

To ruin an Omega #Chapter 359: Paternal Bond 5 - Read To ruin an Omega Chapter 359: Paternal Bond 5

Chapter 359: Paternal Bond 5

CIAN

For a moment she fought them with surprising strength. Not like a warrior, not with skill, but with the desperate energy of someone who had already decided she had nothing left to lose.

Then she lifted her head.

Only then did I realize it was Beta Teagan.

Ronan's mother.

I had seen her many times over the years. She had always carried herself with quiet dignity. Calm and composed in a way that made others trust her without thinking about it.

The woman standing in front of me now barely resembled that memory.

Her dark hair had come loose from whatever braid or knot she had worn earlier and now hung in tangled strands around her face. Dirt streaked across the sleeves of her dress and smeared along one cheek as though she had fallen more than once on her way here. The fabric was wrinkled and creased, the hem dark with dust.

But it was her eyes that held me.

They were wild.

Red rimmed, glassy with tears she was trying and failing to hold back.

She saw me.

The moment she did, everything else seemed to disappear for her.

"You," she breathed, the word torn out of her like something fragile breaking. Her chest rose and fell in quick, uneven breaths as she struggled to steady herself. "How... how could you do this to Ronan?"

For a second I said nothing.

Then I glanced toward Valentine.

"Is it done?"

He gave a small nod. "Yes."

The magic had settled. The covenant was complete.

I turned back to the sentinels.

"Let her go."

They hesitated. It was only a moment, but I saw the uncertainty in their faces. They had dragged her like a threat that she supposedly was. Letting her walk freely toward me was not what they expected.

Still, they obeyed.

Their grips loosened and her arms slipped from their hands. The sentinel with the gun lowered it slightly, though he kept it ready at his side, his eyes still fixed on her.

Freed from their hold, Teagan swayed where she stood.

For a heartbeat I thought she might collapse right there.

Then she forced herself forward.

Each step looked like it took more effort than the last. Not because she was weak, but because whatever had brought her here had already wrung everything out of her.

When she reached me, she didn't try to stand tall.

She sank to her knees.

The movement was slow and unsteady, like her legs simply gave out beneath the weight of what she was carrying.

Her hands came up instinctively, not touching me, but hovering there as if she did not know whether she was allowed to.

Up close, I could see the tracks tears had carved through the dirt on her face.

"Please," she whispered.

The word trembled.

She swallowed hard, trying to steady her voice, but it kept breaking apart anyway.

"I know my son has done terrible things. I'm not blind to it, no matter how much I wish I could be. I raised him. I know the boy he was, and I know the man he became." Her fingers twisted together in her lap as though she was trying to hold them still. "And I know you have every reason to hate him."

Her gaze lifted to mine again, filled with something that made my chest tighten.

Fear.

The kind of fear that belonged to a mother standing at the edge of losing her child.

"But he's still my son," she continued softly, her voice shaking. "I carried him for nine months. I held him when he cried as a baby. I watched him take his first steps across the floor of our home. I remember the way he used to run to the door whenever his late father came back from patrol."

A small, broken sound escaped her throat.

"I remember the boy he used to be."

Her shoulders trembled as she drew in a shaky breath.

"I know you're the Alpha. I know you have to protect the pack. I know justice has to be done." Her voice cracked completely now. "But I'm begging you... please don't destroy him."

Tears slipped freely down her face now, but she didn't try to wipe them away.

"Punish him if you must. Strip his rank. Lock him away. Do whatever you think is right."

Her head bowed slightly as if the words themselves were costing her something.

"Just... please don't take my son from me. Pleas. He has to live."

For a long moment she stayed there on her knees in front of me.

There was no pride in it.

No defiance either.

This was just a mother, trembling with the terrible love that refuses to let go even when it knows it probably should.

I cut her off. "You have no idea what your son Ronan did. How deep his betrayal runs. As much as it hurts me, there is nothing I can or will do about it. So if you're truly here to beg for mercy, I'm sorry to disappoint. You will not find empathy here."

Teagan's face crumpled. Tears spilled down her cheeks.

"The elders will arrive soon," I continued. My voice was flat. "There's no point to this."

She shook her head violently. "You don't understand," she sobbed. "All of this is my fault."

I looked down at her. "Ronan made his bed. You have no part to play in this."

"But that's the thing," she cried. Her voice broke. "You don't know. You don't know."

She wiped at her face with both hands. Her shoulders shook.

"That man," she whispered. "That monster got to him and it is my fault. All he wanted was a father figure."

I felt something cold settle in my stomach.

"This sounds like excuses," I said.

I motioned to the sentinels. "Take her."

They moved forward immediately. Each one grabbed an arm. They started dragging her toward the door once more.

But Beta Teagan fought against them. She twisted and pulled and tried to dig her heels into the floor.

"Ronan's your cousin!" she screamed.

I froze.

The sentinels stopped.

The room went completely silent.

I turned slowly. "What?"

Teagan's face was streaked with fresh tears now. Her eyes were red and swollen. But there was something else there now.

Desperation.

Truth.

"That's right," she said. Her voice shook but she didn't look away. "His father. His true father. Is Aldric."

The words hit me like a physical blow.

I stared at her. My mind went blank for a moment. Then it started racing.

Ronan???

Aldric's son???

My cousin???

"No," I said. The word came out flat. Disbelieving.

But even as I said it, I knew.

I knew it made sense. I hated that it did.

Teagan sobbed harder. "I'm sorry," she whispered. "I'm so sorry... I am so sorry... I did not know... I just wanted to keep my secret. I just wanted the tale of affair to die."

Chapter 360: The Secret

CIAN

I turned to Valentine and Madeline. They were still standing there somehow, watching the entire scene unfold.

"I'm pretty sure I said you could go."

My voice came out harder than I meant it to. More authoritative. The kind of tone that left no room for argument.

Valentine's eyes flickered toward Teagan, then back to me. For a second I thought he might say something. But he simply nodded and gestured to Madeline. They moved toward the door together without another word.

The sentinels followed.

Their boots echoed against the stone floor as they filed out one by one. The heavy door shut behind them with a dull thud that seemed to swallow all the sound in the room.

Now it was just me and Teagan.

She was still on her knees. Her hands were shaking where they rested against her thighs. Tears streamed down her face in steady tracks, carving clean lines through the dirt smeared across her cheeks.

I looked down at her.

"What the hell are you talking about?"

The words came out quieter than before, but there was no softness in them.

Teagan let out a choked sob. Her whole body shuddered with it.

"I had an affair with Aldric."

Her voice broke on his name.

I felt my jaw tighten but I said nothing. I waited.

She swallowed hard and forced herself to keep going.

"It was supposed to be a one time thing. Just once." Her hands curled into fists against her lap. "My husband and I were going through a rough patch. We had been trying for a child for years and nothing worked. He thought it was my fault. He said it out loud more than once. Made me feel like I was broken."

Her breath hitched.

"Aldric said the right words. He made me feel pretty. Like I mattered." She wiped at her face with trembling fingers. "One night with him showed me it wasn't my fault. I got pregnant. I kept my secret. I raised my boy."

She paused, her chest rising and falling in uneven jerks.

"Eventually my husband realized it wasn't me who couldn't perform. It was him." Her voice dropped to barely more than a whisper. "He challenged me about it when he knew. He was going to ruin my life. Ruin Ronan's life. The shame of it would have destroyed everything. All three of us."

I stared at her.

Something cold and sharp settled in my chest.

"Until what?" I said.

She flinched at the question like I had struck her.

"Until what, Beta Teagan?"

Her eyes squeezed shut. Fresh tears leaked out from beneath her eyelids.

"You can punish me for all of his sins," she whispered. "I will take it all because I am responsible."

"Until what?"

She opened her eyes. They were red and raw and filled with something that looked like resignation.

"I had to tell Aldric," she said. "He came up with a plan. A way to keep my secret safe. To make sure Ronan didn't suffer the shame of what we had done."

Her voice cracked completely.

"We killed him. We killed my husband."

The room went silent.

I felt like the air had been sucked out of my lungs.

For a moment I couldn't move. Couldn't think. I just stood there staring at this woman kneeling in front of me while the truth of what she had just said settled into my bones.

Then something clicked.

"Now that I know Uncle Gabriel is not an enemy," I said slowly, "some of these things make so much sense."

Teagan's head jerked up. She looked at me with wide, terrified eyes.

I let out a bitter laugh.

"So he wasn't killed by someone working for Gabriel." My voice came out flat. "I remember a sentinel literally took the fall for that. An innocent man I am sure."

She nodded once. The movement was small and broken.

"I know the sins I have committed," she whispered. "I know I need to be punished. The choices I made are what led to all of this."

Her hands twisted together again in her lap.

"Because when Ronan learned what happened. Why he suffered in the hands of his father for so long. Why that man resented him. And how that man wasn't really his father at all." Her voice shook violently now. "He hated me to hell and back."

She looked up at me with desperate, pleading eyes.

"I'm sure that is when Aldric got his claws into the boy."

I stared at her.

Ronan was supposed to be my sworn brother.

We had grown up together. Trained together. Stood side by side more times than I could count.

And all of it had been a lie.

"Nothing he has done," I said quietly, "and nothing you have said gives me reason to pity him."

Teagan's face crumpled.

"Hearing this does make me sad for him," I continued. "Because he could have told me. I would have gotten it. I would have understood him."

My jaw tightened.

"But he didn't. Instead, he joined hands with a man who has tormented my family. He played me like a fucking fool because he wanted to. He didn't have a gun to his head. He has a choice and he didn't choose me."

"Please, Cian, please." Teagan's voice rose in pitch. "He would be beheaded. They will behead him."

I looked down at her kneeling there in front of me.

"So be it."

For a second she didn't move.

Then something in her snapped.

She let out a raw, guttural sound that didn't even sound human. Her whole body seemed to collapse inward for a heartbeat, folding in on itself like she had been struck.

Then she lunged.

She moved faster than I expected. Her hands came up toward my throat and her weight slammed into me before I could fully process what was happening.

I stumbled back a step.

Her fingers clawed at my neck, my face, anything she could reach. There was no technique to it. No skill. Just wild, desperate violence fueled by grief and a heck of a fury.

I caught one of her wrists and twisted it away from my face.

She swung with the other hand.

Her nails raked across my cheek. I felt the sting of it, sharp and hot.

I grabbed her other wrist and shoved her back.

She stumbled but didn't fall. Her breath came in ragged gasps. Her hair hung in wild tangles around her face and her eyes were wide and unfocused.

She came at me again.

This time I was ready.

When she swung, I sidestepped and caught her arm mid motion. I twisted it behind her back and used her own momentum to pull her off balance.

She let out a strangled cry and tried to wrench herself free.

I hooked my leg behind hers and swept her feet out from under her.

She went down hard.

The impact knocked the air out of her lungs with a sharp gasp. I followed her down, pressing my knee into the small of her back to pin her in place.

She thrashed beneath me.

Her hands scrabbled uselessly against the floor, trying to find purchase, trying to push herself up. Her breath came in short, choked bursts.

"Stop," I said.

She didn't stop.

She twisted and bucked and tried to throw me off with everything she had left.

I pressed down harder with my knee and grabbed both of her wrists, pinning them against the floor on either side of her head.

"Stop!"

This time my voice came out low and cold.

She finally went still.

Her body sagged beneath me. All the fight drained out of her in one long, shuddering breath.

I heard the door slam open behind me.

Footsteps pounded into the room. The sentinels had heard the commotion and come running back.

"Take her," I said without looking up.

They moved quickly. Two of them grabbed her arms and hauled her to her feet. Her legs barely seemed to hold her weight. She swayed between them, her head hanging forward.

I stood slowly and stepped back.

My cheek still stung where her nails had caught me. I wiped at it with the back of my hand and my fingers came away streaked with blood.

I looked at Teagan.

She was looking back at me now with eyes that were empty. Hollow. Like she had already given up.

"You will be charged with conspiracy to commit murder," I said. My voice was steady. Detached. "You will be charged with adultery under pack law. You will be charged with obstruction of justice for concealing the truth of your husband's death."

I paused.

"And you will be charged with assault on the ruling Alpha."

Her head dropped.

She didn't try to argue. She didn't try to defend herself.

She just stood there between the sentinels like a ghost.

"The only mercy I offer you now," I said quietly, "is the chance to make peace with your son."

Her shoulders started shaking again.

"It all ends today."

The sentinels didn't wait for further instruction. They turned and started dragging her toward the door.

She didn't fight them this time.

She went limp in their grip and let them pull her along without resistance.

Just before they reached the door, she lifted her head one last time and looked back at me.

Her lips moved like she wanted to say something.

But no sound came out.

Then they were gone.

The door shut behind them with a heavy thud.

I stood there alone in the empty room.

My hands were still shaking.

I looked down at them, at the blood smeared across my knuckles from where I had wiped my cheek.

Ronan was my cousin. That was hard to accept.

Aldric had fathered him in secret.

And Teagan had killed her husband to keep that secret buried.

I closed my eyes and drew in a slow breath.

What else was going to come out soon?