

Alpha's Regret: Losing His True Mate - Chapter 221[1,260 words]

Chapter 221: Chapter 221

Not long after Liora called Elodie, the car Dante had sent arrived at the Miller house.

In the end, Liora didn't wait for Elodie to come back.

She grabbed her things, climbed into the car, and left.

—

When they arrived at the private room, Liora's face lit up the moment she saw them.

"Daddy! Aunt Sienna!"

She threw herself into their arms without hesitation.

Dante smiled and ruffled her hair gently. Sienna took her schoolbag and set it aside, her expression warm and affectionate.

The private room wasn't empty. Harry, Levi, and Sophia were already there, seated around the table.

Levi watched the whole reunion with an amused grin.

"Dante, I told you, you should've just taken Liora abroad with you," he said, shaking his head. "Look at her. It's only been a few days, and she's already missed you both this much. If you'd waited any longer, she probably would've cried."

The way he said it made it sound like Liora had been suffering. Like she'd been neglected or mistreated while staying with Elodie.

Harry's expression shifted slightly, but he didn't say anything right away.

Before Dante could respond, Harry changed the subject smoothly.

"Did you go out and do anything fun these past few days, Liora?"

Liora sat down and nodded. "Yeah. Mom took me to see a movie. We played some VR games at the arcade. And we had dinner out too."

Levi raised an eyebrow. "That's it?"

Liora shrugged, completely unbothered. "That's it. Mom was really busy, so she didn't have a lot of time to spend with me."

Levi assumed she was talking about the usual New Year chaos, family obligations, social events, the type of thing he and Harry had been drowning in for weeks.

After all, they'd been running around nonstop since the end of last year.

These past few days were the first time they'd had a chance to actually sit down, relax, and have a proper meal together.

Sienna, sitting beside Dante, was quietly reading a book.

Liora, bored, took a sip of her drink and started flipping through the book sitting in front of her on the table.

She glanced at the cover, and something about it seemed familiar.

She looked again, her brows furrowing slightly.

Harry noticed. "Liora, are you interested in that kind of book?"

Liora shook her head. "No. I just realized my mom has the same one."

Sienna froze.

Just for a second.

Then a faint smile tugged at her lips.

The cover of this book was identical for both the beginner and advanced versions. But this one, the one sitting in front of Liora right now, was the advanced version.

Not even most undergrad students touched material this dense. Sienna herself hadn't encountered content this complex until she was pursuing her PhD.

She'd been studying intensely recently, and Sophia had been visiting often, so Sienna knew the book came in two versions.

When Liora mentioned it, Sienna's first thought was obvious.

Elodie must be reading the beginner version.

She almost laughed out loud but managed to hold it back, barely, because Dante and Harry were sitting right there.

Still, the amusement flickered in her eyes.

Harry caught it immediately.

He glanced at Sienna, then at the book, then back at Liora.

His expression didn't change, but something cold settled in his chest.

He understood exactly what Sienna was thinking.

Hearing what Liora said, Harry lowered his head and smiled faintly, but he didn't say anything.

At that moment, Levi seemed to remember something. He raised an eyebrow and looked at Harry with a mischievous grin.

"Harry, I heard your mom's been trying to set you up with blind dates these past few days. So, how's it going? Find anyone suitable?"

The question immediately drew everyone's attention.

Sophia had heard about it too. That's exactly why she'd been on edge lately.

She stared at Harry nervously, her hands clenched in her lap.

Harry, however, didn't even glance her way. He just looked at Levi with a flat, unamused expression.

"Do you ever get tired of gossiping?"

Levi laughed. "I'm just curious."

Harry didn't respond.

His silence said everything. It was obvious he had no interest in the blind dates his mother kept arranging.

Everyone understood.

But Levi, being Levi, couldn't leave it alone.

"By the way," he continued, leaning back in his chair, "how are things going with that 'aunt' of Daisy's? You know, the one she keeps talking about. Since you clearly like her, why don't you just tell your mom? Or is it that her background's too different from yours, and you're worried your mom won't approve, so—"

Harry cut him off sharply. "Can't you keep quiet with all this food in front of you?"

But the more Harry tried to shut him down, the more curious Levi became.

"Look," Levi said, ignoring the warning tone in Harry's voice, "if you're worried your mom won't approve, fine. You haven't brought her home yet. But it's been so long now. You could at least let me and Dante meet her, right?"

He glanced over at Dante with a grin. "What do you think, Dante?"

Dante smiled faintly, his tone diplomatic. "When the time is right, I'm sure Harry won't need any encouragement from us to bring her around. Let's not meddle."

Levi groaned.

Everyone knew that.

He was just curious.

Sophia tugged nervously on Sienna's sleeve. "Sis..."

Before, Levi had told her that Harry already had someone he liked, just to discourage her from pursuing him.

At the time, she hadn't believed it.

But now it seemed like it might actually be true.

Sienna gave a faint smile, her expression calm and unreadable, but she didn't say anything.

The fact that Daisy had an "aunt" they hadn't met was definitely real.

But...

Did Harry really care that much about this woman? Or was it possible that Daisy's so-called "aunt" was just a convenient shield? Maybe Harry had set the whole thing up just to throw people off. To keep them from knowing who he really liked.

Sienna's mind turned over the possibilities, but her face stayed perfectly composed.

Halfway through the meal, Levi suddenly seemed to remember something. He set down his chopsticks and turned to Sienna.

"By the way, Cole's expanding their recruitment right now. Have you thought about giving it another shot?"

Sienna had been abroad recently, but she'd already heard about Cole's expansion through the grapevine.

Honestly? She was tempted.

Cole's technology was cutting-edge. Joining them would be a major boost to her career. A stepping stone she couldn't ignore.

But...

There was still the issue of Elodie.

Sienna hesitated, her expression thoughtful, when Levi smiled and continued.

"I ran into a friend yesterday who mentioned something interesting. Apparently, Johnny's not just recruiting technical staff, he's also reaching out to people on the management side."

He paused, letting that sink in.

"And from what I've heard, Johnny hasn't reserved any management positions for her."

That "her" was obviously Elodie.

The internal expansion at Cole, combined with restructuring, should've been the perfect opportunity to arrange a formal leadership position for Elodie.

But Johnny hadn't done that.

Which could mean one of two things.

Either Johnny was still clear-headed and wasn't letting Elodie have her way.

Or their relationship had already hit a rough patch.

Either way, if Elodie didn't secure a management position at Cole, her influence there would definitely take a hit.

And if Sienna was thinking about joining Cole now? This could be the perfect time.

Alpha's Regret: Losing His True Mate - Chapter 222 [1,012 words]

Chapter 222: Chapter 222

Sienna knew how protective Johnny had been of Elodie.

At the year-end party, he'd stood up for her when people were treating her coldly. He'd defended her without hesitation.

And now it seemed like they were on the verge of falling out?

Sienna paused, genuinely surprised.

But then again...

Maybe it wasn't that surprising.

She'd always known Elodie could never keep Johnny under control for long. This day was bound to come eventually.

She smiled faintly. "I see. I'll find some time to submit my resume and give it a try."

Levi grinned and glanced over at Dante, who had been mostly quiet throughout the conversation.

"At Bellini Tech, Dante set up a whole special project just for you. And now you're just gonna up and leave?"

Dante, who was calmly picking up food for Liora, didn't even look fazed.

"It's fine," he said simply.

Sienna's heart warmed.

Of course he'd say that.

Because no matter what she decided to do, Dante always supported her. Without hesitation. Without making things difficult.

She glanced at him, a soft smile tugging at her lips.

Harry, meanwhile, had been very quiet.

He'd been swamped since New Year's Eve and hadn't had a chance to meet up with Elodie at all.

Hearing Levi and Sienna talk, he lowered his head and didn't join in.

But his mind was working.

Elodie and Johnny were both students of Professor Nolan. The recent projects from CUAP and Cole had both been led by Elodie. Her position at Cole was solid. Unshakable.

To her, titles and formal positions probably didn't matter much.

But if Elodie wasn't aiming for a management role, it probably meant she had other plans in mind.

Harry's brows furrowed slightly as he thought it over.

Elodie's POV

Since the end of last year, I'd already made up my mind.

I wanted to focus more on research. On the work itself. Not the corporate politics or the endless meetings or managing people who didn't really need managing.

Johnny and I had talked it through, and we'd agreed, that we'd hand over the day-to-day management of Cole to people who were actually suited for that kind of thing.

After the New Year, Johnny had started reaching out to a few candidates. He'd almost found the right people.

The expansion was still underway, but we were getting there.

As for my latest research, I'd sent the finalized content to Professor Nolan three days ago.

Now I was just waiting for his reply.

Just as I was thinking about it, my phone buzzed.

A message from Nolan.

[Come over tonight.]

After work, Johnny and I drove over to Nolan's villa.

When we arrived, Nolan was on the phone, his brow furrowed as he spoke in clipped, tense sentences. The moment he saw us, he wrapped up the call and sat down across from us.

"I've looked over your research," he said, his tone calm but serious. "There are a few people who want to meet you. We'll set up introductions when the time is right."

I nodded. "Okay."

My research had been approved as a national internal project, which meant things were about to get a lot more formal. A lot more complicated.

Nolan went over the relevant details with me, timelines, protocols, confidentiality agreements. Then Johnny and I asked him a few more questions, and by the time we left, it was late.

The next morning, I was back at the office, reviewing resumes that HR had filtered for the technical department.

I'd been going through them for about an hour when I suddenly stopped.

Johnny, who was sitting nearby, noticed immediately.

"What's wrong?"

I didn't say anything right away. Just stared at the name on the screen.

Then I said quietly, "It's Sienna's resume."

Johnny raised an eyebrow, then let out a short, amused laugh. "She actually applied here? Wow. She really doesn't give up, does she?"

I didn't respond. Just slid the resume over to him without a word.

Johnny glanced at it briefly, then tossed it aside like it was nothing.

He was leaving for a business trip that afternoon. Before he left, he turned to me and said, "The forum the day after tomorrow, I'm leaving it to you."

I nodded. "No problem."

The forum he was talking about was a government-business event organized by the city. Only about thirty companies had been invited, and Cole was one of them.

Two Days Later.

I arrived at the venue early, dressed professionally, my materials tucked neatly into my bag.

As I stepped out of the car, I spotted someone familiar.

I paused for just a second, then quickly looked away and headed up the stairs into the lobby.

I didn't look back.

But I felt someone's eyes on me.

Inside the meeting room, each seat had a nameplate in front of it with the corresponding company name.

By the time I walked in, most of the seats were still empty. I found mine easily, 'Cole Technologies', and sat down, pulling out my notes and setting my phone on the table.

A few minutes later, I heard footsteps behind me.

I didn't turn around. I just kept my eyes on my notes.

But I heard voices.

"Mr. Hardin."

"Mr. Wilson. It's been a while."

"Indeed."

I stiffened.

I knew that voice.

Dante.

I kept my eyes down, my face calm, my hands steady as I flipped through my notes like I hadn't heard a thing.

But my heart was pounding.

I heard them walk further into the room, their conversation casual and polite.

And then I felt the sudden shift in the air.

I didn't need to look up to know.

Dante had seen me.

I heard his footsteps slow. I heard the brief pause in his conversation with Rex.

Then I heard Rex's voice, quieter now, tinged with surprise.

"Mr. Wilson... isn't that your seat?"

I finally looked up.

And sure enough, there it was.

The nameplate right next to mine.

'Wilson Corporation.'

My stomach dropped.

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Chapter 223: Chapter 223

Jimmy, whose job kept him busy most of the time, typically didn't reply quickly.

But since he was on vacation today, he responded almost immediately.

"No, they didn't know each other before that. Why do you ask?"

Rex quickly typed out what he'd observed earlier, about Jordan's warmth toward Elodie, the familiarity in their exchange, the way she'd called him "Uncle Hall" without hesitation.

Jimmy's reply came a moment later.

"My father and grandfather have a good impression of Elodie and her grandmother. It probably has something to do with that."

Rex frowned at the screen.

Even if Jordan had a good impression of her, wasn't it a bit much to be so familiar with someone he'd only met once?

But since Jimmy said so, Rex decided not to push it further.

He pocketed his phone and went back to his meal.

The weather forecast had predicted rain in the afternoon, with a chance of snow.

Before the meal was even over, Elodie noticed that it had started raining outside. Light at first, then heavier.

After lunch, Jordan and the other officials continued their discussions with the business representatives, reviewing last year's performance, outlining this year's development plans.

Once Jordan and the others had thanked the companies for their contributions to the city's economy, the meeting officially came to an end.

Everyone stood, exchanged handshakes, and began preparing to leave.

When Dante shook Jordan's hand, Jordan glanced past him and spoke directly to Elodie.

"It's really cold today, and I heard there's black ice on some of the roads. Be careful when you're driving."

Elodie nodded politely. "I will. Thank you, Uncle Hall."

Jordan smiled warmly, gave her a brief nod, and turned back to the others.

Elodie, Dante, and the other business representatives made their way out of the building and toward the parking lot.

The rain was coming down steadily now, cold and sharp. Elodie pulled her coat tighter around herself and kept her eyes forward.

Then Dante stepped up beside her.

"It's hard to walk in high heels in this weather," he said, his tone calm and conversational. "Be careful."

Elodie's jaw tightened.

He'd said it loud enough for everyone around them to hear.

She couldn't ignore him. Not in front of all these people.

So she responded coolly, "Thank you, Mr. Wilson. I'll be careful."

But even as she said it, something flickered in her mind.

A memory.

Last year at the tech conference. They'd gone to dinner together, and she'd slipped on the way out. Her heel had caught on something, and she'd stumbled.

He'd been right there.

But he hadn't helped her.

Hadn't even reached out.

He'd just stood there, watching, making sure no one got the wrong idea.

Making sure it didn't look like anything personal.

And now?

Now he was speaking to her in front of everyone, his tone warm and familiar, initiating the conversation like it was the most natural thing in the world.

The business representatives, including Rex, had overheard the exchange.

Among those present were several people who had also attended that tech conference last year.

Cole had risen to prominence by the end of the year, so Elodie's reputation in the business circle had grown significantly. Many people now knew about her work. Her skills. Her connection to Johnny.

Of course, many also remembered the incident from the tech conference—when Elodie had "accidentally" slipped and Dante had remained completely indifferent.

Some had whispered about it afterward. Called it embarrassing. Said she'd been trying to flirt with him and he'd shut her down cold.

But now...

Now Dante was the one initiating conversation.

Now he was the one showing concern.

The shift hadn't gone unnoticed.

Rex's eyes narrowed slightly as he watched them walk side by side toward the parking lot.

Something had changed.

He just didn't know what.

If Dante's concern for Elodie was simply out of politeness, because of the business relationship between Wilson Tech and Cole, then why didn't he address her as "Miss Miller"?

His tone was too familiar. Too warm. Like he was genuinely concerned.

It felt... ambiguous.

Had Dante, who had once avoided any hint of personal involvement with her, actually been charmed by Elodie?

Rex hadn't been at the tech conference last year, so he didn't know about the incident where Elodie had slipped and Dante had barely acknowledged her.

But now, after hearing their exchange, he couldn't ignore the obvious familiarity between them.

It didn't seem like a misunderstanding.

It seemed real.

Rex's jaw tightened as he watched them. His expression turned cold.

He was convinced now. Dante was definitely drawn to Elodie. Maybe even considering an affair.

He glared at them both as they walked side by side toward the parking lot.

Knowing it was going to rain, Elodie had brought an umbrella with her.

But the cold wind was sharp and biting, stinging her face as she stepped outside.

The forecast had predicted rain and possibly snow, but she'd assumed that in early February, any snow wouldn't stick. That the roads wouldn't be too slippery.

She'd been wrong.

The moment she stepped outside, she realized the pavement was slick with a thin layer of ice.

As she descended the first step, her heel slipped slightly. She caught herself, but her movements became more cautious after that.

People who didn't know her walked past without issue, their steady footsteps echoing on the wet pavement.

But Dante stayed close beside her. He didn't leave. Didn't walk ahead.

Some of the businesspeople who were familiar with Dante exchanged knowing glances with him as they passed.

Rex stopped for a moment, his mouth opening like he was about to say something—

And then it happened.

Elodie's foot slipped.

She lost her balance completely, her body pitching forward, her arms flailing instinctively to catch herself.

In the blink of an eye, Dante reacted.

He reached out, his arm wrapping securely around her waist, pulling her back before she could hit the ground.

And then, before she could even process what was happening, he swept her off her feet and lifted her into his arms.

Elodie's face shifted. Her hands pressed against his chest immediately.

"Let me go—"

Dante's voice was calm. "Hold the umbrella."

Before she could argue, he was already carrying her down the stairs, his steps sure and confident despite the ice beneath his feet.

When they reached the bottom, he turned back toward the group of businesspeople still watching from the top of the stairs.

"I'll be leaving now," he said smoothly. "Let's reschedule."

The businesspeople who knew him were visibly stunned.

After all, Elodie's relationship with Johnny was well-known. If Johnny had trusted her enough to let her represent Cole at a government meeting, their relationship must still be strong.

And Dante had a girlfriend. Everyone knew that.

So even if Dante had developed feelings for Elodie, he should have been more discreet. Especially in front of so many people.

To openly act this way—to carry her in his arms, to dismiss everyone so casually, it felt like a slap in the face to Johnny.

And they all knew Johnny wasn't someone to cross.

Still, none of them said anything. They just gave awkward smiles and nodded.

"Alright. We'll set something up next time."

With so many people watching, Elodie forced herself to stay calm.

"Thank you, Mr. Wilson," she said, her voice tight but controlled. "Now that we've reached the bottom, I can walk on my own—"

But Dante didn't put her down.

He just kept walking, holding her securely, heading straight toward the parking lot.

Elodie's hands clenched against his chest.

"Put me down."

Dante didn't respond.

He just kept walking.

Like he hadn't heard her at all.

Alpha's Regret: Losing His True Mate - Chapter 224[1,159 words]

Chapter 224: Chapter 224

Dante glanced down at her, his expression softening. "You really have lost weight."

Elodie opened her mouth to respond, but before she could get a word out, Dante's driver had already spotted them approaching.

He got out of the car quickly, his eyes widening when he realized who Dante was carrying.

"Mrs. Wilson?"

He rushed over and opened the back door immediately.

Elodie's stomach dropped.

She realized what Dante was planning.

"My car is nearby—" she said coldly.

But Dante was already waving at the driver to take the umbrella from her hands. Then he gently lowered her into the back seat, his movements were very careful.

"You've sprained your ankle," he said calmly. "Are you sure you can drive?"

Elodie's jaw tightened. "I can call someone to pick me up."

Before Dante could respond, Rex walked over.

"Mr. Wilson."

Dante closed the car door, took the umbrella from the driver, and turned to Rex with a polite smile.

"Mr. Hardin. You're still here?"

Rex knew Elodie was inside the car, but the windows were tinted. He couldn't see her.

He shifted his gaze back to Dante. "Is Miss Miller inside?"

"Yes," Dante replied smoothly. "She sprained her ankle. I'm taking her to see a doctor."

Rex's expression didn't change, but his tone was a bit hard. "I don't have anything scheduled at the moment, and I was planning to discuss some business with Miss Miller. If you don't mind, I can take her to the hospital."

Dante's smile didn't falter. "What a coincidence. We have something to discuss as well. Mr. Hardin, would you mind rescheduling?"

Rex's jaw tightened slightly.

Dante added, his tone still pleasant, "It's windy out here, and your clothes are getting soaked. Why don't you head back to your car and warm up?"

Rex understood.

Whether or not Dante was actually interested in Elodie, he had no right to interfere.

He nodded once, his eyes flicking toward the car where Elodie sat, then turned and walked away.

Inside the car, the soundproofing was excellent.

Elodie couldn't hear the conversation between Dante and Rex, but she noticed the way Rex looked at the car before leaving.

Based on his feelings for Sienna, she could guess what his intentions had been.

She didn't care.

Instead, she looked down at her phone and called someone to come pick her up. While she waited, she checked her ankle.

It hurt a little, but it wasn't serious. She could still walk.

She let out a quiet breath of relief.

Then she hung up, opened the car door, and stepped out.

Dante turned around when he heard the movement.

Elodie closed the door behind her, walked over silently, and took the umbrella from his hand without a word.

Dante glanced down at her foot. "Is it okay?"

It hurt. But she could manage.

Still, she didn't say that out loud.

She didn't want to think about why he'd carried her today. Didn't want to analyze his motives or read into his actions.

She just wanted to leave.

"Contact me after you've dealt with the divorce," she said flatly.

The implication was clear.

If it weren't for the divorce, they had no reason to stay in contact.

With that, she raised the umbrella, stepped past him, and walked away.

Dante stood there, watching her go.

The rain fell harder now, and relentlessly.

But he didn't move.

He just stood there with his hands in his pockets, his expression extremely unreadable.

And for the first time in a long time, he looked like he didn't know what to do.

Their cars weren't parked far apart though.

Dante didn't get into his car right away. He still just stood there with hands in his pockets, watching as Elodie walked carefully across the icy pavement.

He waited until she reached her car. Waited until she opened the door and slid inside.

Only then did he turn and get into his own.

A moment later, his car pulled out of the parking lot.

Not long after, Rex's car followed.

During the meeting and the dinner, there had been reporters present.

By the time Elodie got to the hospital, and had her ankle checked, and made it back home, it was already past eight in the evening.

She'd just started eating when the evening news came on.

The broadcast covered the government-business forum. From the footage from the meeting to the clips from the lunch.

Both she and Dante appeared on screen.

Meanwhile... Sienna and Janice were watching the same broadcast.

The moment they saw Elodie on screen, attending such an important government event as a representative of Cole, both of them frowned.

Hadn't they heard that Elodie and Johnny were having problems?

So how was she still representing him at such a critical event?

Sienna's jaw tightened.

If Elodie was still able to represent Johnny at something this important, it probably meant her resume had been a waste of time.

Janice, however, relaxed after a moment. She gracefully accepted the tonic the maid handed her and took a slow sip.

"There's no need to rush," she said calmly. "Let's wait and see."

Elodie wasn't just good-looking, Johnny was clearly still reluctant to let her go. Their constant ups and downs were normal.

If there were signs of separation, it meant their relationship was having issues. Even if they were still together now, it probably wouldn't last much longer.

So whether Sienna was aiming to enter Cole or trying to build a relationship with Johnny, it was only a matter of time.

Sienna understood her mother's meaning.

She thought along the same lines.

Besides, seeing Elodie and Dante seated next to each other at the meeting didn't bother her.

Because when it came to herself and Dante, she had more than enough confidence.

At that moment, Landon came downstairs, his backpack was slung over one shoulder.

"Sis, you're back?"

Sienna glanced up. "Mm. How's your studying going?"

Landon was in his second year of high school now. Starting this semester, he'd be transferring to a school in the capital to continue his studies.

Dante had already arranged everything, from the transfer, the paperwork, and to the enrollment.

But the textbooks in their home province and the capital were different, so Landon had been spending the past few weeks reviewing the material to catch up.

Landon shrugged casually. "No problem. You know me."

He wasn't worried. And honestly, neither was anyone else.

Both Sienna and Landon had always been top students. Academics had never been something their family needed to worry about.

Hearing his confident response, both Sienna and Janice smiled.

"Good," Janice said warmly. "Just keep it up."

Landon grinned and headed toward the kitchen to grab a snack.

Sienna turned her attention back to the television, her expression was still calm and composed.

But inside, her mind was already working.

Calculating. Planning.

Waiting for the right moment.

Alpha's Regret: Losing His True Mate - Chapter 225 [1,247 words]

Chapter 225: Chapter 225

The next day, Harry and Rex arrived at Cole at the same time.

Rex spotted him immediately and walked over with a polite smile. "Mr. Becker. What a coincidence."

Harry nodded. "Quite a coincidence."

Rex was about to say something else when he saw Elodie and Johnny coming out to greet them.

He paused.

Yesterday, Elodie had quickly gotten out of Dante's car. What exactly she'd said to Dante afterward, Rex wasn't sure.

But one thing was undeniable.

Whether at last year's year-end party or yesterday's forum, it seemed like Dante was always the one taking the initiative with Elodie.

And Elodie? She seemed completely indifferent to him.

Rex found it puzzling.

Elodie was attractive, sure. He could understand why other men might be drawn to her.

But Dante wasn't just anyone.

And aside from looks, there was no comparison between Elodie and Sienna. None.

So why would Dante, after getting involved with Sienna, still show interest in Elodie?

Rex's expression turned cold as he looked at her.

Elodie noticed. She met his gaze head-on, and her tone turned sharp. "Mr. Hardin, do you have something to say to me?"

Rex's jaw tightened. "Miss Miller, you're overthinking. I thought we had nothing to discuss. Or do you want to say something?"

Johnny and Harry had both watched the news coverage of the forum.

They both knew Rex and Elodie had crossed paths yesterday.

Johnny, hearing the tension in Rex's voice, guessed that something unpleasant must have happened between them.

He smiled, though it didn't reach his eyes. "Oh? What happened? What's going on?"

Elodie didn't want to waste time on this. Before Rex could answer, she cut in. "Nothing."

Then she turned to Harry. "Mr. Becker, please follow me."

Harry nodded, shot a brief glance at Rex, and followed Elodie into the meeting room.

Johnny didn't push it. But he knew their disagreement probably had something to do with Sienna.

Since Elodie didn't want to talk about it, he let it go. He turned to Rex, his tone cool.

"Mr. Hardin, please."

This was the first time Harry had seen Elodie since New Year's.

The moment he'd spotted her earlier, his gaze had lingered. He couldn't help it. He noticed how Elodie was glowing now. How extremely beautiful and radiant she had become.

But with the tension between Elodie and Rex, none of them had noticed.

Once inside the meeting room, Harry finally looked away. He sat down and said casually, "I had planned to attend yesterday's forum, but I had to leave for a business trip. I sent someone in my place."

It was common for clients to make small talk before diving into business.

Elodie didn't think much of it. "I see."

Harry lowered his gaze, realizing she hadn't picked up on what he was really trying to say.

So he shifted the conversation to business.

Harry had social engagements that evening, so after wrapping up their discussion, he stood to leave.

But before he did, he looked at her.

Elodie glanced up. "Is something wrong?"

Tomorrow was Valentine's Day.

Harry wanted to say something. Ask her if she had plans. Invite her to dinner, maybe.

But he didn't.

He just shook his head. "Nothing."

The Next Day which was the Valentine's Day, Elodie had been so focused on work that she'd completely forgotten what day it was.

It wasn't until she arrived at the office and someone greeted her with a cheerful "Happy Valentine's Day!" that it suddenly clicked.

She blinked, paused, then nodded politely and headed toward her office.

But before she could reach the door, a voice called out from the entrance.

"Excuse me, is Miss Miller here? Someone ordered flowers for you. Could you please come sign for them?"

Elodie turned around.

A delivery man was standing just outside the door, holding an absolutely massive bouquet of red roses.

The delivery man's words and the extravagant display, immediately drew everyone's attention.

People stopped what they were doing. Heads immediately turned. Whispers started.

Elodie stood there, frozen for just a second. Her brain trying to register what the hell was happening.

There had been rumors floating around that Elodie and Johnny were romantically involved.

But the truth was, many people in the company knew Elodie was already married.

She just rarely talked about her personal life, so most of them didn't know the details of her marriage or how bad things had gotten.

When they saw someone sending her flowers on Valentine's Day, a few colleagues couldn't help but comment enviously.

"What a huge bouquet! Is that from your husband? He must be really sweet."

"Right? I'm so jealous!"

Elodie thought to herself, Dante? Sending me flowers?

Not a chance. That wasn't even possible.

But she didn't say that out loud.

The card attached to the bouquet listed her contact information, which meant the flowers weren't a mistake. They were definitely meant for her.

The delivery man, after confirming she was Elodie Miller, handed her the massive bouquet and held out a clipboard.

"Please sign here."

Not wanting to make things difficult for him, Elodie signed quickly.

Then, holding the bouquet awkwardly, she turned and headed back to her office.

Once inside, she set the roses down on the coffee table and pulled out the elegant card tucked between the stems.

She opened it.

No name. It was just written with a short message written in neat handwriting.

"Happy Valentine's Day."

She stared at it for a moment, frowning slightly.

The handwriting looked familiar. She just couldn't place it.

At that moment, Johnny pushed the door open. He spotted the red roses immediately and raised an eyebrow.

"Who sent those?"

Elodie shook her head. "I don't know. But the handwriting looks kind of familiar."

Johnny let out a short laugh. "Sounds like someone has a crush on you. Any guesses?"

Elodie shook her head again. "No idea."

Johnny stroked his chin thoughtfully.

He and Elodie had been working closely together for years now, yet he'd never noticed anyone secretly harboring feelings for her.

After a moment, he smirked. Though he didn't actually believe it, he said it anyway.

"It's not... Dante, is it?"

Elodie's tone was flat. "It's not him."

She and Dante had been married for years. He'd never once celebrated Valentine's Day with her. So why would he suddenly send her roses right before their divorce?

Besides, she still recognized his handwriting.

This wasn't his.

Johnny nodded. "Fair enough."

He glanced at the flowers again, then added, "Still, whoever sent them put some thought into it. Those are expensive roses. Top-tier."

Maybe.

But Elodie didn't really care.

Her mind was completely occupied with other things.

Whoever had sent the flowers hadn't left any contact information or a name, and honestly, she couldn't be bothered to figure it out.

"Let's just focus on work," she said.

Johnny nodded and dropped the subject.

Elodie had something important to do today.

She was scheduled to visit Wilson Tech, an arrangement made a few days ago to finalize some technical details for their ongoing partnership.

She gathered her materials, checked the time, and once it was close enough, she left with a few colleagues for the Bellini Tech office.

The drive was quiet throughout.

But as they pulled into the parking lot, Elodie felt her stomach tighten.

She hadn't been here in a long time.

And she really, really didn't want to run into him.

Alpha's Regret: Losing His True Mate - Chapter 226[1,427 words]

Chapter 226: Chapter 226

Elodie's POV

On the way to Wilson Tech, Nonna called me.

I answered immediately. "Nonna."

"Ah, my dear girl." Her voice was warm, and so full of affection. It always was.

"A few days ago, Liora mentioned that you've been extremely busy with work, sometimes even staying up all night. Someone just sent me some tonics, so I had some delivered to you. Make sure to have them stewed and eat them, alright?"

I knew that even if I tried to decline, Nonna wouldn't take no for an answer.

So I just said, "I will. Thank you, Nonna."

She chuckled softly, then seemed to remember something.

"By the way, I spoke with Dante a while ago. He agreed to try and get along with you better. After all, no matter what happens between you two, you're both Liora's parents. If your relationship is too strained, it won't be good for her growth and well-being."

So that's why Dante had acted so differently at the forum. Hah!

Why wasn't I surprised?

I responded flatly. "Alright. I understand, Nonna."

We chatted for a few more minutes before I ended the call.

When I arrived at Wilson Tech, Sienna was nowhere to be seen.

General Manager Kim spotted me and greeted me with a smile. "Miss Miller, did you receive any flowers today? It is Valentine's Day, after all."

Before I could answer, one of the Cole employees who'd come with me chimed in excitedly.

"Of course! A huge bouquet of roses, everyone was so envious!"

Kim laughed, but before he could say anything else, Sophia appeared out of nowhere.

"Just flowers? Nothing else?" she asked, her tone dripping with fake curiosity.

The Cole employee hesitated. "Uh..."

Sophia smirked. "So it really *is* just flowers?"

She let out a mocking laugh. "You all are hilarious. It's just a bouquet of roses. What's there to be envious about? My cousin received a pile of gifts this morning. And my future brother-in-law even gave her Wilson Tech shares. Guess what she said?"

Kim went quiet.

There was no arguing with that.

But was this really something worth comparing?

Noticing that I might not be aware of the situation, Kim leaned in slightly and explained quietly.

"It's well known that Director Brown is quite popular in elite circles. She's considered the dream girl of many wealthy heirs. While no one dares to openly pursue her because of President Wilson, today is Valentine's Day, and some of them couldn't resist. They anonymously sent her flowers and gifts that her entire office is filled with them."

I didn't react. I just kept my expression neutral.

Kim continued, clearly impressed. "But of course, President Bellini is no ordinary man. That's why he was able to win her heart. From what I've heard, he directly transferred some of the company's shares to Director Brown as a Valentine's Day gift."

He shook his head in admiration. "He spoils his girlfriend like no one else. Everyone in the company was beyond envious when they heard the news this morning."

I'd always suspected that one day, Wilson Tech might bear the surname Brown instead of Wilson.

After all, Sienna had free access to company secrets. Landon and Sophia could come and go as they pleased.

Now, hearing Kim's words, I wasn't surprised at all. I mentally rolled my eyes.

Dante had deliberately chosen Valentine's Day to transfer the shares. It wasn't just a gift, it was a statement. A gesture meant to be meaningful. Ceremonial even.

His affection for Sienna was unmistakable.

"What are you all talking about?"

A familiar voice interrupted.

I looked up and saw it was Sienna.

Kim quickly turned to Sienna with a bright smile. "Director Brown, is your meeting over?"

Sienna nodded. "Yes."

Wilson's Tech's senior executives had held an important meeting today. Now that she owned company shares, she'd attended alongside Dante and the others.

Of course she had.

Sophia practically bounced over to her cousin, a smirk plastered across her face.

She shot me a quick glance, then leaned in closer to Sienna and said in a voice just loud enough for me to hear,

"Cousin, someone was feeling quite pleased about receiving flowers, until she heard that tons of people sent you flowers and that my brother-in-law gave you company shares. Then she couldn't say a single word."

Sienna's eyes flicked to me briefly, but she said nothing.

Sophia, however, wasn't done.

"Sis, didn't you say before that Mr. Gray treated her really well? But today's Valentine's Day, and he only gave her a bouquet of flowers, nothing else. Doesn't seem like he cares about her that much after all."

Sienna raised an eyebrow, clearly intrigued.

I could practically see the gears turning in her head.

Johnny only gave me flowers?

How... perfunctory.

She'd always thought Johnny treated me well. After all, I had significant influence within Cole.

But now, seeing the comparison, she was probably thinking, if Johnny truly cared, why had he given me power but not a title? Let alone shares?

At that moment, General Manager Zane walked over. When he saw Sienna, he smiled warmly.

"Now that you have shares, do you plan to take a more hands-on approach in managing Wilson Tech?"

Sienna shook her head gracefully. "No. I'd rather leave professional matters to professionals. I don't like seizing control."

As she spoke, her eyes drifted toward me.

The implication was clear.

'Unlike some people.'

Unlike me, who had no real capabilities but insisted on managing everything at Cole just to prove my authority, even though I had neither an official position nor any ownership.

It was ridiculous, really, when she thought about it.

I didn't react. I didn't even look up.

I just kept my focus on the materials in front of me, completely unfazed.

Let her think whatever she wanted.

I had more important things to do.

Just then, my phone buzzed.

I glanced down at the screen.

A message from Professor Nolan.

[Pick me up tomorrow night.]

Last week, he'd mentioned that someone wanted to meet me. Tomorrow's meeting was likely about that.

I typed back quickly.

[Alright, Professor.]

After sending the message, I slipped my phone back into my pocket and resumed my work.

I didn't have time for petty comparisons or passive-aggressive comments.

I had research to finish. A career to build. A future to secure.

And honestly?

That mattered more than anything else.

I was packing up my materials when my phone buzzed again.

It was a message from Dante's lawyer.

I frowned and opened it immediately.

[MR. BELLINI HAS WITHDRAWN THE DIVORCE PETITION. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY. HE WILL CONTACT YOU PERSONALLY TO DISCUSS RECONCILIATION.]

For a moment, I simply stared at the screen.

Then, unexpectedly, I laughed.

A quiet, tired laugh.

Months ago, this message would have shattered me. Back then, I would have waited desperately for Dante to choose me. To fight for me. To look at me the way he once looked at Sienna.

But now?

Now, all I felt was... calm.

My fingers tightened slightly around my phone before I typed a simple reply to the lawyer.

[I will proceed with the divorce as planned.]

After sending it, I leaned back in my chair and let out a slow breath.

Outside the window, the city lights flickered softly against the night sky.

For so many years, my world had revolved around Dante Bellini. His affection. His approval. His indifference.

I had spent too long trying to prove my worth to someone who had never truly seen me.

But somewhere along the way, without even realizing it, I had changed.

I no longer needed to win against Sienna.

I no longer needed to compare gifts, titles, or shares.

Because the future I wanted was no longer tied to Dante at all.

My phone rang.

Johnny.

A small smile appeared on my lips before I answered.

“Finished with work?” he asked gently.

“Almost.”

“You ate dinner yet?”

I glanced at the untouched tonic soup Nonna had sent over earlier and laughed softly. “Not yet.”

“Stay there,” Johnny said. “I’m coming to pick you up.”

Simple words.

But somehow, they warmed me more than grand gestures ever could.

After the call ended, I gathered my documents and switched off the office lights.

As I walked out of Wilson Tech, the cold night wind brushed against my face.

And for the first time in a very long while, I realized I was no longer walking toward the past.

I was finally walking toward my future.