

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 26: Assassination Attempt - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 26: Assassination Attempt

Chapter 26: Assassination Attempt

Five days later, Eleanor returned home after a busy day at the office. There was a lot of work involved in shaping her newly acquired companies. Some of the top management personnel had resigned, leaving significant gaps that needed urgent filling. Fortunately, her team was capable enough to temporarily replace those positions, but they still needed to hire qualified individuals soon.

It was evening, and the surrounding area was illuminated by streetlights. As her car stopped in the villa's driveway, she stepped out, deep in thought about how to handle the ongoing vacancy crisis. Just as she closed the car door, the entire neighborhood was suddenly plunged into darkness.

Her sharp senses immediately kicked in. Eleanor's right ear involuntarily shifted into its original werewolf form, picking up the faint whistling of something approaching rapidly. Instinctively, she dropped to the ground.

A bullet whizzed past where her head had been just a moment ago and struck a nearby pillar. Chunks of concrete shattered and scattered around. Almost immediately, the villa's emergency power system activated, restoring light to the premises. The entire sequence of events had taken no more than a second.

She heard the commanding voice of her guard captain cutting through the commotion.

"Cut the power immediately! Team G, escort Miss inside the house. Team A, stay vigilant around Young Miss. The enemy is outside the villa... secure the perimeter!"

A brief pause followed before he issued another order. "Command center, reporting in. Miss is under attack at the villa. The enemy has cut off electricity in the surrounding area. Contact Electricity North West and instruct them not to repair the lines for now. We need surveillance footage... track the enemy's location immediately!"

Eleanor remained on the ground, fully aware that she was the primary target. Judging by the bullet's trajectory, if she stayed low beside the car, the enemy wouldn't get a clear shot.

Four guards swiftly approached her, moving in formation. The Blanc Clan was trained to operate best in the darkness.

"Miss, we'll cover you. Please get inside. The windows are bulletproof," one of them assured her.

Eleanor nodded. "I'll crawl to the house. Be careful. The sniper must have night vision."

As she started moving, the guard captain's voice rang out again. "Enemy spotted on the rooftop of a four-story building northeast. Shadow Team, leave the villa to us... pursue the target. There may be multiple assailants. Stay alert."

Midway through her crawl, another bullet whizzed past. It narrowly missed one of the guards shielding her. Fortunately, without any casualties, she reached the safety of the villa. The moment she was inside, a guard shut and bolted the door.

Eleanor rushed to Freya's room. She found her daughter safe, hiding under the bed with her nanny.

She gave the nanny an approving nod before speaking in a calm, reassuring tone. "Freya, Mommy's home. There's no need to be scared. The house is bulletproof. Some bad people are causing trouble, but your uncles and aunts will take care of them. You can come out now."

Freya hesitated for a moment before crawling out from under the bed. Eleanor pulled her into a tight hug. Her daughter seemed relatively calm, much to her relief. Surprisingly, the nanny looked more shaken than Freya.

Meanwhile, outside the villa, the Shadow Guards reached the sniper's location only to find it abandoned. A VSS Vintorez silenced sniper rifle lay on the rooftop, discarded.

"Target missing," one of the guards reported. "Only the rifle remains."

Moments later, the command center relayed new information. "Assailant spotted. He's hiding in an empty house one block away. Surveillance footage confirms five men were involved. Only the shooter entered the house perimeter; the others dispersed. Teams are tracking them separately."

The sniper was a Russian ex-Spetsnaz Sniper. He had meticulously planned the operation, scouting the villa for two days to analyze escape routes. His precision had never failed him before, and yet, his perfect shot had inexplicably missed. He couldn't comprehend it.

His plan had been flawless. The four other men were meant to create diversions, allowing him to slip away unnoticed. But something had gone horribly wrong. His pursuers weren't following the script. They weren't after the diversions... they were after him. His instincts screamed danger.

He gritted his teeth and pulled out his Uzi Pro SMG from his backpack. If he had to go down, he would go down fighting.

However, when the Shadow Guards stormed into the house, they shifted into their werewolf forms. Massive, menacing creatures with glowing eyes surrounded him.

His breath hitched. His grip on the SMG faltered. He had faced death before, but this... this was something else.

With a thud, his knees buckled, and he dropped to the ground involuntarily.

"I'll talk! I'll tell you everything!" he blurted out, his voice trembling.

He confessed the entire assassination plot without even being asked. His eyes darted between the seven monstrous figures that loomed over him, their glowing eyes fixated on him like hunters observing prey.

Once the Shadow Guards confirmed his intel, they relayed the details to the command center. Meanwhile, the other four men were captured and interrogated separately. Surprisingly, all their stories aligned.

Upon hearing the report, Xavier Raynor, who had arrived at the command center after hearing the news, made a decisive call. "Eliminate them all."

It took only fifteen minutes to clean up the mess.

Shortly after, Electricity North West restored power to the neighborhood, issuing a public statement: "Due to an emergency technical issue, certain areas experienced an outage. The issue has now been resolved. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience caused."

The investigation uncovered that the assailants were hired mercenaries from France. They had traveled via speedboat from Calais, crossing the English Channel before docking at Ellesmere Port. From there, they drove to Manchester.

Their plan had been to escape the same way... splitting up and taking different routes back to Ellesmere Port after completing their mission. However, three members of their team had stayed behind at the port, preparing for their return journey.

Among them was their leader... the only one who knew how to receive assassination assignments. The rest of the team only followed orders. According to their intel, their leader obtained jobs through a darknet website.

A separate Shadow Team stationed in Liverpool was dispatched immediately. They quickly located and subdued the remaining three men. After thorough questioning, the orders were clear... no loose ends.

Their speedboat was sunk in deep waters, and the bodies were cremated. All traces of the operation were erased.

By the next morning, it was as if the assassins had never set foot on English soil.

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 27: The Unstable Boss - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 27: The Unstable Boss

Chapter 27: The Unstable Boss

From the captured leader of the assailants, the command center gained access to the darknet website where the assassination had been ordered. The platform operated on an invitation-only membership system with a strict hierarchy. Members were ranked using a point-based system... completing jobs successfully would earn points, which in turn determined one's level. The hierarchy ascended from R (Rookie), N (Novice), then D, C, B, A, and finally S (Superior).

The assassin leader was a Level D member. That meant he could only view and accept missions ranked at Level D or below. Upon inspecting his account, they found the details of the assignment on Eleanor: several recent photos of her, basic personal information, and the bounty value of 100,000 dollars, categorized as a standard Level D contract.

Judging by the mission's low-level classification and basic information, the team concluded that the assassination order had likely come from a human client. There was no sign of involvement from the supernatural world. This gave everyone a small moment of relief... if it were a werewolf or vampire clan, the implications would've been far more serious.

Xavier Raynor issued one command before leaving the command center: "Find out who issued the contract. Hack the site if you have to."

Twenty-Four Seven Limited was Greater Manchester's largest call center, established in 1996 by Kieran Raynor. For decades, it worked closely with the City Council and the Police Department. The building in Hyde stood five stories tall. The lower three floors were for general operations, while the upper two were off-limits to all but Raynor Clan, Blanc Clan, and a few certified insiders.

Unbeknownst to the public, those top two floors housed the security command center for Clan Raynor.

Currently, the command center was under the supervision of Xavier Raynor, the acting Guardian of the Raynor Clan. It served as his personal domain. Following his order, the best hackers from the shadow network were already attempting to infiltrate the darknet website that had dared to place an assassination order on Eleanor.

Meanwhile, on Ethan Raynor's side of things, the news of the assassination attempt reached him almost immediately. He had just been concluding a private meeting with the Mayor of Stockport to discuss expanding their business presence in the Stockport area.

To impress the mayor, they had reserved the entire Hare & Hounds Mill Brow Pub for the day, knowing it was her favorite spot for countryside cuisine. The mood had been light, until Ethan's phone buzzed with a message. As he read the report, his expression darkened. The temperature in the room seemed to drop to freezing.

The mayor, while in mid-sentence, suddenly went quiet. A chill ran down her spine. In her fifty years of life and years of experience dealing with criminals and politicians alike, she had never felt a presence so dangerous. It wasn't just anger she sensed... it was pure, deadly rage cloaked beneath an icy calm. She finally understood why Ethan Raynor had the reputation of a cold-blooded killer in the business world.

She had met murderers, mob bosses, and even war veterans. None of them had given her the soul-chilling fear that Ethan Raynor radiated in that moment.

Jack Brown, Ethan's personal assistant, had already resigned himself to the fact that his boss was... difficult. If it weren't for the absurdly high salary, he would've quit long ago. Ethan was ruthless... not just with enemies, but also with his own team. Precision, excellence, and complete obedience were expected. And Jack and others under Ethan Raynor had delivered that even if they were on the brink of death.

But lately... something had changed.

Ever since Miss Eleanor entered the Kingdom, Ethan had become increasingly moody, indecisive, and prone to emotional swings. Jack often joked... privately, of course... that Ethan behaved like a pregnant woman on bad days.

But when Jack saw his boss's clenched fists and deadly eyes, he knew one thing with absolute certainty: this was related to Miss Eleanor.

He silently prayed for the poor souls who had dared to cross her.

Only seconds passed before Ethan's demeanor returned to its usual calm, professional state. He stood up, voice even but urgent.

"I'm sorry, Madam Mayor. There's a family emergency. I have to leave immediately. My secretary will accompany you for the rest of the dinner. I promise to make this up to you."

The mayor quickly nodded. "It's okay. Please go ahead."

Ethan turned to Jack. "Accompany the Madam Mayor. You know the business details we intended to discuss. As compensation for my absence, offer her and her family a private sea tour aboard my yacht. Schedule it at her convenience. Ensure complete confidentiality and make sure security is airtight. Handle everything. And get another car... I'm taking mine."

With that, Ethan exited the pub, not sparing another glance. Once outside, he pulled out his phone and made a call.

"I'm at Marple Bridge, Stockport. I need to be in Manchester immediately. Track my location. Clear all road signs and give me green lights all the way. I'll be speeding. Take care of it."

"Understood, Mr. Raynor," came the crisp response.

Ethan pocketed his phone, climbed into his black BMW X5, and roared down the road.

He had come alone for the confidential meeting, without guards. But he wasn't worried about protection now. He only needed speed.

Thanks to his men, every traffic light on his route turned green just before he arrived. Other drivers were subtly rerouted. In just fifteen minutes, he crossed the usual thirty-minute distance and arrived at Eleanor's villa.

The scene outside the house had already been cleaned up. The guards stood at attention, the perimeter calm but alert.

Ethan checked his phone again for real-time updates. The command center had everything under control.

The guard captain stepped forward as he got out of the car.

"Miss Eleanor and the young miss are both upstairs."

Ethan gave a curt nod. "Thank you."

Without another word, he walked inside, straight up to the second floor. He paused in front of Freya's room, where he heard laughter and soft voices.

He pushed the door open and saw a heartwarming sight.

Eleanor and Freya were playing with building blocks on the carpeted floor. Freya's giggles filled the room like sunshine.

The moment Freya saw him, she squealed and rushed over, arms wide open.

"Daddyyyy!"

Eleanor turned around, standing slowly, eyes locking onto his. She had sensed his arrival even before he reached the stairs. She had waited to gauge Freya's reaction... to be sure she was truly fine.

Ethan scooped Freya into his arms, holding her tightly. His eyes never left Eleanor's.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

So much emotion was packed into that one simple sentence... worry, rage, guilt, relief.

Eleanor smiled softly. "I'm fine. Just a small disturbance."

Freya chimed in, grinning, "Daddy, let's play! Mommy is no fun to play with."

Eleanor gasped in mock outrage. "Now that you've found your daddy, you've abandoned your poor mommy?"

Realizing her mistake, Freya squeaked, "No, no! It's also fun with Mommy!"

Both parents burst out laughing, the earlier tension melting away.

"Children are always a blessing," Ethan thought as he held his daughter close.

Eleanor wiped her hands and stood. "Freya, go play with Daddy for a bit. I'll check the kitchen. Ethan, join us for dinner tonight."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 28: World Hacker Alliance - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 28: World Hacker Alliance

Chapter 28: World Hacker Alliance

Eleanor went to the kitchen to instruct the staff about dinner. She specifically asked them to cook some of Ethan's favorite dishes. Her voice was calm, her expression composed... but there was a hint of weariness in her gaze.

After giving the instructions, she walked upstairs to her study and called the guard captain. Within minutes, he entered the room and stood at attention.

"Miss," he said respectfully, "we've already cleared the damages. By tomorrow morning, the broken pillar will be fully repaired. The command center informed us that all the assailants have been taken care of. There's no remaining threat. As for what the command center did, we weren't told."

Eleanor nodded. "Okay. I'll speak with the command center myself. You may go now."

The guard captain hesitated. "I'm sorry, Miss. Please pardon our incompetence."

Eleanor shook her head. "It's not your fault. We never expected a sniper to open fire in a residential area. Our AI system is designed to detect unauthorized access by living beings within the villa perimeter. But now that we've seen what desperate people are willing to do, we'll expand the system's range. The perimeter detection and notification protocols will be updated immediately."

She paused before adding gently, "Don't blame yourself or your men. No one was hurt. This attack, if anything, exposed the blind spots in our defenses. Go and tell everyone... they didn't fail. They protected me under heavy firepower, and I'm grateful."

The captain bowed his head and left the room.

Once alone, Eleanor picked up her phone and called the command center. A voice on the other end quickly responded.

"Ma'am. Here's the current situation. After the boss gave the order, our hackers began attempting to breach the darknet site, but so far, they've failed. The firewall is strong and multi-layered. We're trying various strategies to break through. The assailant leader told us that if he fails to complete the mission within one week, the assignment will be opened to other hit squads. Also, if he doesn't personally confirm his failure, his account will be temporarily suspended. So, we have a one-week window to act. We'll keep you informed of any updates."

"Understood," Eleanor said. "Send me the link and login information."

Seconds later, her phone buzzed with a secure message. Eleanor opened her desk drawer and pulled out a second phone... a sleek, matte-black Bittium Tough Mobile, untouched for over a year.

She powered it on and began typing. Her fingers flew across the screen in rapid motion, almost a blur. The interface loaded a secure shell. She bypassed the preliminary encryption easily, but the deeper she went, the more she frowned.

After five minutes, she leaned back in her chair.

"If I force access, they'll track my location," she murmured. "No doubt about it."

She stared at the code, her brow furrowed. "And this signature... there's no mistaking it. ZeroWarden. One of the top ten hackers in the world. This site is under his protection, I presume. If I go further without initiating contact, it'll escalate into a digital standoff."

She exhaled slowly, then exited the shell and opened a forum instead... a private domain known only to the elite of the hacking world. She posted a single message:

BlackCat: @ZeroWarden, contact me ASAP or your device will be blown.

The forum, dormant seconds earlier, exploded with activity.

RedNull: Ahhhh... the goddess is back.(scream)

ByteWitch: @BlackCat, where have you been for two years?!

DrkSyntax: @BlackCat, I love you.

K3yMast3r: @ZeroWarden, don't keep our goddess waiting!

BitJunkie: Did @ZeroWarden offend you? Say the word, we'll handle it.

HexShade: @BlackCat, we missed you so much.

NovaBreak: @AzureDragon, if @ZeroWarden disrespected her, vote to expel him!

NetStalker: Marry me, @BlackCat! (love)

AzureDragon: @Everyone, calm down. Welcome back, @BlackCat.

Three years ago, BlackCat, one of Eleanor's aliases, had been the most formidable hacker in the world. So powerful was her presence that the President of the World Hacker Alliance, AzureDragon, once nearly lost his position to her in a popular vote. Though the group was informal, membership in their private forum required rigorous vetting. And among them, BlackCat was legend.

Within minutes, a private message appeared.

ZeroWarden: Sorry @BlackCat, did I offend you somehow?

BlackCat: Not at all. I just tried to access a darknet site and found it was under your protection.

ZeroWarden: Ah, that would be the Russian job board. Yes, I built their new system. Tell me what you need.

BlackCat: I need access. That's all. You know what happens if I force it.

ZeroWarden: Understood. Sending you the credentials now.

BlackCat: Appreciated.

A file popped up on her screen: untitled.zip.

She downloaded and opened the archive, decrypting the contents in seconds. Inside was a set of master credentials... admin-level access. Without a second thought, she logged into the target darknet site.

Meanwhile, in the forum, ZeroWarden posted publicly:

ZeroWarden: @Everyone, I just spoke with the goddess. All is well. There's no problem between us. I would never offend her.

BitJunkie: Smart man. LoL.

DriftGhost: Thanks @ZeroWarden. At least you could bring her back, we forgive you.

Eleanor, now deep within the site's architecture, ignored the ongoing chatter. Her attention was solely on the server. The structure was impressive. The group was a global mercenary network based in Russia. Over a thousand members. Organized, disciplined. Contracts filtered by region, specialization, and target class.

She located her contract. It had several photos of her, general information, and some background details when she was Eleanor Whitmore. Rage flickered behind her eyes, but she remained calm.

The issuer's profile came next. Pseudonym. Faked IP chains. Dummy phone numbers. The data trail was expertly scrubbed.

Dead end.

She leaned back and sighed. The only way forward now was through the organization itself. But poking further would alert too many eyes.

Eleanor encrypted her logs, wiped all traces, and powered off the Bittium phone.

Then, using her personal phone, she called the command center.

"What's the update on the breach attempt?"

"No progress, Miss. Their defenses are holding strong."

"Don't waste any more time," Eleanor said. "I've gained access through another route. I have a lead and I'll pursue it independently. Inform Uncle Xavier that I asked for the hacking process to be terminated. It's a dead end."

"Are you sure, Miss?"

"I'm sure. Please pass along my message, word for word. Thank you."

She ended the call, then turned to the window. Night had fully fallen over Manchester, lights flickering in the distance like stars reflected on a dark sea.

One week. That was all the time she had before another assassin came.

She whispered, "Let's see who you really are... and why you want me dead."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 29: A Glimpse of the Past - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 29: A Glimpse of the Past

Chapter 29: A Glimpse of the Past

Eleanor stood by the floor-to-ceiling window in her study, her gaze lingering on the dark sky above. The stars were scattered like spilled glitter, faint yet constant, whispering memories of a past she'd tried for so long to forget. In the distance, a plane passed silently overhead, blinking red and white across the heavens.

Her thoughts swirled like a storm cloud. "The assassination order wasn't for Eleanor Raynor... but for Eleanor Whitmore," she murmured to herself.

That detail changed everything.

"It means the order didn't come from the business world... and definitely not from the supernatural circles either. If it had, the bounty would be in the millions... not a mere hundred thousand dollars. No, this is personal. It has to be the Whitmore family."

She clenched her fists, brows furrowed in cold realization. "Willow White must have informed Jennifer about my return. And now... they're desperate. Of course... they would be. The seven-year deadline is almost here. They can't take any chances."

A wave of memories from her childhood hit her like a gust of winter wind... sharp, sudden, and unrelenting.

Her mother had passed away when she was barely six months old. The only thing she had left of her was a few faded photographs and the business empire she'd built from scratch. Eleanor's memories before her bloodline awakening had been vague, but afterward, everything was vivid. Strangely, despite the mental clarity, she still couldn't recall a single moment spent with her mother. Her presence existed only in stories... and regrets.

After her mother's death, Aunt Isabella had stepped in. A kind woman who claimed to be a distant relative of her mother's side. Eleanor had no memory of ever meeting

another member of her maternal family. She does not even know the names of her grandparents. Nothing. Her mother's world had been erased... was it deliberate?

She remembered being eight when Jeanne, her "kind" stepmother, suddenly fired Aunt Isabella. Eleanor had cried for days. Jeanne had comforted her, winning her trust with a sweet voice and fake warmth. It wasn't until now that Eleanor realized she had completely forgotten about Isabella.

Her face darkened.

She pulled out her phone and dialed Teresa. "I want you to find an old lady named Isabella Thomas," she said, her tone low but urgent. "She must be in her early fifties by now. She was my nanny, looked after me until I was eight. After she was fired, I heard she returned to her hometown... somewhere in Birmingham. She once told me her house was near Edgbaston Stadium. Cross-reference the timeline. I want her location by tonight. I want to visit her tomorrow."

"Okay, Boss," Teresa replied.

Teresa ended the call and groaned... she'd just sat down to relax after a grueling day, but a paycheck that size made up for the sudden overtime. She threw off her blanket and got to work.

Meanwhile, Eleanor paced across the room. "How stupid was I?" she whispered, shaking her head bitterly. "To think Jeanne was a gentle stepmother... and Jennifer, a loving older sister."

They had orchestrated her life like a play... every move, every emotion. Puppeteers in velvet gloves.

"How could a father participate in planning the rape of his own daughter? He even wanted me dead." Her voice cracked, but she swallowed the lump in her throat. "Is he really my father?"

A chilling possibility emerged. What if William Whitmore wasn't her biological father at all?

"I need to find out the truth. I need a DNA test... as soon as possible."

Back when she first returned to the U.S., Eleanor had reached out to a few of her mother's former business partners. Through them, she'd pieced together fragments of the truth.

Her mother, Esmeralda Langford, had suffered complications during childbirth and remained hospitalized until her death. At the time, no one knew who Eleanor's father was. William Whitmore had worked closely with her mother as a personal assistant and

took over managing the company during her illness. After Esmeralda's death, he suddenly produced a marriage certificate and claimed Eleanor as his daughter.

On her deathbed, Esmeralda had gathered her partners and declared that all her assets would go to her daughter, Eleanor Langford. She added a clause stating none of the properties could be sold or transferred until Eleanor turned twenty. William became Eleanor's legal guardian and temporary custodian of all her mother's assets... and, of course, the acting chairman of the company.

Just a few months later, he married Jeanne Baker.

And with that, Eleanor Langford became the second daughter of the Whitmore family, second to Jennifer Whitmore, who was Jeanne's daughter with William Whitmore before their marriage.

Everything suddenly clicked.

James Clifford's mother was Phoebe Baker. She'd seen Phoebe and Jeanne together several times, always speaking in familiar tones. James hadn't come into her life by chance... he had a role to play, too.

She remembered how James had always come to her rescue in school, playing the hero. But when had the bullying begun?

It all started when someone spread a rumor that Eleanor's mother was a mistress who broke apart the Whitmore family. That Esmeralda had seduced William and given birth to an illegitimate daughter. People had said the only good thing about her death was that she spared Jennifer more suffering.

And the worst part? Eleanor had believed it! Jennifer was her senior, kind and well-liked. Eleanor had resented her own mother, even hated herself for being "the mistress's child."

And there was no one to tell her otherwise.

Only Jeanne and Jennifer were there... always supporting her. Always feeding her lies.

The rumors had begun right after Isabella was fired.

Of course. Jeanne had orchestrated the whole thing. Isabella might have told Eleanor the truth... that Esmeralda was William's wife first. That she wasn't the product of some illegitimate affair. That Jennifer was the outsider, not her.

Most of her school bullies had come from Jennifer's class. It didn't take much effort to guess who started the rumors.

Before the night she overheard them plotting her rape and murder, she had genuinely believed they were her family. Their performance had been so convincing that it could've won Oscars. If she hadn't heard it herself, even a video recording wouldn't have been enough to convince her.

Her stomach churned at the thought.

Eleanor sat in silence for a long while, staring at the polished surface of her desk. Finally, she picked up her phone and dialed a number from memory.

"Hello, Uncle. How's your health?" she asked softly.

A voice came through, aged but warm. "Ah, Eleanor. Still alive and kicking, my girl! It's so good to hear your voice. How've you been?"

"I'm doing well. I've returned to the Kingdom. I want to see you. When would be a good time?"

"You're back?" he said, clearly surprised. "That's wonderful news! Your aunt hasn't been doing well recently. I think it would do her good to see you. Come over anytime."

"Alright. Just don't tell her I'm coming. Don't tell anyone. There might be spies eyeing you." Eleanor smiled gently. "I'll be there in about an hour."

"Got it. I'll be waiting."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 30: Shadow Guards - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 30: Shadow Guards

Chapter 30: Shadow Guards

Eleanor gently closed her eyes, allowing the silence of the study to settle around her like a comforting shroud. Outside, the world continued on, unaware of the storm brewing within her mind. Since her return to the Kingdom, her focus had been singular... building her company. Heimdall Technologies was still in its infancy here, unlike the thriving tech conglomerate she had established in North America. She had envisioned a quiet, low-key launch in the Kingdom, avoiding unnecessary attention. Too much limelight in the beginning was never good for business. These annoying bugs didn't let her be at peace.

After her bloodline awakening, she had remained in the ancestral land until Freya was born. During that time, she gained access to ancient books and received teachings from elders who had long withdrawn from the mortal world and now resided within the ancestral grounds. There, she immersed herself in business philosophy, strategic thinking, and the subtle intricacies of power. Later, she traveled across the globe and

spent over a year learning directly from Fiona, a legend in the business world. Those lessons were etched into her very soul.

Finally, when she felt prepared to challenge the Kingdom's market, she returned home. She had no intention of engaging with the Whitmore family yet. Her plan was to settle Heimdall Technologies, release their breakthrough product, and establish an unshakable foothold. Then she would move against her enemies... on her terms. But her plans were derailed.

The Whitmores acted first. Their desperation was evident. They knew she had returned, and perhaps they sensed what she had discovered. Their moves forced her hand. She could no longer afford to wait. Especially not when the risk extended beyond her... to Freya.

Eleanor's jaw tightened. Her daughter's existence had to remain a secret from the Whitmores. No matter what.

She straightened her back and spoke with resolve, "Shadow Guards, gather here."

Within seconds, six dark figures emerged from the shadows, silent as the night. Their presence was as natural as the air around her. Eleanor had always been aware of their protection, but now, it was time to truly lead them.

"I need to retrieve something... discreetly," she said, scanning their masked faces. "Which one of you is best in stealth?"

One figure stepped forward without hesitation. "That would be me," a female voice said with quiet confidence.

Eleanor nodded. "Before we go further, I owe you something. I've never formally introduced myself to you all. You've been guarding me since I returned, and I was too immersed in work to do what I should have done long ago."

She paused. "My name is Eleanor Elizabeth Raynor. Future leader of the Raynor Clan. Please show your face and let me know your name."

The guards removed their masks at her command, revealing the faces behind the shadows. One by one, they introduced themselves.

"I'm Sebastian Blanc," said the first, a tall man with a chiseled jaw. "I am the leader of this team. My specialty is hand-to-hand combat."

"Ophelia Blanc," said the stealth expert. Her sharp eyes missed nothing. "Specialized in infiltration and assassination."

"I'm Raphael Blanc. Small firearms expert," said the next, casually resting a hand on his concealed weapon.

"Alaric Blanc," came the voice of a lean man. "Long-range shooting and sniping."

"Elias Blanc," said another with a calm demeanor. "My strength lies in swordsmanship."

"And I'm Isadora Blanc," said the final member. "Tracking and close combat."

Eleanor's eyes lingered on each of them with respect. "Thank you for keeping me and my family safe. Without Clan Blanc, the Raynor legacy would never have reached these heights. As an Elizabeth, my life will always carry more risk. Your jobs are dangerous without question."

She took a deep breath. "From this moment, in addition to the payment you receive from the Clan, you will also be paid ten thousand pounds per month directly from me. This is not charity... it's recognition. If something happens to you, your families will be compensated from my personal funds. What I ask in return is simple: absolute loyalty and total secrecy. Especially concerning my personal matters. Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes, my lady," they said in perfect unison.

"Good. Then your mission begins now." She handed a folded paper to Sebastian. "Go to this address. Monitor every individual on the premises, especially the household staff. I want you to find out the moles there. I will arrive in one hour. When my car enters the compound, activate the signal jammer and cut their internet."

Sebastian nodded. "Understood."

Eleanor turned to Ophelia. "You stay. You have a separate mission."

The rest of the guards placed their right hands over their hearts and bowed. With a shift of air and no sound, they vanished into the shadows.

Only Ophelia remained.

Eleanor approached her. "This task is personal and confidential. You are not to speak of it to anyone... ever."

Ophelia nodded once.

"I need three strands of hair. From William Whitmore, Jeanne Baker, and Jennifer Whitmore. Make sure the roots are intact. Use gloves and seal them in sterile bags immediately. Can you do that?"

"Yes, my lady."

"I'll send you the address and their photos. Go tonight. No mistakes."

Ophelia said her mobile number, and Eleanor typed a message. A few seconds later, her phone buzzed as the message arrived. She bowed slightly and exited the room.

Eleanor turned her attention to her family. She walked to Freya's room and found her daughter giggling while Ethan was playing a dragon game on the computer. The sight warmed her heart, if only for a moment.

"I'll be heading out for a while," she said, standing at the doorway.

Ethan looked up and smiled. "Alright. Freya and I will be here."

She left them with a soft smile and descended to the ground floor. The guard captain was waiting.

"I'm leaving for a private meeting. No convoy. Send your best driver with a civilian car. Shadow Guards will cover me."

"Yes, Lady Eleanor."

She informed the butler that Freya and Ethan were to have dinner without waiting for her if she was late. Then she stepped into a black sedan that pulled up at the side entrance.

Forty minutes later, they arrived at a quiet, upscale courtyard. A uniformed guard at the gate approached.

"Name and appointment?" he asked.

Eleanor called a number and handed over her phone. The guard spoke briefly to the person on the other end, nodded, and opened the gate.

The car drove through and stopped before a modest yet elegant villa. Standing at the entrance was a tall, silver-haired man in gold-rimmed glasses.

"Uncle Grant!" Eleanor exclaimed and rushed to embrace him.

"We missed you, child. It's been years. Your aunt will be happy to see you," Elliot Grant replied with warmth.

"I'll see Aunt later. We need to talk...privately," she said, serious once again.

Understanding her tone, he led her to his study. Once inside, she shut the door firmly.

"Sebastian," she said calmly.

To Mr. Grant's shock, a figure emerged silently from the corner. His presence was terrifying... like a phantom.

"There are three infiltrators," Sebastian reported. "One guard at the gate. One in the kitchen. The last is Mr. Grant's secretary."

Eleanor's voice was cold. "I want to know who sent them. Interrogate, then eliminate them. Make sure their bodies vanish."

Elliot Grant stood frozen, staring at the emotionless face of the young woman he had once rocked to sleep. She was no longer the lively girl he knew, no longer the helpless child left behind by her friend Esmeralda.