

Chapter 0019

(James POV)

I felt strangely energized as I arrived back at the pack house. Luke was moping in the back of my head, but he was leaving me be. His absence --or rather, his lack of endlessly badgering me-- gave me plenty of time to think about how I could use the mate bond to exact the perfect revenge on the Little Brat. It also gave me the opportunity to say a silent prayer to Stephanie, letting her know that I had not forgotten her and I that I would continue to make sure that all those involved in her death would pay.

After I entered the packhouse, it took me a while to find an Omega proficient in hair cutting. Thankfully, I not only found one, but I also found one of the best ones. She agreed to meet me in my room in 30 minutes, which gave me just enough time for a proper shave and shower.

When I got to my room, I was annoyed to find Sheila still there. Sheila was Stephanie's best friend while Stephanie was alive, and she and I have.... an arrangement. I have... arrangements... with three or four she-wolves who take turns spending the night in my bedroom. They are all aware of each other, and under strict orders to not discuss what happens inside.

I started to lecture Sheila about her failure to comply with

the rules that she previously agreed to, including the rule that all she-wolves must leave the alpha suite no later than 7 am each morning without exception. However, part-way through the lecture, I remembered that the Little Brat always seems uncomfortable and unhappy when Sheila is around. That gave me a great idea, and I almost kicked myself for not thinking of it earlier.


Instead of finishing the lecture, I switched gears. I told Sheila to make sure that she dressed extra nice for today's ceremonies. I also told her to meet me at the back of the first event hall, because I would arrange special seating for her. Sheila did not ask any questions about what was going on or what exactly I had in mind; instead, she just left with her robe and a smile.

Nick walked in after my haircut, just as I was putting on my black suit. He pretended to do a double take, even asking if he was in the right room.

"Wow. You look nice. Most put together I have seen you look in years. What has gotten into you, Man? I was expecting to walk in here, and have to force the vodka bottle out of your hand and shove you out of bed."

In response, I glared at him. "You knew."

Nick groaned. "About the meeting this morning? I did not know ahead of time, but I know now. They told me afterwards. I want you to know, James, that I told them it was a horrible idea. And I am not going to accept the alpha

 +5 BONUS

position, even if you do not take a chosen mate. I have never wanted that."


I sigh. A part of me wants to be angry at him for being related to the Little Brat and her parents, but he is also related to Stephanie. Plus, I cannot ignore the sincerity in his voice. He is telling the truth: he did not know about the ultimatum ahead of time and he warned them it was a bad idea when he found out about it.

"It's fine. It is not going to come to that. I will be taking over as alpha as planned."

Nick looked at me confused. "What do you mean? You aren't seriously going to give up your chance for a second chance mate and take a chosen mate... are you?"

When Nick mentions the concept of a second chance mate, Luke sends me a vision of the Little Brat at the waterfall this morning... and a memory of what it felt like to kiss her.

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