

Mated in the Shadow of My Sister Chapter 241

Chapter 0241

(Stephanie POV)

My heart racing, I immediately began looking for my mother. I could not find her anywhere.

“Mom!” I shouted in the mind-link. “Where are you?!!?”

“I am in the Steffie Garden with Jane and Sheila. Are you okay?”

“I am on my way!” I replied.

I hurried downstairs and cut through the packhouse kitchen, shoving any omegas who dared to get in my way. A couple of them fell and began crying, but that was their problem. I needed to get to my mother as quickly as possible.

I finally arrived, finding her having afternoon tea with Jane and Sheila. The Steffie Garden had been built and named after me after I “died.” It had previously been used as a lounge for omegas during their breaks, but my mother wanted an interior garden space dedicated to my memory, and this was the only room that was not only big enough but that could also have large portions of the roof replaced with glass to allow a sufficient amount of sunlight.

The best part about the Steffie Garden was that, because it was located within the four walls of the packhouse, Sheila and I were allowed to be there notwithstanding our current house arrest.

My mother stood up and approached me. “Stephanie, darling, are you okay?”

“It is James!”

Jane stood up. “What about James? Is he okay?”

I smiled as I started jumping up and down. “Yes! He is on his way home! He just texted me! He will be here on Friday!!!!”

“Oh, that is amazing news! I am so glad! Finally!!!” my mother exclaimed. She then turned to Jane.

“See, Jane! I told you that they were mates. Why else would he reach out to Stephanie before any of us?”

“Maybe because you are the one who texts him 50 times each day,” my wolf said in annoyance.

Ignoring my wolf, I explained the crisis situation to my mother. “There is a

problem, though, Mom... I have not been able to leave the packhouse, so I have not been able to get my hair done, or my nails done, or even get a proper waxing. And what am I supposed to wear if I cannot go shopping?!?!?" My mother thought for a moment. "Oh, dear. Well... perhaps we can ask the werewolf council for meet your mate! What do you think, Jane?" Jane scoffed. "I think Stephanie looks fine the way she is." I felt hurt by Jane's words, and so I gave my mother a look.

"What Jane means, dear, is that you are so beautiful already that you already put all the other she-wolves in the pack to shame. Isn't that right, Jane?" Jane scowled at both of us.

My mother waved her hand dismissively. "Whatever. You can ignore Jane; she is just sad that James did not text her. Now, let us talk about how get that pass for you—"

"-And for me, too," Sheila piped up.

"For you? Why for you?" I asked, annoyed.

"I am the future mother of James' heir, I should look the part too, Stephanie."

I glared at her, ready to attack. "Sheila, if you say one more time that you "GIRLS! Stop it," my mother scolded. "We have already talked about this.

Stephanie, even though the pup is in Sheila's womb, he or she was conceived as a result of the love that James has for you. When the pup is born, you and James will raise him or her. And until then, we will treat Sheila with respect and include her as part of our family.

I growled but reluctantly agreed. I was still not comfortable with the fact that James slept with Sheila. No matter how many times my mother told me that James only cheated because he believed Sheila was me, it did not feel right. He was mine, and our first time together should have been with me.

I also could not get over Sheila's betrayal. Even if James thought he was sleeping with me, Sheila clearly knew who she was sleeping with. Urgh. I may be pretending to play nice now, but once I am made Luna, I will have to come up with some way to punish her.

"So you will get the pass for both Stephanie and me?" Sheila asked my mother in excitement.

"Of course."

"Another issue, Mom.... I know we have been working on the plans for my

welcome home and engagement party, but that is still a ways away... I know that James and I are going to want to celebrate on Friday night as well. We all are! The future alpha and luna will finally be reunited! Do you think we could do a small get together on Friday night as well? Just close family and friends?"

"I do not see why not. We would not need to accommodate more than 50 wolves, right?"

"Maybe 100?" I suggested. "I don't want anyone to feel excluded."

My mother smiled: "Of course, my dear. 100 should not be a problem."

"What about your son, Stephanie?" Jane asked.

"What son?"

"Jackson. You know, the one that you had with that human? Is he going to be invited?"

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Urgh. Seriously. Why do people keep bringing Jackson up?!? Jackson was part of my past. James is my future.

"Jackson is with his father."

"But you are his mother."

"Not anymore. His father is more than capable of taking care of him."

"Don't you care about your own flesh and blood?"

"URGH. SHUT UP ALREADY," I thought to myself.

I needed to figure out how to close this little chapter once and for all. The last thing that I need is the

topic of Jackson and Antonio interfering with my relationship with James. I had been thinking for months

about how to solve the Jackson/ Antonio problem, but I had not had any good ideas.

But then, the solution hit me. Right when I needed it the most. Granted, the solution was a bit cliché and at

bit overused, but who was going to have the guts to challenge me on it?

I covered my face with my hands and forced myself to start crying.

"Are you okay, honey? What is wrong?"

"Mom, it's just... Jackson.... it is so hard for me every time someone brings him up.

someone brings him up. I... I have been trying to

ignore it because I did not want to tell any of you this... but... Antonio...

I kept crying, making myself sound like a whimpering mess. Antonio was right

when he said a few years ago that I should have been an actress. I was actually offered a couple of parts in a couple of movies, but I had to turn them down because I was worried that someone from the werewolf community would recognize me.

“Honey, what is it? You can tell us anything.”

“I... I don't like to talk about Jackson... because... the night Jackson was conceived.... Antonio r-r-r-raped me.”

“Oh

my goddess,” my mother, Sheila, and Jane said at the exact same time. My mother sounded shocked and sympathetic. However, Sheila and Jane sounded frustrated and annoyed.

Whatever.

“Are you

“Are you seriously going to play the rape card?” Jane asked. “Are you going to pretend like the entire pack

I removed my hands from my face and stared daggers at Jane. My mother turned and did the same thing.

After a minute or two of silence, Jane relented. “Fine.”

My mother turned back to me. “Oh, honey, I am so sorry that all of that happened to you. Why don't we make Friday night's party even bigger? A big celebration to celebrate your new and safer and happier life?”

“I would love that! Thank you, Mom!!!”

“How much is this party going to cost us?” Jane asked bitterly.

Seriously, what is wrong with Jane right now??? She was never like this before. I wonder what has

changed. Could it just be menopause? I mean, Jane would be pretty young to be going through it, but I

cannot think of any valid reason for Jane to be this bitter or angry with me.

I am going to have to talk to James about Jane when he gets back. Whatever the problem is, he will have

to help her fix it. I do not want to spend the rest of my life with a horrible, bitter mother-in-law. Antonio's

mother was tough enough to deal with.

“Would you stop Jane?!?!” my mother yelled. “Money is not everything. My daughter just confessed to

being raped. Have some sympathy! And BACK OFF!”

Jane stood and looked at my mother angrily. “Back off? Your daughter is lying

about being raped and you know it. Your daughter has also cost this pack dearly for years. We have been bleeding money because of her, and we have been losing alliances because of her actions as well. I have every right to want to know how much she is going to cost us now with some grand party and unnecessary pampering trip.” My mother reached out and slapped Jane as hard as she could.

“I will pay for our outing and party myself, out of my own funds. However, the next time that you raise your voice to me or say something negative about my daughter, I will be talking to the werewolf council about more than just the passes for Stephanie and Sheila. Am I understood?” Jane held her cheek and looked down, trying to pretend like the pain did not bother her. Once she gathered herself, she left the garden without saying another word. “Mom, why does Jane hate me so much?” I asked once she was out of earshot.

My mother rubbed my shoulder. “Oh, do not take her too seriously, dear. She is just having a hard time with the idea of her only son getting mated and married. All mothers go through it to a certain extent.”

I plopped myself down in the chair that Jane had just been sitting in. “Well, she needs to get over it. I do not want my mate to believe I cannot get along with his mother.”

“Of course, dear. Now let’s talk about what kind of dress you want to be wearing when you see James for the first time.”

“I should probably get two dresses... one to see him in and one for the party.” My mother smiled. “Of course. I completely agree.”

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Chapter 0243

(Lily POV)

James laughed as he responded to a text on his phone. He then put the phone down and climbed into bed next to me. We were currently staying in a hotel about 25 minutes from West Mountain Pack. The hotel would act as our base of operations until we executed our final plans. “Was that Joey?” I asked.

He smiled. "Yeah. I owe him \$500."

"You lost the bet?"

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"Yes. Can you believe it? I thought for sure at least one of them would have some shame. But no, not only did your mother convince the council to give both Stephanie AND Sheila passes so that they could go shopping, but they are also getting full hair and spa treatments too." I laughed. "I tried to warn you not to make that bet with him." James smiled. "At least they will look their best for their destruction."

"I assume the party is on then too?"

"Oh, yeah. Margie has omegas working overtime getting ready for it. She is calling it a 'small' party... just 500 guests."

I sighed. "It's amazing how predictable all of them are."

Now that I was participating, having the pack and council takeovers occur in a big, public setting was no longer as important as it was before. However, during our planning meetings, we all agreed that there was still value to getting the key players in the same room at the same time. That would prevent the key players from trying to hide or escape when they realized what was about to go down. Meanwhile, our allies would surround West Mountain's borders in case any of the smaller players tried to make a run for it.

Notably, getting everyone in the same place at the same time was by far the easiest part of the plan.

Being as predictable as they are/were, we knew that all we had to do was inform Stephanie that James was coming back and wanted to see her. My mother would have a celebration put together in no time flat.

James' face suddenly turned serious as he pulled me closer to him in the bed.

"Are you sure you are ready for all of this? I know it is a lot."

I kissed him gently, put my head on his chest, and then grabbed his right hand, intertwining our fingers together.

"I am ready. It is a long time coming."

"But you know that it isn't just the council, or even your mother, Stephanie, and Sheila that you will have to deal with. It's the whole pack. Are you sure that you are ready for all of that? To see your brother, Joey,

Jessica, and all the others?”

“Has anyone ever told you that you worry too much?” I asked him.

“No.”

“Well, you do. I am going to be fine, I promise. Six months ago, I could never see myself coming back. I never WANTED to come back. But this is our destiny, and I believed you when you told me about the Movement and about all of the changes in the pack. Plus, even if were to ever begin to doubt, all I would have to do is look up at your handsome face or touch the mark you left on my neck, and I would remember. You are the best example in the world of the power of someone to change.

“The best example or the sexiest example?” he asked, as the fingers of his left hand slowly began running up and down my leg.

“Both?”

“Good answer.”

James leaned over and kissed me as his fingers went between my legs. I thought things were about to get heated between us, and I was more than ready.

Unfortunately, James then suddenly paused as though he had a thought pop into his head. He began looking at me seriously again.

“What happened between you, Joey, and Jessica?” he asked.

“Seriously, now you ask me that question?”

“Yes.”

“Why now?”

“Because every time I have asked you, Joey, or Jessica, you all find a way to avoid answering the question.”

I frowned. “I guess because I am a little confused too.”

“But something clearly happened. Even the Moon Goddess mentioned it. You helped Joey or saved him somehow. And whatever it was, Rose was involved because that is when Jessica saw her.”

I sighed.

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“It isn’t that I am trying to hide it from you. It’s just that there is only one thing that I can remember happening with Joey, and I definitely do not remember Jessica being there. Rose was always so paranoid

about shifting in front of other people, so it's hard for me to believe that she was. Rose would have known."

"Whatever it was, it was a big deal to Joey and Jessica. Will you tell me the incident that you remember?"

I took a deep breath. For half a second, I wondered if I should tell him Joey's story given that Joey had chosen not to, but I decided to go ahead anyway. I liked that James and I did not have secrets from each other.

"As you know, Joey was one of my biggest bullies in school. Jessica and I used to be good friends, and so it bothered me when her boyfriend bullied me, probably even more than when others did things to me.

I usually just dealt with the bullying without saying anything, because it was important to Rose that we

keeps a low profile. However, one day, I could not take it anymore. I don't even remember what Joey did

to me that particular day, but I do remember that I was tired, hungry, and frustrated. Joey's mom was one

of my teachers in middle school, and she was always nice to me. I somehow got it in my head that I

should go to Joey's house and tell her about what he had been doing. I thought maybe she could talk to

Joey and make him stop.

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I went over to his house after I got off work. I knocked on the door, but no one answered. But I heard screaming from inside. To make a long story short, Joey's dad was wasted drunk and angry.

I guess Joey's parents were heavily in debt and they were afraid that they were going to lose their house. One of his dad's friends was a ga mma in another pack, and his daughter had always had a crush on Joey even though she was four years older than him. When her mate unexpectedly died just a couple of weeks

after they met, her dad was desperate to make her feel better. The ga mma offered Joey's parents

enough money to pay off the mortgage on their house if Joey would agree to marry his daughter.

Joey was not even 18 yet, and he was in love with Jessica. He was sure that she would end up being his mate. He thought his dad's idea was insane, and he absolutely refused to marry anyone other than Jessica.

I know all of this because when I got to his house, his dad was screaming the whole story in anger. Out of instinct, I opened the front door, which was unlocked. To my horror, I walked in on his dad whipping Joey with a silver whip. Joey was unconscious and Rose and were worried that he did not have much time left.

When he saw me, Joey's dad tried to go after me too, but I shoved him back hard, with all my strength. I told him to never touch Joey again. I also told him to stop pressuring Joey to leave Jessica. I then gave him my necklace, which I assumed he could sell to get enough money for the back due mortgage payments."

"The one with the diamond pendant? That your father gave you?"

*You remember it?"

James looked at me sadly. "Your dad gave it to you on your 13th birthday. I remember you proud of that necklace, just like you were of every gift your dad gave you."

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"I was. And that one ended up being the last gift that my dad ever gave me.

When I gave it to Joey's dad,

I told him that in exchange for me giving it to him, I expected him to forget who I was and where he got the necklace."

I wiped a couple of tears away from my eyes. I really had loved my father. I still loved him. I wish I

I understood why things had to go so very wrong.

"Anyway," I continued, "after his dad left the room, I checked on Joey. I was scared that he was not going to make it. There was so much blood, and I could not get Joey to wake up when I shook him. I pleaded with Rose, asking her to come up with an idea to save him. At that point, she had me shift into her form. She then used her tongue to lick Joey's wounds, which made the wounds immediately heal. We shifted

"Wow," James said.

"I remember being so scared that Joey's dad was going to hurt Joey again or say something to someone about how I intervened, but... he never did."

“You used your alpha command on him,” Rose linked me.

“I did what?”

“It wasn’t at full force yet, but it was enough to get the job done. Your emotions were super intense that night,” Rose explained.

James raised an eyebrow at me. “Rose have input?”

I nodded. “She says that Joey’s dad never said anything because I used my alpha command on him.

unknowingly.”

“Does she know how Jessica found out about it and you?” James asked.

“She was hiding under the couch,” Rose linked.

“WHAT?!?!?!?!?!?!?! She was there and you didn’t tell me? Why didn’t you make me tell her to stay quiet too?”

Rose sighed. “I trusted Jessica, and I could smell her intense guilt and her intense fear. I knew it would

take her time before she would be willing to talk to anyone about what happened. I did not know it would

take her YEARS, but I knew we did not have to worry about her.”

I looked up at James with wide eyes. “Jessica was under the couch. I had no idea. Rose never told me.”

James climbed on top of me. “You, Lily Brogan, are the most amazing she-wolf that I have ever met,” he said seriously.

With that, he kissed me. And then he began kissing my neck. When his lips reached my mark, I moaned.

“Are you sure you aren’t going to stop this time?” I teased him. “You don’t have any more dying

questions?”

He gently pulled my nightgown up over my head. “Nope.”

“How do you know I’m still interested?”

“As if you could resist me,” he said with a smile. “Your sex drive is almost higher than mine.”

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his hands found their way to my breasts, I pushed his pajama pants down and arched my back.

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Chapter 0245
(James POV)

It was finally show time. Again.

Was I nervous? I would be lying if I said that I wasn't... especially after what happened last time.

However, things were different than before. The last time that we were on the cusp of taking over the

pack, I knew that I loved Lily, but I did not know where I stood with her. In contrast, this time, I know Lily's

heart. I wear her mark and she wears mine.

Just as importantly, this time is different because Lily and I will be taking over the pack together, while

standing side by side. We also have more tools and the blessing of the Moon Goddess.

Things could still go wrong, but I am more confident than ever.

Just as the car pulled up to take us to West Mountain Pack, Lily stepped out of the bathroom.

"Holy sh&t," I exclaimed.

"Do I look okay?" she asked me, as she did a small twirl. "I was going for party professional but serious."

She was wearing a sleeveless black and gray business dress. It was conservative in the sense that it almost reached her knees, but it hugged her curves perfectly, and its v-neckline exposed more than a hint of her ample cleavage. She paired the dress with black high heels and a pendant necklace that fell

directly in the middle of her perfect breasts.

"Lily, you are killing me," I responded.

She

looked at me in confusion, and then looked down at herself. "What's wrong with it?"

I walked over to her and pulled her close to me. I then took her hand and placed it on the tent that had formed in my pants.

"This. This is what is wrong with the dress. How am I going to be able to concentrate while you are wearing this?"

Lily rolled her eyes and giggled. "I am pretty sure that I could be wearing a garbage bag and there would be a tent in your pants."

"Maybe... ok, probably... but seriously, sweetheart. You look... wow."

Lily blushed at my compliment. Goddess, how I love when she does that.

"Thank you, James. You look handsome yourself. Are you ready to go?"

"With a tent in my pants?"

"I would offer to help you with that, but they are waiting for us downstairs."

I squeezed her butt and kissed her. "Fine. Give me a second to ice my balls

and then we can go.”

Lily laughed again, clearly feeling exactly zero sympathy for me..

Joey and Nick ensured that we got through border security without any issues. Once through security, Lily and I easily made our way to Joey’s house with a few trusted guards from Brady’s pack. I did not think that we needed guards, but Dr. Hyder had insisted.

After I knocked on Joey’s front door, Joey quickly opened it and ushered us inside.

Joey and Jessica stood nervously side by side, staring at Lily. It was the first time that they had seen Lily since she went to Brady’s pack.

“L-Lily,” Jessica said hesitantly.

I almost laughed. The two of them looked the way I am sure that I looked when the Wolf Packers

baseball players invited me to play with them. It was a mix of awe and fear.

Lily only hesitated for a moment. She went up to each of them and gave them a huge hug.

“Thank you,” she whispered to both.

They looked back and forth between Lily and I with confusion.

“Why why are you thanking us? We should be thanking you.” Jessica asked.

Lily gave them a warm smile. “No. I know what you did for me. You saved me, and you saved us,” she said, gesturing to me. “I do not know if I would be standing here with James if it was not for the two of you.

Jessica started to tear up.

Joey, meanwhile, continued to look at Lily with shame as he rubbed his neck.

“Lily, I... I am so, so, so sorry for everything that I did to you in the past. I cannot

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tell you how

much I regret it all.”

“I appreciate your apology,” Lily responded. “However, James has filled me in. I feel like I have gotten to know you all over again through the stories he has told me. None of us are who we were in the past.

Jessica reached out and hugged Lily again. “Thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. You have no idea how grateful we are that you are here.”

After a minute, Lily pulled back. I could see a couple of tears in her eyes as well. Lily had told me how

much she valued Jessica’s friendship when they were younger. I think getting

Jessica back in her life

meant almost as much to Lily as getting Lily back meant to Jessica.

"It's 6:10. Are you ready for the meeting with your father?" Joey asked, pulling himself back into business mode.

"Yes," I confirmed. I was meeting with my father at 6:30; Margie's party started at 7:00.

"Are you sure that you do not want Joey or Nick to go with you?" Lily asked me in concern.

"I am sure. The meeting will be short and sweet. My father will tell me to f&&k off and then I will meet all of you at the party, okay?"

Lily kissed me gently. "Okay. Good luck.

"I love you too, sweetheart."

I love you."

With that, I headed back out the front door, our plan was for Lily to stay with Joey and Jessica until the party.

As I left, I saw Nick pacing on the sidewalk outside. I looked at him curiously. What are you doi

"What are you doing out here, Nick?" I asked.

"I... I wanted to come and see Lily before the party, but I ... I wasn't sure if Lily would be willing to see me."

I gave him a sad smile and gripped his shoulder. "Your sister has an amazing capacity for forgiveness."

"But I am her brother. I should have done more to protect her. I should have-
-And I am her mate. I did far more to hurt her than you did."

"But-"

"Nick, go in there and talk to her. See what she says. Your sister is an incredible she-wolf, and she believes in the power of people to change. You have done a lot of that lately, so I think you might be pleasantly surprised by her reaction to you."

Nick

gave me
door.

a half-smile. He continued to look worried, but I watched as he slowly walked to Joey's

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Chapter 0246

(Alpha Randall POV)

At 6:25 p.m., I kissed my wife and headed down to my office to meet our disappointment of a son. I did not know why I agreed to meet with him, much less why I was making an effort to be on time. Timeliness was important to me, but it was not important to James. I knew I would be lucky if he showed up prior to 7.00.

Honestly, after everything that James had put Jane and I through the last several months, I was ready to turn the pack over to Nick and disown James. Only three things were currently stopping me: 1) Nick's mental health after Jenny left him; 2) Margie's unyielding desire for Stephanie to be made Luna; and 3)

Jane's absolute love and devotion to our son.

I could only hope that James asked for this meeting so that he could apologize to me for his constant disappearing acts, and so that he could ask for advice on how to make things right with his pack and his family.

I knew that might be too much to ask for, but I prayed that he at least did not plan to embarrass his mother and I again tonight. We were running out of money and capital, and we could not afford to have any more scandals in front of our pack members and close allies.

To my shock, the lights were on in my office when I got there. I opened the door and found James sitting in my chair, with his feet propped up on my desk.

"You made it," James said matter of factly.

"Get out of my chair," I growled.

"It isn't your chair anymore," James responded calmly.

"Get Out. Of. My. Chair," I repeated.

"Sit down in a guest chair, Father."

To my surprise, my body began walking towards the guest chair. I then sat down in it. I did not intend to do either of those things.

"How did you do that?" I asked James suspiciously.

I did not feel the pressure that you would typically feel when an alpha command was released, nor should James have been able to alpha-command me in the first place. Still, I somehow knew that he had something to do with it.

James smiled at me mischievously. "It is not important right now. We have more important things to talk about."

I glared at him angrily.

"Now you want to talk? Now?!?!?"

"Yes, Father. Now," he repeated in a flat tone.

"Why don't we start with where the hell have you been, James? And why have you ignored all of the messages that your mother, myself, and your mate have sent you since the wedding?!? Do you really think that the pack is some sort of hotel where you can come and go as you please?!?"

James sighed dismissively.

"I have been busy building alliances and trying to deal with many of the things that you should have handled years ago. And I never ignore messages from my mate. Absolutely never. She is far too important to me."

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I scowled at him. What the f&k was he talking about? Building alliances? I could not see any other alpha agreeing to meet with him. He was an alpha heir, but only barely. Maybe he just meant Jay. Whatever.

"Stephanie told me that she only heard from you once the entire time that you were gone, and that was to tell her you were coming home today."

James shrugged. "That's true, but we both know that Stephanie is not my mate."

Sigh. I was not going to fight with him about this, especially now that his mother was having second thoughts about Stephanie. It was time to finish this.

"Fine. Stephanie is not your mate. But mate or not, you will be marrying her. We are announcing the engagement tonight, and you will marry her on your birthday." I told him coldly, releasing some of my alpha tone

"After everything that Stephanie has done, you would still have me marry her?" he asked.

"Yes. And this time I have no problem ordering you to do so. Margie has

friends on the werewolf council. Her friends will ensure that the marriage will be considered valid. You will marry Stephanie, you will f&&k her, and you will mark her. And then you will raise your pup with Sheila together.”

Margie and I had talked about all of this at length. Margie still believed that James and Stephanie were either mates or second chance mates, but she also acknowledged that James was undeniably stubborn.

She did not want Stephanie’s prior choices to get in the way of her destiny. Using an alpha order to force

James looked at me with sadness.

“Wow. You are an even more horrible person than I realized you were.**

“Careful, Son. I have tolerated your disrespect for far too long. Your mother and I have coddled

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you are not going to get away with it anymore. It is time for you to grow up.” you, but

James removed his feet from my desk. He crossed his arms and leaned over my desk, looking at me

with the most serious look I have ever seen on his face. If I was not an alpha wolf, I might have been.

unsettled by it.

“Listen carefully, Father. I am not marrying Stephanie, Sheila, or anyone else you want me to marry. You

do not control me and you do not control my life. Moreover, as of tonight, you will no longer be the alpha

of this pack.”

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Chapter 0247

“Did you hit your head while you were away, Son? I am the alpha of this pack until I say otherwise.”

“No, you are not. You are not fit to be alpha. You have not been for 26 years, when you relinquished

control to Margie. Too many pack members and wolves have been hurt because of your selfishness and

neglect. It ends today.”

“Who do you think you are to be talking to me this way?” I roared as I stood up. “I am still your alpha and I

am still your father. One more disrespectful word and I will disown you, cut off your trust fund, and declare you a rogue," I threatened.

James did not flinch.

"Sit down, Father."

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My body sat down. I fought it all the way, but I could not prevent it. Suddenly, I started to feel alarmed.

What the f&&k was going on?

"What did you do?" I asked him.

"Cool, isn't it? It is an alpha command but supercharged. It is so powerful that just a little bit of energy and even a grown alpha like yourself succumbs to it. You don't even have to feel the weight of it to be controlled by it."

"You are not an alpha," I interrupted.

"Oh, but I am Father. And as of today, I will be the alpha of this pack."

As he said that, he pulled his collar back just slightly to expose the mark on his neck.

My stomach dropped. "YOU ARE MARKED?"

James smiled triumphantly. "Yes, I am. And before you even think about doing anything, let me say this:

You will not mind-link anyone. You will remain seated until I am done talking to you. And when we are done here, you will go to the party and keep mum about our conversation.

You will not tell or signal anyone about our chat or what I've told you.

What the hell is going on? I quickly extended a mind-link to Beta Robert, but to my horror, the mind-link

would not go through. I then tried linking several other security guards and even Jane, but still I got nothing.

"How did you do that?" I asked angrily.

"You mean the alpha command? Oh, that's easy. You see, the mark on my neck is from my mate. My true mate. The one that you all but left for dead. The one that you gave up searching for and tried to prevent me from finding. Not only is she the love of my life, but it turns out that she is special and powerful. And

that makes me powerful as well."

"What the f&&k are you talking about?"

“Lily. I am talking about Lily.”

I started laughing. “Lily? As in Stephanie’s sister, Lily? Have you lost your mind?”

James’ face suddenly turned stoic.

“I have already spent more time here with you than I intended to. I asked for this meeting purely out of courtesy. I will be the alpha of this pack by the end of the day. The only question is whether you will agree to a peaceful transfer of power, or whether you would prefer that I take it from you in another way.”

I tried to stand up again, but I could not. What the f&&k.

“Why would I voluntarily hand the pack to you? You are a disappointment.

You do not have the strength

or the ability to run, this pack. You are a joke. The pack would be better off in the hands of anyone else

but you. And Lily? As Luna? Give me a break. You spent years poisoning the pack against her. Even

after discovering that Stephanie is alive, no one will ever respect her. She is weak, useless, and she has no wolf.”

James stood and slammed his fists against my desk. Then, seemingly trying to gather himself, he walked

around to the front of my desk and leaned against it, staring at me with rage in his eyes.

“Let’s try this one last time, Father. You are not fit to run this pack. You know it, and I know it. You have

ten seconds to make your final choice. Give me the pack voluntarily and spare yourself some

embarrassment, or sit back and watch as I take it from you.”

My gut told me to listen to him, but there was no way in hell I was going to let him waltz in here and take

the pack from me. Jane and I had too much at stake.

“F&&k you, James. HOW DARE YOU COME INTO MY PACK AND TALK TO ME THIS WAY. YOU ARE NOT WORTHY OF THE ALPHA TITLE OR EVEN MY LAST NAME. AS OF RIGHT NOW, I NO LONGER CONSIDER YOU MY SON.”

James frowned.

“Remember that I gave you the option. Enjoy the party, Randall. I know that I will.”

James headed towards the office door. Just before he walked out, he looked back at me. “You can get

say anything to interfere with what happens at the party.”
I would never admit it to anyone, but I was now scared. Very scared.

Mated in the Shadow of My Sister Chapter 248

Chapter 0248
(Stephanie POV)

I am soooooo excited. Today is the day that I will finally be reunited with James, experience the mate

bond, and be officially introduced to the pack as their future luna.

My nails and toes are perfectly polished; my hair has been trimmed, highlighted, and styled; and I have

I

been waxed to ensure that I have exactly zero body hair below my neck.

– vervo

I am also wearing one of the two beautiful dresses that I purchased for today.

We else that they should dress business-formal, but I opted for pink sequins for both of my dresses. I am the star of

the party, and the star of James’ heart, and I want to make sure that I stand

out. Yes, pink is a little juvenile and a bit overdone, but it is my favorite color and one that I know will help remind James of our

wonderful past together.

Speaking of James, I am annoyed that I have not seen him yet. I was really hoping that we could have

some private time together before the party. A fresh mating mark would have been the perfect accessory

for my dress. In fact, that is why I insisted on the hair stylist doing an up-do for me.

Unfortunately, James ignored all of my text messages until about 30 minutes ago, which was just before

the party was supposed to start. And even then, he sounded strangely distant:

Me: “James, I thought you were coming home today? I miss you. We have an entire party set up to

celebrate you and I tonight.”

James: “I am already back. I am surprised no one told you. I had to meet with my father, and now I have a

couple of other things to take care of. I will meet you at the party.”

Me: “I was hoping to see you before the party.”

James: “It will not work out.”

Me: “Aren’t you excited to see your mate?”

James: "I am incredibly excited to see my mate."

Me: "Why don't I meet you in our room before the party, and we can walk over together?"

James: "Our room?"

Me: "Yes. [smiling face emoji] I already moved into the alpha suite, into your room. Your father said that!

could. I had to get rid of a few of your things to make space for my stuff, but I hope you do not mind. I would have asked you first, but you weren't returning my calls."

James: "What things did you get rid of?"

Me: "Mostly just your baseball memorabilia. That's kids' stuff anyway. I want our room to be a romantic haven and reflect both of us. Sweaty humans playing with balls doesn't quite fit with that."

James: "What did you do with my stuff, Stephanie?"

Me: "Who knows and who cares. I can't wait to see you."

James: "Where is my stuff, Stephanie?"

Me: "Relax. I don't know. The omegas moved it out. Why do you seem upset?"

James: "Because that was my stuff. You had no right."

Me: "I am your mate, James! We are going to be building a life together. I had every right."

James did not respond to that last text message, so I did the only thing that I could think of to put things

back on track. I pulled my dress down, took a picture of my naked breasts, and sent that to him.

Me: "Just a preview of what is waiting for you. [winking emoji]"

James: "Do not send me pictures like that again. I do not want a preview. I will meet you at the party."

Me: "You can have an in-person preview if you meet me in our room first. [flirty emoji]"

James: "Knock it off, Stephanie. It is not becoming of you. You have guests waiting for you. I will meet you there."

After receiving James' last text message, I got angry and threw my phone on the floor. I get that James has reasons to be angry at me, but I am his mate! He needs to get over himself and move on. I just hope. that the mate bond is as powerful as

everyone says that it is..

Sighing, I decided I needed a quick pick-me-up before going down to the party. I picked my phone up off of the floor and sent the same breast picture I

sent to James to Antonio. Antonio is always good for my self-esteem.

Antonio: "Hey, Daisy. I have not heard from you. Jackson and I miss you. You weren't supposed to stay away this long."

Me: "Do you miss me or my body?"

Antonio: "Does this answer your question?"

I smiled as a picture of Antonio's erect penis came through my phone. I started to wonder again how James' penis will compare... and if James will be open to some of the threesomes that Antonio has been.

Mated in the Shadow of My Sister Chapter 249

Chapter 0249

I ended up having phone sex with Antonio. It was exactly what I needed after those text messages with James. But now it is time to head down to the party. Sheila and my mother were already there; I sent them down without me so that I could focus on Antonio for a few minutes.

I walk into the ballroom and am immediately impressed by how beautiful everything looks. Pictures of me, and me and James, are artfully displayed on the walls and on every table. The place is dripping in crystals and flowers and elegance. The omegas and my mother truly outdid themselves.

I had expected to have people flocking to me as soon as I walked in, but to my surprise, only a few people do. Thankfully, the few who do call me "Luna Stephanie," which makes me feel good.

I look around for my mother, Sheila, or James, but with so many decorations and so many wolves here, it is hard to spot them.

As I am scanning the room, my eyes land on what appears to be a crowd of people surrounding someone. I smile, thinking that has to be James.

However, as I walk closer, I realize that it is an adult female. She is laughing and hugging guests, and everyone around seems to want to talk to her. I feel a small sense of jealousy, but I reassure myself that it is only because the guests do not realize that I am here yet.

I continue to approach this mystery female, and then my heart drops as I recognize her. Could his really be ... Lily?

"SISTER?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?" I screech out.

The crowd immediately parts, and I run up to Lily and give her a huge hug. She does not hug me back, which annoys me a little, but whatever.

It has been years since I have seen her. After releasing Lily from the hug, I

take a good, long look at her.

“Wow, Lily! I cannot believe it is you! What happened to my crater-faced teenage sister with the huge ugly glasses?”

“Hello, Stephanie,” she responds coolly.

“I cannot believe you are here!”

“Yes, I came with James.”

My heart immediately melts. So that is why James has been so cagey and distant? He must have known how much I missed my sister, and he decided to bring her here as a surprise to me. Oh, my Goddess.

acting distant because he was taking care of me.

“I am so glad to see you!!! I cannot believe James brought you here as a surprise for me! He’s so amazing!” I gush.

“Yes, I can agree with you that James is amazing.”

My eyes land on the mating mark on Lily’s neck.

“You are marked! So that is where you have been, with your mate?”

Lily gives me a strange look.

“Yes, I have been with my mate.”

“Oooh... where is he? I cannot wait to meet him. The four of us should go on a double date soon!!! Is he a gamma or beta of another pack?”

“There will be no double dates, Stephanie,” Lily says coldly..

I look at her in confusion. “Surely you are not still mad about...”

“Your so-called Luna Training? Lily finishes for me. “The torture that you put me through?”

Yes...”

“That is water under the bridge, dear sister,” Lily replies, “I have more important things to worry about now,

Goddess, Lily has changed so much. Seriously, if it was not for the mark on her neck, I would worry about

her stealing James from me. She is gorgeous, and she has that friendly but aloof aura about her that drives guys crazy.

I wish she wasn’t showing me so much of the aloof side, but hopefully with time, we can work through

that. If nothing else, at least she is here. That has to mean something, right?

I decide to steer the conversation back to happier topics.

“Lily, where is your mate? I would love to meet him.”

“He was supposed to meet me here. I am not sure where he is. I am starting to get a little bit worried,” she responds.

This time, there is sincerity and vulnerability in Lily’s voice. She must really love and adore her mate.

“Oh, I am sure he is around here somewhere, Lily. Don’t worry, we will find him. With a mate as gorgeous

Just then, I hear a slight commotion by the entrance to the hall. I turn and my eyes land on the male I

have been waiting to see..

James is finally here, and he is making a bee-line this way. My heart pounds against my chest in excitement.

Mated in the Shadow of My Sister Chapter 250

Chapter 0250

(Stephanie POV)

As James continues to approach, my heart beats faster and faster in my chest.

James is wearing a dark gray suit with a black button-up shirt and a black and silver tie. Antonio taught me a lot about suits over the past few years, and James’ suit is obviously custom and expensive. He exudes power and authority.

Just as importantly, James looks incredibly hot in it. I mean, James was always good-looking, but this

I older version of James is just... wow. Greek gods have nothing on this version of James. Had I known that James would grow into this, I never would have left.

Hell, at this point, I don’t even want a threesome anymore. If James can f&&k as well as it looks like he can, I will not need anyone else. Suddenly I feel like forgiving Sheila for sleeping with him; if Sheila’s mate looked like this, I would not have been able to resist him either.

As James gets closer, I am surprised that I do not smell anything unusual, but I tell myself that it is probably just because there are so many people here. Or maybe it is just that my wolf is being a b&&ch again and does not want me to be happy. That is possible too.

Whatever it is, there is unmistakable love and determination in James’ eyes, so I am sure everything is

fine. James gets within a few feet of me, and I step away from Lily and open my arms to embrace him.

But instead of embracing me.... he walks right up to Lily. He puts his hands on both sides of her face and kisses her.

Um, WHAT?!?!?

My mind begins racing as I try to make sense of everything. Surely, I am just seeing things. James-my

James- cannot possibly be kissing my sister right now. My baby sister. My baby, crater-faced, annoying, ugly sister.

No, this cannot be happening. I must stop this. Now.

“James? Um, hello? James?! JAMES!!! I am right here. That is Lily, not me,” I say loudly, trying to get his attention.

I

I mean, it has been six years. Maybe he has forgotten what I look like? Lily and I are sisters so we do look alike. He must just be confused.

James ignores me and continues to kiss Lily. I look around for Lily’s mate. He must feel the pain of their kiss. He can help me stop this nonsense.

“James!!!!” I yell again.

“STOP! I am right here!!!” This time I scream at the top of my lungs. I do not care who else can hear me.

Still, James does not pay any attention. He keeps on kissing Lily.

“You are late,” I hear Lily say to him when they finally break apart.

“Yes, I am sorry, sweetheart. I had to track something down.”

“What was it? Is everything okay?”

“This.”

James pulls a framed baseball picture out of his suit jacket. I recognize it as being one of the ones that I got rid of. I only remember it because it was signed and it looked new. I almost felt bad getting rid of it, but it just did not fit the theme of our newly decorated room, so I tossed it anyway.

“Where was it?” Lily asked.

“Stephanie moved into my old room and got rid of a lot of my things. I had to track down the omegas and

find it. Thankfully, they had not thrown any of my things away yet.” find

Lily gives him a look. “We could have gotten you another one, you know,” she scolds him gently.

James holds the picture up to his heart. "No. This is the one that you gave me. This is the one that told me that there was hope for us. This one means the world to me." Lily smiles. "You have gotten a little sappy, you know that right?" James looks at her lovingly. "Only when it comes to you, my love." Lily stands on her tippy toes and kisses him again. The kiss quickly turns passionate. I swear I even see him putting his tongue in her mouth. They are kissing as though they have forgotten that anyone else is in the room.

I cannot believe I am sitting here watching all of this unfold. I should be doing something else to stop this craziness, but I can't. The shock makes me feel frozen. Nothing makes sense right now.

Finally, they break apart again.

"Are you ready?" she asks him.

He nods and takes her hand. He starts to lead her to the stage.

As they walk away, my brain finally starts working again.

"James!" I scream out. "What are you doing? STOP!!! SHE IS MY SISTER, NOT YOUR MATE!"

For the first time since getting here, James turns and looks at me. The love I had just seen in his eyes. when he was looking at Lily is replaced with disgust and hatred.

"Lily is my mate. My fated mate. My only mate. Our parents lead you and I to believe that you and I were fated, but they were wrong. They were manipulating us."

What is he talking about?

"No! That is not true! You are my mate!" I protest.

James pulls down his collar, fully exposing the mating mark on his neck. My heart stops as I realize that it

matches the mark that I saw on Lily. Realization finally hits me.

"YOU MATE STEALING WH ORE!!!!" I scream out as I start to charge towards Lily.

I will kill her and then I will take my mate back.