

Chapter 5

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"Selina, do you even understand the rules and etiquette of the wolf kingdom?"

Ryan's golden eyes burned with fury as he glared at me, his tone colder than the winds in winter.

He turned and helped Saya to her feet, his movements so gentle they bordered on absurd. He carefully touched her swollen cheek, his expression filled with pain and concern.

"Selina, apologize." His voice was low but commanding. "Bow your head, admit your mistake to her in front of everyone here, and I'll let this slide. I won't pursue it any further."

I almost laughed out loud.

How foolish I was in my previous life.

The moment I discovered Saya's schemes, I wrote a secret letter to Ryan. In painstaking detail, I explained how she had been manipulating him, using her feigned fragility to win over the sympathy of the wolf pack elders.

I warned him, "Saya isn't as simple as she seems. Every step she's taken toward you has been calculated."

The very next day, news broke that Saya had "poisoned herself to death."

But it wasn't a feigned death.

It was real.

The story spread quickly throughout the pack—Saya had succumbed to the pressure of malicious rumors and ended her life out of shame.

Ryan sent me only a single voice message, "Thank you for your reminder, Selina. Those who betray the Alpha King will always face the consequences."

And just like that, the matter was over.

For years, I believed he had confronted Saya, forcing her hand until she consumed the poison for real. After all, Ryan was renowned in the packs for his iron-fisted methods and ruthless retaliation.

It wasn't until the moment of my death that I finally understood the truth.

When he mentioned those who betrayed the Alpha King, he wasn't talking about Saya.

He was talking about me.

"Selina, did you hear me?" Ryan's voice cut sharply through my thoughts. "Saya did nothing wrong. I'm the one who chose to marry her. I'm the one ending this engagement with you."

I didn't answer right away. Instead, I lifted my chin slightly, meeting his gaze with a calm, mocking smile.

Ryan was known in the pack for his decisiveness and sharp mind, but he was nothing more than a joke in my eyes now.

I turned to Annie and asked, my voice steady and controlled, "The Four Great Packs' leaders are upstairs at the top-floor banquet hall, aren't they?"

Annie hesitated for a moment, then nodded cautiously.

I adjusted my gown and began walking toward the elevator.

Ryan's footsteps echoed as he quickly followed me.

"What are you planning?" he demanded. "Those elders are here for a private visit. Their presence hasn't been made public!"

Of course, I knew that.

I was only the princess of a wolf pack. How could a simple birthday party attract the leaders of the Four Great Packs?

It wasn't because of me.

It was the century-old strength of the Johnstone family. It was also because of my two elder brothers, who had recently annexed several packs on the frontier. It was my father, who had just led the Snowfang Pack to claim the northern forests, the richest resource lands in the region.

The Snowfang Pack was thriving and shining brighter than ever. We were a force no other pack could afford to ignore.

But Ryan?

He had thrown caution to the wind, publicly announcing his intent to marry Saya and demanding to break off our engagement. His reckless declarations had dominated the media's headlines for three days straight.

The current Alpha King, Leopold, couldn't afford to alienate my father and brothers.

As the elevator doors slid open, Ryan was still on my heels.

"Selina, don't you dare run to the elders to beg for their help just because it's your birthday!" Ryan snapped. "I've already promised Saya that I'll marry her. If you voluntarily give up the engagement, I'll ensure the Snowfang Pack is compensated generously."

I stopped abruptly and turned to face him, meeting his golden eyes with an icy calm.

A trace of astonishment flashed in his golden eyes—perhaps because of the chill in my gaze.

Ryan had lived his life unchallenged. As the heir to the Alpha King, his path had been free of obstacles. He had never truly understood what it meant for someone to sit on the throne beside him.

The banquet hall doors opened, and Leopold greeted me warmly from his seat at the head of the room.

"My little princess, what brings you here in such a rush?"

The leaders of the Four Great Packs sat in their places of honor, and the room was filled with werewolf nobles.

With a graceful bow, I addressed them. "Esteemed elders, I'm sure you've all heard by now. Ryan and Ms. Saya—savior and hero, love at first sight. I have no desire to linger where I'm not wanted, nor do I wish to make things awkward for anyone else.

"So, I ask all of you here to bear witness. I, Selina, princess of the Snowfang Pack, formally request to dissolve my engagement with Ryan."

I stood tall, my demeanor calm but unyielding.

The entire room fell into an eerie silence, so quiet one could hear a pin drop.