise Temple in Adrian Sinclair's hand.

Natalie paused, her expression freezing. She recognized the sacred talisman instantly.

It was the same type Richard Winters had sought at Moonrise Temple for Sarah Winters during her final

illness. The memory of her predecessor's suffering hit her like a physical blow.

Natalie's eyes trembled with a pang of sorrow. She remembered how desperately Richard had climbed those

sacred steps, begging the Moon Goddess to save his dying mate.

"Did you personally seek this talisman at Moonrise Temple?" Natalie asked Adrian, her voice barely above a

whisper.

Her expression went momentarily blank as she processed the significance of such a gesture. The three

thousand steps. The midnight vigil. The dawn prayers.

Adrian's gaze remained fixed on Olivia. He simply hummed in affirmation, his voice quiet but steady.

Natalie's surprise was evident. She regarded Adrian with newfound interest, recognizing the depth of his feelings for Olivia.

She understood what it meant for a werewolf to climb those sacred steps on his knees. The physical pain.

The spiritual devotion. The desperate hope.

Olivia accepted the moonlight charm with trembling fingers. "Thank you, Adrian," she said quietly, avoiding his intense gaze behind his wire-rimmed glasses.

The weight of his sacrifice pressed down on her chest. She couldn't meet those beautiful eyes emotions she couldn't quite decipher.

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Rebecca Frost and Lily exchanged meaningful glances. Their expressions grew subdued, the earlier lightness

completely evaporated.

Lily, usually jovial and carefree, fell silent. She acknowledged the gravity of the situation with unusual

solemnity.

She knew Olivia hadn't completely let go of Connor Rivers. This development with Adrian's devotion must be painful for her friend.

Both Lily and Rebecca sighed inwardly. They lamented the cruel twists of fate in matters of the heart.

Ten days passed like a shadow over the Rivers Pack territory. William Rivers' health deteriorated rapidly from the wolfsbane poisoning.

His once-powerful alpha presence diminished day by day. His thick hair thinned to wispy strands. His robust body grew frail and hollow.

Eleanor Rivers, the pack matriarch, was burdened by grief and her worsening heart condition. She weakened

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< Chapter 185 Sacred Bond

considerably, spending most days in bed.

* Points

The Rivers Pack Mansion was shrouded in gloom. Pack members whispered in hushed tones about their Alpha's declining health.

Gerald Rivers had stayed in Riverdale for three days after the crisis. Then he returned to the capital for urgent

pack business.

He embarked on a pre-arranged overseas diplomatic mission for the werewolf council. The timing couldn't have been worse, but duty called.

At Harbor City Memorial Hospital, the pack healer set out a bland nutritional lunch. It was specially designed for werewolves recovering from silver or wolfsbane poisoning.

William Rivers stared at the unappetizing meal with no appetite. The healing herbs smelled bitter and medicinal.

Connor Rivers stood by the window, finishing a phone call with the territorial authorities. His ice-blue eyes reflected the gray sky outside.

"The poisoning case is complete with solid evidence," the voice on the phone confirmed. "We're transferring the case to the werewolf tribunal for prosecution."

Connor had also submitted evidence of Frederick Warner's other crimes against pack law. The tribunal's recommendation was swift and merciless.

Death penalty for Frederick Warner. Life imprisonment for Vanessa Reed.

Connor turned back to William, who hadn't touched his healing meal. The untouched food sat cooling on the bedside table.

"Was that call about the charges against Frederick and Vanessa?" William asked weakly.

Connor confirmed it with a cold nod. His expression remained impassive, showing no emotion about the verdict.

e last time."

William hesitated, his weathered hands gripping the hospital blanket. "I want to see Frederick Connor's ice-blue gaze hardened instantly. The temperature in the room seemed to drop several degrees. "No," he said coldly, turning to leave the room.

"Connor, please!" William cried out, his voice breaking with desperation. "I'm begging you!" William's eyes filled with tears. "I don't have many days left with this wolfsbane in my system."

"I want to say something to Frederick before I die," he pleaded. "Just once. Please."

Connor paused at the door. His eyes filled with intense coldness that could freeze fire.

"In the next life, perhaps," he replied in a frigid voice.

(Olivia's POV)

After I finished lunch, I was chatting with Rebecca and Lily in the ward. The afternoon sun streamed through the windows, creating a peaceful atmosphere.

Suddenly, there was a commotion outside in the hospital corridor. Shouts came one after another, sharp and urgent.

< Chapter 185 Sacred Bond

*d Points

The sound of running footsteps echoed through the halls. Multiple voices overlapped in panic and confusion.

Lily frowned, her usual cheerful expression turning serious. "What's happening out there?"

I felt uneasy through my heightened werewolf senses. Something cold settled in my stomach like a stone.

"Something terrible must have happened," I said, my voice tight with worry.

Lily stood up immediately. "I'll go check what's going on."

She walked toward the door with determined steps. Rebecca and I watched her go, both sensing the shift in the hospital's atmosphere.

The door burst open suddenly. Lily stumbled back into the room, her face pale and terrified.

Her usual composure was completely shattered. Her hands shook as she gripped the doorframe for support. Fresh chapters posted on

Seeing her strange expression, Rebecca and I exchanged glances. Our faces grew grim with worry.

"Lily, what happened?" I asked urgently.

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Whisper 258

Chapter 186: Blood and Broken Bonds

Chapter 186: Blood and Broken Bonds

(Third person's POV)

"Blood..." Lily's lips trembled, unable to form a coherent sentence. "So much blood... suicide... jumping..."

Her face was ghostly pale. Her hands shook uncontrollably as she gripped the doorframe.

I felt my amber eyes widen with horror. The scent of death seemed to permeate the hospital corridor through my heightened werewolf senses.

My wolf instincts recoiled violently. Something terrible had happened in this place of healing.

"Lily, what did you see?" Rebecca asked urgently, standing up from her chair.

But Lily couldn't answer. She just stood there trembling, her usual cheerful *demeanor* completely shattered. Just then, Ethan Quinn rushed into the ward. His face was grim as he took the terrified Lily into his arms. "It's okay," he whispered softly, his voice carrying gentle pack bonds. "You're safe now."

Lily clutched his collar desperately. Tears streamed down her face as she buried her head against his chest.

I felt a wave of guilt wash over me. I had let her go out to investigate the disturbance.

My protective instincts as an Alpha's daughter made me blame myself. I should have kept my friend safe from witnessing such trauma.

"This is my fault," I said quietly. "I shouldn't have let you go alone."

Ethan Quinn looked at me over Lily's head. His expression was equally grave as he took a deep breath.

“Olivia,” he said carefully. “William Rivers jumped to his death from the hospital rooftop.”

The words hit me like a physical blow. My wolf whimpered in distress at the news.

“What?” Rebecca gasped, her hand flying to her mouth.

Ethan’s voice grew even more somber. “The news caused Eleanor Rivers’ heart condition to flare up fatally.” “The pack matriarch died from the shock,” he continued. “Her wolf couldn’t survive the loss of her son.”

I felt the blood drain from my face. Two deaths in one day. The Rivers pack was being torn apart. “How is Connor?” I asked immediately, my mate bond stirring with worry.

Ethan shook his head grimly. “He’s handling the aftermath alone. Gerald Rivers is in Europe on werewolf council business.”

Connor Rivers received the news of William Rivers’ suicide shortly after returning to the Rivers Pack Mansion. The timing was devastating.

William had committed suicide almost immediately after Connor refused to let him meet with Frederick Warner one final time. The guilt would be crushing.

The Rivers pack quickly sealed off the news from other territories. They couldn’t afford to show weakness to rival packs.

< Chapter 186 Blood and Br

Gerald Rivers was in Europe and wouldn’t be back for weeks. Connor was left to handle this devastating aftermath completely alone.

The weight of leadership had fallen entirely on his shoulders. Two family members dead in one day.

Back in my ward, I was unable to sleep. The shocking events troubled me deeply.

+P>

They had torn through the Rivers pack like silver through flesh. The pain was almost unbearable to witness.

I knew Eleanor Rivers’ heart condition made her vulnerable to extreme stress. But what made William suddenly jump off the building?

Was it related to Frederick Warner’s crimes? The shame of his illegitimate son’s actions?

The guilt of the wolfsbane poisoning that was slowly killing him anyway?

I reached out through our developing mate bond. The connection was still fragile but growing stronger.

“Take care,” I sent to Connor, hoping he could feel my support.

After a long time, I received a reply. “I’m fine, rest early.”

But I could sense the lie through our bond. He was anything but fine.

I closed my eyes and tried to sleep. But my dreams were vivid and disturbing.

A little boy with Connor’s ice-blue eyes looked at his father William. William was holding another child- Frederick Warner.

The little Connor said sadly through the pack bond: “It is clear that I am also his son...”

His voice was filled with the pain of a child who felt unloved. Unwanted. Second best to an illegitimate

brother.

The scene changed suddenly. Connor stood alone in the rain outside the Rivers Pack Mansion.

He was grief-stricken, his powerful frame hunched with sorrow. His wolf was howling silently in anguish. “He is dead,” Connor said to the empty air. “There will never be another chance in this life to make things right between us.”

The regret in his voice was devastating. All the words left unsaid. All the forgiveness never given.

I woke up from the dream with tears on my cheeks. Connor’s pain was clear through our strengthening mate

bond.

The connection between us was growing deeper every day. I could feel his grief like it was my own. Three days passed after William Rivers’ suicide. The Rivers pack was in mourning.

During a fierce storm that seemed to mirror the pack’s grief, I looked out my hospital window. The rain pounded against the glass relentlessly.

That's when I saw him. *Connor* was standing in the rain outside Harbor City Memorial Hospital.

His powerful frame was hunched with sorrow. The storm soaked through his expensive suit.

But he didn't seem to notice the cold *or* the rain. He just stood there, lost in his grief.

I immediately got out of bed. My wolf urged me to go to him.

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< Chapter 186: Blood and Br

He needed me. I grabbed a jacket and headed for the elevator.

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Whisper 259

Chapter 187: Rain and Reconciliation

Chapter 187: Rain and Reconciliation

(Connor's POV)

"Connor Rivers." Olivia's voice was very soft, so soft that it was instantly drowned out **by the sound of the**

rain.

As if sensing her thoughts through our developing mate bond, I still heard her. I turned back, **gazing at Olivia** from afar through the rain.

She stood on the moonlit corridor, while I stood in the pouring rain. The rain was too heavy, making **my** ice-blue eyes unclear through the downpour.

The storm had been raging for hours. Each drop felt like ice against my skin, but **I** barely **noticed**.

The pain in my chest was far worse than any physical discomfort. William's death had torn something fundamental inside me.

But seeing Olivia there, her amber eyes filled with concern, something stirred in my wolf. A warmth I **hadn't**

felt in days.

Olivia opened her storm shelter umbrella and was about to step into the rain. My Alpha instincts triggered immediately.

I quickly walked towards her. My long legs took large strides, moving swiftly through the storm.

Olivia had only taken two steps when I reached her. The thought of her getting soaked in this freezing rain was unbearable.

"Your wound hasn't healed

et, don't get caught in the rain," my voice was hoarse with grief.

I reached out and took Olivia's hand that wasn't holding the umbrella. Her skin was ice cold against **my** palm.

I pulled her back onto the corridor. She couldn't help but shiver at the contact.

Feeling her trembling, I immediately released her hand. My wolf instinctively wanted to warm her, **to** protect her from the cold.

"It's cold at night, and it's raining, go back quickly."

Even through my grief, her safety came first. It was an automatic response, deeper than conscious thought. Olivia's breath hitched. I could sense her emotions shifting through our strengthening bond.

Even in such distress over my father's death, I would still subconsciously **care** for her safety. The realization seemed to affect *her* deeply.

The corridor was only lit by a dim flickering hallway light, **casting** a faint glow. Olivia put **down the** umbrella and leaned it against the ancient/stone guardian pillar.

"You..." Olivia paused for a moment, "Don't stand in **the** rain."

"Okay," I said, watching her intently. My ice-blue eyes were filled with deep **sadness mixed with gentle, loving affection**.

< Chapter 187 Rain and Re

The rain continued to pour, creating a rushing sound. On the corridor, we stood facing each other, momentarily speechless.

Our wolves called out to comfort one another through the bond. The connection between us pulsed with

unspoken understanding.

+ Points

After a long while, Olivia finally spoke. "Birth, old age, sickness, and death are the natural course of life, my

condolences."

Emotion rippled through my ice-blue eyes. I stepped forward, reaching out to pull Olivia into my arms.

But seeing that I was soaked and dripping wet, I stopped my hand in mid-air. I couldn't bear to get her wet

and cold.

The gesture caused another tremor in Olivia's heart through our *bond*. I could feel her emotional response to my consideration.

I was always like this, every little detail revealing my deep love for her. It was impossible to ignore or

suppress.

I withdrew my hand, hoarsely saying, "I'm fine."

Still being stubborn. That's what it was like in her dream too, though I didn't know she'd been dreaming of

1. me.

Olivia looked up and met my eyes, glaring at me somewhat resentfully. "If you're fine, why did you run out in the middle of the night to stand in the rain?"

My ice-blue eyes seemed to melt with the warmth of her concern. Just as I was about to say something, my pupils suddenly contracted.

Olivia gently wrapped her arms around my waist, hugging me. The familiar scent of my potential mate surrounded me.

My powerful body instantly stiffened. The unexpected contact sent shockwaves through our mate bond.

I hadn't expected this. Olivia had always been more reserved with physical affection, especially since our relationship remained complicated.

Olivia buried her head in my chest, tightening her arms slightly. Her voice was very soft. "Connor Rivers, will a hug make it less painful?"

My eyes deepened, a warm current flowing through my cold heart as our mate bond pulsed with comfort. The girl's warm body was like a small stove.

She dispelled the cold from the rain, instantly warming me from head to toe. The physical warmth was nothing compared to the emotional healing.

My hands slowly returned her embrace, my movements very gentle, very careful. I was afraid of holding too tight, of frightening her away.

"I'm not very good at comforting people," Olivia whispered, nestled in my arms. "I know that sadness and grief can't be suppressed."

"I just hope you don't mistreat your body."

Who said she couldn't comfort people? A hug was worth a thousand words.

< Chapter 187: Rain and Re

My heart had melted into a pool of spring water, rippling gently through our developing bond. This was exactly what I needed, though I hadn't known how to ask for it.

+ Points >

The warmth of her embrace chased away the numbness that had settled over me since William's death. For the first time in days, I felt truly alive.

After hugging for a while, Olivia left my embrace. The loss of her warmth was immediate and sharp.

"Okay," Olivia averted her amber eyes, not looking at me. "Go back and change your clothes, don't **stand** in

the rain anymore."

“Okay,” my expression was soft, very obedient. I would do anything she asked in that moment.

“Eat well, sleep well,” Olivia instructed, as if scolding a child. “Don’t make me worry.”

Hearing her say that, my heart turned incredibly soft. It was the first time since William Rivers’ death that Olivia had openly revealed her feelings for me.

The admission that she worried about me was more precious than any declaration of love. It meant she cared, despite everything between us.

I softly replied, “Okay.”

“Then I’m going back, you go back and drink Connor’s healing ginger brew, take a hot bath,” Olivia turned to

leave.

I stood there, watching her back, until she was out of sight. The corridor felt empty without her presence. But the warmth from her embrace lingered. The knowledge that she cared enough to come out in the storm

for me.

Returning to my downtown apartment, it was already past two in the morning. The staff had already gone to

sleep.

The apartment felt cold and empty after the warmth of Olivia’s embrace. But her instructions echoed in my mind.

I took a hot shower, letting the warm water wash away the rain and some of the grief. Then I made myself a bowl of Connor’s healing ginger brew.

The therapeutic brew warmed me from the inside out. I could almost feel Olivia’s *care* in every *sip*.

After drinking the ginger brew, I lay in bed and quickly fell asleep. I hadn’t had a good night’s sleep for many days since my father’s suicide.

But tonight, wrapped in the memory of Olivia’s embrace and her whispered words of concern, sleep came easily. The Alpha finally found peace. THIS CHAPTER IS UPDATE BY

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Whisper 260

Chapter 188 Funeral and

Chapter 188: Funeral and Returning Shadows

Chapter 188: Funeral and Returning Shadows

(Third person's POV)

In mid-May, Gerald Rivers returned from his European visit to bid farewell to his son and daughter-in-law. **The** funeral for William Rivers and Eleanor Rivers was scheduled for May 17th.

On the funeral day, the sky was overcast with leaden gray clouds hanging low. The atmosphere felt somber and oppressive, as if the heavens themselves mourned the loss.

The private cemetery was located fifteen kilometers north of Rivers Pack Mansion. Generations of Rivers

pack ancestors rested here in eternal peace.

Rows of neat tombstones stood silently like guardians of time. They witnessed countless endings and beginnings of pack life throughout the centuries.

Now two new monuments joined them. The stones were engraved with names, birth dates, and death dates

of the deceased.

Mourners dressed in black with solemn expressions slowly entered this tranquil place. Their footsteps were

muffled against the soft earth, creating an almost reverent silence.

The two graves were arranged vertically, representing different generations. Bouquets and wreaths

surrounded them in a sea of white and pale colors.

The ceremony began with a pack elder's low and solemn voice leading prayers and remembrance. His words carried the weight of tradition and loss.

Pack members bowed their heads in silent tribute. Time became slow and heavy, each moment stretching

like an eternity.

Finally came the farewell moment. Mourners placed white moonflowers one by one on the fresh graves.

Despite past unpleasantness with the Rivers pack, Richard Winters and Natalie Winters attended the funeral. They offered their condolences to the three remaining Rivers family members with genuine respect.

After the funeral ended, a young woman in a black dress with white flowers approached. Her movements were graceful despite the somber occasion.

She greeted Gerald Rivers and Eleanor Rivers with appropriate reverence. Then she turned to Connor Rivers

with subtle changes in her eyes.

Her gaze showed more tenderness as she called his name. "Connor."

Connor responded coldly and politely. "Thank you for specifically returning **to the** country to attend my father

and grandmother's funeral, Miranda."

Miranda looked at him with barely perceptible heartache. "My condolences **for** your loss."

Connor's brief "hmm" and averted gaze signaled the end of their conversation. His ice-blue eyes remained

distant and unreadable.

Seeing this, Miranda lowered her eyes with trembling eyelashes. She said nothing more and **quietly left the**

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Chapter 188 Funeral and.

cemetery grounds.

As funeral attendees gradually departed, Connor didn't see the figure he hoped for. Disappointment flashed

in his ice-blue eyes like a shadow.

The embrace in the rain that night seemed like a dream. Beautiful yet unreal through their developing mate

bond.

Many days had passed, yet he could still feel Olivia's warmth in his arms. The memory was both comfort and

torment.

Due to her unhealed wounds and doctor's orders against excessive movement, Olivia wanted to attend but was forbidden by Richard Winters. She remained confined to the hospital against her wishes.

During this time, she sent messages to Rebecca Frost. Her concern for Connor was evident in every carefully

worded text.

Lily hadn't attended the funeral either. She was severely frightened by William Rivers' suicide and had been

having nightmares.

She stayed home for psychological treatment. Olivia called every few days to check on Lily's condition.

Ethan Quinn always answered that her psychological state remained poor. The trauma had affected her more deeply than anyone anticipated.

After the funeral, Rebecca called back. She lowered her voice as she walked to her car while updating Olivia

on the situation.

“Connor’s emotions seem normal,” Rebecca said quietly. “Don’t worry too much about him.”

Knowing the call was about Connor, Rebecca’s reassurance made Olivia feel relieved through their strengthening bond. The connection between them pulsed with distant comfort.

As Rebecca continued chatting, she suddenly stopped mid-sentence. A familiar face appeared in her line of

sight.

Miranda approached and greeted her with a polite smile. “Rebecca, what a coincidence seeing you here.” After hanging up with Olivia, Rebecca responded coolly to Miranda’s dinner invitation. “Hello, Miranda.”

Initially wanting to refuse, Rebecca changed her mind. She remembered Miranda’s past feelings for Connor and suspected she wanted information about him.

Rebecca also wanted to gauge whether Miranda still harbored feelings for Connor. This could be an opportunity to gather intelligence.

That evening at 7:30 PM, they sat in a private room at an upscale members-only restaurant. The establishment was under Silverridge Holdings, ensuring privacy and discretion.

Miranda and Rebecca sat face to face across the elegant table. The atmosphere was polite but tense

beneath the surface.

After exchanging pleasantries about the funeral and mutual acquaintances, Miranda finally broached the real. topic. Her voice carried carefully controlled emotion.

“Rebecca, I heard about Connor and Olivia’s broken mate bond,” Miranda said softly. “Is it true they’ve completely severed their connection?”

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< Chapter 188 Funeral and

Despite being abroad, she had kept tabs on Connor through various pack connections. She was deeply saddened when she learned of his arranged mating with the Winters pack last year.

The Silverridge and Rivers packs had been allied since Gerald Rivers' generation. Pack elders once jokingly arranged a childhood mating between her and Connor.

Connor was Miranda's first love during her adolescent years. Despite numerous suitors due to her outstanding appearance and pack background, she could never see anyone else.

His brilliance as an Alpha heir had captivated her completely. No other man could compare to his strength

and intelligence.

Before studying abroad, she confessed her feelings at nineteen. She hoped he might ask her to stay, but Connor rejected her completely.

"I already have someone I care for," he had said simply. That someone was Olivia.

Though jealous, Miranda acknowledged Olivia's beauty and exceptional achievements. Olivia excelled in academics and various competitions with natural grace.

Proudly, Miranda didn't persist after rejection. But she declared she wouldn't give up, silently vowing to improve herself enough to catch his attention.

Now, asking about the severed mate bond four months later, she nervously feared hearing an answer she didn't want to hear. Her hands trembled slightly as she waited for Rebecca's response.

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