

## Chapter 91 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Axel POV

“How’s Mom doing?” I ask as we drive to Jack’s house. “She didn’t come to dinner last night.”

“She had a migraine,” Dad sighs as he looks out of his window.

“But we both know that was a lie,” he turns to face me. “She knew she was wrong and was humiliated. So, she couldn’t face you.”

“She actually said that?” I raise my eyebrows. It is not often that Mother admits defeat.

“Everything but the wrong part,” Dad chuckles. “She will not admit that aloud. But Liana challenged her with logic and reason. She knows she overstepped.”

“How do you feel about all of it?” I look intensely at him.

“Hell, I’m just happy you stayed and that there’s a form of peace,” he snorts. “I was at the point to kick your mother out of the house.”

“We sure know how to pick them,” I roll my eyes and Dad bursts out laughing.

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Jack’s residence is exactly how I remember it. Impeccably neat and tidy. I refused to come here after I broke up with Angela when we were teens.

Dad and I do not say a word as we follow the Omega to the balcony where Jack is basking in the early morning sun, reading through documents.

“Grant,” Jack greets jovially when the Omega announces us but his smile falters when he sees me. “And Axel, please have a seat.”

I do not listen to Dad and Jack’s small talk as we are being served coffee and croissants by an Omega.

“So, Axel,” Jack looks at me when it is only the three of us. “Are you here to talk business?”

“We have nothing else to discuss,” I shrug nonchalantly.

“It takes a big man to admit his mistakes and ask for another chance,” Jack smiles victoriously. “But don’t worry, Axel. I don’t hold grudges. We can pick up where we left off after we negotiated new pricing.”

Dad gives me a sideways glance before he invests his attention in his coffee.

“Who said I wanted to renegotiate?” I smile amused. This arrogant bastard truly thinks he ruined my contract with Austin, and I’m crawling back for his business.

“Come on, Axel,” he looks at me patronizingly. “You’ve been in this business for years. You know I gave you the best price. But after your ... uhm, lack of hospitality I cannot sell to you at that price anymore. Trust has been broken and new bridges must be built.”

“Interesting,” I smile as I put my cup down and lean forward. “Jack, Austin outbid you. Not only are his prices lower, but his software is also performing better.”

“Okay,” Jack nods after a while. “I’ll match his price.”

“I don’t think so,” I smile politely.

“I won’t go lower,” Jack grunts.

“And you don’t have to,” I lean back. “You assumed I’m here to negotiate a deal, but you’re wrong. However, you are right about one thing. I did make a mistake. I blindly trusted you because you and Dad are friends. It never occurred to me that you’re not giving us the best price. Imagine my surprise when I talked to Austin and learned that not only are you more expensive, but your software is outdated.”

“Bullshit,” Jack is red in the face. “My software ...”

“Is about to be buried next to BlackBerry,” I interrupt him. “And you know it. That’s why you’re so willing to renegotiate. Most of your clients have moved on to better technology and now you’re stuck with a warehouse full of redundant stock.”

“Jack,” Dad looks at him flabbergasted. “Is this true?”

“Of course not,” he huffs. “I always gave you the best price.”

“It doesn’t matter if I’m right or wrong,” I shrug. “I’m not here to renew our partnership. I’m here to inform you that Austin and I have a solid contract and relationship.”

“Is that why you’re here?” He glares at me. “To gloat about your new supplier?”

“No,” my words are icy. “I’m here to warn you that if you ever pull a stunt like you did with Austin, I will flatten both you and your business. When I’m done with you, you’ll be able to spell slander in every language and font possible.”

“Get out of my house,” he hisses at me. “You’re no longer ...”

“Daddy,” Angela comes around the corner and Jack abruptly stops talking.

“Axel,” she whispers, and her eyes lighten up. “Are you here to see me?”

“No, Angela,” I reply stiffly. “This is purely business.”

“Can we talk?” There’s so much hope in her voice that it feels like I will be telling a child Santa Claus is not real if I decline.

“We’re about to leave,” I clear my throat. “Sorry, maybe at another time.”

“After what you’ve done to her, hearing her out is the least you can do,” Jack grunts.

Dad gives me a sympathetic look and with irritation, I get up and follow Angela inside.

“I’m seeing a therapist,” she says softly as we walk into Jack’s office and close the door. “And I’m on medication.”

“I’m glad you’re getting the help you need,” I force a smile and push my hands into my pockets.

“That’s just it,” her eyes are filled with hurt. “It’s not helping. I still love you. I still ...”

“Angela, no,” I cut her off brusquely. “There’s no use talking about this. I accepted my mate and I’m happy with her.”

“Liana,” her eyes blaze and she lifts her chin. “You can say her name, you know. Her identity isn’t a secret.”

“We’re done here,” I grunt and walk towards the door.

“I killed for you!” she shouts, and I stop dead in my tracks.

“Tried,” I say and turn around. “You tried to kill Liana, but I found her in time. And if she hadn’t convinced me otherwise, you would’ve been dead by now for even thinking of harming her.”

“I’m talking about Greta,” she smiles, and a sickening feeling overwhelms me.

For six years I have been haunted by that day. Greta and I had a fight about something frivolous. I stormed out, shifted and ran into the woods. I did not know that she followed me until I got home, and she was gone. Her mutilated body was found that evening, but we could never figure out who did it. There were no new scents, and everybody had an alibi. Angela said she was sleeping, and nobody saw her leave. She was only twenty-one at the time, and nobody suspected her.

“You killed Greta?” I inhale deeply to calm myself. “Why the fuck did you do that? She hasn’t done anything to you.”

“She didn’t make you happy,” she states passionately. “Everybody knew it but you. You were too mesmerized by her beauty. She wasn’t your mate and the two of you were fighting constantly. It was clear that you needed help, so I killed for you. Can your mate say that? Does she love you enough to kill? Hell, Liana is struggling with the pregnancy. She’ll never be able to love you like I do.”

“You’re fucking insane,” I look at her in disgust. “And you just confessed to murder. You know what that means.”

Repulsed, I turn around and walk out.

“It wasn’t murder,” she yells as she runs after me. “It was a favour to you.”

“I didn’t ask for any,” I keep on walking.

“Axel, please,” she grabs my arm and I yank away.

“Don’t you ever touch me again,” I hiss furiously. “You disgust me.”

“Nobody will believe you,” she continues as I keep on walking. “Nobody saw me leave the mansion.”

“What the hell is going on?” Jack bellows as he and Dad walk towards us.

“She belongs in an asylum,” I say angrily. “She’s bat-shit crazy.”

“Don’t say that!” Angela screams and bursts out in tears.

Jack instantly runs to comfort her, and I look at them.

“She confessed to a murder,” I growl. “And ...”

“No!” Angela shouts and jerks free from Jack’s embrace. “It was self-defence.”

“You’ll be charged with murder,” I continue.

“I said no!” She storms towards me and with a deafening growl, she shifts.

“Angela, don’t!” Jack shouts but she lunges at me.

I move to the side, and she misses me. Immediately she turns around and comes at me again. Quickly I shift and bite into her outstretched paw. With all my might I swing her to the side, and she flies through the air before crashing into the fireplace.

Growling, she stands up and shakes her fur as she bares her teeth at me. Patiently, I wait for her next move. She leaps towards me, and I claw at her, striking her in the face. Her body connects hard with the wall, and she knocks her head on the sleeper wood coffee table.

My chest is heaving as I stare at her, but she does not move.

“What have you done?” Jack screams as he runs to her lifeless body.

Chapter 92 Angela's Fate

## Chapter 92 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Axel POV

“My baby,” Jack sobs as he touches Angela all over.

I shift back and kneel next to them.

“Get your naked ass away from her,” Jack sounds on the verge of hysteria.

“I’m trying to help,” I grunt as I feel for a pulse.

“You’ve done enough!” He bellows. “You killed her. You’re a murderer.”

“Jack,” Dad kneels next to him and rests his hand on his shoulder. “It was an accident.”

“She has a pulse,” I say urgently. “We need to get her to the hospital.”

“You hear that, Jack,” Dad comforts him. “She’s not dead.”

But Jack is too distraught to register anything other than his wounded daughter as he cradles her head in his lap while weeping.

“You,” I look at the wide-eyed Omega who is staring at the scene in horror. “Get a blanket. Hurry!”

The Omega scurries away and I run to our car where I quickly put on sweatpants and a T-shirt. Barefoot I run back to the living room. The Omega holds out blankets and I grab it.

“Come on, Jack,” I say firmly as I cover Angela and pick her up.

“I’m not going anywhere with you,” he hisses.

“Then pull yourself together and rally your men to help you,” I lose my temper. “Or get into our fucking car so that we can get her to the hospital.”

“Jack,” Dad says patiently. “Where’s Mary?”

“Uhm ... book club or something,” he stutters bewildered.

“You need to call her,” Dad says as he pulls Jack by the arm towards the car.

Useless idiot, I grunt inwardly as I carry Angela to the car and Dad drags Jack along. One little incident and Jack turns into a blabbering idiot. How the hell did he manage to run a pack for four decades?

“I’ll drive,” Dad opens the backdoor for me to get in before he helps Jack into the front seat.

It is eerily quiet in the car as Dad speeds towards the hospital. I keep my hand on Angela’s pulse, and I can feel it weaken with every minute.

She deserves to die for everything she has done. But a part of me hopes she pulls through so that I can tell her exactly how much I hate her before I lock her up for an eternity. And then I will make it my daily routine to visit her and reassure her that I hate her.

Dad parks with screeching tires at the emergency centre and I quickly get out and run inside with Angela. People are instantly surrounding me and within seconds, Angela is being pushed on a gurney to an examination room.

“What a pathetic moron,” I whisper to Dad as I look at Jack sitting in the waiting room.

“Give him a break, son,” Dad sighs heavily. “He’s in shock.”

“That’s no excuse,” I huff. “If he can’t handle a crisis, he shouldn’t be the alpha.”

“Not now, Axel,” Dad warns softly. “Losing a child is vastly different than losing a spouse or pack member. He’s scared, don’t be too harsh on him.”

“Phone Mary,” I grunt. “He’s incapable of wiping his own ass right now.”

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Liana POV

“Gorgeous,” I exclaim happily as I look at Adele and Nina in their bridesmaid dresses. Their empire-style dresses are beautiful and flattering.

“I love it,” Nina shrieks and twirls.

“It’s pink,” Adele pouts as she tries to pull the bust higher. “And puffy.”

“Oh, please,” Nina rolls her eyes. “Chiffon isn’t puffy.”

“Do you want a puffy dress, Adele?” I tease as I sip on my sparkling grape juice.

“Please no,” feverishly she shakes her head. “I’ll gladly wear this.”

“It’s just for one night,” Nina giggles. “You’ll survive.”

“I’m your guard,” Adele looks at me with a pained look. “I shouldn’t be a bridesmaid.”

“You’ve been more than a guard for a long time, Adele,” I smile. “Besides, as my bridesmaid, you’ll literally be by my side.”

My cell phone chimes in my handbag, and I reach for it.

“Axel’s home,” I announce as I put my phone back.

“Does that mean there’s no time for cheesecake?” Nina pouts.

“There’s always time for cheesecake,” I smile.

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The second Adele and I walk into the front door, we can hear Mrs. Silverman crying and I sigh inwardly. I had the perfect day. I do not need her drama and spoil my mood.

Reluctantly, I follow the noise to Grant’s office and when I see his face, I know this is more than his wife’s theatrics.

“Call me if you need me,” Adele whispers and I nod.

“What happened?” I ask cautiously when I do not see Axel. Did something happen to him?

“Where’s Axel?”

“Phone call,” Grant replies and relief washes over me. Axel is fine.

“We should talk,” Grant splinters my moment of peace and I take a seat.

“Angela and Axel had an altercation,” his voice is monotone as he informs me of what happened. My blood boils as I listen to how that psycho bitch attacked him. “Angela’s scans showed a massive haemorrhage in her brain and her EEG showed minimal brain activity. Her coma is irreversible.”

I look at my hands as I process the information. Everything inside me screams it serves her right, but I do not dare utter the words. Not while the room is filled with snot and tears and depression.

“Are you okay?” I ask softly and Grant nods.

“I need to find Axel,” I say as I stand up and go look for him.

Over time, Axel has said more than once that he wanted to kill Angela, but this was an accident. Goddess knows what emotions he is experiencing now, and I should be there for him.

Quietly I walk into our room and hear the shower running. I kick off my shoes and walk to the bathroom where I find Axel pressing with his hands against the wall as the water streams over his body.

Silently I undress and get into the shower. He looks at me and I smile softly as I pick up the loofa and add body wash. He does not move or say anything as I wash his back, neck and arms. I move to his front and concentrate on his chest.

“She confessed,” his voice is emotionless.

My hands are still for a moment before I continue washing him.

“She killed Greta and had all the intentions of killing you,” he grunts.

“But she didn’t,” I look up at him. “You saved me.”

“You could’ve died,” his arms go around my waist, and he pulls me impossibly close to his chest.

“Axel,” I pull away slightly to cup his face. “She got what she deserved, and I’m still here.”

He looks at me long and intensely before his lips come crashing down on mine. His kiss is eager and demanding. I curl my fingers into his hair as he holds me tighter while I fervently return his kiss.

The tiles are cold against my back when he presses me against it as his lips move over my jaw to my breasts. I moan satisfied when his tongue flicks my nipple before taking it into his mouth.

I reach down between our bodies and curl my fingers around his erection. He growls deep and low as I start stroking him.

He turns me around and I support myself with my hands against the wall as he bends me forward before entering me. I close my eyes and savour the intense feeling of him inside me before he starts thrusting.

The water is warm and soothing on my back as he shoves harder and deeper into me. His hand glides smoothly over my hip forwards until he reaches my clitoris. My breathing gets heavier as he rubs me while thrusting at the same rhythm.

I tighten my pelvic floor muscles around his erection as my desire grows and he grunts satisfied. Reality evaporates as my orgasm builds until I cry out in ecstasy. He keeps on thrusting until my arms start trembling.

His arms go around my waist, and he pulls me against his chest. Tenderly he kisses my mark before he picks me up and carries me to bed.

“We’re wet,” I protest weakly as he lays me down.

“It doesn’t matter,” he mumbles before kissing me.

He pulls the cover over us before his lips find their way to my stomach. He kisses my baby bump for a moment before he rests his head against my belly.

“Axel,” I lift my head and look at him concerned. “Are you okay?”

“She almost killed you,” he mumbles before lifting his head and looking at me. “I’m so happy she didn’t but to think that I might lose you scares the shit out of me. Don’t die.”

“Okay,” I comfort him as I pull him into my embrace and bury my face in his neck. “But only if you can promise me the same.”

“Deal,” he sighs before he kisses me.

Chapter 93\_Wedding Day

## Chapter 93 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“I’m nervous,” I shake my hands as I pace up and down in my wedding gown in the hotel room. I had a small army of people helping to get dressed and do my makeup and hair. I have been looking forward to this moment for so long. I was excited the entire morning and I have no idea why I am anxious. “Why am I so nervous? I want to marry Axel. I want to do this; I should be calm and relaxed. Not nervous.”

“Because you’re the bride and all eyes will be on you,” Adele says as she awkwardly pulls on her dress bust.

“Adele,” Nina hisses at her with big eyes and shakes her head.

“It’s okay, Nina,” I inhale deeply. “She’s right. It’s terrifying.”

“Okay, wait,” Nina comes to stand in front of me and places her hands on my shoulders.

“Remember when Kate Middleton and Prince William got married? We watched it on TV, and we admired her dress and grace. Kate was an ordinary girl who married a prince. Can you imagine how terrifying it was for her? And it wasn’t just the people from London who watched or even Britain. It was the entire world. If she could do that, you can do this.”

“You’re right,” I close my eyes and take a deep breath. “I can do this.”

“Besides,” Nina grins wickedly. “Your pregnancy boobs are awesome. People won’t take much notice of anything else.”

“She’s not wrong,” Adele chuckles, and a blush creeps up from my neck to my ears.

“Is my dress cut too low?” I ask when a wave of fresh panic hits me.

“No, no, not at all,” Nina says quickly when she notices my embarrassment. “It’s perfect. It’s classy and feminine. It’s a good thing.”

“Luna, everything will be fine,” Adele says seriously. “Nobody is going to kidnap you or drop the cake.”

“Adele!” Nina explodes. “Not helping.”

“I’m saying it’s all good,” Adele protests. “She shouldn’t worry about that ... or her boobs.”

“The two of you are lousy at calming me,” I glare at them.

“Don’t blame me,” Adele shrugs. “You knew I suck at this kind of thing when you asked me to do this.”

“That’s true,” I laugh as some tension leaves me.

“Thank you,” I take Adele’s hand.

“And you,” I look at Nina as I reach for her hand. “I know I’m freaking out a little but things were so chaotic lately that I have a difficult time believing that this will go without drama.”

“Give it time,” Adele grins wickedly. “Things can still happen.”

“You’re evil,” Nina laughs.

“But I love her,” I squeeze Adele’s hand.

“Ladies,” Adele looks at her watch. “It’s time to go.”

“Okay,” Nina says quickly as she reaches for my hair. “Let’s just fix this.”

“It’s fine,” Adele rolls her eyes. “She’s fine and I want to get out of this dress.”

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Drew and Carol are already waiting for us when we reach the hall’s door. Carol clamps her hands together excitedly before she walks towards us.

“Sweet child, you look gorgeous,” Carol takes my hands in hers and squeezes them gently. “I’m so grateful that I can be a part of this.”

“So am I,” I say emotionally as I hug her. I do not want to admit it but I miss my parents. Carol and Drew filled that void but sometimes I still wish my parents could see how far I have come. “Thank you.”

Drew smiles lovingly at me before he hugs me tightly and I sigh contently against his chest. He was the first kind soul I have encountered since Axel came into my life. His support and approval mean the world to me.

“Axel looks nervous,” Nina giggles as she peeks around the doorframe.

“A nervous Axel? That I must see,” Adele rushes to her side.

“Oh, shit,” she mumbles and stumbles backwards.

“What?” I ask anxiously when I look at her pale face. I knew it was too good to be true and that everything would go smoothly. “Is something wrong?”

“Who’s that man between Axel and David?” She asks with big eyes.

“You mean Luther?” I frown. “He’s Axel’s cousin. What’s wrong with him?”

“Luther,” she whispers the name absentmindedly.

“What’s going on?” I am on the verge of a panic attack. Adele is my guard and if she is cautious about a person, I should be too.

“He ...” she clears her throat as she looks at me. “He’s my mate.”

“This is going to be a fabulous wedding,” Nina giggles.

“You should be happy,” I exhale relieved and touch Adele’s shoulder. “Luther is a great guy.”

“And fucking hot,” Nina adds.

“I ... uhm ... this is unexpected,” Adele stutters.

“But it’s a good thing, right?” I smile at her. “Honestly, I know him. You have a great mate.”

“This is a problem for later,” she shakes her head. “Right now, we’re getting you married.”

“Ladies,” Drew intervenes and gives Carol a signal. She nods and scurries away. “We must go in before Axel passes out.”

“Now I’m nervous,” Adele mumbles as she fixes her dress.

“Aren’t you grateful for the pink and puffy dress?” Nina teases her. “You’re going to knock Luther off his feet.”

“I can do that without pink,” she snorts.

The first notes of the violin fill the air and I take a deep breath before taking Drew’s arm.

“Ready?” He looks down at me.

“So ready,” I smile happily. Facing the sea of faces is still terrifying but I cannot wait to stand next to Axel.

Nina starts walking and Adele follows her. I cannot help myself; I keep my eyes fixated on Luther. The second he sees Adele, his eyes widen and even from a distance, I can see him swallow. Nina was right, this wedding is going to be fabulous.

Drew places his hand over mine and together we start walking down the aisle. Instantly my eyes find Axel. He is standing tall and proud. His tuxedo compliments his godlike body, and everything fades. All the noises, the people, the music. It is just the two of us and our future.

I want to walk faster, but Drew holds tightly onto me until we reach Axel.

Axel POV

My heart is beating like a racehorse’s and my mouth is dry like the Sahara. She was supposed to walk down the aisle five minutes ago. Why is she not here yet? Is she okay? Is there something wrong with the baby?

“Relax,” Luther whispers next to me. “She’ll be here.”

“I’m not worried if she’ll show,” I mumble. “I’m worried if she’s okay.”

“You would’ve known if something happened,” he replies. “Just relax.”

“I can’t wait for you to meet your mate,” I grunt irritated. “Then you’ll understand what hell it is when nothing else matters besides their well-being.”

“You’re exaggerating,” he snorts.

“Hush,” I say quickly as the violin starts playing.

My eyes fixate on the door like a hawk. I relax when I see Nina, but Luther gurgles next to me when Adele enters and I glance at him.

“Are you dying?” I hiss irritated.

“Mate,” he gulps. “That’s my mate.”

“I’m going to have fun with this,” I smirk as I look at Adele’s flustered face. Adele is a strong, independent guard. She is not going to settle down with a man easily. Luther is going to need much more perseverance, poems and flowers to convince her to accept him.

But my smile evaporates and my blood freezes when Liana and Drew come into view. Her blond hair is curly and gold down her back. Her white and golden gown drapes dreamily around her curves and at that very moment, I believe I see an angel.

Impatiently, I wait for her to walk to me. I am so ready to shout ‘I do’, reap her up in my arms and run with her into our future.

In a haze, I shake Drew’s hand before Liana and I take our places. I cannot stop smiling as I look at her while the ceremony continues. I respond appropriately when it is my turn but I only have eyes for her. I must have done something right for the goddess to bless me like this.

“You may now kiss the bride.”

The words are manna to my soul and I pull her closer. She smiles sweetly at me and I kiss her gently. Her lips are soft and warm and I cannot help myself. I pull her even closer and deepen the kiss. Someone, I think it is my dad, loudly clears his throat and reluctantly I let go of her as soft laughter fills the room.

“I love you, Mrs. Silvermann,” I whisper.

“I love you, Mr. Silvermann,” she replies softly.

Liana blushes beautifully, and to the guests’ laughter, I kiss her again before I take her hand and lead her outside to start our lives together.

Chapter 94 The Reception

## Chapter 94 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“Ladies and gentlemen, I give you Alpha and Luna Silvermann!”

A loud applause welcomes us as we walk to the dance floor. Axel twirls me once before I am close to his chest, and he steers me across the floor.

“Well, that was easier than I expected,” he smirks, and I follow his gaze to where Adele and Luther are entangled in a steamy make-out session. “I thought Adele was going to resist him more.”

“Kissing him and accepting him are not the same,” I laugh. “You should know that better than most.”

“True,” he smiles before leaning in for a kiss.

“I’m surprised they came,” I say softly as I look at Jack and Mary at their table. Mary looks tired while Jack is an empty shell. It is like his spirit is trapped with Angela’s.

“I’m surprised you didn’t fight my mother on inviting them,” Axel grins.

“They’re their oldest friends,” I sigh. “It’s only fair. But I would’ve stayed at home if I were them. This must be torture. Looking at us instead of you and Angela. Dreading the night instead of enjoying it. Why would they willingly do this to themselves?”

“Maybe because it’s better than staying at home and staring at your vegetated daughter?” He suggests.

“Neither option is healthy,” I sigh. “Staying at home and harboring dark thoughts or coming here and staring at the reason for their dark thoughts.”

“Whatever their motivation, it’s their problem,” he pulls me against his chest and kisses me when the music stops. “Tonight is about us.”

“It’s kind of weird to have a normal life,” I laugh as we walk to our table. “I got used to the drama.”

“Liana,” Nina comes running to me with big eyes. “Can we talk, please?”

I look at Axel and he smiles sweetly.

“Go,” he kisses me again. “I’ll be at the bar.”

“Thanks, Alpha,” Nina says as she takes my hand and drags me outside into the garden.

“Where’s the fire?” I laugh astounded and pull her to a halt.

“It’s David,” her eyes are wide and bewildered. “He’s my mate, he just told me that. I don’t know if I should believe him.”

“Why don’t you believe him?” I frown.

“Come on,” she rolls her eyes. “We’ve known each other for months and now he claims to be my mate. On the night that Adele finds hers. What are the odds? I think he’s taking advantage of the situation.”

“No, he’s not,” I say sympathetically as I take her hands. “David told Axel he’s your mate that day he saw you in his office. He patiently waited for you to find yourself after what Wilson did to you. The same way Axel waited for me.”

“Really?” Her eyes tear up. “It’s sweet and kind but infuriating. I mean, I love him, but I was readying myself to lose him once he meets his mate.”

“I know the feeling,” I smile empathetically. “But he did the right thing, Nina. Wilson did a number on you.”

“So, it’s real,” she laughs happily. “I found my mate and this time it’s real. I’m going to find him and then ... you know.”

“I do,” I laugh heartedly as she hurries away.

Smiling, I watch her leave. It warms my heart that my best friend has found her mate and happiness. And the best part – she’s mated to the Beta. She and I will now even see more of each other.

“Liana.”

The familiar voice makes my heart skip a beat and my body freezes over.

“How did you get in?” I swing around and the blood drains from my face when I look at my father. He looks terrible. His eyes are sunken into his face and his skin is covered in wrinkles.

“It’s a hotel,” he shrugs. “I walked in.”

I am too stunned to move or say a word. At one point in my life, I loved this man most in the world. Now I am unsure what I feel. A part of me is happy but I am equally hurt and angry at him. He failed me when I needed him the most.

“Why are you here, Father?” I finally found my voice.

“My daughter got married and I wasn’t invited,” he smiles sadly. “Can you blame me for trying to see you?”

“Yes, I can,” I lift my chin. “Because you made it abundantly clear that I’m no longer your daughter.”

“I want to apologize,” he replies tiredly. “A lot of things were said that day and all of it in anger.”

“Let me guess,” I cross my arms in front of my chest. “You need money.”

“No,” he says hastily and takes a step towards me, but I instinctively step backwards. Pain flashes over his face but he does not attempt to come closer.

“I’m sorry,” he sighs heavily. “I don’t blame you for thinking that.”

“That’s new,” I sneer. “Since I am always to blame for everything.”

“I’m sorry,” he starts again. “Sorry for always relying on you. For expecting you to provide for us. Most of all, I’m sorry for blaming you for Leon’s death and kicking you out.”

My heart weeps as I look at him. For nights, I cried myself to sleep and dreamt of this moment, but now ... I do not know if I can believe him. The fact that he found me on my wedding day means he knows I married into money. History taught me that he is here because he wants something from me. That thing is not love. And despite my reasoning, my heart begs to help him.

“I accept your apology,” I say after a moment of silence. “But it will take time for me to truly forgive you. The things you said that day ... I’m not ready to rekindle our relationship.”

“I understand,” he bows his head and takes a deep breath before he looks at me again. “But don’t take too long, your mother is dying. She has cancer, and it’s terminal.”

“For fuck’s sake, Father,” I explode. “Why can’t you allow me one day of happiness? Of all the days, you picked my wedding to share the news with me. How can you ask for forgiveness and ruin my day in the same breath?”

“Would you rather I don’t tell you?” He looks hurt and broken. “I don’t know where you live. This is the only time I could get hold of you.”

“Have you tried picking up a phone?” I sneer.

“This is hardly news that you share via a message or a phone call,” he protests.

“You could’ve called and arranged a meeting,” I argue as my anger overtakes my sadness. “But my happiness and needs were never a priority for you. I’m the fool to think that it has changed.”

“Liana, I know I failed you,” his words are soft. “But don’t think you’re the only one hurting. Your mother has advanced pancreatic cancer and has less than a year. Your brother is dead, and we are estranged. When she dies, I have nothing.”

“So what?” I shout. “What did you leave me with when you kicked me out? For fuck’s sake, I wasn’t even allowed to attend my brother’s funeral.”

“Forget it,” he says angrily. “I came here to apologize and tell you your mother is dying. Nothing else. What you do with that information, is up to you. I’ve done my part.”

“No,” I snap when he turns around. “You don’t get to play the victim and walk away. For years, I sold myself short for the sake of our family. For Leon. But you and Mom refused to see him for what he was. He was weak and addicted to gambling. And instead of getting him help, you enabled him by making me work harder. When his sins finally caught up with him, you blamed me. What have you and Mom sacrificed? What have you done to help him? So, no Dad, you don’t get to be the victim because I’m angry and hurt. Playing the cancer card doesn’t undo what you’ve done.”

“I’m sorry, Liana,” he sighs. “An apology is all I have. Nobody can undo the past, but we can work on the future. You don’t have to forgive me. Just know that I am truly sorry for my mistakes.”

“Sorry doesn’t heal my heart,” I say with a trembling lip as I place my hands protective over my stomach. “I worshipped you, Father, and you tossed me aside like I was nothing. But you’re right, we can’t undo the past. I appreciate that you came to find me and that you apologized. However, my future doesn’t include you.”

“Congratulations on your big day,” he says softly. “And you look beautiful. I love you and I’m proud of you.”

My heart breaks as he turns around and walks away.

All my life, that is all I ever wanted to hear.

But it will still take me time to believe and forgive him...How could I ever forget?

Chapter 95\_It's Under Control

## Chapter 95 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Axel POV

“Hey, David,” I stand next to him at the bar. “How are things with Nina? Have you told her yet?”

“Ten minutes ago,” he sighs heavily before finishing his drink in one swallow.

“That bad?” I ask concerned.

“Seems I won’t be your beta after all,” he smirks sadly. “I need my true mate, and she’s leaning towards rejecting me.”

“Are you sure?” I frown. “Nina told Liana she’s in love with you. I don’t think she ...”

“She walked away,” David interrupts me. “She gave me a look, turned around and walked away. So, thank you for the offer, Alpha, but my mate’s not interested.”

“David,” I try to stop him when he turns around, but he keeps on walking, and I turn back to the bar.

It would be a shame if David declined the position. Nick has already handed in his resignation, and I don’t want anybody other than David.

“Axel!” Dad calls and I turn around.

He is at his table waving at me and I nod. I order my drink and walk to him and Mother.

“Where’s your beautiful bride?” Dad asks jovially as I take a seat at their table.

“Bridesmaid business,” I smile, and suddenly it hits me why Nina wanted to talk to Liana so urgently. It is about David confessing he is her mate. Well, at least I know there is no one better to advise Nina on the subject than Liana. She would know exactly what to say and I am sure David will be my beta, after all.

“I had my doubts,” Mother says through tight lips. “But everything is tasteful and beautiful. She did a good job.”

“Mom,” I rest my hand on hers. “You should tell her that. It would mean the world to her.”

“I’m afraid I’m not there yet,” Mother admits. “But I’m getting there.”

“This is a start,” I sigh. Pressuring her is not going to speed things up. It might only make things worse. It would be best if I allow her the time she needs. “Thank you.”

“Sorry for interrupting,” Mary and Jack stand next to us. “But we’re on our way.”

“Thanks for coming,” Dad jumps up and shakes Jack’s hand before he walks away in the direction of the bar. Since the incident with Angela, Dad has very little to say to them.

“So soon?” Mother protests. “Dessert has not even been served.”

“I’m afraid so,” Mary looks at Mom and avoids me. “We had enough of this ... event for one night.”

“I was hoping you’d spend the night,” Mother stands up and hugs Mary. “Are you sure there’s nothing I can say to change your mind?”

“No,” Mary smiles sadly. “We don’t like being away from home. We don’t want Angela to be alone when she wakes up.”

I ignore the glare she directs my way and take a huge gulp from my Whiskey. Mary and Jack are in denial. Angela is never going to wake up. Not after crashing her head twice against a wall and once on a solid wooden table.

“I understand,” Mom says sympathetically. “Thanks for coming.”

“You’re welcome,” Mary nods. “And good luck with ... you know.”

“Good luck with what?” The words blurt out before I could stop myself. I am not an idiot. I know she is referring to Liana and I will not stand for it.

“The disappointment,” Mary’s glare is cold as she replies through tight lips. “And having a human as a Luna. Goddess knows what deficiencies your child’s going to have.”

“Disappointment?” My voice is deceitfully calm as I rise out of my chair and walk to her.

“Are you deaf or slow?” Mary sneers. “You’re a disappointment to your parents. You broke down everything your father has worked for. You’re going to run this pack and the business into the ground within five years.”

“Mary, enough!” Mother snaps before I can respond. “Axel is doing an excellent job. I understand you’re heartbroken about Angela, but you can’t blame him for her condition. He found his mate and respected our laws. That isn’t his fault and what happened to Angela was an accident.”

“Where you there?” Mary looks coolly at Mother. “Because Angela can’t defend herself and all we have is his account of events.”

“Jack was there,” I growl and glare at him, but Jack only looks at me with empty eyes. “And so was my dad and an Omega. She attacked me.”

“Because you provoked her,” Mary spits the words. “My daughter wouldn’t harm a fly.”

“She’s a cold-blooded killer,” I hiss furiously. “She ...”

“She’s too much of a coward to harm a fly,” Liana growls behind me and everybody goes quiet. “She locks you up in a bathroom and then leaves you to die.”

My heart nearly stops as I look into her fiery blue eyes. She just growled! Instantly I am at her side and take her wrist.

“Don’t worry,” her words are soft while her eyes are fixated on Mary. “I’m not about to shift. It’s under control.”

“Oh, please,” Mary’s laugh is humourless and ugly. “You don’t have anything under control. You’ll die with your first shift, you’re too weak.”

“You think you’re superior because you’re a born wolf,” Liana walks closer to Mary, and she takes a step backwards. “You’re stronger and faster than humans and you got comfortable. Angela hasn’t worked a day in her life. What she wanted; you gave to her. And when she couldn’t get it, she took it by any means necessary. I was born a human and grew up poor and I’m grateful for that. It made me strong, and it taught me to fight. Not only am I controlling my own alpha wolf, but I’m growing one as well. And not once did I have to kill, manipulate or oppress somebody else to get here. What you call weak, I call self-control.”

“You’re an abomination,” Mary looks at Liana in disgust.

“Woman, I will rip your head off,” I growl and take a step forward, but Liana takes my hand and I look at her.

“Let her be,” Liana says softly. “She’s entitled to her opinion, and I couldn’t care less what she thinks of me. Her opinion won’t change the fact that we’re going home as a family while she has to return home where sorrow lives.”

“That was a cruel thing to say,” Mary looks at Liana with hatred. “You’re going to be a mother soon and you better start praying that you never have to experience such a loss.”

“Are you threatening her or my grandchild?” The fire in Mother’s voice surprises me. “Because neither is acceptable.”

“Neither,” Mary looks at Mom. “But now I know I’ve lost my best friend’s support. Come on, Jack, we overstayed our welcome.”

Mary takes Jake’s arm and together they walk away. I mind-link security to ensure that they leave our premises before I turn to Liana.

“Are you sure you’re okay?” I gently rub up and down her arms.

“Feel my heart rate,” she takes my hand and presses it against her pulse. “I’m fine.”

“I’m not,” Mother sighs. “I need a drink.”

“Mrs Silvermann, I’m ...”

“No, Liana,” Mother cuts her off. “This time you don’t apologize. This time I’m on your side.”

Mother smiles stiffly at Liana before she walks towards the bar.

“Are all wolf weddings this dramatic?” Liana looks flabbergasted at me.

“You have a room filled with alphas, what did you expect?” I laugh as I pull her into my embrace.

“At least we got married in peace,” she smiles as her arms go around my waist. “My dad was here.”

“What?” I look down at her in astonishment. “Why didn’t you mind-link me? I would’ve been there in a heartbeat.”

“I wasn’t in any danger,” she looks up at me. “He’s an old and broken man.”

“Emotional support, love,” I lean over and kiss her. “I wouldn’t have kicked him out or beaten him up, but I could have at least been there if you needed a hand to hold on to.”

“I know,” she smiles sadly. “I wanted to face him alone, Axel. I needed to figure out if I could stand my ground without backup.”

“I get it,” I smile. “Just remember I’m here for you, always.”

“My mother’s dying,” she sighs against my chest and holds on tighter to me as she tells me what happened. “I should see her.”

“I’ll go with you,” I kiss her on the top of her head.

“You don’t have to,” she replies softly. “I can handle it.”

“Liana,” I sit down and pull her onto my lap. “I don’t doubt your abilities, but I will never forgive myself if anything happens to you or Wolfie. I’ll stay out of your way if you need me to, but please don’t go without me.”

“You’re a good husband, Alpha Silvermann,” she cups my face and kisses me lovingly.

Chapter 96 Visiting the Parents

## Chapter 96 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“I miss our honeymoon,” I sigh theatrically as I rub my belly which has nearly tripled in size overnight. “The beach house, the ocean and quiet. Waking up next to the ocean just does something to me.”

“I know,” Axel gives me a wicked smile as he steers through traffic. “And then you do things to me which I thoroughly enjoy.”

“It was our honeymoon,” I laugh. “Of course, I’m going to have my way with you.”

“Do you want to go this weekend?” Axel asks. “One last getaway before Wolfie arrives.”

“As much as I would love that, it’s too risky,” I smile sadly. “What if he decides to come early? I’m not delivering this baby without Michelle.”

“I can always ask her to join us?” Axel reaches over and gently rubs my stomach.

“And traumatize her with our sex noises?” I snort. “I like her, let’s not do that.”

“Yes, dear,” he grins as he turns onto the road that leads to my parents’ trailer park.

The familiarity of everything suddenly hits me in the gut and I inhale deeply. Seven months have passed since I last set foot here and still, it feels like it was yesterday.

“Remind me again why I wanted to do this?” I ask nervously as I fumble with my fingers.

“Liana, I will turn around right now if you want me to,” Axel says sincerely.

“No,” I shake my head. “Keep going. I will only postpone the inevitable.”

“Okay,” he parks in front of my parents’ unit. “But the second you’re uncomfortable or in distress, we’re leaving.”

“Thanks,” I smile weakly.

I take a couple of deep breaths as Axel gets out of the car and walks around to open my door. With my hand in his, we walk to the door and wait patiently after he knocks.

“Liana?” Dad looks surprised at me and then at my stomach.

“Hi, Dad,” I smile. “May we come in?”

“Yes, please,” he says hastily as he opens the door and steps aside. “Your mother is sleeping but I can wake her.”

“No, don’t,” I reply softly. “We’ll wait until she wakes up.”

My heart breaks when I see the inside of the trailer. My mother might be heartless, but she was always on top of her household duties. It is still neat and tidy, but it has not been cleaned properly in weeks.

“Dad,” I swallow on the lump in my throat. “Where’s the tv and your recliner?”

“Oh, uh, I sold it,” he rubs his neck awkwardly. “But we can sit at the kitchen counter.”

I give Alex a pained look before walking to the fridge, and I nearly burst into tears when I look at the contents. Six eggs, half a bread and an almost empty can of jam. Dad looks down at his feet like a scolded child as I go through the cupboards one by one. The less I see – or rather, do not see – the more upset I get.

“Dad,” I take a deep breath before I turn to him. “I never cancelled the grocery order when Leon died. Where’s the food?”

“I’m sorry, Liana,” he looks at me with tear-filled eyes. “Your mother is in a lot of pain. I sell some of it to buy painkillers for her.”

“Dammit, Father,” my bottom lip starts quivering and Axel is immediately by my side and places his arm comforting around my shoulder.

At this moment it does not matter what they have said or done to me in the past. They are still my parents and watching first-hand how they are struggling, is breaking my heart.

“Only some of it,” he says hastily. “I swear, we eat most of it.”

“I need fresh air,” I mumble and storm out of the trailer.

“Liana,” Axel calls after me but I keep on walking until I am at the car.

“Love, are you alright?” Axel asks gently as he rests his hand on my shoulder.

“No,” I sniff and wipe the tears off my face. “They’re suffering, Axel. And I was too hurt and mad at them to care. What kind of daughter ....”

“Enough,” he cuts me off and pulls me into his embrace. “They could’ve reached out to you, but they didn’t. They chose to cut you off. This is not on you. Thanks to you, they had food every day.”

“I should’ve done more,” I argue. “I should’ve tried harder. I should’ve done better.”

“Do you remember the state you were in when they kicked you out?” Axel asks sternly as he takes me by the shoulders and looks me in the eyes. “You collapsed, Liana. You cried yourself to sleep for weeks on end. This is not your fault.”

“It doesn’t feel like it,” I inhale deeply and pull myself together. I know Axel is right, but I cannot suppress the sadness. I thought they would be okay if I kept on sending food. I have been living in luxury while they had to sell their furniture and food to make ends meet. I should have thought that Mother would need medicine and that they would not be able to afford it.

“Okay,” Axel rubs my arms. “Go see your mother. I will go shopping. Let me know what else they need besides food, okay?”

“I love you,” I throw my arms around his neck and cling for dear life. I would have never made it this far without him.

“I love you too,” he hugs me tightly before pulling away and kissing me. “I won’t be long.”

I nod and wipe the last tears away before walking back into the trailer.

“I’m sorry, Liana,” Dad says the moment I walk inside. “I didn’t think you’d be mad at us for selling the food.”

“I’m not mad,” I close my eyes for a second and fight my emotions. I swear, if I start crying now, I will never stop. “I only wished I knew earlier so that I could’ve helped.”

“My child,” Dad mumbles and rubs his wrinkled hands over and over. “We mistreated you poorly long enough. It wouldn’t have been fair to come to you again. You need to live your life. When Leon died ... he was my baby boy. I had all these hopes and dreams for him. Every time he failed, I thought, next time. Just believe. Don’t give up on him, he can do it. I never had to worry about you like that. You always did your best, even in school. You worked hard and never complained. You never asked for anything. But Leon ... there was always something with him. I knew he needed more attention and guidance than you to get somewhere in the world. When he died there would never be a next time and I was angry at everyone. Angry at Leon for never living up to his potential. Angry for being too weak to provide for my family like a real man. And I took it out on you. I’m sorry, Liana. I can never take back the things I said. So, I decided that I would get back on my feet and once I can take care of me and Mom by myself, I will reach out to you. Proof to you that I love you for you and not using you to provide for us.”

“Oh, Dad,” I bite hard on my lip to stop the tears as I throw my arms around his waist and hug him. I can feel his bones through his shirt and sorrow rips through me. The things he said to me that day, pulled my soul apart. And as painful as it was, I am ready to let it go. This is a heartfelt apology. He is not asking anything from me. Not even forgiveness. He is simply saying sorry.

"I'm so sorry," Dad cries. "I should've fought harder for you. I should've said something every time your mother has been unreasonable towards you. I should've appreciated you more and showed it. I failed you, Liana, and nothing can change that."

"Please stop," I cry against his shirt. "It's in the past and I'm happy now. I love you and I forgive you. We don't need to talk about it ever again."

"I don't deserve you," Dad sniffs. "Or your kindness, but I'm grateful, Liana. You're the only thing I've done right in my life."

"Enough of this," I pull away and wipe my cheeks. "We leave the past where it belongs and work on the future. I'm going to check in on Mom."

"Okay," Dad nods as he dries his face. "I'll make tea."

I stop at the bathroom and fix my makeup before going to the bedroom. Quietly, I open the door and inhale deeply when I look at the tiny figure on the bed.

She has lost an alarming amount of weight, and her complexion is a frightening yellow. I take a seat on the chair next to the bed and pick up her hand.

"Hello, Mother," I say softly, and she looks tiredly at me.

Chapter97\_Talking To Mother

## Chapter 97 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

"I didn't expect to see you," Mother sighs and closes her eyes as she pulls her hand out of mine.

It stings that she is still refusing any form of contact with me. But if I must be honest with myself, I did not have high hopes that she would.

"You might've written me off, but I'm still your daughter," I say patiently. "That won't change, not even in death."

"A miserable end to a miserable life," she groans as she reaches for the painkillers.

I pick up the glass of water that is on the side table and hand it to her. Without a thank you or any form of acknowledgement, she takes the glass and swallows the pills.

"I assume your father told you about my condition," she leans back against the pillows.

"Yes," I reply softly. "I would've helped if I knew."

"Help," she snorts sarcastically. "Nobody can help me."

"Mom," I swallow on the lump in my throat. "I'm so sorry."

"Don't be," she smiles at me, and I am taken aback about the sincerity of it. "I'm finally going to reunite with my loved ones."

I look down at my hands as I think of Leon and the grandparents she is referring to. I am grateful that she is at peace with her ordeal, but I pray she does not say such things in front of Father. It must be hell for him to watch his wife dying.

"Well, you have loved ones here who will miss you terribly," I say softly.

"You shouldn't love me," she looks at me and the hardness in her eyes makes my blood chill. "I never wanted you."

To hear her say out loud what I have always suspected rips the last piece of hope I clung to shreds.

"Why, Mother?" I pull my shoulders back. It does not matter how hard it will be to hear her answer, I want to know. I need to know so that I can move on with my life. "What is it about me that you cannot stand?"

"You ruined my life," she snorts. "I got pregnant with you and was forced to marry your father."

"Hold on," fear grips my heart as the worst scenario pops up in my head. "Were you forced to marry him because he got you pregnant or another man?"

"Relax," she rolls her eyes. "He's your dad. He's so besotted with you, it's sickening. I wanted to be a model. I was ambitious and pretty. I wasn't going to settle for a poor man and have his kids. I was going to marry rich and have the world at my feet. But your father was in love with me and persistent that I should go on a date with him. So, I did. Unfortunately, I got pregnant and made the mistake of telling him. He was much older than me and I was a month shy of turning eighteen. He went to my parents and begged them to marry me. They were just so happy that he was willing to do the right thing, they didn't even listen to my plans about having an abortion. So, I had no choice but to kiss my dreams goodbye and become a wife and mother. Over the years, I wanted to leave this place more than once, but then Leon came, and I stayed. If he didn't get injured, he would've made it to the top and I could've finally gotten away from here."

Guilt swarms through me as I protectively cross my arms about my stomach. At one point, I considered aborting Wolfie. It would have been the worst decision of my life and an irreversible mistake. Considering abortion is so easy. Until you realize you could have never been born.

Sure, I did not have the easiest of life, but I had life. The only difference between me and my mother is that I considered abortion not because I did not want the baby, but because I thought it would be best for all concerned. Mother wanted to abort me because she did not want me.

"Thank you for telling me," I smile and look at Mother with fresh eyes.

Everything just clicked for me. There was nothing I could have done differently to make her love me. She is not incapable of love; she is incapable of loving me. I was the worst thing that happened to her, and she blames me for the derailment of her life.

I still love her, and I always will. She is my mother and the only mother I have ever known. But I no longer carry the burden that I am not good enough.

"What?" She snorts. "No resentment or tears? You're always so dramatic and emotional."

"No," I shake my head. "I needed to hear this. It's like you've finally cut the umbilical cord that connected us. A cord of bitterness and resentment. You blamed me for all your wasted ideals and dreams. I am the manifestation of everything that went wrong because you couldn't keep your legs closed."

"Says the one that's about to pop," she snorts.

"This child was conceived out of love, Mother," I say firmly. "I'll admit that it was unplanned, but not unwanted. I didn't marry the father because I was forced to, I married him because I love him."

"Well, sure," she shrugs. "He's rich. I would've loved you too if it meant living in luxury."

"I'd rather be loved and poor than rich and alone," I say adamantly. "And before you say it's easy to say that when you have money, remember who I am and where I come from. I know exactly what it is to be poor, Mother. Not only poor in possessions but poor in love. I am after all your daughter."

She does not say a word as I stand up.

"Rest assured, Mother," I give her a pitiful smile. "You will die in luxury. I will make sure of that."

"What's that supposed to mean?" She frowns.

"Exactly that, Mom," I reply softly. "You will lay in the finest bed with the best medical care. You can eat what you want whenever you want. People will serve you as if you're the queen. And once you're surrounded by the best that money can buy, you'll realize that the void inside of you is still there. That you wasted your life yearning for something better when you could've been happy if you appreciated what you had. Because you had it all, Mother. You might not have had the best, but you weren't homeless, hungry or unloved."

She looks at me for a moment before she turns to the window and ignores me.

Axel POV

Hastily I park the car. I am eager to get back to Liana. Over the years her parents have put her through hell, and it kills me not knowing if she is alright.

I am about to get out when my phone rings and I bite back my irritation as I answer it.

"Alpha," David's voice is serious. "Remember that Luna requested eyes on Gwen?"

"Yes," I frown. Gwen can go to hell for all I care, but it was important to Liana, so I agreed to it.

"Gwen tried to commit suicide," David informs me. "I wasn't sure if I should inform you or her."

"You did the right thing calling me," I sigh and push my fingers through my hair. Liana has her parents to deal with, heavens know why she bothers with Gwen.

"The boy," I say quickly when the realization hits me. From the very beginning, Liana was concerned about the child. Not so much about the parents. "Is he okay?"

"The boy is with his parental grandparents and safe," he replies. "Gwen's at the hospital. She took a bunch of pills, and we don't know if she's going to make it or if she's going to lose the baby."

"Keep me informed," I bark and disconnect the call after we said goodbye.

I gather the groceries I bought and walk with long strides to the trailer.

Liana and her father are sitting in the kitchen drinking tea and her face lights up when she sees me.

"Thank you," she kisses me on the cheek before she starts unpacking the bags.

"Are you okay?" I whisper as I help her.

"I am," she winks at me, and I relax a little.

"Thank you, Axel," her father says, and I turn to face him. "For everything."

"You're welcome," I smile stiffly. They are Liana's parents, but that does not mean I like them. Not after they put her through hell.

"Dad," Liana looks at him. "Why don't you take Mom a cup of tea? Axel and I will continue with this."

"Sure," he nods and pours a cup.

"What's wrong?" Liana asks softly once we are alone. "You look troubled."

"You were right about Gwen," I sigh before telling her.

"We should go," Liana looks at me. "We can't do anything for Gwen, but that child didn't ask for any of this. If Wyatt's parents don't want him full-time, we need to help."

"Yes, Luna," I smile as I look proudly at her.

Chapter 98\_Welcome Wolfie

## Chapter 98 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

"And you're sure it doesn't bother you?" Axel asks sceptically after I tell him about my conversation with Mother as we drive back home.

"Yes," I smile brightly at him. "Do you remember as a kid how you struggled to tie your shoes and one day it just slipped through, and you have a knot? It was like this. For years I've been struggling with worthlessness and doubt. I tried to fix it, over and over. I talked about it, I cried about it, but I just couldn't get passed it. But today it just clicked. She couldn't love me because she never wanted me. And I accepted it for what it is."

"Just like that?" He grins and glances at me.

"Just like that," I smile. "And I ... oof!"

"What?" Axel nearly jerks his head off as he looks at me. "What's happening?"

"It's fine," I exhale long and deeply as I rub my stomach until the pain subsides. "Wolfie just decided to kick me in the ribs."

"You scared the shit out of me," he says relieved.

"Ah, dammit, Wolfie," I moan and sit forward. "Stop kicking me like that."

"Is this normal?" Axel asks concerned. "I don't recall him kicking you so hard before."

"It's not the force he's kicking with," I laugh. "It's where he's kicking. So, anyway, as I was saying. I want to arrange for the best care for Mother during her last days. Initially, I told her I would do it out of spite. But now I want to do it because she's my mother and she's dying. She has pain and discomfort. I want to make her last days as comfortable as possible."

"I'll ask Michelle for hospice recommendations," he reaches over and takes my hand in his. "She'll know all the best facilities."

"Oh, dear goddess," I grunt and squeeze his hand painfully hard. This is not a kick. This is pain.

"Another kick?" He asks sympathetically.

"Nope," I moan. "A contraction."

"What?" He gapes at me in utter shock and disbelief.

"Keep your eyes on the road, Axel," I say patiently. "It could be Braxton hicks, there's no need to panic yet."

Axel firmly gets hold of the steering wheel, and his mouth pulls into a thin line. I am fully aware that he is fighting the panic, and frankly, so am I. It does not matter how much research you do; you are never fully prepared when it is your first time.

"Ten minutes," I groan as I look at the car's clock when another contraction hits me, and I inhale deeply.

"You need to be more specific," Axel grunts frustrated. "Ten minutes to what?"

"My contractions are ten minutes apart," I sigh.

"I thought you said it's Braxton hicks?" He holds on tighter to the steering wheel and accelerates.

"Braxton hicks are contractions," I reason softly. I have no idea if I am in labour or if this is a false alarm. "And my water hasn't broken yet. We're fine."

He does not argue with me but when I double over in pain with the next contraction, he glares at me.

"Liana, I love and trust you," his words are calculated. "But I don't give a shit if it's Braxton hicks or hiccups, I'm phoning Michelle."

"Good idea," I reply as I fight to stay calm when I feel the wetness. "Forget everything I said. My water just broke."

It takes every inch of self-control not to panic when he gives the voice command to phone Michelle. Yes, childbirth is the most natural phenomenon but nothing about this pregnancy has been straightforward.

“How long until you’re here?” Michelle asks calmly after Axel informed her about our situation.

“About forty-five minutes,” he replies. “But I can push for thirty.”

“That’s not necessary,” Michelle says. “There’s no need to endanger anyone with speed. There’s enough time and I’ll be ready when you get here.”

There is a moment of silence after he disconnects the call before the next contraction hits me.

“We should phone your parents,” I try to think logically and push the pain to the back of my mind as I lean back against the seat. “And Drew and Carol. They need to bring my hospital bag.”

“I’ll do it,” he grunts. “Just concentrate on keeping Wolfie inside until we’re at the hospital.”

Axel POV

My heart is racing by the time I stop at the hospital. I wanted to hyperventilate every time Liana had a contraction. I have been looking forward to this moment ever since she told me she was pregnant, but now that the time has come, I worry about losing them both and it scares the bejesus out of me.

Michelle opens the door before I can kill the engine and helps Liana out.

“We’ll be in room one,” Michelle says to me, and I nod before I park the car.

“Are we too late?” Dad comes running towards me with Drew and Carol on his heels.

“No,” I force my strained facial muscles to smile. “They just took her to room one.”

In silence, we walk to the room, and I am surprised to see Mother waiting for us. The nurse allows me inside while Mom, Dad, Drew and Carol are friendly being requested to wait outside.

“What’s all this?” I ask as I look at all the monitors in horror. I might not know much, but I do know this is not standard.

Liana looks slightly panicked as she is lying on a medieval contraption of a bed with her legs spread open. I rush to her side and take her hand in mine as I kiss her on her forehead.

“We’re monitoring both mom and baby,” Michelle replies as she takes a seat in front of Liana. “Whether you like it or not, this birth is medical history in the wolf community.”

Liana cries out as a contraction gets hold of her and it feels like she is breaking every bone in my hand.

“You’re doing great, love,” I comfort her as I try to restore blood flow to my fingers.

“Can’t you give her something for the pain?” I ask as I stroke Liana’s hair.

“No time, Alpha,” Michelle says urgently. “This baby is in a hurry. It usually takes much longer from first contraction to birth, but this little guy is eager to meet you.”

“Is that good or bad?” I shout over Liana’s screams.

“Luna,” Michelle ignores me as she looks at Liana. “You’re fully dilated, it’s time to push, okay?”

Liana nods tiredly before she leans forward and pushes. I shout louder than her when she squeezes my hand.

“I see the head,” Michelle says excitedly. “Another push.”

Liana obeys and I feel hopeless that I cannot help. I hate seeing her in so much pain.

“One last big push,” Michelle encourages and Liana groans as she pushes once more.

“It’s done,” Michelle laughs. “It’s over, Luna.”

Liana cries softly and she lays back in exhaustion.

“Come cut the umbilical cord, Dad,” Michelle looks at me.

In awe, I walk closer and look at the messy bundle in her arms before I cut the cord. I feel dizzy and have lost all sensations in my hand as I watch the nurse take Wolfie to get cleaned up.

“Is that it?” I ask flabbergasted as I sit next to Liana and take her hand.

“What do you mean, is that it?” Liana glares at me. “It was fucking painful.”

“No, no,” I protest hastily as I kiss her. “I thought it was going to be longer.”

“It usually is,” Michelle replies. “Especially for the first time. I must admit, I didn’t think it would go so smoothly. I have the OR on standby for an emergency c-section. You did good, Luna, really good.”

“Thank goddess this is over,” Liana closes her eyes and relaxes.

“I’m so proud of you,” I mumble emotionally as I lean over to kiss her. I have never felt so overwhelmed before in my life. Whatever Liana asks from me, I will give it to her. I will never be able to master the words or actions to tell her how grateful I am for the son she gave me.

“Excuse me,” Michelle interrupts us, and I look up into the face of my son.

I laugh and cry simultaneously as Michelle places Wolfie into Liana’s arms. She laughs happily as she nestles him closer to her chest.

“Does our young alpha have a name?” Michelle asks as she steps away.

“Connor,” I mumble as I touch my son’s cheek. “It means lover of wolves.”

“Welcome to the world, Connor,” Michelle smiles. “We’ll give you a moment before we allow the grandparents to come in.”

“Thanks,” I mumble absentmindedly as I stare at Connor.

“He’s so beautiful and perfect,” Liana sighs as Michelle closes the door behind her.

“Just like you,” I wipe the tears away before I lovingly kiss her.

Chapter 99\_Protecting Connor

## Chapter 99 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Axel POV

Liana and I are lovestruck imbeciles looking down on the tiny mouth feeding on her. To say that I am in awe of this perfection, this pure love, would be an understatement. People always tell you how beautiful the miracle of life is, but no one can comprehend it until it happens to you.

I knew I was going to be a father and I knew that I love him but I never knew that the reality would be so overwhelming. My heart simply is not big enough to contain all these feelings of love and contentment.

“I’ll take him,” I offer as I stand up when Connor is finished drinking.

I throw a towel over my shoulder and place him upright against my chest as I pace up and down in the room while rubbing his back. Less than a minute later, he softly burbs.

“Nice moves, Alpha,” Liana yawns as she makes herself comfortable in the bed. “I’m impressed.”

“Why do you sound so surprised?” I pretend to be offended. “I know how to google.”

“Well, congratulations on reading the instructions,” she laughs softly. “Let’s hope you’re just as successful with diapers.”

“You’re not going to poop, are you?” I look at Connor as I talk to him in a ridiculous voice like most people do when they talk to babies and cute animals. “No, you’re a good boy.”

“He’ll also be a constipated and crying boy,” Liana snorts.

“He’s sleeping,” I whisper as I look at him in wonder.

Gently, I kiss him on the forehead and lay him down on the bassinet next to Liana.

“He’s prettier than you,” Liana looks at me with a twinkle in her eye.

“I know,” I mumble as I lean over and kiss her. “But not prettier than you.”

“It’s compliments like that which got me pregnant,” she grins.

“You should get some rest,” I sit down next to her on the bed. “You can bet that you’ll be swamped by visitors later tonight. Nina already tried to come, and my parents haven’t had nearly enough time earlier.”

“Will you go check in on Wyatt’s son?” She asks.

“Yes,” I smile. “But I’ll be back before you wake up, promise.”

“I love you,” she cups my face.

“I love you more,” I kiss her once more before I leave with a heavy heart.

Liana POV

A shuffling noise wakes me. I open my eyes and for a moment I have no idea where I am. I do not move or make a sound until I remember. Wolfie was born. Happiness and love spread through me.

As Axel predicted, my room was filled with people during visiting hours. Michelle tried her best to enforce hospital procedures which allow only two visitors at a time, but both Axel and Grant overruled her. At eight o’clock, Michelle put her foot down and chased everyone out besides Axel.

He did an exceptional job helping me to bath and dress Connor. After I fed Connor, Axel put him to bed and went home for a shower.

Fussing noises are coming from Connor's bassinet behind me and I am about to turn around when alarms go off in my head. Something is not right.

My body is in sensory overload when I pick up a strange scent and deep breathing.

Axel, are you back? I mind-link him.

No, I'm closing a deal. Do you need something? He replies.

Give me a moment, I link back.

This could be my imagination and I do not want to alarm him without reason. But I know somebody is in this room and it is not a nurse. She would have turned on the light.

My heart starts beating faster as I slowly and quietly turn around.

"Get away from my son," my voice is surprisingly calm and stable as I look at Gwen. The bassinet is between us and her hands are stretched out as if she is about to pick him up.

"I'm only admiring the new alpha," she smirks and pulls her hands back.

"What are you doing here?" I sit upright and pull the bassinet closer to me.

"I told you," she shrugs. "Admiring your son."

"Are you even allowed to leave your room?" I ask suspiciously. "Aren't you supposed to be on suicide watch?"

"I gave them the slip," she giggles and the sound gives me goosebumps. Gwen has completely lost her mind.

"I would like you to leave now," I say sternly.

"We used to be friends," she pouts as she looks at Connor. "Now I'm not even allowed to see your baby. It's not fair."

Axel, you better get here, I mind-link him.

I'm on my way, he replies.

"Why don't you come back in the morning?" I ask sweetly. "It's late and we both need sleep."

"No," her eyes blaze into mine. "I want to look at the baby before they take him away."

“Who’s going to take him, Gwen?” I ask softly as an ominous feeling settles in my gut.

“His grandparents, of course,” she shrugs. “That’s what they do, you know? They took Peter. They said it’s better for him. They want to take my baby as well, but I put a stop to that. My baby’s dead. They can’t take her anymore.”

“I will talk to them,” I stand up slowly. “I will tell them to give Peter back to you.”

“They won’t listen,” her laughter is that of a madman. “They always get what they want.”

“I will help you,” she looks at me with bright, shiny eyes. “I will take your baby and then they can’t find him.”

“Gwen ...”

“No,” she shakes her head. “I must help you. You were my friend, I must help.”

She reaches for Connor and I jump up and place myself between her and him.

“Get away,” she shoves me aside.

I land hard on the floor and quickly turn around. In horror I watch her reaching for Connor and I completely lose it. Without thinking, I jump up and leap towards her. A deafening growl fills the room, followed by Gwen’s ear-piercing scream. Pain surges through my body but I do not pay attention to it. I must keep Gwen away from my son. I jump onto her and she falls. Connor starts crying at the top of his lungs but I cannot attend to him now. I must protect him.

In utter disbelief, I look at the paw that is pressing on Gwen’s chest and I realize I have just shifted. For a split second, I want to panic, but I suppress it as I bare my teeth at a terrified Gwen.

“Kill me,” she starts crying. “Kill me and get it over with. I have nothing to live for. Put me out of my misery.”

“What’s going ... oh, dear goddess,” a nurse mumbles before she runs off.

“Kill me, please,” Gwen begs softly.

Alarms start blaring as Code Green is announced. People are swarming to my room but I do not move. Not only am I protecting Connor against Gwen, I am protecting her against herself.

“Liana,” Axel says flabbergasted.

Connor, get Connor, I mind-link him.

“Are you okay?” He asks softly as he comforts our son.

She needs help, I mind-link him.

“Sedate her,” Axel commands a stupefied nurse and she scurries away.

“And silence that alarm,” he says angrily.

The nurse comes back with a needle and looks doubtfully at me before she carefully kneels next to me. Gwen starts squirming and I pin her down harder. I keep the pressure until the nurse has injected her. Patiently I wait until Gwen is unconscious before I sit back and look at the people. Everyone is staring at me with wide eyes.

Carefully I turn to Axel and he smiles.

You’re beautiful, he mind-links.

“I came as quickly as I could,” Michelle says hastily as she bursts into the room. She comes to an abrupt halt when she sees me.

“Dear goddess, now I have seen everything,” she mumbles as she kneels by my side. “Are you okay?”

How should I know? I’ve never been a wolf before, I mind-link.

“You’re fine,” she chuckles and turns to a nurse. “Remove sleeping beauty over there and don’t leave her alone. And make no mistake, heads will roll. This patient is supposed to be under surveillance.”

Two nurses step forward and pick up Gwen before placing her on a gurney to take her away.

“Alpha,” Michelle turns to Axel. “I’ll take Connor while you help her shift back.”

I growl softly as Michelle takes our baby.

“Relax, Mom,” she smiles at me. “We’ll be right outside.”

“Liana,” Axel kneels next to me as my eyes follow Michelle leaving the room. “Look at me.”

Reluctantly, I obey but I hate not being able to see Connor.

“Your wolf is magnificent,” he whispers as he strokes my fur. “It’s the same gold as your hair. I cannot wait to see you in daylight.”

Now what? I mind-link.

“Now I’ll help you shift back so that you can hold Connor,” he replies gently.

## Chapter 100 - Selling Myself To The Alpha

Liana POV

“Did you find out what happened with Peter and why Gwen attempted suicide?” I ask Axel as Michelle takes my vitals. With Axel’s help, I shifted back easily. Connor is sleeping snugly in his father’s arms while Michelle ensures that I am fine.

“According to our watchers, Wyatt’s dad showed up,” Axel replies as he rocks Connor. “Minutes later, he left with Peter, and they could hear Gwen crying. They checked in on her when they couldn’t hear noises from the house and found her unconscious next to a bottle of sleeping pills. The grandparents are filing for custody of Peter. According to them, Gwen is an alcoholic and neglects him.”

“That’s bullshit,” I snort and look at Michelle. “Surely you tested Gwen’s blood when she came in. Did you find any alcohol?”

“No,” Michelle shakes her head. “But that only means she hasn’t been drinking in the last twelve hours. And it’s their word against a clearly unstable woman.”

“She’s not an alcoholic,” I say adamantly. “In all the time that I’ve known her, I haven’t seen her drunk once.”

“People change, Luna,” Michelle says softly. “She could’ve started drinking.”

“How’s Gwen doing?” I ignore Michelle’s last words.

“Still sedated,” she sighs. “Once she’s awake and stable, she’ll go to a psychiatric facility.”

“You can’t do that,” I protest passionately. “She’s not crazy, she’s broken.”

“Liana,” Axel says softly as he lays Connor down. “She needs help.”

“Exactly,” I huff. “Help. Not locked up.”

“Luna, she’s a danger to herself and the society,” Michelle says sympathetically.

“No, no, no,” I jump off the bed and glare at her and Axel. “She didn’t threaten me or Connor. In her mind, she was helping me. Then she begged me to kill her. She’s depressed and hurting. Locking her up is not helping her.”

“Liana, we must ...”

“No,” I cut him off fiercely. “She lost her baby and her child in one day, Axel. Look at Connor and tell me you’ll be fine if someone took him from you. For goddess’ sake, Axel, I shifted to keep him. How much more would you have done?”

“She didn’t lose the baby,” Michelle says, and I look at her in disbelief. “We did an emergency c-section. Her daughter is healthy and safe in the nursery.”

“A c-section?” I gape. “But she walked around like nothing has happened and thinks her baby is dead.”

“Gwen’s a she-wolf,” Michelle smiles. “Wolves heal faster. Humans are walking around the day after the operation. A wolf does it within twelve hours. It’s still painful, but with Gwen’s state of mind and the number of painkillers in her system, she could’ve been unaware of the operation. Also, Gwen was unconscious when she came in, she had no idea we delivered her baby. She woke up and came to you before I could talk to her and explain what happened.”

“Don’t tell the grandparents the girl is alive,” I say quickly. “And we need to get Peter from them and reunite the children with their mother.”

“Liana,” Axel sighs as he takes my hand. “As noble as it is, it might not be in the children’s best interest to be with Gwen when she’s in this state. Let the family take care of them while she heals.”

“As much as I agree with you, so much is Wyatt’s parents partially responsible for her condition,” I say firmly. “Taking Peter from her pushed her over the edge. Axel, for a very long time I was mad at Gwen and Wyatt. They humiliated and betrayed me, but I’m over it. In fact, I’m glad they did it otherwise you and I would’ve never been together. And they might’ve not be mates, but they loved each other. Like real, true love. Through everything that happened, Gwen loved Wyatt. He was an asshole, but Gwen never threatened or harmed me. She said mean things because she was angry and hurt. I’ve seen her with Peter, she’s a good mother, Axel. She and I will never be friends again, and I’m not even sure if I like her but no mother deserves to lose her children because she’s in pain and there’s no one to help her.”

“Okay,” Axel smiles softly at me. “What do you want to do, Luna?”

“To begin with, Gwen needs to see her kids,” I explain. “Under our supervision, of course. She needs to know that they’re not gone. You’re the alpha, you can force Wyatt’s parents to give Peter back, regardless of their claims. She needs a reason to fight, a reason to live. We will arrange for therapy for Gwen. And I’ll ask Carol and Drew if they’re willing to foster the kids

while Gwen is in hospital. At least that way we know Peter won't be brainwashed against his mother."

"Michelle," Axel turns to her. "No psychiatric lockup for Gwen. Keep a close eye on her during the night and inform her that she'll see her children in the morning."

"Fine," she sighs heavily. "But I strongly advise against it."

"Duly noted," I lift my chin challenging. "I'll take full responsibility for Gwen."

"You should get some rest," Michelle walks to the door. "You had an eventful day."

"You make me proud, Luna," Axel grins as he pulls me into his arms and kisses me lovingly.

Axel POV

I am stiff and sore when I wake up. Hospital chairs are not comfortable to sleep in, but I refused to sleep in another room and Liana's bed is not nearly big enough for the both of us.

I stretch my stiff muscles and freeze when I notice she is not in her bed. Ever since I saw her towering over Gwen last night, I cannot help but worry. Her first shift went smoothly thanks to the adrenaline pumping through her veins, but I am concerned that she is not entirely in control of her wolf. Granted, Liana is strong-willed, and I doubt her wolf will dominate her, but I love her too much to leave it up to chance.

"Good morning, sleepyhead," Liana says cheerfully as she walks towards me with a cup of coffee. "I'm discharged and we can go home."

"What time is it?" I groan as I gratefully accept the coffee.

"Seven," she smiles as she packs the last of her belongings.

"Seven?" I raise my eyebrows. "And you're fully dressed and already handled the paperwork. Did you even sleep?"

"With your snoring?" She gives me a wicked smile.

"I don't snore," I protest indignantly and appreciate the sound of her laughter that fills the room.

"No, you don't," she laughs. "Connor woke up hungry at five and I didn't see the need to go back to sleep."

"Doctor Google says you should sleep when the baby sleeps," I place the empty cup down and stand up.

"I'll practice that once we're home," she replies. "Sleeping without you sucks."

“Second that,” I grin as I pull her into my embrace and softly kiss her. “I’ll get the car.”

“No need,” she wiggles out of my arms and picks up her bags. “Drew’s already waiting. I called him. I got this; you get Connor.”

“Yes, dear,” I smirk, and she rolls her eyes at me before leading the way.

I am surprised to see Drew and Peter waiting for us at the exit.

“Oh, yeah,” Liana grins. “I did that too. Drew and Carol are taking the kids. Wyatt’s parents weren’t happy but couldn’t say anything when I phoned them.”

“I might as well resign,” I pretend to be offended but in reality, I could not be prouder of her. She was born for this title.

“Drew, why are there two cars?” Liana frowns once we are outside.

“I’m not driving,” Drew replies and I smile satisfied. “Peter and I are visiting. The other car is your security.”

Thank you, I mind-link him.

Sure thing, Alpha, he replies, she’s going to love the surprise.

Drew opens the backdoor and I secure Connor in his car seat while Liana climbs in next to him.

I do not say a word as I start the engine and move into traffic.

“This isn’t the way home,” Liana says from the back.

“We’re not going home,” I smirk. “And that’s all I have to say about that. It’s a surprise. Close your eyes and rest. I’ll wake you once we’re there.”

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“Liana,” I softly as I touch her shoulder. “Wake up, love.”

Slowly she opens her eyes and focuses on our surroundings.

“We’re at the beach house,” she exclaims happily.

“Not the beach house,” I smile as I hand her a set of keys. “Your beach house. You gave me a son, the least I can do, is buy you a house.”

Flabbergasted she looks from the keys to me.

“Our beach house, thank you,” she smiles brightly before jumping out of the car and into my arms. She plasters kisses all over my face and I laugh happily.

“I signed the papers last night,” I say as I take out Connor. “That’s why I came later.”

“This is the best gift ever,” she sighs as she looks at the house.

“It gets better,” I take her hand and together we walk to the door. “Besides for our security, there are a cook and a night nurse. All you need to do is feed our son and smell the ocean.”

“I can think of one more thing to do,” she smiles wickedly before she kisses me.