

# An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 91[ 1,484 words ]

? Chapter 91

Chapter 91

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Penny had made it her mission to make the upcoming luna ceremony the best the pack had ever seen. She had stated that it was necessary that the pack have something to celebrate after everything with the rogues. The elders had requested the ceremony to be done within a week, but Penny had demanded more time for ‘

necessary preparations.’

She had planned an extravagant dinner that Elva was all too excited to *cook*. She had forced Riley to look at pages upon pages of centerpieces, color swatches and flower arrangements.

Prior to Riley’s trip, she had forced Riley to go dress shopping, picking out a beautiful dark purple, strapless

mermaid dress that hugged Riley’s figure and complemented her shape. It had been sent for some minor

alterations and the day after Riley had gotten back to the pack, Penny had announced that the dress had

arrived.

That was how Riley found herself in Penny’s sitting room, modeling the dress for Penny, Lana and a sleeping

baby Lily.

“You look amazing.” Lana smiled from her spot on the couch. “Kent’s going to be speechless.

Riley rolled her eyes. “I’ll believe that when I see it.”

Penny laughed as she walked behind Riley, gathering her hair. "I'm picturing an up-do."

"Definitely. It will show off her neck and shoulders." To Riley she added, "You have lovely skin."

Riley felt Penny's fingers on the back of her shoulder, brushing lightly. "Tell Kent to lay off the love bites until after the ceremony. You have marks back here."

Riley flushed slightly, remembering the way Kent had taken her from behind this morning in the shower,

sinking his teeth into her shoulder in the most delightfully painful way.

Penny let go of Riley's hair, walking back around. "I think light make up," she said towards Lana. "Nothing too

heavy."

"It wouldn't look right if it was too much," Lana agreed.

"I feel like a doll," Riley commented.

"Shh... dolls don't talk," Penny whispered with a smirk.

Riley rolled her eyes but suddenly felt the world wobble, her stomach rolling with nausea.

"I need to sit," she muttered, moving towards the couch, sinking down carefully so as to not crease the dress.

Lana frowned. "Are you ok?"

Riley shrugged, closing her eyes. "The last couple days I've just felt tired and dizzy and nauseous. I don't know what's going on."

"Do you think you're getting sick again?"

She shook her head. "Not like before. This is different. It comes and goes, but I'm mostly just tired. I think **it** might be stress."

"Like it was last time?" Penny scoffed.

Chapter 91

Lana studied Riley for a long moment. "Could you be pregnant?"

"No." Riley rolled her eyes.

“When was your last period?”

Riley frowned, trying to remember. “I guess I had one right before I arrived here. So about seven weeks ago.” She looked over at Lana. “But again, I think it’s just stress. That can mess with your period, right?”

“Are you using protection?” Penny raised an eyebrow. “Or taking birth control?”

“Well...” Riley trailed off, her cheeks flushing.

“You do know how you get pregnant, right?” Penny half-laughed.

Riley rolled her eyes again. “I guess there could be a chance, but I don’t think it’s likely. I’m not even sure I

want to have pups.”

“Not wanting them isn’t birth control,” Penny pointed out. “You need to take a test. I have an extra in the bathroom. I’ll grab it after you get changed.”

“Have you and Kent talked about pups at all?” Lana asked gently after Riley had changed.

She shook her head. “It’s not like we’ve had a lot of time to talk about our future together.”

“Kent would be happy.” Penny handed Riley the test. “He’s great with the boys. He loves kids.” She sat down

beside Riley, grabbing her hand. “No matter what, you have him and both of us. Plus Elva would be over the

moon. She has always considered Kent to be like her son, so I know she’ll be there to help.”

“Go upstairs and take the test.” Lana nudged her arm gently. “You can tell us when you’re ready. Either way,

we’ll be here.”

\*\*

Riley sat on the edge of the soaking tub, impatiently watching the seconds crawl by.

The pregnancy test rested on the vanity beside her appearing totally innocent and yet it felt like a ticking

time bomb. In two minutes, her entire life might detonate.

She heard the sound of the bedroom door opening and cringed.

Of all the moments for Kent to come home, why now?

“Riley? Are you in there?” His knuckles rapped lightly against the door.

“Yep,” she called, trying, and failing, *to* sound normal.

“Everything okay?”

“Yep.”

A heavy pause filled the space between them before she heard the rattle of the handle.

Riley dropped her head into her hands. Of course he knew she was lying. He could probably feel the panic pouring off her through the mate bond.

“Open **the** door, Riley,” Kent said, his voice low and strained.

“Not right now, Kent.”

“At least tell me what’s wrong!”

< Chapter 91

‘Just...just give me one more minute, okay?’

Another long, tense silence, then the sound of his retreating footsteps.

She exhaled shakily, turning back toward the sink.

The longest minute of her life finally ticked by. Riley stood, every limb heavy, and approached the vanity. She

forced herself to look at the test.

Her heart slammed into her throat.

Footsteps thundered back toward the door.

“Riley? What’s wrong?” The handle jiggled, the door rattled under his hand.

“Riley!” he barked, pounding on the wood.

She flinched, then grabbed the doorknob and wrenched the door open. Kent nearly fell inside, catching

himself against the frame before reaching for her shoulders, scanning her face with frantic eyes.

“What’s wrong? Are you hurt?”

Wordlessly, Riley pulled free, crossed the bathroom, and grabbed the test from the vanity. She placed it into

his hands, barely breathing.

Kent stared down at it, his brow furrowed. “A plus sign is positive, right?” he asked hoarsely.

“Yes,” she whispered.

His eyes snapped up to hers. “You’re pregnant?”

She nodded once, stiffly.

For a moment, Kent just stared. Then a wide, brilliant smile broke across his face. He let out a laugh,

scooped Riley up, and spun her around the bathroom, his joy radiating from him.

“This is incredible!” he crowed, setting her down carefully. “We’re going to...” He stopped, catching the look on

her face.

“Oh.” His hands fell away from her. He stepped back. “You’re... not excited.”

“I’m...” Riley turned, searching the room as if the right words might materialize from the air. Finally, she pushed past him into the bedroom.

Kent followed, his steps softer now.

He sat down beside her on the edge of the bed.

“We never really talked about pups,” he said carefully. “Do you... even want them?”

Riley dragged a hand through her hair. “I don’t know,” she admitted. “Growing up, I always thought I would. It was part of the dream. But after my rejection...” Her voice faltered. “Everything changed. I didn’t want to raise a pup alone. I didn’t want a chosen

mate. I told myself it wasn't in the cards for me. I stopped hoping. And then..." She shook her head. "I never planned for this. For you. For all of this."

Kent stayed silent, giving her space.

"I'm still adjusting," she said quietly. "To you. To the pack. To belonging again. It's a lot. And **now**..." She looked down at her flat stomach, as if expecting to see some sign of the upheaval growing inside her. "I **don't**

3/4

< Chapter 91

even know how to feel."

+8 Points >

Kent reached for her hand. His grip was warm, steady. "I know this hasn't been easy for you," he said. "It's been a lot. Fast. And I know it's different for me. I already had a pack, a home. You've had to rebuild everything from the ground up. But Riley..." He squeezed her hand. "I love you. I'm not going anywhere. No matter what."

Her throat tightened. She smiled at him, small but real. "I love you too."

He smiled back, though there was tension still lingering in his frame. "So what do you want to do?" he asked softly.

Riley hesitated for a long moment, then finally said, almost in a whisper, "I want to have a pup with you." She looked down, blinking rapidly. "I'm just terrified."

Kent let out a breath that sounded like a laugh, full of relief. "Me too," he said. "But we can be terrified

together."

He leaned forward, resting his forehead lightly against hers, and Riley closed her eyes, letting herself breathe

him in, letting herself hope, maybe for the first time in a very long while.

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# An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 92[ 552 words ]

## Epilogue

Riley handed Elinor to Kent as Patrick carried the cake outside, setting it carefully on the table she had decorated. She walked over to adjust the candle shaped like a number three, straightening it for the third

time.

“Where’s the birthday boy?” Patrick asked, smoothing the tablecloth and stepping back to admire the setup.

“Inside with Penny,” Riley said, checking everything one last time.

“He’ll love it,” Kent said, swinging Elinor over his head and earning a delighted squeal from their daughter. “Stop worrying so much.”

“He only gets one third birthday party,” Riley sighed. “I can’t believe he’s three already.”

Patrick nodded. “Tell me about it. Lily’s going to be four next month. Feels like yesterday she was just learning to walk.”

Kent came over, settling Elinor on his hip so he could wrap his free arm around Riley’s shoulders.

“Pups grow up,” he said, kissing the top of her head. “And he’s three. He won’t even remember this party. Relax.”

“Mommy!” Wyatt yelled, bursting out of the back door with Lily hot on his heels. Emma toddled after them, her chubby legs struggling to keep up. Wyatt launched himself into Riley’s arms, laughing breathlessly.

“They’re gonna catch me!” he exclaimed.

Patrick snagged Lily around the waist and swung her up onto his shoulder. “Careful around the cake!” he warned, carrying her away.

“Cake!” Wyatt cried, his eyes going wide. “Can we eat it now?”

Riley laughed. "Your party hasn't even started yet!"

"I don't care," Wyatt said seriously. "I just want cake."

Riley looked up at Kent, who was grinning at her. "You were right," she admitted. "I'm trying too hard."

He chuckled and kissed her cheek. "Told you so."

Penny came out the door, Alex trailing behind her with a handful of extra decorations.

"They got away from me," she said, gesturing to the children.

Emma ran straight for Alex, who set the decorations down just in time to scoop his little sister up, her legs dangling nearly to his knees.

"Where are Max and Evan?" Kent asked, shifting Elinor on his hip.

"Upstairs on a call with Ty," Penny replied. "Trying to sort out dates for our next trip."

Lana appeared then, carrying Oliver on her hip. "This looks amazing," she said, smiling warmly at Riley.

"Thanks," Riley said, her smile widening. "At least someone appreciates it."

She set Wyatt down, and he took off after Lily again, shrieking with laughter.

1/2

## Epilogue

It had been nearly four years since Riley had first come to Red Moon, and as she watched her son race across the yard, she couldn't help but reflect on how much had changed. Her consulting business was thriving. The council's supervision had ended without incident.

The pack was peaceful.

Her heart was whole.

She watched Kent kiss Elinor's cheek and felt something swell inside her.

"What are you thinking about?" Kent asked when he caught her staring.

She smiled up at him. "Just that I love you."

JJB Tirado

## Points

Thank you for reading “An Unwanted Second Chance“! I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it! I have a new story in progress – “His Scarred Luna” – focusing on Alpha Jake and the New Dawn Pack. Find it here: *His Scarred Luna*

## Comments

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# An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 93[ 1,618 words ]

## Extra Story – Chapter 1

Hey everyone! I’ve been working on a new story, all about a grown-up Evan. While writing it, I ended up with a few chapters that don’t really fit, but I love them too much to toss out. So I’ve decided *to* share them here –

kind of like an epilogue to this story and a prequel to the new one (tentatively titled *The True Alpha*). You don’t need to read them to follow the new story, but I had a great time writing them and thought you might enjoy

them too!

Age 14

Kent was pretty sure Evan Greene was going to be the death of him. He loved his best friend’s son, but that boy had developed a talent for getting into trouble lately. Kent suspected Evan was responsible for at least half of the new gray hairs now peppering his temples. He had even been tempted to dye the grays back to black, but Riley had only laughed at him.

“It makes you look distinguished,” she had told him.

“I look like my dad,” he’d grumbled. But he never dyed it.

Now, as Max rambled in worry beside him, Kent wouldn’t be surprised if he looked in the mirror and found

even more of his hair changing color.

Evan had been missing all night. Any time he disappeared, it sent Max and Penny into a tailspin, dragging up a host of bad memories. For Kent, though, it had become a regular frustration.

Goddess knows, the boy was probably out drunk in the woods again.

Alex claimed he didn't know where his brother had gone this time, but Kent had the distinct feeling he was lying. Alex always covered for Evan. The two were so close in age they were nearly twins and had only grown closer after their little sister was born.

Thankfully, Alex was a rule follower and stayed out of trouble. Unfortunately, he hated seeing his brother suffer the consequences of his own actions and spent too much time trying to save Evan.

Evan needed to learn to save himself. He was too old to keep getting coddled like this. Kent knew the kid had been through more than any child should, but at some point, he had to be held responsible for his choices.

"We've had patrols out all night," Kent told Max, stopping in front of the pack house and raking a hand through his hair. "He'll turn up. He always does."

Max frowned, his forehead creasing. "I wish I knew how to get through to him. It just seems like... the older he gets, the angrier he gets."

"All teenagers go through a rebellious phase," Kent offered, trying to sound reassuring.

"But how long does it last, Kent?" Max pinched the bridge of his nose. "He's been getting into fights at school for years. He's failing all his classes, which is ridiculous because he's one of the smartest kids I know."

Kent sighed. "Maybe you should **try** therapy again."

"We've done that for years." Max shook his head. "He refuses to talk. Or he runs his smart mouth the whole time, talking nonsense just to piss everyone off."

"I don't know, man." Kent looked up at the sky, already pink with the rising sun. "But something **has to**

Extra Story – Chapter 1

\* Fonts >

change. Evan can't keep going like this. We've worked hard to make sure he feels accepted here, but he's not exactly making it easy."

“I know. I hear them calling him a stray when they think I’m not listening.” Max’s eyes darkened. “I wish they knew he hears it too. That it only feeds the fire burning inside him.”

“There’s only so much we can do about small-minded people.”

“Alpha! Beta!”

They turned as Jaxon jogged toward them, the sunlight glinting off his short blond hair.

“Patrols came in,” he said, catching his breath. “Still no sightings. No scents. No tracks.”

Jaxon shrugged. “I don’t think he’s in the woods. We would have picked something up by now.”

“\*\*k,” Max muttered, pacing a few steps away.

“Thanks, Jax.” Kent forced a small smile. “Call in the extra patrols. Let them rest. Rotate the shifts and get fresh bodies on regular patrol.”

“Will do, Alpha.”

As Jaxon walked off, Kent turned back to Max. “Where do you think he is?”

Max shook his head. “I don’t know. But when I find him, I’m stringing him up by his toes.”

Kent rolled his eyes. “Like you’ve ever been strict with that boy.”

Which was part of the problem, but Kent kept that to himself.

“Stop following me!”

Kent stepped off the elevator just in time to see Wyatt raise his fist at his sister, who shrank back against the wall.

“Wyatt!” Kent barked. “What are you doing?”

“She keeps following me, Dad!” he whined, lowering his hand as Elinor smirked at his scolding.

“That’s no reason to raise a hand to *your* sister,” Kent snapped.

“I wasn’t going to hit her,” Wyatt muttered, rolling his eyes. “I was just trying to make her stop.”

Kent knelt down in front of him, narrowing his eyes. “First, don’t roll your eyes at me again. Second, you don’t raise your hand to someone unless it’s absolutely necessary. I don’t care if you were actually going to hit her or not. That’s not how we solve problems.”

He could tell Wyatt **was** fighting the urge to roll his eyes again as he let out a heavy sigh.

“Okay, Dad,” he muttered, clearly annoyed.

Kent bit back a smile. Goddess, this boy **was** so much like his mother some days.

He looked **at** Elinor, who was still grinning as she watched her brother get lectured. “And you, young lady, need to listen when your brother asks you to stop.”

Her smile vanished, and her cheeks flushed as she nodded.

<Extra Story – Chapter 1

The door at the end of the hall opened and Riley came out, sweeping her long hair into a ponytail,

“Did you find him?” she asked as soon as she spotted Kent.

He stood, shaking his head, “Patrols don’t think he’s in the woods.”

She frowned. “That boy,” she muttered, before looking at the kids. “You two ready for breakfast?”

A loud crash echoed from down the hall. All four of them turned toward the sound. Kent moved quickly, aware that Riley and the kids were right behind him as he threw open his office door.

“Hey, Alpha!”

Kent groaned.

Evan was slouched behind his desk, surrounded by a spread of liquor bottles. His face was flushed, eyes

glassy, and he grinned as he took a long swig from Kent’s best whiskey.

“Take the kids downstairs,” Kent said to Riley. “Tell Max we found him.”

Riley stared at Evan for a moment. Through the bond, Kent felt her frustration and disbelief surge. Finally, she

sighed and guided the kids out of the room.

Kent shut the door and turned to the fourteen-year-old in the chair. Evan's dark brown hair had grown long,

falling into his eyes. His normally olive-toned skin was now pale and sickly.

"What are you doing, Ev?" Kent asked with a heavy sigh.

"Enjoying your fine bourbon," Evan slurred.

"That's whiskey, actually." Kent crossed the room, stepping around the desk to face him. "How'd you get in

here? The door was locked."

"Knicked Mom's key," Evan said proudly. "She always leaves it lying around. You should talk to her about that."

He snickered, amused with himself, but Kent felt only frustration.

Kent glanced at the liquor cabinet and saw the broken hinges. "You broke my cabinet."

Evan shrugged. "Mom doesn't have a key for that."

The door flew open and Max stormed in, his eyes blazing with fury as he took in the scene.

"What the hell, Evan?!" he shouted, eyes sweeping over the bottles. "We've been looking for you all night!"

Evan's grin widened. "And? Sounds like a you problem. I've been just fine right here."

Max's nostrils flared as he grabbed Evan by the collar and hauled him out of the chair. At fourteen, Evan was nearly as tall as his father. He was only going to grow.

"It's about to be a very big you problem," Max growled.

Evan rolled his eyes. "Sure, Pops."

Max shook him hard. "Do you realize how many people were looking for you? Do you care how worried your

mother and I were?"

"No and no." Evan's grin didn't waver.

"Max," Kent said quietly. "He's drunk. You're not going to get through to him right now."

“I don’t need to talk to him,” Max growled. “I can knock some sense into him.”

<Extra Story – Chapter 1

“Sure, Dad,” Evan snapped. His smile vanished. “Go ahead and try.”

Max made a low, furious sound but shoved Evan away instead. The boy stumbled, nearly falling. He straightened, laughing.

“You’re too much of a coward to touch me. I’m not scared of you anyway.”

Max clenched his fists but didn’t move.

“Evan,” Kent said, keeping his voice calm as he stepped forward. “Let’s get you downstairs to sleep, alright?”

“I don’t need to be tucked in like a baby.”

Kent raised an eyebrow. “You’re acting like one.”

Evan’s expression darkened. “f\*\*k you, Alpha.”

“Evan!” Max started forward, but Kent held up a hand to stop him.

“This isn’t how adults behave,” Kent said, voice steady. “Adults don’t disappear. They don’t pick fights for fun, and they don’t break into things or steal.”

Evan’s eyes were still full of fire, but Kent could see the tears shining there. He took a step forward, reaching

for his shoulder.

But Evan doubled over and vomited.

1

**Comments**

**An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 94[  
1,512 words ]**

## Extra Story Chapter 2

Age 14

Riley shouldn't have been shocked when Kent told her they had taken Evan to the hospital. Apparently, he **had** thrown up and then passed out in Kent's office. With no way to determine how much alcohol he had actually consumed, thanks to the number of broken bottles, Kent had decided the safest course of action was to get

him checked out.

Penny was sitting beside the hospital bed when Riley walked into the room. Her auburn hair was piled into a messy bun, and her eyes were red-rimmed from crying. Evan lay asleep, his face slack, making him look every bit as young as he truly was.

It always amazed Riley how quickly Evan was growing, already taller and broader than most of his peers. Sometimes he looked so much like an adult that it was easy to forget he was still just a child. A boy who was lost, hurting, and unsure of where he belonged.

"How is he?" Riley asked, slipping into the chair beside Penny..

"He has alcohol poisoning," Penny said, her voice raw. "They pumped his stomach, but he'll need to stay for at least a day for observation and fluids."

"Goddess, I can't believe he drank that much." Riley reached for Penny's trembling hand and held it in hers.

"I'm just grateful Kent insisted on bringing him in," Penny said with a shaky breath. "Max was furious. He wanted to make Evan sleep it off in his room. If Kent hadn't pushed, something could've happened to him."

"You know Kent loves Evan," Riley said, giving her hand a gentle squeeze. "He'd do anything for him."

A tear slipped down Penny's cheek. "What am I supposed to do, Riley?" Her voice broke as more tears followed. "I don't know how to help him. I don't know what he needs."

"What about therapy?" Riley asked softly.

"He won't cooperate. Even when we manage to get him to go, he refuses to talk. Or he acts like a complete jerk the entire time." Penny wiped her cheeks with the back of her hand. "He won't listen to me or Max. The only one who gets through to him at all is Alex, but what can he do? He's just a kid himself."

She let out a long, unsteady breath. "And the things Evan says sometimes... he can be so cruel. He knows exactly how to hurt us. I don't understand it. We've done everything we

could for him. We've always given him everything he needs, everything he wants. We've always made sure he was treated the same as Alex and Emma."

"But he's not the same as Alex and Emma," Riley said gently.

Penny's brows shot up. "No. He's my child. Just as much as they are. Even if I didn't give birth to him..."

"I know," Riley said, lifting her hand slightly. "I'm not questioning your love for Evan. I know you love him **just** as deeply as your other two. But Evan *is* different. Being adopted means he **carries** a story that's separate **from** theirs."

Penny chewed on her lip, her eyes locked on Riley.

"He knows he's adopted," Riley continued. "He knows what **happened to** his **birth parents**. He knows how he

Extra Story–Chapter 2

came to live with you. He probably has a list in his head of every way he's not the same as his siblings."

Penny said nothing, her gaze fixed and distant.

"And he's been through things most kids never have to experience," Riley said softly. "He was kidnapped as an infant and abused. Even if he doesn't remember it, his body does. That trauma is still there. And then it happened again when he was five. He's carrying so much pain."

Penny's eyes filled again. "How do I help him?" Her voice cracked. "I can't take that pain away. I can't fix what's already happened. And he doesn't want my help. He doesn't want anyone's. He's just so angry." "We'll figure it out, Penny." Riley wished she felt as confident as she sounded.

Riley stood in the hallway outside Evan's hospital room for a few minutes. The low hum of the machines and the occasional beep echoed like a metronome of anxiety. She finally turned away and made her way down the corridor, where Kent, Max, and Penny had gathered in the small family waiting area. The coffee in the corner sat untouched. No one had said much since Kent called them all in.

She slipped into the seat beside Kent. Max sat across from her, elbows resting on his knees, hands dangling loosely between them. He looked drained. Penny sat next to him, her fingers twisted in the hem of her shirt, eyes puffy and tired. Kent leaned back with his arms crossed, his jaw set in a familiar line of restrained frustration.

No one spoke at first. The silence between them was thick.

“We can’t keep doing this,” Max said finally, his voice raw. “Every few weeks it’s something new. School fights, disappearing for a night, drinking, trashing things. It’s like we’re just waiting for the next crisis.”

“I know,” Penny whispered. “It feels like we’ve tried everything, and nothing works.”

Kent exhaled through his nose. “Because everything so far has been soft. Talking. Waiting. Hoping. He needs consequences. Real ones. Not just ‘go to your room’ or a stern lecture. That’s not cutting it anymore.”

Max looked up, his eyes shadowed. “You think more punishment is going to help him? He’s already angry all the time. If we come down harder, what if we push him further away?”

“We might,” Kent admitted. “But right now, we’re letting him walk all over us. He’s tearing up his future, and we’re watching it happen. He needs boundaries. He needs to know his actions have weight.”

Riley cleared her throat, drawing their attention. “I agree with Kent.”

Penny turned toward her, brows drawing together.

“I don’t think we can keep handling Evan like he’s a broken child who needs to be protected from everything,” Riley said gently. “He’s not just angry. He’s reckless, and someone’s going to get hurt. Or worse, he’s going to destroy his own path before he ever has a chance to walk it.”

“So, what do we do?” Max asked. “Ground him again? Take away privileges? He doesn’t care.”

“I think we stop just taking things away.” Riley **said**. “And start giving him responsibility. Make him clean up

what he’s broken. Make him apologize, to people and to the pack. Force him to do the work. If he’s old enough to break rules, he’s old enough to repair the damage”

Kent gave a slow nod. “Restitution.”

<Extra Story- Chapter 2

+ Pets >

“Yes,” Riley said. “He needs to feel that his actions don’t disappear when we forgive him. That they cost

something.”

She hesitated before continuing. "I've been reading more about True Alphas lately. Especially about the changes they go through during puberty."

Max blinked at her. "You think this is connected to his genetics?"

"I think it's all connected. True Alphas mature faster, physically, mentally, emotionally. Their instincts are

stronger, their tempers harder to control. Their energy can overwhelm them if they don't learn how to focus it.

Add to that the trauma Evan's carrying, the rejection he's starting to feel from people in the pack, and it's no wonder he's spiraling."

Max ran a hand over his face. "The things people have been saying... calling him a stray when they think we

don't hear."

"He hears it," Riley said quietly. "Even if he pretends not to."

They fell silent again. Riley felt the weight of all their years together, of battles fought as warriors and

parents and leaders. It wasn't just about Evan anymore. It was about the future of the pack. About who Evan

could become if they failed him now.

"You know," Max said, after a long moment, "when Evan was five, and we thought we'd lost him for good... it

was you who brought him back."

Riley looked up, surprised.

"He trusts you," Max continued. "Always has. You're the only person he's never fully turned on, no matter how

angry he gets."

Kent looked over at her as well, brow lifting slightly. "You think he might actually listen to her?"

Max nodded. "If anyone can reach him, it's Riley."

“I’m not a therapist,” she said quietly. “I’m not even his parent.”

“No,” Penny said, her voice shaking. “But you’re, the one person he’s always looked up to. And maybe right

now, he doesn’t need a parent. Maybe he needs someone who sees him as a future warrior... maybe even a future Alpha.”

Riley stared at the linoleum floor, at the faint scuff marks and shadows cast by the fluorescent lights.

Training Evan wasn’t what she expected. And definitely not what she wanted.

But maybe it was what he needed.

She looked up, meeting Max’s eyes, then Penny’s. Then Kent’s.

“Okay,” she said finally, “I’ll try”

Comments

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Extra Story – Chapter 3

## **An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 95[ 1,390 words ]**

Extra Story – Chapter 3

Age 14

Riley stood alone on the training field, arms crossed, the early morning mist still clinging to the grass. Her foot tapped against the ground as she stared across the grounds. Evan was late.

She wasn’t even surprised.

He was testing her. She was sure of it. Show up late, act like it doesn't matter, try to take control. It was the kind of move a frustrated kid with too much pain and too little direction would pull. Especially one who was used to watching adults dance around his outbursts.

Her jaw tightened. She didn't have time for this.

A list of unfinished tasks tugged at her brain. She had client reports waiting for her review. Emails that needed replies. A meeting she should have scheduled. Wyatt had a school project due in two days, and she

still hadn't picked up supplies. Elinor needed new shoes, again. The kid was growing faster than her budget could keep up.

And instead of checking any of those things off, she was standing here in the cold early morning, waiting on

a boy who had spent much of the last year acting like he hated the world.

She exhaled slowly, forcing the tension from her shoulders. She could already feel her irritation building, and

that was exactly what Evan would want.

Finally she caught movement across the field. Evan approached like he couldn't be bothered. His hands were

stuffed into the pockets of a dark hoodie, hood pulled up to hide most of his face. He didn't hurry. He didn't

apologize.

- 4 5 6 F

Typical.

"You're late," Riley said flatly.

He shrugged. "Didn't know there was a clock on this."

"There is now." She turned and walked toward the center of the training ring. "Let's warm up."

Evan made a noise that was somewhere between a laugh and a scoff. "Don't need to. I already know how to

fight.”

She stopped and turned toward him, raising an eyebrow. “You do, huh?”

He gave her a cocky smirk. “Yeah. I fight all the time. With those assholes at school who don’t know how to

keep their mouths shut. I haven’t lost once.”

“Great,” Riley said, her voice even. “Then you shouldn’t have a problem showing me.”

He shrugged, his smirk widening. If you’re so eager to lose.”

Something about his tone almost made her smile. Made her remember when she used to take such joy in

knocking down overconfident Alphas who always underestimated her because she was a woman. Even her own mate had been one of those Alphas once upon a time.

She shook her head, reminding herself that Evan wasn’t one of those full grown men who had tried to **belittle**

1/4

<Extra Story – Chapter 3.

her, but a boy still trying to figure life out.

+8 Points >

She moved to the center of the mat and motioned him forward. Evan tossed off his hoodie, revealing the bulk of a teenage boy who had started filling out long before he should have. He was already far taller than her, almost nearly as tall as Kent. Broad shoulders. Strong arms.

⌘ ⌘ ⌘

But none of that mattered.

He came at her fast, all aggression and no form. She waited until the last second before she sidestepped, hooked his arm, and swept his legs out from under him. He hit the mat with a surprised grunt.

Riley didn’t smile. She held out her hand.

He slapped it away and pushed himself up, scowling. “You got lucky.”

“Try again.”

This time, he hesitated. Calculated. But the frustration was already simmering behind his eyes. He came in harder, faster, but still telegraphed every move. She ducked, twisted and had him on the ground again within

seconds.

His growl of frustration echoed across the field.

“Strength isn’t everything,” she said calmly, watching him sit up. “Neither is speed. It’s about control. Strategy. Patience.”

He pushed himself up quickly and launched himself at her before she had time to prepare. His fist clipped her shoulder, but she righted herself quickly. He was all fury now and no control. He lunged towards her and she easily moved out of the way. He grunted in frustration and came at her again, but she easily took him down a

third time.

“You don’t know everything, Evan,” she said quietly, looking down at his prone form on the mat. “No one does.

But if you keep acting *like* you do, you’re going to keep getting knocked down.”

He didn’t answer. He pushed himself into a sitting position, but made no move to stand. He just sat there,

breathing hard, jaw clenched tight.

Riley sank into a crouch beside him. “You have a lot of power and strength, Evan. Your heritage makes you

very powerful. But power and strength means nothing if you have no control.”

His dark brown eyes flickered to hers before looking back to the mat quickly. But she caught it. The flash of that white hot anger he tried to hide.

Riley moved so she was sitting crosslegged beside him. “What do you want to do when you grow up?”

He shot her a glare, like it was the dumbest question in the world. “Doesn’t matter. Everyone already decided

for me.”

“Who decided?”

“Everyone,” he snapped bitterly. “I’m supposed to go back to my birth father’s pack and be the Alpha. That’s why I’m supposed to visit every year, I don’t get a choice. I don’t get to stay here, but it’s not like it matters.” He picked at a piece of lint on his pants. “No one wants me here anyway.”

“That’s not true, Ev,” Riley said gently.

He **rolled** his eyes, scoffing at her. “You don’t hear the way the people at school talk. Then my own parents

214

<Extra Story – Chapter 3

Ponts >

are always riding my ass, going on about my grades and my responsibilities. And then they drag me to that stupid little pack and I have to listen to Ty drone on and on about how I’m fulfilling my father’s legacy.”

She studied him. “And how do you feel about that?”

He looked away. “I don’t get to feel anything about it.”

“That’s not true.”

He didn’t answer. Only stared out at the trees, a faraway look in his eyes.

Riley leaned forward, trying to keep her voice light. “You know, that’s not the only path. You could go to the academy. Study law. Diplomacy. Investigation. You could train with the Council. There are other options,

Evan.”

His eyes flicked back to hers. “Not for me.”

“Do they want you to be Alpha? Yes, of course they do. It’s your right to be Alpha of that pack. But it doesn’t mean you have to. There are people, heirs to packs, who choose to forge a different path for themselves.”

He shook his head. “No one will like that.”

Riley smirked, nudging his knee gently. “Since when do you care about doing what other people like?”

The corners of his mouth lilted up in a slight smile.

“You can make your own path, Evan,” she said gently, “but you won’t get anywhere if you keep pushing everyone away.”

He gave her a sidelong glance. “Do you think I could really work at the council?”

She nodded. “I used to work there. I loved it. I still work with the council a lot. Plus, my business is very similar to what I used to do there. I work with packs who are struggling. Help negotiate treaties. Handle territory disputes. It’s not as boring as it sounds.”

His brow furrowed. “You do that?”

“I do,” she said. “And it’s not all meetings and paperwork. Sometimes it’s tracking down leads. Meditating conflicts before they turn violent. Trying to make packs stronger.”

He was quiet for a long moment, and then, cautiously asked, “Could .. see it? What you do?”

Riley blinked. She hadn’t considered he might be that interested.

“I suppose you could shadow me for a day.”

He shrugged, trying to act indifferent. “Yeah, Just to see.”

A slow smile pulled at the corner of her mouth. “Alright. But only if you show up to training on time tomorrow.

He rolled his eyes but didn’t argue/

It was a start, at least,

Comments

## **An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 96[ 1,856 words ]**

Extra Story – Chapter 4

Age 14

Riley was on edge, and the rational part of her brain told her to send Evan away for the day. He was supposed to be shadowing her, but she wasn't sure she was in the right frame of mind to have him trailing behind her. They had been training together in the mornings for over a week, and Evan was making progress, albeit slowly. He was exceptionally stubborn. He hated being told what to do, and he refused to accept that he might be wrong. Riley had spent more time than she liked knocking him flat on his back because he simply wouldn't listen.

Today, she had agreed to let him shadow her at work, something he had been pestering her about all week. But then she woke up to that email, and her heart had nearly leapt out of her chest. She had run straight to

Kent.

"An email from who?" he asked, looking up from his desk as she barged in, babbling about what she had

seen.

"Paul," she said, her voice strained.

Kent blinked at her. "Paul-the-jackass who rejected you?"

She nodded.

He followed her back to her office and sat beside her as she opened the message and read it.

*To: Riley Westwood*

*From: Paul Gallagher*

*Subject: Condolences*

Dear Riley,

I'm sorry to be *the one to inform you, but your father, Joel Atwood, passed away overnight. He had been ill for some time, and his death was not unexpected. He did ask for you toward the end, but Alpha Rodrick was not willing to lift your banishment.*

I felt an obligation to let you know, *given our history. I am sorry for your loss.*

-All the best,

Paul

Riley sat there in shock, reading and rereading the words, struggling to process them. Her father was dead? Honestly, she had barely thought about him in years. He hadn't been the most pleasant person to be around. But still, the news pierced her chest with a sharp ache.

He was still her father.

"Alpha Rodrick sounds like a real winner," Kent muttered. "And what's that crap about 'obligations' and 'given our history'?"

"That's just Paul," she said. She didn't feel the old stabbing pain she used to when talking about him. Not after nine years.

< Extra Story - Chapter 4

+0 Points

But there hadn't been much time to process any of it. She had a meeting scheduled with Ridgehill and Hollow Rock in twenty minutes and still needed to finish her notes.

Kent left her with a long, reassuring hug and a promise to check in later. She got to work setting up. But of course, Evan wasn't where he was supposed to be and wandered in only a few minutes before the meeting

started.

"You're late," she said, glancing up as he stood in the doorway, wearing a black hoodie and joggers.

He shrugged. "Got distracted."

She pointed to the armchair. "Sit there. I want you to watch and listen, but be quiet."

He rolled his eyes but flopped into the chair, slouching down with one leg bouncing restlessly.

The screen flickered to life, and both clients appeared in the grid. Alpha Porter from Ridgehill had black hair and dark eyes, while Gamma Lacy from Hollow Rock wore her pin-straight blonde hair tucked behind her ears. Her bright green eyes were fixed on the camera. The topic was simple: strategies for integrating Half-Moon Protocol training into mixed-role packs. Riley had done this a dozen times before.

She barely made it three minutes in before Evan leaned forward, his voice too *loud*. "That's not gonna work for Ridgehill. Their delta ranks are garbage."

Riley's jaw tightened. "Evan," she warned quietly, keeping her eyes on the screen.

Porter raised a brow. “Is that your assistant?”

Riley gave a tight smile. “Just an observer today. Please continue.”

She redirected the conversation, but barely a minute later, Evan cut in again.

“They can’t integrate that until they fix their communication system...”

“Evan,” she said sharply, cutting him off. “Enough.”

There was an awkward pause before Lacy cleared her throat and continued, but the rhythm was lost. The call felt clunky and off-balance after that. When it ended, Riley clicked out of the window and turned slowly to face him.

“What was that?” she asked. Her voice was calm, but tight with irritation.

“I was helping” he said, crossing his arms. His eyes narrowed.

“No. You were interrupting,” she said. “You were supposed to watch and learn. That means keeping quiet. Listening Understanding the structure before you jump in.”

“You treat me like I’m stupid!” he snapped. “Like I’m some little kid who can’t do anything!”

“You’re fourteen, Evan” Her tone sharpened “You are still a kid. That’s not an insult. it’s just the truth. You’re

here to learn, not take over the room.”

His cheeks flushed deep red. His jaw clenched tight. “You’re just like the rest of them,” he said bitterly Pretend you care, but really you think I’m just a burden.”

“Don’t twist this into something it’s not,” she said, rising to her feet as her own patience wore thin. “I brought you here because I do care. But if you want to be taken seriously, you have to start acting like someone worth listening to. Not someone who throws tantrums when they don’t get their way.”

2/2

<Extra Story – Chapter 4

Points

He didn’t reply. He just turned and stormed out, slamming the door behind him so hard the frame rattled.

Riley stared at the door for a long moment, her chest tight. Unwillingly, her mind flicked back to Paul's email, to thoughts of her father dying, of him asking to see her and being refused by an alpha with a petty grudge.

She sank into her chair and began to cry.

The knock was soft, but she knew it was him.

"I'm coming in," Kent said, not waiting for permission.

Riley didn't lift her head from where she sat on the edge of the couch in her office, elbows on her knees,

fingers threaded through her hair. She'd stopped crying a while ago, but the weight of everything still pressed

down on her chest like a boulder she couldn't move.

Kent shut the door behind him. She felt more than heard the way he crossed the room, quiet and deliberate.

His presence filled the space like it always did, steady and grounding.

He knelt in front of her and slid his hands around hers, gently pulling them free from her hair.

"You've been in here too long," he said softly.

"know."

"You didn't come find me."

didn't want you to see me like this," she admitted, her voice rough.

He frowned at that, thumb brushing over the back of her hand. "There's no version of you I don't want to see."

That broke something open again, but she blinked fast, refusing to let more tears fall.

"I couldn't do it, Kent. I tried with him, I really did, and he just... he pushed and pushed until I snapped. And I shouldn't have. He's a kid. He's just... he's so angry. I don't know what to do with that."

Kent didn't interrupt. He just let her speak, holding her hands gently.

thought I could handle it. Evan. My father dying. My work. Everything. I thought I could hold it all together

like I always do, but I can't."

He leaned in, resting his forehead gently against hers. "You don't have to. That's what I'm here for."

Her eyes fluttered closed at the contact His rich sandalwood scent wrapped around her, something she'd

known for years and still found comfort in every time.

"I feel like I'm failing" she whispered

"You're not" His voice was steady, sure. "You're carrying the weight of too many people. But you're not failing.

Kent shifted to sit beside her on the couch. He pulled her into his arms and she didn't resist. She curled into him, pressing her cheek to his chest, her fingers gripping the back of his shirt like it was the only thing anchoring her to the ground.

"I love you," she murmured

He kissed the side of her head. "I love you too" He pulled **back just** enough to look at her, his hand coming up

3/5

<Extra Story - Chapter 4

to cradle her jaw. "I've got you right now. You don't have to carry everything. We're in this together. You and

me."

Her throat tightened, and she nodded, eyes brimming again.

He kissed her, slow and sure. She melted into him, letting her stress bleed away.

Kent's lips moved to her temple, then her cheek, lingering like he was grounding her piece by piece, His hands slid over her back, strong and soothing, until one cupped the side of her neck, his thumb brushing along her

jaw.

“I hate seeing you hurt,” he whispered.

“I know,” she said, her voice low.

He kissed her again, this time deeper, more purposeful. When she responded, his grip tightened just slightly, his other hand skimming down to her waist and pulling her into his lap. Her thighs settled on either side of

his hips, the warmth of his body wrapping around her.

Riley exhaled slowly, her hands running through his hair as she kissed him again, slower this time, savoring the way he always gave her the space to come back to herself.

His lips moved to her throat, soft and warm, and she tilted her head for him without thinking. Her breath

hitched when his teeth grazed her skin, just enough to tease.

“Let me take care of you,” he said against her neck, voice thick with emotion.

“You already are,” she whispered.

He guided her shirt over her head, slow and unhurried. Her bra followed quickly. His hands moved across her skin with reverence, not urgency. When she reached for his shirt, he let her strip it away, and their bodies pressed together, skin to skin, familiar and grounding.

They kissed again, slower now, as if neither of them wanted to break the moment. Her hips rolled forward instinctively, and he groaned softly, his hands settling on her waist, holding her in place.

“I love you,” she said again, voice steadier this time, stronger.

“I love you more,” he murmured

He helped her pull off her pants and underwear. She reached between them and freed his hard length from his pants, stroking it in her hand before she positioned herself over **him**, sinking down.

They both groaned as she began to move in a rhythm that was both familiar and thrilling. He clasped the back of her neck, pulling her mouth back to his, his tongue moving to the pace of her hips.

When they came, it was together Riley pushed her forehead into his, their **moans** mixing together as they

found their release.

Afterwards, Riley curled up against Kent's chest, his fingers drawing patterns along **her** spine. Kent kissed the top of her head softly For a moment, all the worries about life faded away, lost in the comfort of his

embrace

Comments

## An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 97[ 1,450 words ]

Extra Story - Chapter 5

Age 14

Kent found Patrick in his living room, wrestling Oliver while Lily clung to his back. Oliver squealed, kicking and laughing as Patrick tickled him. Lily tightened her small arm around her father's throat in a mock hold.

Kent paused in the doorway, amused, before clearing his throat.

Patrick looked up, his face splitting into the wide grin he always wore when playing with his kids.

"Hey, man," he panted, working to untangle Lily's arm. "I didn't know you were coming."

"I've got a favor to ask," Kent said, rocking back on his heels and sliding his hands into his pockets. "Didn't realize I'd be interrupting the spar of the century."

"I almost got him in a chokehold, Uncle Kent," Lily beamed up at him.

"I saw," he replied, grinning down at her. She had blond hair like her mother, but her eyes were the same

shade as her namesake. "You just need to apply more pressure with your forearm."

She nodded, considering that seriously.

“She’s only ten, Kent, Patrick said with a note of admonishment. “She doesn’t really need to know how to do

a proper chokehold yet.”

Kent rolled his eyes and looked at Lily. “Tell your dad that you’re never too young to learn important life skills.

Lily giggled.

“Lils, take your brother to the other room while I talk to Kent,” Patrick said, shifting into one of the chairs as

Kent moved to sit on the couch. They watched as Lily grabbed Oliver’s hand and tugged him away.

“So what’s up?” Patrick asked once the kids were gone.

Kent sighed and ran a hand through his hair. “Riley’s been training with Evan in the mornings.”

“I heard,” Patrick said, frowning. “How’s it going?”

“It’s only been a week, and he’s already stressing her out.”

“No real shock there. That kid is as hardheaded as they come.”

Kent leaned forward, bracing his elbows on **his** knees. “Riley’s already stretched thin. Her business, Luna duties, the kids... and now she just found out her dad died.”

“Ah, s\*\*t,” Patrick muttered, arms folding tightly across his chest. “I’m sorry to hear that.”

“Yeah. It’s a lot. I’m sure she’ll tell you when she’s ready. Goddess knows she talks to you more than she talks

to me sometimes.”

It was true. Over the years, Riley’s friendship with Patrick had only grown stronger. But that no longer bothered Kent. He was glad she had someone other than him to lean on.

“So what’s the favor?” Patrick asked after a beat.

“Can *you* take over training Evan for half the week? I don’t want him to stop. He needs to learn control, and

1/4

< Extra Story – Chapter 5

you've got more patience than I do. You're calmer. I think that'll work better with him."

Patrick raised a brow. "That boy could test the patience of the Goddess herself."

Kent snorted. "Yeah, I know. He's rough around the edges."

+ Paints

"Understatement of the year," Patrick muttered. He shook his head, then sighed. "All right. I'll take him. I'll talk to Riley so we can figure out how to split the schedule and what he needs to work on."

Kent nodded, relief washing through him. "Thanks, Pat. I can always count on you."

His next stop was the beta wing. Alex sat in the living room with a book open in front of him and a notebook

balanced on his knee.

"Hey, Kent," Alex said, glancing up.

"Hey, kid. Where's your dad?"

"Probably yelling at Evan again," Alex replied, eyes dropping back to his notebook. "He failed his history test

today."

"What about you? How'd you do?"

Alex grinned. "Aced it. Obviously."

Kent smiled. "Obviously."

"Uncle Kent!"

He turned just in time to catch Emma as she threw herself into his arms, her red hair flying around her like a

flame.

"Hey, Emmie." He kissed her forehead before setting her down.

“I’m going to be in the science fair next week,” she said brightly. “Will you come see my project?”

“The Alpha has better things to do than your stupid science project, Ems,” grumbled a surly voice from

behind them.

Kent’s expression darkened as he turned to see Evan amble into the room, hands shoved deep in his hoodie pockets. Max followed a step behind, eyes narrowed, jaw tight.

“Don’t talk to your sister like that,” Max snapped.

Kent looked down at Emma and saw her eyes drop to the floor, her smile gone. He knelt in front of her and waited until she looked up.

“Just tell me the day, Emmie, and I’ll be there”

Her face lit up again, and she threw her arms around his neck, squeezing tight Kent hugged her back,

catching Evan rolling his eyes as he flopped onto the couch next to Alex.

“Emma,” Max said gently. “Go see what your mom’s doing, okay?”

She beamed and ran out of the room. Kent watched her go, smiling That kid never walked anywhere. She

was always in motion.

“What brings you here, Kent?” Max asked as he sat down.

214

6

Extra Story Chapter 5

“I wanted to talk to you and Evan,” Kent said, settling into a nearby chair.

“Oh great,” Evan muttered. “Another lecture from the Alpha.”

Alex glanced at his brother, lips pressed into a line. Kent could tell he wanted to say something but decided

not to.

“Alex, finish your homework in your room,” Max said without looking up.

They waited as Alex gathered his things and left the room.

“So, what’s up, Uncle Kent?” Evan said, drawing out the title in an exaggerated tone.

Kent took a deep breath, keeping his voice calm. “From now on, Patrick and Riley will be splitting your training schedule. Riley will let you know the exact days.”

Evan scoffed. “So she doesn’t want to work with me now?”

“She still will,” Kent replied evenly. “Patrick will be helping *too*.”

“Is it because she’s still pissy about today?” Evan bounced his leg, staring at the ceiling.

“No,” Kent said firmly. “Riley has responsibilities. The training is taking time she needs for other things. That’s all.”

“Sorry I’m taking up so much of her precious time,” Evan sneered. “She doesn’t have to train me at all. I’d hate

to be such an inconvenience.”

“Damn it, Evan,” Max snapped. “Stop acting like this.”

“Like what?” Evan shot back. “Like myself? You’d rather I be perfect like Alex or sweet like Emma, right?”

“That’s not what I said,” Max replied, rubbing his forehead.

“But it’s what you think,” Evan said. “Don’t think I haven’t heard you and Mom talking.”

“Evan, stop.”

“I don’t need anyone to train me.” Evan stood, glaring at Kent. “Tell the Luna I won’t waste her time anymore.

She told me I’m just a kid. That I should sit down and shut up.”

Kent stared at him, anger flaring. “Sit down, Evan.”

“No,” Evan snapped. “I didn’t ask her to make me her charity case. She made it pretty clear she’s done with

me”

Kent stood and crossed the space, stopping in front of Evan. The boy straightened, fists clenched at his

sides

“Riley found out her father died this morning.” Kent said quietly

Evan froze. His eyes widened His mouth opened, then snapped shut

“I didn’t know,” he said, his voice softer. “She didn’t tell me”

Kent placed a hand on Evan’s shoulder and gently nudged him back down to the couch. He sat beside him, rubbing his forehead.

“She didn’t want you to know. She **hasn’t** told anyone but me. She probably wouldn’t want me to tell you either. But you need to understand that you’re not the only one going through something. Everyone around

3/4

Extra Story Chapter 5

you is carrying things you may not see.”

“No one wants to tell me anything,” Evan mumbled. “Everyone treats me like a kid.”

“You are a kid, Evan.” Kent leaned forward to meet his eyes. “Like it or not, you still have a lot to learn.”

Evan rolled his eyes. “You sound like Riley.”

“Good. Riley’s the smartest person I know. If I sound like her, I’m doing something right.”

Kent leaned back. “You’ll keep training. Your time will be split between Riley and Patrick. Whether or not you

continue shadowing Riley at work is her decision.”

He stood and nodded to Max as he made for the door. Just before he left, he turned back.

“And from now on, for every test you fail, you’ll spend an evening in the kitchen helping your grandmother. I’m

sure she’ll appreciate the help.”

Evan’s jaw dropped while Max tried to hide a laugh.

“Have a good evening, Evan.”

1

## An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 98[ 1,770 words ]

Extra Story – Chapter 6

Age 16

Riley had hoped, perhaps stupidly, that Evan would calm down when he got his wolf. She thought the Goddess might see fit to bless someone so temperamental with a calm inner voice. But it seemed the Goddess had a cruel sense of humor.

Evan’s wolf, Atlas, was not calm. He was just as aggressive and hot-tempered as his human counterpart. He was easily one of the largest wolves Riley had ever seen, larger even than Kent’s, which felt fitting, given how

much Evan had continued to grow. At sixteen, he now stood taller than both Max and Kent.

His body had filled out, making him look far older than he was. His shoulders had broadened, his frame solid

and muscled from training. He looked like a man. A dangerous one.

After months of resistance, Evan had finally fallen in line with the training Patrick and Riley led. He showed

up most of the time, applied himself when he bothered to focus, and had *become* surprisingly disciplined on

the mat. It turned out he was a quick study when he chose to be. His strength had increased dramatically,

and his sparring skills improved to the point that he could sometimes beat Riley when he actually tried.

The problem was that the control he learned during training didn’t always follow him into the rest of his life.

He was still quick to anger and quicker to fight. Most of his peers had learned to leave him alone, knowing no one could match his strength or his temper.

And Evan knew it. His arrogance had only grown with his power. He was wildly popular with the girls, and

Max and Penny had grown so exasperated with his habit of sneaking them into his room that they moved

him to a bedroom closer to the outer wing, just so they wouldn't have to see it as often. Max, rather

pragmatically, had pointed out that Evan was going to have s\*x no matter what they said. Instead of fighting

**him**, they simply ensured he was well-stocked with condoms and educated on safe practices.

Meanwhile, his grades had improved dramatically. Kent had enforced a rule that poor grades meant working in the kitchen, which led to Evan spending time with his grandmother and learning some impressive cooking skills. But as his interest in girls escalated, he quickly grew tired of scrubbing dishes and missing his

evenings. That motivation alone got him to start taking his schoolwork seriously.

Riley still allowed him to shadow her a few days each week during school breaks. After getting in trouble once for speaking out of turn, he never made that mistake again. She discovered he had a sharp mind, a natural instinct for strategy, and could run numbers faster than most calculators. But he could also be lazy and overconfident, and she had to stay on top of him to make sure he didn't let things slide.

That was all before the fight.

Riley was elbow deep in paperwork when Kent stepped into her office, closing the door behind him. The look on his face had her heart dropping before he even spoke

“What happened?” she asked, already standing

He hesitated just long enough to make her stomach twist. “Evan's at the hospital.”

“What?” Her voice rose sharply. “Is he okay?”

“He's fine. Mostly bruises and a split lip.” Kent scrubbed a hand down his face and let out a breath. “But it's

< Extra Story – Chapter 6

not good, Riley. Not just because he got into a fight. It's how it started.”

Her heart hammered. “Tell me.”

Kent crossed the room and leaned against her desk. “He snuck into that bar on the edge of town. Got

someone to lie about his age at the door.”

She swore under her breath. “He was drinking again?”

+8 Points >

“Yeah. And apparently, he started hitting on some she wolf. An older woman. She kept turning him down, told

him she was mated, but he wouldn't stop.”

Riley sank into her chair, heart pounding.

“Her mate and a couple of his friends were there. They jumped him in the parking lot after she left. Evan held

his own, but it got ugly. And now half the pack's talking about how the beta's son is trying to screw around

with mated females.”

She pinched the bridge of her nose, the beginnings of a headache forming behind her eyes. “Goddess, Kent.”

“I know.” He sat across from her. “He's lucky he didn't get killed. And now I've got pack members questioning

my beta's parenting. Questioning if Evan should be allowed to stay in this pack once he comes of age.”

“I don't care about their gossip,” she said quietly. “I care about Evan.”

“I know you do.” Kent's voice softened. “But he's blowing every chance we give him. He has the grades. The

training. He could go to the academy in the fall and thrive. But with this attitude? They'll chew him up and

spit him out.”

“He won’t even consider therapy again,” Riley muttered. “He refuses to talk to anyone.”

“I want him to go back. He needs it. Not just for the academy, but for his life. He has to learn to control the anger, or it’s going to cost him something permanent. Someone.”

Riley nodded slowly, eyes clouded with worry. “No one can force him. He won’t do anything he doesn’t want

10”

I know. But maybe this is the wake-up call he needs.”

They sat in silence for a moment.

Then Riley said, “I want to talk to him. He needs to understand that this is a problem. That he needs to step

up and make some real changes.”

Kent reached across the desk and took her hand. “He listens to you more than anyone else. Maybe not always the way we want, but it sticks. It sinks in”

Her eyes met his. “Thope so. Because if this keeps going... I don’t know what else we can do”

Evan showed up a few minutes late to training the next morning. He didn’t **have** a mark on him. He healed faster than anyone she had ever met, so she wasn’t shocked to **see** that he looked completely fine.

He ambled across the training field with his normal confidence, hands in his pockets, posture **relaxed**. His

grin was lazy, like nothing about the **day** before mattered

Riley waited until he reached her before speaking. “You’re late.”

<Extra Story – Chapter 6

Evan shrugged. “I had a rough day yesterday. Needed some extra rest.”

Her jaw tightened. “You’re supposed to be here by seven.”

“Yeah, well, I’m here now.”

He didn't even sound apologetic.

+8 Points >

She folded her arms across her chest and nodded toward the benches lining the side of the field. "Sit down."

He frowned. "What? I thought we were training?"

"Sit," she said more firmly.

He hesitated, then dropped onto the bench, stretching his legs out in front of him.

She stayed standing, towering over him slightly, letting the silence settle between them for a moment.

"I want to talk about what happened the other night," she began. "I'm not upset about the fight. Not exactly. You were defending yourself. But your behavior leading up to that moment? That's a different story."

Evan rolled his eyes. "I didn't do anything. I was talking to a girl. She was smiling. Laughing. She didn't seem bothered until her mate walked in."

"She told you to leave her alone," Riley said evenly.

He opened his mouth, but she cut him off. "More than once, from my understanding. She told you she had a mate, Evan, You didn't care."

His jaw clenched, and he sat back, folding his arms tightly across his chest.

"I know you think you're grown," Riley continued, her voice low. "You're strong. You're smart. People listen to

you. You've got power, and *you* know how to use it. But all of that doesn't mean anything if you don't learn to respect people's boundaries. Especially women's."

He scoffed and looked away.

"You're not going to like what I say next," she warned him, softening just a little. "But I need you to hear it."

His eyes flickered back to hers, wary now.

"You know my first mate rejected me, correct?"

He nodded slowly, not speaking.

“His name was Paul,” she said quietly, taking a deep breath. “He was strong. Smart. Respected. The beta of our pack. People respected **him**. He had charm when he wanted it... and a mean streak when he didn’t get his

way”

Evan blinked, surprised. She rarely talked about Paul

“I was young when we met. He had a chosen mate, so he insisted we stay a secret for a lot of reasons.” She sighed. “Our relationship was very tumultuous. At first, I thought I was the one being difficult. That maybe I was the problem. He always knew what to say. He pushed every boundary I had. If I said no, he’d push until I gave in. If I needed space, he’d guilt me until I folded. If I was upset, he’d make it about him.”

She met Evan’s eyes, steady and unflinching “It got worse. When I refused to listen, he would hit me. He manipulated me. Controlled me. And every time I pushed back, he made sure I knew what it would cost”

3/4

< Extra Story Chapter 6

Evan looked stunned, sitting frozen.

She crouched slightly to get on his level. “What you did last night, it wasn’t strength. It wasn’t Alpha behavior.

That woman asked you to stop. You didn’t. You made her uncomfortable. And when her mate stepped in, you

acted like you were the one wronged.”

Evan’s expression twisted in frustration. “I’m not like that.”

“You keep saying that,” she said quietly. “But your actions don’t always line up.”

“I would never hurt someone like that,” he snapped, standing up abruptly.

“You did hurt her,” Riley said, straightening up. “You made her feel unsafe in a place she should’ve felt

protected.”

He shook his head. “That’s not the same. That’s not...” He broke off, his voice cracking with emotion. “You’re

comparing me to someone who abused you.”

I’m asking you to look at your choices,” she replied calmly. “And ask yourself what path you’re on.”

Evan stared at her, something unreadable flickering in his eyes. Then he turned and stalked off the field

without another word.

Riley let him go. He needed time. But the knot in her stomach didn’t ease.

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## An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 99[ 1,638 words ]

< Extra Story - Chapter 7

Extra Story - Chapter 7

Age 16

More Rewards

Evan stormed into the pack house, his body thrumming with anger. Riley didn’t know what the

hell she was talking about. Comparing him to that? To her first mate? To someone who had h

urt her?

He wasn’t like that.

He wasn't.

But the words kept spinning in his head anyway.

*You made her uncomfortable.*

*You made her feel unsafe in a place she should've felt protected.*

*Ask yourself what path you're on.*

He threw open the door to the wing, nearly hitting Emma in the process. She leapt out of the way, her eyes wide as she took him in.

“Ev?” Her voice was small, hesitant.

“What?” he snapped, heading toward his room, still shaking with the need to do something, punch something, fix the wrongness crawling beneath his skin.

She flinched. “Are... are you okay?”

“What the hell do you care?” he barked, whirling around to glare at her.

Emma jumped back, pressing herself against the wall, her hands trembling at her sides.

He regretted it immediately. The way her face pinched. The way her shoulders hunched, like she was trying to disappear. But the apology stuck in his throat, caught behind the heat of his

frustration.

“Just... leave me the hell alone, Emma.”

He shoved his way into his room and slammed the door hard enough to rattle the frame. His desk chair took the brunt of his fury, skidding into the wall with a crack of plastic. The impact made his hands tremble, but he didn't care.

Evan sagged onto the edge of his bed, burying his face in his hands, heart thundering like

1/6

:

Extra Story – Chapter 7

he'd run for miles.

He wasn't like Paul.

He. Wasn't. Like. Paul.

More Rewar

But Riley wouldn't have said it if she didn't mean it. She never said anything she didn't mean. And that was the part that hurt most.

The door opened sharply.

"Evan." His father's voice was firm. But then, it always seemed that way when they talked.

Evan didn't look up. "I know. I yelled at her. She didn't deserve it." His voice sounded hollow,

even to himself.

There was a pause, then the sound of Max shifting in place. "She's really upset. It was uncalled for."

"I know," Evan snapped, then softened. "I didn't mean to. She just... caught me at a bad time." Max sighed. "You think I haven't had bad days, bud? But I don't take it out on a ten-year-old."

"I know, okay?" Evan ran his hands through his hair.

The silence stretched.

Finally, Max asked, "You want to tell me why you're so upset?"

Evan hesitated. He didn't talk to his dad much anymore. It was hard when every conversation turned into an argument. And with Max, he always felt like he was screwing up.

"Riley tore into me," he finally said.

"About the other night?"

Evan nodded. "She said I didn't respect that girl's boundaries. That I made her uncomfortable. Compared me to..." His throat tightened. "Compared me to her old mate. The *one* who hurt

her."

Max's expression darkened, but he stayed quiet.

"She thinks I'm turning into someone like that." Evan finally looked up, eyes burning. "But I'm not. I didn't mean it that way. I was just talking. Joking around. She was smiling at first. Laughing."

Extra Story Chapter 7

"Did she ask you to stop?"

Evan swallowed. "She said she had a mate. That she wasn't interested."

"And what did you do?"

He shrugged, staring down at his hands. "I kept talking. I... I touched her face. Her cheek. She got upset. Told me to stop touching her. To leave her alone."

"And you didn't?"

His stomach churned. "I didn't think it was a big deal..."

Max moved closer, sitting on the edge of the bed. "Maybe it wasn't to you. But it was to her."

Evan turned away, jaw tight.

"You've got to see it from her side. She told you she had a mate. She asked you to stop. You kept going. You're bigger than her. Stronger. You were being pushy. How do you think that felt

to her?"

Evan's mouth felt dry. "Scared," he admitted finally.

"Yeah, Ev," Max said, his voice gentler now. "You frightened a girl who just wanted to have a drink with her friends. Who thought she'd have a good time without being harassed or made uncomfortable by a teenage boy."

Evan dropped his face into his hands. "I'm not... I'm not some monster... I just..." His voice

cracked.

"No," Max said. "You're not. You're a sixteen-year-old with more power than most adults, and a temper that still scares you. You've been carrying more weight than any kid should.

But that doesn't give you the right to ignore the people around you or push past their boundaries."

Evan stared at the floor. "It just feels like... no matter what I do, I mess it up."

He didn't say the thoughts that always circled in his mind: *This isn't even really my family. I'm not really one of them. Everyone's just waiting for me to leave. To go back to Green River. No one actually wants me here. No one really cares what happens to me.*

Max placed a hand on his shoulder. "I know you've been through more than you let on. And I know you hate this idea. But maybe it's time to talk to someone again."

Evan tensed. "Therapy?"

3/6

\*\*\*\* 2004 92ng your're broken. I'm saying you're carrying stuff you don't have to carry along

The fore," Even erid automatically

"you're not May replied, but there was no judgment in his voice. "And that's okay, bud"

Even stared at the chair lying broken in the corner. He couldn't stop seeing Piley's face when

she talked about her previous mate. Couldn't unhear her voice when she said he was acting

the same way. Riley had always believed in him.

And now..

" didn't mean to hurt anyone, Evan whispered.

"I know," Max said quietly. "That's why it's not too late to try again."

Max let Evan stay home from school that day, which honestly surprised him. He'd expected a fight, but Max had only pursed his lips and considered the request seriously before nodding once. "Only this once," he'd said, and let Evan go back to his room without another word.

His mom poked her head in later to check on him, but Evan hadn't felt up to talking. He couldn't stand the disappointment he imagined on her face. It was just another reminder of how badly he was screwing everything up.

After hours of lying there alone with his thoughts, Evan finally gave up and made his way to the top floor. He followed the familiar path to Riley's office and knocked.

"Evan?" Riley looked up, surprised, when he stepped inside.

He shut the door behind him and shifted uncomfortably. "Can I... talk to you for a minute?"

She blinked, then nodded. "Of course, Ev. Sit down." She gestured to the couch.

He sat, elbows resting on his thighs, hands clasped tightly between his knees. He chewed his lip, unsure of how to begin.

"Why aren't you at school?" she asked, breaking the silence.

"Dad let me stay home," he murmured.

She nodded again. "Okay. What did you want to talk about?"

He took a breath. "I'm not..." He faltered. "I don't want to be like your mate. I don't want to be someone who pushes people or makes them feel uncomfortable."

4/6

Extra Story Chapter 7

Her brows lifted. "I know that. I don't think that's who you're trying to be."

"But that's how you see me," he said softly.

More towards \*

She frowned. "No. But I worry that's the path you're heading down, if nothing changes."

He looked away,

After a moment, Riley stood and moved across the room, sitting beside him on the couch."

You're not a bad person, Evan. You're still a kid. You're figuring things out. And you always

have the ability to change. To make different choices."

"I'm not sure I know how," he admitted.

"You do, Ev. You know right from wrong. You just haven't been listening to that part of

yourself lately.”

He glanced at her. “Dad thinks I should go back to therapy.”

“What do you think?”

He looked at the floor, his brow furrowed. “I don’t know. I’m not sure it’s worth it. It’s just...

talking.”

“Talking helps. It did for me.”

Evan turned to her. “You went to therapy?”

She nodded. “After Paul rejected me, I didn’t talk about him or what happened for years. Even after I met Kent, I kept it bottled up. I thought that if I didn’t talk about it, it couldn’t hurt me

anymore.”

She sighed. “But I was wrong. It wasn’t until I started talking about it that I realized how deeply it had affected me. And then after the kidnapping, after everything that happened with you and me, I had to go. Kent pushed me to. I’m glad he did.”

Evan’s chest tightened. He hated thinking about the kidnapping. The fear. The helplessness. Even eleven years later, it still made him feel like he couldn’t breathe.

“Did it help?” he asked.

“It did. A lot. I went for several years, up until I had Elinor.”

“Do you think it might help me?”

“I do.” She reached over and gently squeezed his hands. “But you have to want to try. It only

5/6

Extra Man Chapter ?

works if you’re willing to be honest. With yourself and with the person helping you.”

Evan nodded, wanting to believe it. Wanting to believe he wasn’t already too far gone. But deep down, he wasn’t sure of anything anymore.

Comments

# An Unwanted Second Chance Ripped 100[ 1,511 words ]

Extra Story – Chapter 8

Age 16

More Rewards

The change in Evan was sudden and somewhat concerning. Riley hadn't realized she might actually miss Evan's cocky attitude until it disappeared overnight. He became noticeably withdrawn, his smile gone, his forehead constantly furrowed as though something was bothering him.

Max had been irritated with Riley at first, questioning why she would tell a sixteen-year-old boy about her abusive first mate. He hated that she had pointed out ways Evan reminded her of Paul and accused her of making him feel bad about himself. But Riley waited him out. Max could be temperamental and short-sighted, but she knew he would come around, especially after Evan finally agreed to go back to therapy and give it an honest try.

After that, Evan showed up on time to nearly every training session. He worked hard, and Riley noticed a dramatic improvement in his skill. He was becoming harder and harder to beat in a sparring match. Riley had always prided herself on her speed, but she had nothing on Evan. And somehow, he kept adding muscle until every shirt he owned stretched across

his chest.

He also grew more focused. In the evenings, he studied with Alex, working on homework and preparing for tests. Evan had always been smart enough to pass without much effort, but once he actually tried, he started pulling straight A's.

"I can't come to training tomorrow," Evan told her one morning as they sat in the grass, stretching after a particularly grueling hour.

"Why not?" she asked, raising an eyebrow.

“I have a phone interview at eight. I don’t want to be late.” His voice was quiet, almost flat.

“An interview?”

He nodded. “With the academy.”

Riley blinked. “The academy? I didn’t even know you applied.”

He shrugged like it wasn’t a big deal. “Alex was applying. He helped me with the application. It wasn’t too hard.”

“You did the essay and everything?”

175

Extra Grey Choptal #

He nodded. “Yeah.”

“What did you write about?”

He hesitated, eyes fixed across the field. “My therapist gave me some ideas. I took his advice.”

She studied him for a moment. “You didn’t answer my question.”

He glanced at her, the corner of his mouth tipping up just a little. “I know.”

She gave a quiet laugh. “So, are you not going to tell me?”

Evan sighed. “I just... I don’t want to talk about it right now. You’ll ask to read it. Same as Mom and Dad did.”

“Did you let them read it?”

He shook his head. “I didn’t let anyone read it. Not even my therapist.”

“Well,” Riley said, still watching him, “I’m sure it was beautifully written.”

He almost smiled, but there was something soft and uncertain in his eyes. “I hope so.”

She pulled her knees up to her chest and rested her chin on them. “How are you doing, Evan?”

He looked at her, blinking like the question caught him off guard. "I'm fine."

"Are you, though?"

A line creased his brow. "What do you mean?"

She shrugged slightly. "You're quieter lately. Almost... sad, I guess."

Evan looked away again, toward the treeline. "I'm just tired."

"You're allowed *to* be," Riley said gently.

They sat in silence for a moment, the morning air still clinging to the dew-soaked grass beneath them.

"I didn't mean to make you feel like you were a bad person," Riley added softly. "You're not."

"I know," Evan said, though his voice lacked conviction.

"You're still figuring things out. That's not weakness. That's just being sixteen."

He gave a quiet snort. "Sixteen feels a lot older than I thought it would."

215

"I always doves"

Another silence stretched between them, but it wasn't tense. Just quiet. Evan's shoulders slumped a little, some of the tension easing from his frame.

"I don't know if I want to go to Green River," he said at last.

Riley looked at him, her expression calm and open. "You don't have to decide today"

He gave a faint nod, then rose to his feet and brushed the grass from his hands. "I should get

home."

She watched him walk away, the morning sun catching in his hair, and wondered just how much he was carrying that no one could see.

"Come in," Riley called, not taking her eyes off the screen as she tried to make sense of the email from one of the council reps.

The door opened and closed, but she frowned a moment longer at the screen before finally glancing up.

“Hey, Ev.”

He stood just inside the doorway, clutching a sheet of paper in his hand and glancing around awkwardly.

“Hey,” he said quietly.

“How was your interview this morning?”

“Good.” He looked at her. “I think it went pretty well, actually. The guy interviewing me really liked my essay. We talked about it for a while.”

She smiled. “That’s *good to hear.*”

He swallowed. “I hope I get in.”

“I’m sure you will,” she said, standing and walking around the desk. “You’re strong, talented, and very smart. You’d do really well at the academy.”

He shifted uncomfortably and cleared his throat. “Thanks.” He glanced down at the paper in his hands. “I thought...” He sighed. “I thought you might like to see it.” He held the paper out to her.

3/5

Extra Story – Chapter 8

She took it and turned it over. “Is this your essay?”

“Yeah.” He nodded.

She smiled and looked up at him. “I’m honored you want to share this with me.”

More Rewards >

His cheeks reddened slightly. “Right. Well, I need to get going. I promised Grams I’d help her

with dinner tonight.”

“Okay.” She smiled again, but Evan didn’t return it. He slipped quietly out the door.

She sat back down behind the desk, her eyes falling to the paper in her hands.

How has **your background and upbringing influenced your desire to serve your pack, and how do you hope to evolve during your time at the Academy?**

*I do not come from a traditional background. I was born into one pack but raised in another. My birth father was the Alpha of Green River, but as an infant, I lost both of my parents. My mother was brutally murdered, and my father passed shortly after, unable to survive the loss of his mate. I was taken from the pack where I should have grown up. How I ended up at Red Moon is a long and terrible story, but it is also a miracle I do not take for granted.*

*I was adopted by Red Moon's Beta and his mate, and raised in a loving home alongside their children, who became my siblings in every way that matters. Still, my life has not been without*

*hardship.*

*For as long as I can remember, I have struggled with a sense of belonging. My adoptive parents gave me everything they could, and I will always be grateful. But even in a house full of love, it is difficult to feel grounded when your path in life has been laid out by others. Everyone has always assumed I will return to Green River and assume the role my birth father left behind. To many, that sounds like an honor. To me, it has always felt like a burden. I have been trained to lead since childhood, yet no one ever asked whether leadership was what I wanted for myself.*

*I love Red Moon. I love my family. The idea of leaving them for a pack I barely know is painful. And yet, I recognize the responsibility I carry. My lineage stretches back to Green River's founding Alpha, and my birth mother came from an esteemed Alpha bloodline in Juniper Grove, Leadership is in my blood, but I still find myself wondering if it is truly in my heart.*

*As a True Alpha, I have physical gifts – strength, speed, stamina – that set me apart. People assume this makes me a natural leader, but the truth is more complicated. Some days, I struggle to manage my own emotions. I have made mistakes. I have let my temper speak for me. There is a version of myself I fear becoming, especially when I think about the kind of Alpha*

Extra Story Chapter 9

*I refuse to be.*

Recently, *I began therapy*. I have committed myself more *fully* to training, studying, and reflecting on who *I* want to become. I am learning *to* listen *with* intention *and* to speak *with* care, even *when it is difficult*.

I want to become a leader *who* does not *rely solely on strength*. I want *to be someone who understands others, who* protects them, *and* who creates a place where *everyone* feels *safe* to be themselves. *I know what it means to feel like an outsider, even among those who love you. I believe the Academy can help me become the kind of Alpha who deserves to lead, not just one*

*who was born to.*

2

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