



Alpha's Hidden Truth

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Description: When I tried to renew our mate certificate, the Werewolf Affairs Division told me it was a forgery—there was no record of my bond with David.

Worse, they said his legal mate is Ella, his childhood friend.

In five years together, he never marked me. No certificate. No legal tie. Just a fake ceremony built on lies.

I gave him everything. But if none of it was real, there's only one thing left to do: leave.

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I got home with the fake mate certificate in my hand and felt empty.

The Werewolf Pack Council gave every mated werewolf couple a mate certificate. It was a sign that their relationship was real. In human terms, it was like a marriage licence.

But mine was a lie.

As I got closer to the door to our house, I made myself stay calm.

I was just about to open it when I heard David's voice inside talking to his Beta.

"Alpha, it's been five years. Are you still not going to mark Sophia?"

I couldn't move, and my breath stopped.

There was a long silence before David's voice came back, low and steady.

"Not yet. She needs me to help her get a foothold first."

The Beta didn't hold back when he said, "But Sophia doesn't even have a real mate certificate with you. If she ever finds out the truth, she could leave at any time."

David looked down. He thought for a moment and then said, "Ella gave birth to my daughter. I have to do everything I can to keep her safe. As for Sophia, she loves me too much to leave. She broke up with her birth pack just to marry me, so she has nowhere else to go. She can only stay with me."

The truth hit me like a winter storm, bare and bleeding. I felt like I was falling into a cold void.

My dad was very against my relationship with David. David hadn't become an Alpha yet, so he thought he wasn't good enough for an Alpha's daughter. I had gone against my father, cut ties with my birth pack, and gone to the Moonlight Pack by myself with David.

And now... That very sacrifice had become the chain that kept me tied up.

My thoughts were all over the place, crazy and wild. I didn't even see where my foot slipped. One second I was standing, and the next I fell to the ground.

A gentle breeze blew, and in a flash, David was standing in front of me. He picked me up and held me gently in his arms as he carried me inside to the couch.

He moved so slowly, as if I were a fragile piece of glass that he didn't want to break.

"Why are you being so careless? Are you hurt?"

He worried about my hands and feet, and his voice was soft and his eyes were full of worry. It didn't seem fake at all.

I had been living in his fantasy for five years, lulled by the careful lie he told just for me.

I suddenly took his hand. Even now, I couldn't believe that the man who loved me so much could lie.

The Werewolf Affairs Division might have made a mistake. It's possible that David really didn't know.

“David, I lost our mate certificate. Should we get another one?” I asked, holding on to the last bit of hope.

There was a flash of panic in his eyes, but it quickly turned to calm.

He turned his head away from me, not looking at me.

“Let the Beta handle that. All you have to do is get better.”

I closed my eyes and felt despair wash over me like a wave. I nodded slowly after a long pause.

“Okay.”

David’s face showed a hint of worry. He was about to say something, but his phone rang.

I raised my head. The name on the caller ID was Ella.

He quickly let go of me and grabbed the phone, giving me only a quick excuse as he walked towards the door. “Tell the Beta to take care of the certificate. The pack has something going on that I need to deal with.”

He answered the phone without waiting for a response.

“Don’t worry, Ella. I’m on my way.”

I got a call from the pack orphanage at the same time.

“Sophia, your friend said they wanted to adopt Maya, but now another couple is interested in her. Can you come see her?”

I got myself together, put on a calm face, and drove to the orphanage.

I could see David already standing at the door from a distance. Before I could even get close, a person ran up and threw herself into his arms.

“David, you’re finally here! Please save Maya! I don’t want her to be adopted by people she doesn’t know. I don’t want her to call someone else Mom and Dad.”

I was shocked and stared at the woman he was gently comforting.

Ella was it.

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David looked at Ella with complete confidence.

“Don’t worry. No one will take our daughter away.”

They were standing too close to each other. Their closeness was open and natural... the kind that only true friends shared. At that moment, I was just an intruder in someone else’s life.

I didn’t move until they went inside. Then, slowly, I got out of the car and followed them up to the second floor.

A small group of employees had gathered at the end of the hallway, just outside an office. Even though their whispers were quiet, they cut through the silence like silver knives.

“Is that the pup that Alpha David wants to adopt? She looks just like him.”

“Of course she does. She’s his biological daughter. I heard this was all part of the plan to make her look like an orphan so she could go back to his side as the rightful heir.”

“God. Who’s the mother? It can’t be Sophia, can it?”

“No way. Sophia can’t have kids. I heard she hurt herself as a pup and can’t have kids anymore.”

“That’s not it. I heard it was because of... messy affairs when she was younger.

Multiple abortions. Wrecked her chances. Why else would the Alpha go to all this trouble, pretending to adopt his own kid?"

"That's right. Ella is David's one true love. I knew it since we were kids. Look at them—they're perfect together."

Every word and careless phrase cut deep into my chest and made me bleed.

For five years, I had not been able to give David a puppy. He always made me feel better and told me it didn't matter. That having me was enough.

Now I got it: he had already made other plans. Plans that I was never a part of.

I leaned against the wall to stay upright because my legs gave out.

Out of nowhere, the office door opened.

David stepped outside, one arm around Maya and the other holding Ella's hand.

We looked at each other. Something in his eyes flared up—panic.

"Hello, Sophia," Ella said cheerfully, waving with her free hand. "I haven't seen you in a long time."

David let go of Ella's hand like it hurt him and ran over to me.

"Hey, Sophia! What are you doing here?"

His voice was quick and defensive. "Don't think too much about it. Ella is a guard here and watches over all the puppies. I just happened to be here to talk about Maya's adoption..."

He moved Maya around in his arms and held her out to me as if she could somehow change the subject.

“This is Maya. Isn’t she cute? She’s the best-behaved pup in the whole orphanage.”

I nodded and ran my hand along her cheek.

“She looks so much like you. I would have thought she was your own blood if you hadn’t said anything.”

But I could smell it. The smell of both David and Ella stuck to her—deep in her skin and in her breath. I couldn’t ignore it no matter how hard I tried.

David was about to say something when Maya suddenly started crying in his arms.

Ella suddenly appeared next to him and said, “I’ll take her.” She reached out and picked Maya up without any trouble, as if she had done it a hundred times before.

Maya snuggled into her chest and nuzzled for comfort, whispering softly-

“Mommy...”

David turned white. His breath hitched, and I could smell the fear coming off of him.

“Don’t get me wrong,” he stammered. “Ella works here, and she’s close to all the puppies. They all call her ‘Mommy.’ Once the adoption is final, I’ll teach Maya to call you something else.”

But the way he sounded desperate only made my chest hurt more.

Did he think I would get hurt? So why did you lie to me? Why did he keep me in this

fake bond, acting like we were friends while he left me for another woman and her dog?

Why do you want to adopt a pup that isn't mine and leave me to deal with the judgement of every whisper and sideways look?

"Don't worry. I understood." My voice was calm and soft. "Go take care of the adoption paperwork. I'll be in the car."

David let out a visible sigh of relief, and his smile broke free like sunlight through fog.

"Be good and wait for me, okay? I'll be back soon."

I turned around and walked towards the parking lot. With each step, the weight in my chest got heavier. I walked past a few members of the pack. They didn't even try to be quiet.

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“Poor thing. She doesn’t know...”

“I heard the Alpha comes here almost every day with Ella. They’ve already registered as mates. Doesn’t that make Sophia the homewrecker?”

Their words hurt me like icy claws on my back, but I didn’t stop. I didn’t flinch. I reached for my phone with shaky hands and sent a message to someone I hadn’t talked to in years.

Dad, I’m sleepy. I just want to go home.

My dad called me not long after I got home. It was a video call, not just a voice call.

We hadn’t seen each other in five years, and his hair was a lot more silver now than I remembered.

He said, “Sweetheart,” his voice tight with worry, “has David been mean to you?”

The knot in my throat came undone. I tried to keep it together, but my tears gave me away.

“I missed you so much, Dad...”

It felt like a lifetime ago that we fought and he yelled at me, “Get out! You’re no daughter of mine!” But there he was, still mad at me. Still in love with me.

He sighed, tired and long, but his eyes were full of warmth and regret.

“No matter what happens, this will always be your home. I’ll send someone to get you tomorrow.”

I couldn’t sleep after the call. Guilt kept me awake all night. I felt guilty about what I had done to my family and the choice I had made years ago to leave everything behind to follow David.

When I got up the next morning, David and Ella were already sitting at the breakfast table with Maya between them.

They looked great. A picture of a family that is happy.

And I... I was the smudge on that perfect picture, the person who ruined their painted happiness at home.

David was the first one to see me. He jumped up, and guilt showed on his face.

He quickly said, “Maya just moved in. She doesn’t know the place yet.” “She’s only staying for a few days to help Ella get used to things.”

Maya looked at me with suspicious eyes. Then she yelled, “I want Mommy and Daddy to sleep with me every night!” She held David’s and Ella’s hands together like she was tying a knot.

Ella looked at me with a small, sorry smile that didn’t reach her eyes and said, “Sorry, Sophia. Maya has trouble sleeping in new places. But you’re so understanding. You won’t mind, right?”

David’s face went pale. His mouth opened and closed, but no defence came.

A sharp, breathless pain stabbed through the numbness in my chest.

“Don’t worry,” I said, trying to sound light-hearted as I sat down at the table. “Of course I don’t mind. She’s just a pup. Being around people she knows makes her feel safe. Let’s all eat breakfast.”

Ella, always polite, picked up a piece of bread and gave it to me.

“I made this myself. Give it a try. I even put sweetgrass in it, which you like.”

She smiled and gave me a wink.

“David said you liked it. You have to finish it!”

I grabbed the bread. I knew the smell as soon as it touched my fingers.

It wasn’t sweet grass. It was something completely different.

I carefully put the bread back on the plate, my voice shaking with anger.

“I didn’t know you liked to bake with wolfsbane.”

Ella’s eyes filled with tears, and her lower lip shook.

“Sophia, you don’t have to accuse me like that, even if you don’t like it.”

David’s face became dark with disapproval.

“Ella got up early just to make that for you. Why would she poison you? Don’t be unreasonable, Sophia.”

I was just about to say something when Maya’s high-pitched voice cut me off and told me to go upstairs to watch her cartoons.

David put down his knife and fork right away. He said, “I’ll take her up,” and he was already getting up.

Ella’s tears disappeared as quickly as smoke in the wind when the sound of their footsteps faded and the door clicked shut behind them. She turned to me with a smirk on her lips and a sharp tone that made fun of me.

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“Five years of pretending to be a fake mate, Sophia. How does that feel? Oh, that’s right. You didn’t know, did you?” Her eyes sparkled. “Maya is my daughter.”

In the next moment, she was no longer in her seat and was standing inches away from me, her presence sudden and heavy.

She hissed, “The mate certificate David and I have? That one’s real.” “Get out of here right now if you have any shame left. Stop holding on to something that was never yours.”

She grabbed a piece of bread from the table and pushed it against my lips before I could move.

“Enjoy the wolfsbane. This is what a dirty little parasite like you deserves.”

The bitterness felt like ash and acid on my tongue. I gasped, and my throat was already swelling. Breath clawed at my chest but wouldn’t come out. I fell to the ground, my body gasping for air.

Ella’s ears twitched; she had heard something.

Her right hand quickly turned into a claw, and she slashed her own chest. Crimson welled up right away, ruining her clean white blouse. She fell to her knees and screamed, which echoed through the house.

“Please, Sophia, don’t kill me! I’m sorry; I shouldn’t have moved in. I’ll leave. Please let me go!”

“Hey, Ella!” David yelled from upstairs.

He hit the ground floor in a flash, eyes wide with shock as he rushed to pick up Ella’s bleeding body. “What the hell, Sophia? Have you lost your mind?” His voice shook with rage. “She made you breakfast, stayed to help with our daughter, and this is how you thank her?”

He didn’t give them time to answer. “When I get back, I want you to say you’re sorry. For real.”

Ella leaned weakly against him, her head resting on his shoulder. She looked at me just before he left. Her eyes were full of tears, and her mouth was in a quiet, triumphant smile.

David didn’t look my way even once.

I was curled up on the floor, my body on fire from the inside out, and my lungs wouldn’t let me breathe as the wolfsbane worked its way through me. Pain twisted in my stomach. My wolf howled inside.

I somehow got myself up and staggered step by step to the bedroom. I fumbled for the antidote on the nightstand and drank the whole vial in one go. Slowly, the tightness in my throat began to ease.

But the relief never came.

Not to my heart.

Not to the place that used to believe in forever.

I looked at the picture of David and me getting married on the nightstand. I took the

frame off. Then they opened the drawers.

All the pictures. Every memento. The mate ring, the wolf fang necklace, the fox-hide bag, the moonstone, and the hand-carved tokens.

All the memories he had given me.

I got them all together and then destroyed them.

I ripped out the rose garden in the backyard, which David himself had planted, roots and all, and burned it.

I didn't want any of it.

Not even him.

David would no longer be a part of my life starting tomorrow.

The werewolves from my birth pack moved quickly. That afternoon, my father's family came. I signed the papers to get out and packed up what was left of me.

I didn't look back when I left the Moonlight Pack.

David sat next to Ella's bed in the hospital.

He hadn't gotten any sleep all night. His hands were shaking and his eyes were dark. Ella kept calling his name, but he didn't hear her. "David," she said in a weak voice. "My chest still hurts. But don't blame Sophia. She was just jealous that I was with you and Maya." Before she could finish, there was a loud knock on the door.

His Beta was outside, out of breath and scared, and they linked their minds right

away.

“Alpha-Sophia is gone. She officially left Moonlight this afternoon. She’s gone.”

David’s point of view

A rush of blood went to my head, and the world around me spun.

I reached for my phone and called Sophia.

No signal.

The call kept failing to go through.

Panic dug its claws into my chest.

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I grabbed my Beta by the collar. “How did she get away? Find out! Use all of our contacts to find Sophia!”

But no matter how hard we looked, it was like she had disappeared from the world.

When I got back to the manor, I fell onto the couch, empty and defeated.

So this was on purpose.

She didn’t leave in a fit of rage; she had planned it. With care. In a quiet way.

I jumped up and ran into the master bedroom.

There was no sign of her anywhere. Pictures. Clothing. The presents I had given her over the years. Everything... deleted.

I called for a maid and gave her a look that was so sharp it could draw blood. “Where are her things? Why is everything gone?”

The poor maid shook with fear because an Alpha was angry.

“Madam destroyed them all,” she stammered. “Even the rose garden in the backyard... She set it on fire.

My pupils shrank to slits. I let go of the maid’s arm and disappeared in a flash, only to reappear in the backyard.

And there it was.

Burned earth. Blackened stems. Not one rose left alive.

I was frozen in place, looking at the remains.

I planted those roses myself the day we became friends. I made a simple vow with her hand in mine: “My love for you will bloom like these roses—fierce and forever burning.”

She loved that garden. She spent hours taking care of it, watering, pruning, and caring for every flower.

There were always new roses in our room.

It was gone now. She had killed it with her own hands.

Did she really mean to throw me away?

A horrible thought hit her like lightning.

What if she had learnt something? Something that made her leave without saying anything?

Fear twisted in my stomach.

I turned quickly to my Beta and said, “Check the mate certificate.” How did she lose it, exactly? And find out if she found anything. My phone buzzed in my pocket before I could even move.

My heart raced. I didn’t even look at the screen. I took a shaky breath and said,

“Sophia?” Is that you?”

“David,” Ella’s voice said instead. “My wound still hurts... Maya has a fever too. “Please come to the hospital.”

My face got darker.

“I’m busy. If you’re sick, see a doctor. Don’t call me about this.

I hung up before she could say anything else.

At that moment, I heard my Beta’s voice in my head: “Alpha, I found something.” Sophia went to the Werewolf Affairs Division... She asked for a new mate certificate.

My head was pounding. I was so angry that it felt like fire was flowing through my veins, and my aura was crashing outward in waves.

“Did she find out?” “Why didn’t you know this before?” I yelled. She must have known that the certificate was fake... She must have been very sad.

My Beta looked pale because I was so angry. “You’ve already decided to break up with Ella, haven’t you? You and Sophia will get the real certificate after you re-register. I’m sure she will see how sincere you are.

“Then do it right away!” “Find that moonstone necklace Sophia always wanted,” I yelled. Make sure we win the auction.

I’d bring her the certificate, the gift, and an apology from the bottom of my heart once I found her.

I would fix it.

Sophia would forgive me. She had to. I would get her back.

I told the staff to move the roses again, but this time not just to a garden. I wanted the whole courtyard to be full of her favourite roses.

That same night, I sent people into the Dark Forest to pick the rare flowers. I even hired the best gardeners I could find, even though they cost a lot. I finally let myself breathe again when everything was finally in motion.

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I spent every waking hour looking for Sophia, so much so that I forgot about everything else that was going on in the Pack.

It didn't take long for everyone in the Pack to find out what I was doing. They all came to talk to me one by one.

"Your legal wife is Ella," they said. "And Maya—she's your daughter, yours and Ella's by blood." Why do you keep going after Sophia? She went away by herself. She gave up her spot so Ella could be your Luna. Why can't you just let it go?"

Their words made me angry. I jumped up and yelled, "I love Sophia!" That was just an old feeling for Ella, nothing more. "I'll take Maya's inheritance away right away if Sophia comes back."

The room went silent in shock. Then someone, who was either braver or more foolish than the rest, spoke up with doubt in their voice.

"You married Ella first and then made a fake certificate to get Sophia. Wasn't that because you always meant to get rid of Sophia and officially get back together with Ella?"

The rage came out of me in a flash.

My power grew, and the floor under my foot cracked and broke because of how angry I was.

"Not true!" I growled, "If anyone says Sophia isn't my true mate again, I won't let

them go.”

There was a heavy, complete silence. The room, which had been full of voices, was now only filled with the sound of still breathing. My Alpha presence stifled all dissent.

When I got back to the manor, I opened the door and saw someone sitting on the couch in the living room.

My heart raced.

I didn’t think about it and moved quickly to pull the figure into my arms.

“Thank God you came back, Sophia,” I said, feeling so relieved. I knew you couldn’t just walk away from me.

But in the dark, the smell was wrong. The shape was too thin. The voice, which was soft and sad, wasn’t Sophia’s.

“David,” Ella whispered, her eyes full of disappointment and anger. “It’s me.” The doctor told me that my injuries were bad... I missed you, though, so I left and came home.

She turned her head up towards me, looking weak and sad. The blood-stained bandages on her shoulder looked like a badge of pain.

But I didn’t feel anything.

No warmth. No love. No guilt.

I let her leave.

“You are hurt. I said coldly, “You should be in the healing lodge.” “This house is mine and Sophia’s.” Don’t come back unless you need to. Tomorrow, we’ll go to the Werewolf Affairs Division and end our relationship. “Take Maya with you. I’ll take away her inheritance.”

Ella turned white.

“Fine, you don’t want me,” she said, her voice shaking. “But Maya is your daughter.” Are you ready to give up your dog just for Sophia? Right now, she’s sick. “She just wants to see her dad...”

I pushed her hand away and looked away sharply.

“Go.” I don’t want to see anyone but Sophia.

Her eyes got bigger and shone with tears. She slowly got up, and every line of her body showed how much pain she was in.

“David,” she yelled, her voice breaking. “I’m the one you married, not her!” Sophia is gone! She’s never coming back!”

She stepped closer, desperate, and reached for me again.

“Have you ever thought about marking me? We could all live together as a real family. Isn’t that what counts?”

I slapped her hand away and growled.

“Leave! Sophia is the only person I love. Go away. Now!”

Ella ran out of the house crying.

The smell of jasmine, which was her scent, still hung in the air in the hall, like a film I couldn't scrub off. I rubbed my nose in frustration.

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I needed to smell Sophia. I wanted to feel the warmth of her memory and the familiar signs of her presence.

But there was nothing left.

Ella had cleaned everything up. Everything that smelt like Sophia was gone—destroyed.

I was alone in what used to be Sophia's room.

Even when the sky outside turned from night to dawn, I didn't close my eyes.

The next morning, there was a lot going on in the manor's backyard.

The gardeners moved with purpose, carefully planting roses they had just picked from the Dark Forest. The air was thick with the smell of flowers and dirt, and the soft sound of voices could be heard throughout the garden.

"These roses are beautiful," someone said, their voice full of awe. "They're rare even in the Dark Forest." I've heard that Alpha David loves his mate, but this... This is more than I expected."

Another voice joined in, full of rumours. "You're behind the times. Everyone knows that Alpha David and Ella have been friends since they were kids. They even have a daughter together.

Another voice said, "I heard that Ella left David for another pack before he became

Alpha. Sophia was the only one who stayed with him. Ella has come back to take her place now that he's Alpha.

What they said hit me like a bolt of lightning.

Since becoming Alpha, I had been surrounded by respect and admiration. Many people wanted to be by my side to share in the power and prestige. But in that moment, I thought of Sophia, the one who had stood by me when I had nothing. She had cut ties with her own family to support me and believe in me. She had been my anchor and my comfort.

But I let her go because I was after someone who cared more about status than honesty.

I sent my Beta a mind link that said, "Find Sophia, no matter what."

Later, my Beta came up to me, looked away from me, and gave me a report.

"What is this?" "Why?" I asked.

"Alpha, here's your medical report." It took longer than expected.

I looked at it quickly, planning to put it away, but my Beta's hesitation made me stop.

"You should read it," he said. "There are some strange things."

As I read the report, I felt a wave of anger wash over me. It said that my wolf had mutated, making it impossible for me to have a pup.

So, Maya wasn't...

I growled, “That lying Ella.”

Ella sat next to Maya, who had a fever, at the werewolf hospital. When I walked in, Maya’s eyes lit up.

“Papa!” She yelled, “Why haven’t you come to see me?” and then pouted. Mommy said you don’t want us anymore.

Her words used to make my heart melt, but now they feel like daggers.

Ella walked up with hope in her eyes and said, “David, I knew you’d come back to us.”

I was so angry that I grabbed her by the throat and pinned her against the wall.

“You dirty liar,” I yelled. “How dare you lie to me?”

She gasped, her eyes wide with fear. “I didn’t lie!” Please stop. You’re scaring Maya.

“Then tell me,” I said, “who is Maya’s dad?”

Ella said, “She’s yours.”

“Don’t lie to me!” Because of my condition, it’s not possible. Who owns her dog?”

Ella’s eyes darted around, and she started to panic.

Ella’s eyes were wide with fear, and her voice shook as she spoke.

“David, let me tell you...”

My Beta had already unlocked Ella's phone when she got there. He opened her message thread with Sophia and restored the photos and videos Ella had deleted.

"Alpha," he said with a frown, "Ella sent Sophia a lot of messages that were very suggestive. There are also pictures and a video that was taken down."

I took the phone from him and held it tightly as I started to scroll.

The messages were full of spiteful pride. One after the other, they sent me pictures of myself smiling as I talked to Maya, as if we were a happy little family.

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Every word and picture was like a needle going straight into my eyes, and the shame and anger were getting worse and worse.

But the last video, which was filmed in the manor's dining room, pierced my chest with a spear of cold ice.

Ella had made Sophia eat bread with wolfsbane in it.

Wolfsbane. She really did it.

The longer I watched, the colder I got. My heart sank like a stone in freezing water.

That day, there really was wolfsbane in the bread. And those wounds Ella had shown off? She had hurt herself to make Sophia look bad.

I thought back to that moment and how harsh and dismissive my own voice was when I told Sophia to say she was sorry.

She must have been in pain by then.

How much pain did it cause?

I can see why she left so quickly. I can see why her eyes looked at me like I was a stranger.

She must really hate me.

The rage hit me like a firestorm. I snarled and picked Ella up off the ground, then slammed her into the marble floor. The tiles broke with a sharp, crystalline shatter.

“I told you not to go near Sophia!” I growled, my voice full of anger. And you still did all this dirty work behind my back?”

Ella’s mouth was bleeding. She coughed violently but didn’t care about her injuries. She crawled on her knees and grabbed the hem of my trousers.

“David!” “Even if Maya isn’t your daughter, I’m still your friend!” she cried, desperate. You can’t do this to me!”

I kicked her hard enough to make her fall down. My voice got cold and final.

“Not for long.” “You’ll pay for everything you did to Sophia.”

I looked at my Beta and said, “Take her.” Put her in the basement of the manor.

Ella’s eyes grew wide with fear. She grabbed my leg again, her voice high with fear.

“Not David! I was wrong! Have mercy, please! You loved her so much for Maya’s sake! Please don’t do this to me!”

She had seen what I did to a werewolf who dared to talk badly about Sophia before.

She heard the begging and the screams from the basement.

Saw the body after it was pulled out. Silver burned it in a dozen places.

She had been having bad dreams for days.

Now it was her turn.

I felt sick as I shook her off. I told the guards to take her away.

Maya had turned ghostly pale on the hospital bed, and her small voice cried out, “Daddy...” “Mommy...”

I didn’t even look at her.

I told my Beta to “send someone from the orphanage to pick her up.”

I then gave him another order right away.

“Send a message to every pack about the missing person.” I want to find Sophia no matter what it takes.

Sophia’s point of view

Word of David’s loud, never-ending search for me spread quickly, even to the Snow Pack.

At that moment, I was sitting across from Zane, the Alpha of the Snow Pack, in Ebonfield’s most famous restaurant. It was so famous that even royalty had to make reservations weeks in advance and still had to wait in queue.

My father had picked Zane as a political ally, and to my surprise, he was charming and gentle. He acted like a big, obedient dog wagging its tail in front of me, trying to please.

I had only ever said in passing that I liked this restaurant once.

So, Zane bought it for me.

Straight up.

He said it was so I could eat here whenever I wanted.

It wasn't the first time Zane's money and power had surprised me, and it probably wouldn't be the last.

He talked to me in that casual, offhand way of his while he carefully cut my steak into neat, bite-sized pieces.

“Hey Sophia, that Alpha with the territory the size of a sesame seed is still looking for you.” It seems like he still has feelings.

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I leaned back in my chair and relaxed while Zane fussed over my plate.

“He’s not important anymore. I said, “I don’t care how he feels. There’s nothing between us anymore.” My tone was indifferent.

Zane smiled so big that it looked like his face was going to split in half. If he had been a wolf, I was sure his tail would have wagged right off.

I laughed softly and said, “You look like a silly puppy right now.” Then I reached out and ruffled his hair.

His Beta’s breath caught in his throat from across the room.

Did someone just call Alpha Zane a dumb dog?

Was she crazy?

But the next second, the Beta’s eyes were almost out of his head.

Zane rubbed his nose against my hand like a dog and barked, “Woof.”

His Beta turned around and marched out of the restaurant, grumbling under his breath as he cleared out the last few diners.

“Ugh. The great Alpha Zane is a wolf in love who is hiding.

In the meantime, David had finally found me after spending a lot of money to get the

information.

David's point of view

“Alpha, we have confirmed it. Sophia is with the Snow Pack.

“The Snow Pack?””

For a moment, I froze as the name weighed heavily on my mind.

That was Alpha Zane, the guy her family set her up with before she met me.

He wasn't just any old person; he was powerful in Ebonfield. He even had a former king in his family. But he kept a low profile, and I didn't know much about him, which bothered me more than I wanted to admit.

I said, “Sophia broke off that engagement for me.” My voice got tight. “So why the hell is she with him now?””

A slow, cold feeling of unease settled in my chest.

The faith I had in myself, the belief that I could get Sophia back, started to fade. I didn't feel so sure against Alpha Zane anymore.

But I couldn't give up—not now. I had to try no matter what.

My Beta rushed in again, breathless and full of energy, just as I was trying to deal with the weight of it.

“Zane is getting married.” In three days, the Marking Ceremony will take place.

I almost lost it. I felt pure, wild joy surge through me.

“He’s getting married to someone else?” I laughed, crazy with relief. “And you’re still after my friend?” Great. I’ll show everyone what a scumbag he is. Let’s see what face he has left to show Sophia after that.

I looked everywhere, but I couldn’t find out who Zane’s wife was.

I didn’t care.

I thought it was just a spoilt princess from one of the big packs. It didn’t matter.

“Get me a copy of the wedding invitation,” I said angrily. “I’m going there myself to bring Sophia home.”

She had chosen me once, going against her own family to break off the engagement with the Snow Pack. All for me.

She didn’t have anyone else to talk to. I was her only choice.

I sneered as the plan became clear and sharp in my mind. At Zane’s wedding, I would tell everyone about his dirty little secrets. Once Sophia saw what kind of werewolf he really was, she’d remember how good I was to her and come back to me, quiet and obedient, just like before.

Sophia’s point of view

The Marking ceremony took place at Zane’s huge estate. When I walked into the grand hall wearing a shimmering mermaid gown with glowing threads, the crowd gasped in admiration, envy, and awe.

Someone whispered, “Goddess, that’s the dress with 999 pieces of moonlight crystal in it.” Made by hand. It took a whole year to finish.

“Alpha Zane must be completely in love. I don’t blame him. “Look at his friend; she’s stunning.”

I slowly walked towards Zane while holding a bunch of rare blood moon roses in my hands.

This was the second time I had stood in front of so many people dressed like this. The first time, I had lost everything.

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And this time... was I really ready to be happy?

I stumbled. Doubt gripped my chest, cold and sudden. A part of me wanted to run away.

“Sophia.”

Zane stood in front of me, his fingers curling a little because he was nervous.

He took a deep breath, straightened his tie, and walked towards me with calm determination.

“Sophia, I know you have a lot of fears. But I want you to know that it’s okay. “I’ve got you,” he said.

I looked up into his eyes, which were so open and honest.

He had grown up next to me, protecting me from cruelty and ridicule. When I left him for David, I thought I was looking for love. But no matter how far I went, he stayed right there, at the crossroads where we had parted.

My parents were below the stage, crying and smiling as they waved at me and mouthed “Congratulations.” They had always been my strength, protecting me from pain.

How could I not let myself be happy?

I smiled and held out my hand to Zane.

“Don’t go with him, Sophia!””

The door suddenly opened, and David’s voice was hoarse and cracked.

He stood there, shocked, looking at the two of us on stage. The happiness on our faces cut through him like a knife. Shock and regret filled his eyes, drowning him.

He was right next to me in a flash, his eyes full of need.

“I was wrong, Sophia. You can’t just get married to someone else because you’re angry. You do love me, right? You love me!”

I looked at him coldly, with no emotion on my face.

“You can’t say that word.” Not anymore. We’re over, David. I don’t want to see you again.

“No-no!””

David lunged forward to grab my hand.

Zane stepped in front of me right away, blocking him with a calm fierceness.

David’s eyes narrowed in anger as he stared at Zane.

“You’re to blame for this! You know she’s mine. How could you go after her?”

A faint, creepy smile spread across Zane’s lips.

“Your legal mate is named Ella,” he said, his voice as cold as winter steel. “Don’t mix up your problems with my bride.”

David pulled back, clearly surprised. “I-I only married Ella to help her. I don’t love her! I’ve only ever loved Sophia!” Zane looked at him with disgust written all over his face.

“So the person you love... isn’t the one you legally bound yourself to? That’s interesting.

David was angry and clenched his jaw. “Ella and I are already getting ready to end our mate bond. Then I’ll do the Marking with my real mate. “Alpha, it’s none of your business.”

There was something sharp in Zane’s eyes.

“Is that breakup mutual? Or are you making her do it and leaving her?”

David stopped for a moment, his voice getting thinner. “Of course it’s mutual.” It was just a deal between us.

“You lie! You pathetic liar!” The doors to the hall flew open again with a bang. Ella was standing in the doorway.

There was a lot of tension in the air. People gasped all around the room.

Ella walked up, rolling up her sleeves to show off her arms, which were covered in silver scars from burns.

“These,” she said, her voice shaking, “are from David.” He hit me. He wanted to kill me.

She shook as she told the whole story: how David had played with Sophia while stringing her along, how he had kept up the lie of being in love with both of them while betraying them both.

She cried as she talked.

“I know I’m not a saint,” she said with tears in her eyes. “I just wanted a place for my daughter to live. And still—David, how could you be so mean?”

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David lost it. He ran at her like a wild wolf that had been cornered, grabbing her throat with his fingers and slamming her into a pillar.

“Shut your filthy mouth, you lowborn dog! Get out of here!”

Several Blue Moon guards rushed into the hall in a flash. They tackled David to the ground and pulled Ella away to safety. “Alpha David, you are under arrest for trying to kill someone.”

Another pair of guards moved towards Ella at the same time.

“You are also suspected of poisoning.” You have to come with us.

Ella’s eyes got bigger in shock as she turned to Zane in disbelief.

Zane quietly picked up a crystal wine glass from the table and held it up to her as a toast.

I saw everything. When I looked at Zane, my breath caught in my chest.

“Was all this... What are you doing?”

Zane nodded right away.

“Anyone who’s hurt you will pay the price,” he said softly.

My chest felt warm. So this was what it felt like to be safe.

As David was pulled away, he yelled to me, broken and desperate. “Sophia, I’m sorry.” Please, can you ever forgive me?”

I turned to look at him, and for the first time, my heart was completely still.

“David, I forgive you. But not because I still care about you. “I forgive you because the past doesn’t matter to me anymore.”

I held my mate certificate over my head and smiled.

“Now I know what a real mate certificate looks like. Bye.

Then I turned and reached out my hand to Zane, who was waiting for it.

This time, I would grab my happiness with both hands.