

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 51

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 51

Chapter 51: Lab Results

Serena received an envelope at the hospital from the human lab she'd sent Logan's bloodwork to. It was addressed to her directly, but she'd had the result sent to the hospital because her house was still being repaired. She debated tearing the envelope open right at the nurse's station and checking the results, but she had a feeling that it was going to be an emotional read, so she stuffed the envelope into her lab coat and decided to read it later. All day, Serena's mind kept wandering back to the envelope in her pocket. "Are you okay Serena?" Adriana asked her while they were rebandaging the wounds of a patient from the recent Moonshine attack. Serena nodded absently. "Yea, I'm fine," she said. "You seem a little distracted," Adriana commented. "And you're re-wrapping that leg with sport's tape, not a bandage." Snapping out of her daze, Serena groaned and stopped what she was doing. "Oh, I'm sorry!" she gently began to peel the sport's tape off. Adriana chuckled and shook her head. "Don't apologize to me, at least the patient is still out and you don't have to explain to him," she said, going to the cabinet and getting the right bandaging. "Okay, I'm distracted," Serena admitted. She tossed the used sport's tape in the trash as Adriana put the proper bandaging into place. "What's on your mind?" the other doctor asked. Serena shrugged. She couldn't tell Adriana the truth, despite how close they were getting. She also couldn't avoid answering, because Adriana was her boss and had the right to know if her judgement in the workplace was compromised, especially in their line of work. "I just got some news today," she explained. "I'm not sure I'm prepared for the answer." "You mean, you received news, but you don't know what the news is?" Adriana clarified. Serena nodded. "I have the letter in my pocket, and I don't want to read it here," she said. "It is weight heavily on my mind, though." "Well, I can send you off to do rounds, something less focus driven than bandaging wounds," Adriana offered. "I can work," Serena assured. Adriana gave her a concerned look. "I know you can" she assured, finishing her wrapping and grabbing Serena's hand across the patient. "We all have off days now and then. Take it easy, focus on rounds and catching up on reports. Tomorrow, I'll expect you back at one hundred percent." Serena smiled gratefully.

16:08

"Thank you," she said. She took a deep breath and left the room. She did her rounds first, making sure all the rooms were stocked and checking vitals, noting them in charts. Nothing was off, so Serena returned to the nurse's station and began her reporting. Every couple hours, she would do her rounds again. The day seemed to fly by, despite the repetitiveness. The letter burning a hole in her pocket the whole day! She periodically reached into her pocket just to touch it. The weight of the envelope felt like she was carrying an anvil around. When she returned to Logan's house, she was happy to see

that he wasn't there. Neither was Holly. Dana had brought the kids back from daycare, but she departed shortly after Serena got back. After checking on the kids, Serena went to the room she was staying in. She sat down, taking a deep breath and smoothing the envelope out on her lap. This was the moment of truth. Numb, shaking fingers peeled through the seal on the envelope. Serena held her breath as she pulled the lab results out. The paper was folded in thirds. She hesitated in opening it. As much as she wanted to know, she was suddenly plagued by all the thoughts of what it would mean if the test had come back negative! Shaking away those thoughts, Serena opened the envelope. She ignored all the technical terminology and just looked for the line that said 'Results.' Next to it, in all capital letters and green ink, the word 'Positive' flashed at her like a giant neon sign. Tears sprang into her eyes, and Serena couldn't hold them back. She burst into tears, bowing her head and holding it in her hands. Suspecting something and having full confirmation were entirely different. Sobbing into her hands, Serena's whole body shook. She shook her head back and forth, trying to change the results with the power of her mind. Everything was going to get more complicated now, especially with Holly being pregnant! Olivia and Oliver ran into the room, alerted to their mother's tears. "Mommy, mommy, what's wrong?" Olivia asked, tugging at Serena's leg. "Are you hurt?" Oliver asked. Serena sniffled, wiping her eyes quickly. She grabbed the lab results and folded the paper up again, shoving it into her scrub pockets. She hadn't even changed out of her hospital clothes. "I'm okay, babies," she said, wrapping her arms around each of their heads and hugging them to her. "I miss my parents." It wasn't that far off from the truth. She wanted to talk to her mother, tell her everything. She was a grown woman, and she still needed her own mother!

Sighing, Serena sent the kids back to their room to play. While she showered, she let the water wash away her anxieties, letting them swirl down the drain. She ran her fingers through her hair, thinking about what to do next. She'd intended to tell Logan once she got the results, if there was anything to tell him.

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If she'd gotten the results back a few days earlier, things would be different. Instead, she had to consider the implications with Holly being pregnant. It wasn't like her kids had any more legitimacy than Holly's did. Logan wasn't mated to anyone. Still, Serena knew that Holly would make a big deal out of it.

Serena needed her mother's advice. She needed someone to tell her what to do, because she was too numb to make her own decisions. After she was showered and changed into casual clothes, Serena went to check on the twins. They'd built a fort out of out of their blankets. It covered almost all of their bedroom "You two are going to clean this up, right?" Serena asked. Olivia shrugged and Oliver crawled into the fort where she couldn't see him. She chuckled and sat down on the floor. "Are we going to see Grammy and Grandpa soon?" Olivia asked, standing next to her mother. They were close to eye level while Serena sat on the floor. "I'd like to," Serena said. There was a knock on the doorframe of the twins' room. Serena twisted around to see Logan standing there with a broad smile. Serena cringed at the sight of his happiness. She

couldn't look at him the same way now. His presence felt more invasive than welcome, and she wanted to be far away from his line of sight. "Good, you're all here together," the Alpha said, stepping into the room. Serena stood up, moving as far from him as she could with the blanket fort in the room. Logan's smile faltered as she put distance between them. "I'm sorry about the mess," Serena said, waving her arm over the fort. "I'll make sure it gets cleaned up." Logan scoffed, waving his hand at her dismissively. "Not a problem," he assured. "I'm actually here about something else, something think the three of you will appreciate." "What is it, what is it?" Olivia asked running over to Logan and jumping up and down. "It is presents?" Oliver asked, emerging from the fort. "Oliver, that's rude," Serena chastised. Logan chuckled. "It is a present, of sorts," he said, winking at Serena. "A very large present, in fact." "Really, what is it!?" Olivia asked, getting more and more excited. Serena sighed and rolled her eyes. Logan did know how to appeal to their five-year-old hearts. It made her happy, just as much as it filled her stomach with a pit of dread. "I just got the news today, but your house is ready to be moved back into," he said. Olivia and Oliver stopped jumping around. "Our house?" Olivia asked with a sneer. Serena could have laughed with joy! Knowing they could go home meant she could digest the confirmation of Logan being the father of her kids without being around him constantly.

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"Olivia, this is good news," Serena said. "You should thank the Alpha for getting our house fixed." Olivia mumbled a thank you and then went back into the fort. Serena was happy, and she thanked Logan with a smile. "I'll help you move," he offered. "It is the least I can do." "Thank you," Serena said. "It will be nice to have our space back."

"Is it really that bad to be here?" Logan teased. Serena smiled sheepishly.

"No, but you're going to need one of these rooms for a nursery," she reminded him. Logan rolled his eyes.

"Right," he grumbled. That reaction told her he wasn't ready to know the twins were his!

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 52

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 52

Chapter 52: Moving Back In

As the boxes piled up, Logan realized he was going to miss Serena and the kids living with him. He knew Serena had never felt comfortable there, but the twins had, and he

had enjoyed having them all there! Serena was a unique female, and with the twins, there was always something exciting going on. He felt like he had really gotten to know them, especially on their excursions into the human city. They wouldn't be far away, but it was still enough distance that he wouldn't be seeing the twins every day. Box after box he carried to the moving truck, surprised they managed to salvage so much stuff from the destroyed house. Most of it was clothes and toys for the twins, things that Serena's parents had sent after the storm. "Really, you don't have to help," Serena argued. Logan dismissed her. "I do," he said. "I want to." She sighed. "Okay, I just feel bad," she told him. "We've been imposing on you for so long, and now you're still doing the heavy lifting." Logan smiled. "This hasn't been an imposition at all" he assured her. "I'm a little embarrassed to admit that I'm going to miss having the kids around." "I'm sure they'd like to visit you too, once we are settled back in over there," she told him, picking up another box and sliding it onto the truck. Logan smirked at her. "Is that an open invitation?" he asked. Serena blushed a little. Logan was surprised by her reaction, but pleased nonetheless. She had been acting strangely around him, being friendly and warm one minute, then shying away and closing herself off the

next.

Logan knew she still had secrets. He had wanted to know what they were. Having her at his house had helped with that, a few phone calls he'd overheard here and there. It wasn't the reason he wanted her around, by any means. He knew now, he'd have to work harder to get to know her.

"I don't know about 'open," Serena said. Logan smirked at her and she went off to find more boxes.

"Logan, how long are you going to be?" Holly asked from the front porch. Logan looked up to her. She didn't look pleased. "I'm going to help unload at their house," he told her. Holly crossed her arms. "I need your help with some things," she said. Logan raised an eyebrow at her. That was code for she didn't want him to do what he was currently doing. "I'll be done when I'm done," Logan said. "If you want things to go faster, you can help with the boxes." Holly sneered, "No, she can't," Serena said, "She's pregnant, she shouldn't be lifting more than Moving Back in twenty-five pounds." Logan rolled his eyes. Of course, Serena would take the stance of both a doctor and a mother. Holly gave Logan a triumphant smile. "See, doctor's orders," she said. She turned and went back into the house. "Great, now she isn't going to help out around the house at all" Logan muttered. Serena smiled. "Does she usually?" she asked. Logan laughed. "Well, you got me there," he said with a smirk. "Hop in, I'll drive us over." "The kids," Serena said. "My mom is watching them," Logan assured her. "Once everything is unloaded, we'll come back for them."

“Shouldn’t we put out a public service announcement to the pack or something?” Serena asked climbing into the passenger seat. Logan started the truck, which roared to life.

“It isn’t like you have that much stuff to move,” he pointed out, pulling away from his house. “Mostly just clothes and toys.” “True,” Serena said. “Thank you for getting the house repairs done so quickly.” “You don’t need to thank me for that,” Logan assured. “Most of the damage around the territory was minimal in comparison. I did make sure to take down any other trees that were too close to your house.” Logan chuckled and caught Serena’s eye roll. “Thank you, but I doubt my luck is that bad,” she said.

“Better safe than sorry,” Logan said. “Do you really want to crash with me every time there is a storm?” Serena shook her head and Logan chuckled again. “No, but I think Oliver would appreciate having you around during storms,” she admitted. Logan sighed, nodding. He didn’t know why it was so easy to be there for the twins, but the thought of Holly having his baby still bothered him. Maybe it was because the twins weren’t his, so he didn’t have a solid commitment to them. He felt like he did though. Not just as Alpha, but as something else. They were such great kids, so much fun, and brilliant! Logan wondered if he was so bothered with Holly’s pregnancy because he didn’t think he wanted a kid that didn’t turn out just like the twins! Serena had rolled the genetic lottery and won completely! Whoever their father was...he had to have come from a strong bloodline like hers.

Serena chose to unpack the boxes inside while Logan ferried them into the house. The back-and-forth motion was automatic enough that he could think more about the twins and his conflicts with having his own kid. It was a large commitment to take on a child. Logan knew that! He hadn’t been expecting it, and he’d been hoping it would be a while longer before he had to. His

mother had reminded him that he needed a Luna and he did need to carry on his family’s bloodline and name.

Still, it was all so sudden! There was a part of him that wondered if he was putting so much focus on the twins because he could have fun with them, and they were a distraction from the child he didn’t want. “That’s all the boxes,” Logan said when he dropped the last one off. “Thanks, again,” Serena said. She was pulling some clothes out of a box, folding them on the coffee table. “Everything looks exactly the same.” “It was recently renovated before you arrived,” Logan reminded her, looking around at how well his construction teams had put the house back together.

There were now seams or breaks that could be seen by the naked eyes. All the wall colors matched, and there were no breaks in the molding. “I think they still had a lot of those materials in storage,” he said. Serena nodded. “That makes sense,” she said. “The couch and coffee table aren’t the same.” “I’m sure most of the furniture was replaced” Logan said. “You’ll probably need new linens and things like curtains and dishes.” “Oh, right,” Serena muttered. Logan smiled. He went to stand across from her,

the coffee table between them. "Don't worry," he said, reaching out and touching her hand. She stopped folding the shirt in her hands. "The pack will take care of it. Just get me a list of what you need." "Thanks," she said, smiling weakly. Logan wished she would just accept the pack's help without feeling guilty or thinking she was undeserving. "We are all equal here," he reminded her. "If one is in need, the whole pack rises up for support. That's the way things are around here." "I know," Serena said. "I appreciate it."

"Then smile," Logan told her, grinning. Serena's lips broke into a smile. Logan knew she hadn't seen Carson again, not since their first dinner together, so he had felt that twinge of betrayal fade to the background. Still, there was something Serena wasn't telling him. He could see it in her eyes, in the way she hesitated to look at him and speak to him. He didn't think he was particularly self-centered, but the Alpha couldn't shake the feeling that she was reacting to him specifically, not something from her past or a memory. "If there's anything on your mind, anything bothering you..." he trailed off. He didn't really know how to say what he wanted to say without sounding nosy or inappropriate. "Yes, you're the pack Alpha, you are here for me," Serena said, "I know. There is nothing wrong." She pulled her hand from his and started to fold clothes again. "Serena, you've changed," he said, pushing the matter gently. "At least, you've changed towards me." Serena raised an eyebrow at him.

"As opposed to the time when you were recently giving me the brush off and then bounced back quickly?" she asked. "I don't pry into your personal thoughts and feelings." Logan sighed, nodding.

"I'm sorry, that wasn't my intention," he said.

"We all have our moods," she pointed out. "If there is anything you need to know, I will tell you."

"Alright, if you say so," he said with a shrug. "Ready to get the kids?"

"Yes, I think they will like having their rooms back," Serena said. She dropped the clothes in her hand and followed Logan back out to the truck. He watched her get into the passenger seat. More than ever, he was determined to learn what she was hiding!

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 53

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 53

Chapter 53: Hide and Seek

When Serena and Logan got back to Logan's house, Serena was ready to get the kids and head home. She was happy to have a home again, and happy to get some space from the Alpha. Knowing he was her kids' father, knowing that another female was pregnant with his child, it made everything too complicated. She went to the room they'd been staying in. Flo followed her, wanting to say goodbye. When Serena opened the door, she found the carved wooden wolf toys on the floor, but the twins weren't there. "I didn't hear them come downstairs," Flo muttered. Serena sighed. "They are just playing a hiding game," she assured. Flo and Serena went around the whole house, looking for the kids. They weren't anywhere! Panic began to rise in Serena's chest. "I know they couldn't have gotten outside," Flo assured. Serena nodded, but she couldn't help worry that the kids had gotten into one of their hiding places and were hurt or trapped! "Olivia, Oliver, where are you?" Serena called. There was no answer.

"What's happening?" Logan asked, joining Flo and Serena in the living room. "The twins have done a vanishing act," Flo said. Serena winced. "I hope they're okay," she said, going to a wall and pressing her ear to it. There wasn't any sound coming from inside.

"I'm sure they are fine," Logan assured. "I know all the hiding places in this house. Trust me, I used to use them too." Flo chuckled and tousled her son's hair, even though he was taller than her. "Yes, you were good at giving your father and I scares," she said. "Something the twins are good at too!" Serena stared at Flo for a moment. She worried Flo was implying something she shouldn't know! Serena had made sure no one else would see the lab results confirming Logan's paternity. "Come on, I've got a few ideas of where to look," Logan said. "Olivia, Oliver," Serena called as she followed Logan back upstairs. "It is time to go back to our house!" "We don't want to go!" Olivia screamed from inside the walls. Logan chuckled, pointing to the closet in his room. Serena nodded. "Sounds like they've gotten quite comfortable here," he muttered. "I think they like the hiding places, where they can cause trouble without me seeing." Hide and Seek she said. Logan smiled at her and opened his closet door. "I'm probably not going to fit through here, but you are slender enough to get in there enough to talk to them," Logan said, pushing a panel aside in the wall. It revealed an old crawl space.

The space was narrow and dark. It smelled musty. Serena wasn't too keen on crawling in there on her elbows.

"Don't worry, I'll be right here and I'll pull you out if you get stuck," Logan assured. Serena scoffed and shook her head.

"I'll be fine," she said. Serena dropped down on her hands and knees. She lowered onto her stomach and used her elbows to crawl into the space as far as she could go, until her hips hit the sides.

Olivia and Oliver were in the crawl space, tucked away against the back of the wall. They were hugging each other. Serena couldn't quite reach them, even with her arms

stretched out all the way. "What are you two doing?" she asked, propping herself up on her elbows so she could look at them. "We don't want to leave, Mommy." Olivia said. "Yea, it is fun here," Oliver said. "Don't you want to go back home?" Serena asked. "Our real home where you have all your toys and you each have your own room?" "No!" Olivia snapped. "We like it here." Serena sighed. "I know, baby," she said. "This is an old house with lots of fun places to hide and lots of fun toys to play with." "Yea, so, can we stay?" Olivia asked. "This isn't our home," Serena said. "We are just guests here. We've got to go to our real home." "But Uncle Logan likes us," Oliver said. "Yea, we could stay here with him, and you can go home," Oliver said. Serena chuckled, though her heart hurt thinking her kids wanted to stay with Logan instead of her. "As much fun as that sounds," she said with a note of sarcasm, "Logan has his own life and his own family." "It's not fair!" Olivia wailed. "I want to stay here!" "Just because we are going home doesn't mean we won't ever come back," Serena assured them, "Logan will come visit you at our home, and I'm sure he'd love to have you visit here. And, I'm sure there will be times when Flo will take care of you when I can't or when Dana can't." Hide and Seek "Do you promise?" Olivia asked. Serena was hesitant to promise the kids anything that she couldn't make complete good on. This was a promise that involved other people, but knowing Logan and Flo, she didn't think they would mind. "I promise," she said. "This won't be the last time you see them, and it won't be the last time you get to play in this house." "Okay," the twins said together. They started crawling towards her. Serena used her elbows to push herself back out of the crawl space. It was slower for her than the twins, and they were getting antsy. When she made it all the way out, Serena sighed and flopped down on the closet floor on her back. The twins emerged next, sneezing and stamping their feet to get rid of the dust on their clothes. "Nice work," Logan said, reaching a hand out for Serena. She accepted it, and he pulled her to her feet. They stood facing each other for a moment, and then he brushed his fingers through her hair. Serena cheeks reddened, and she stepped away. Logan held up his hand, showing her the clump of dust she'd pulled from her hair. "You'll come visit us, right, Uncle Logan?" Olivia asked, stealing his attention. "I'll come visit," he assured. "We always have so much fun together, that's not going to stop because you aren't living here anymore." "Okay!" Olivia said. "I should get them home and in the tub," Serena said, grabbing Olivia's hand before she ran off. "Good idea," Logan said. He walked with them down to the front door. "I have to say, I think I will miss having the kids here." Serena raised an eyebrow at him. "Well, you'll have one of your own soon enough," she reminded him. Logan said, glancing back up the stairs at the door of his bedroom. "Won't that be something," he muttered. "As you said, you'll come visit and play," she said. Logan smiled. "Absolutely," he said with a nod. Serena held one twin in each hand and headed out of Logan's house. The walk back to their house was quick and easy. When she walked through the front door, she sighed with relief. It was nice to be home, and to actually have a home! "Come on, kids, you need to take a bath," she said.

"Awe, mom!" Oliver complained. Serena had a feeling Oliver would be a little nervous in the bathroom since that was where they were when the tree fell on their house. She wanted to make sure that he was safe and comfortable, though. That he had a positive

experience in the bathtub. “Go pick out your jammies,” Serena said. “I’ll fill the bath.” The kids ran to their rooms, and Serena filled the tub part way with warm water. She

threw in some bubble bath and added some of their favorite bath toys. The twins ran in the bathroom naked, tossing their pajamas at Serena. “Get in, get in,” she said. Olivia fearlessly plopped into the tub. Oliver was more hesitant, but he climbed in after his sister. Serena hummed softly, sitting on the toilet as she folded the kids’ pajamas and laid out their robes and towels. They’d started a game that involved their toys being held at high heights before being dropped into the water, making bubbly splashes.

“Wash your faces,” please,” Serena said when she noticed the twins were getting pruned. She waited for them to wash their faces and then she had them stand up so she could dry them quickly and wrap them in their robes.

“I’m so clean!” Olivia said. Serena smiled, handing her daughter her pajamas. It was good to be home! She wasn’t worrying about taking too long in the bathroom with bathing the kids, or worried about how much noise they were making. Still, she liked the idea of having a home with a full family one day.

With the kids in bed, Serena took a moment to appreciate being back in her own home. The first night wasn’t as relaxing as she thought! Every creak and sound made her sit bolt upright in bed, listening for a tree to come crashing through the roof again!

[Previous Chapter](#)
[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 54

Kids from One Alpha
Chapter 54
Chapter 54: A Mother’s Love

Charlotte showed up at the house bright and early the next day. A single phone call the day before, where Serena had expressed wanting to talk to her mom, and the Luna promptly appeared with donuts for the kids! “Morning, morning everyone,” Charlotte sang as she came into the house. “Grammy!” Olivia said. “I’ve got donuts for you,” Charlotte said, setting the box of the warm pastries on the table. Olivia and Oliver each grabbed one out of the box and started eating. “I’ve got coffee,” Serena said, handing her mother a mug. She grabbed a donut for herself before they vanished in the kids’ mouths, and poured herself some coffee too. “Wonderful” Charlotte said, taking a seat at the table. “I was worried about you, dear. That call was...uncharacteristic.” Serena eyed the kids. “We’ll talk after Dana takes them to daycare,” Serena said. Charlotte winked at her daughter and nodded. Olivia and Oliver had their mouths smeared with powdered sugar. Serena wiped them off just as Dana arrived to take them to daycare. “Oh, it looks like you had a special treat for breakfast,” she said. “Want a donut?” Serena asked. “There are plenty.”

"Thanks," Dana said, grabbing one from the box before heading off with the kids. Serena listened for them to all walk down the front steps before she sighed and sat down at the table across from her mother.

"Serena, talk to me, darling," Charlotte said. Serena looked up from her steaming coffee at her mother. She hadn't felt close to Charlotte during her years in school when she was in the human world. Now that her mother knew about the kids, she felt closer to her, but there was still a part of herself she was keeping hidden and reserved. "I got confirmation on who the father of Olivia and Oliver is," she blurted out. "What?" Charlotte asked. "I thought you didn't know who it was." "I didn't" Serena said. "I had my suspicions, though." "Honey, this is huge, why didn't you tell me any of this before?" Charlotte asked. Serena sighed again. "It is complicated," she said. "I didn't want to talk to anyone until I had answers. I even sent the bloodwork out to a human lab." "Why all the secrecy?" Charlotte asked. Serena wasn't sure how much she wanted to

tell her mother. She didn't want to reveal Logan as their father, but she knew if she wasn't careful with her wording, her mother could narrow down who the suspects

were. "It has been over five years," she reminded her mom. "I don't know if this male remembers me, or the time we spent together. There was a lot of alcohol involved. I didn't want to make any accusations or completely change another wolf's life without the right proof to back it up." "That's understandable," Charlotte said, sipping her coffee. "You're going to tell him now, though, aren't you?" Serena shrugged. "I honestly don't know," she admitted. "It isn't that easy..." "Why not, does he have a mate and a family?" her mother asked. Serena thought of how to answer that question. "**Not exactly, at least, not in the most traditional sense;" Serena said. "I just can't imagine how I would even start that conversation." Charlotte chuckled "I think you can find the right words," Charlotte assured. Serena shook her head. "Yea, I can just walk up to him and say 'do you remember me from that one night stand all those years ago? Because, guess what, you're a dad,' she said with an eyeroll. Charlotte laughed. "I'd trust you to have a little more tact than that," she said. Serena shrugged. "I don't know," she said. "This is all very confusing, mom. I wasn't really expecting to have confirmation, but then I started wonder, and things started to make sense in ways I wasn't expecting." "You might not believe it, darling, but I do understand," Charlotte said. "It isn't always easy to be honest." "So much time has passed," Serena said. "I just can't bring myself to uproot someone so unsuspectingly." "Can I ask who the father is?" Charlotte asked. Serena shook her head. "I mean, you can, but I'm not going to tell you," Serena said. "Why not?" Charlotte asked. "I want to tell him first, before anyone else," Serena said. "It would be awful if I told other people first, and then somehow he found out through someone else." "You think I'd tell anyone?" Charlotte asked, raising an eyebrow. Serena chuckled. "I know you, Mom," she said. "You'd tell dad. He'd tell Santino, and then who knows where it would go from there." "Okay, okay, you're right," Charlotte said with a smile and a chuckle. She took another sip of her coffee. Serena looked down at her own coffee. She hadn't even taken a sip yet, and the steam had stopped rising. It was

getting cold. Now that she knew Logan was the father of her kids, it only made her relationship more complicated. It hadn't been any kind of relief or closure, especially since she had to contend with Holly's pregnancy. "What's on your mind, Serena?" Charlotte asked. "Mom, it is more complicated than just changing the life of someone I barely know," she said, "Not just because I don't know if he'll remember me, but because he does have a personal life. His girlfriend, possible future mate, is pregnant." Charlotte let out a whistle and shook her head. "I'm sorry," she said. "That does complicate things." "And this female...she isn't one that I want to be in competition with. She isn't one want my children involved with," Serena explained. "I see," Charlotte said. "I'm guessing this male is part of Night Sky?" Serena nodded. "Yes. I only discovered the connection when I came to work here," she added. "Have you thought about maybe coming back to Starseeker?" Charlotte offered. "It could put some distance between you and give you the time to figure out what you want to do." "It isn't about what I want," Serena said. "It is about what is right. What is right for the kids, what is right for their father." Charlotte stood up and came around the table. She stroked Serena's cheek. "You're so grown up, dear," Charlotte said. "I'm proud of you, coming to that conclusion." "Thanks," she said. "I just don't know how to go about doing what I know is right." "Maybe you should start with telling Olivia and Oliver," Charlotte suggested.

Serena thought about it. If they knew Logan was their father, they'd never keep it a secret. She could at least tell them she knew who their father was, or ask them if they wanted a father. She had to time it right. If she began talking like that to her kids and then she wasn't ready to reveal the truth to Logan yet...she knew the kids would start talking. She'd already told Logan their father wasn't in the picture, if he found out that she'd told the twins she knew their father, that could cause him to ask questions. It would lead to all the answers she didn't want to give. So, Serena knew she had to time things perfectly. Whatever she did, she knew it wouldn't be comfortable for her or for Logan. "Thank you for being here, Mom," she said. "I'm always here for you, darling," Charlotte said. "But, whatever you decide, remember that the kids deserve to know where they come from." "You're right," Serena said with a nod. "I've kept too much from them their whole lives. They only just found out they were werewolves when we came to Night Sky!" "Then, you shouldn't hide anything more from them," Charlotte advised. "You know, it doesn't matter if this male wants to be a parent or not. The kids deserve to know, and so does he. You should confront him." "I will," Serena assured with a nod. "I just want the timing to be right." Charlotte chuckled.

"I don't think there ever is a right time for this kind of thing," she said. "Perhaps you should just pull the band aid off." "Maybe I should" Serena said with a sigh. She finished her coffee with her mother, and they ate the last of the donuts. Serena was so glad that her mother had come through with support and advice. She was also grateful her mother hadn't pried for details when Serena had been reluctant to give them.

Part of her knew that her mother wouldn't stop there. There was a chance that her mother would snoop and try to find out more information. Serena had to be sure no one would have that information until she was ready to reveal it. "Thanks for coming by," she told her mom as they walked out onto the front porch. It was a bright, sunny day. "I'll

always be here for you,” Charlotte said. “That’s what a mother does.” “I know,” Serena said. “I’ll see you soon.”

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 55

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 55

Chapter 55: Second Date

“Serena, good afternoon,” Carson’s voice said cheerily into the phone. “Hey. Carson,” Serena said. She had just gotten in from her shift at the hospital. Dana was already making the kids dinner, and when she’d arrived, the phone was ringing. “Are you just getting in?” he asked. “You sound flustered.” Serena chuckled. “Yea, I just got back from the hospital. What’s up?” she asked. “Well, I may have heard from a little bird that you have a babysitter tonight,” he said. “So, I was wondering if you wanted to have dinner with me.” “You’re asking me to dinner again?” Serena asked. “My cooking didn’t scare you away.” Carson laughed.

Serena saw Olivia make a scrunched-up face. She thought it was about her own cooking, but she made it again the next time Carson spoke. “Not at all,” he said. “I will be handling the food this time, though.” Serena sighed. “I guess I could come over for a little while” she said. “Let me shower and change, then I’ll come by.” “Great!” Carson said happily. “I’ll see you soon.” He hung up. “Are you going to see Carson again?” Oliver asked moodily. Clearly, her kids hadn’t taken to him very well. “I am,” Serena said. “Dana, are you okay to stay with the kids?” “Of course,” Dana said with a nod. “Thank you,” Serena said. She showered and changed quickly, kissed the kids goodbye, and then headed out to see Carson. When she got to his house, Serena was surprised by the setup. The lighting was dim, and he had a candle lit dinner prepared. It smelled amazing, and her mouth started to water. Between her own cooking and eating hospital cafeteria food, she hadn’t had a really delicious meal in too long! “Wow.” Serena said as Carson took her sweater. “This looks amazing.” There was a pretty flower arrangement at the center of the table. “Well, you are always working so hard, as a mother and a doctor, I figured you could be spoiled for a night,” he said with a chuckle. Serena smiled, taking a seat at the table. “Did you cook?” she asked. Carson shook his head. “No, but I had a few favors to call in,” he said. Carson poured them each a glass of wine. Serena raised an eyebrow at him. “The kids aren’t here.”

“That is true,” she said, accepting the glass and taking a sip. Not that she didn’t think she could drink wine in front of her kids, but she was a little suspicious about what Second Date Carson had in mind for their night. “Don’t worry, I’m not going to try anything,” he said, sitting down across from her. “I just wanted this to be a nice, normal

date." "A date, is it?" Serena asked, smiling as she cut into the juicy steak cut on her plate. "That's what I'd like it to be," Carson admitted. "You're an incredibly strong female, a great doctor, and a great mother. I can't think of any other qualities that matter." Serena snorted a laugh and set her wine down. "I could probably cook better," she teased. Carson rolled his eyes and gave her a dismissive wave, sipping his own wine. They ate in silence for a while, and Serena looked around Carson's house. It was a definitely a bachelor pad. He hadn't done much to decorate the walls or get interesting furniture. She didn't know how long he'd lived there, but he was a lifelong member of the Night Sky pack. As Beta, he would have access to whatever luxuries he wanted! What are you thinking about?" Carson asked her. Serena chuckled. "I was admiring your house, and the simplicity of it," she said. Carson nodded. "I don't need much to be happy," he admitted. "I'm not one of those lush Betas that needs to show off my status with expensive furniture, fine art, and a big house." Serena nodded, biting her bottom lip. "I see," she said. "I've offended you," Carson said. Serena shook her head. "No. My mother and father are Alpha and Luna. They live very comfortably," she explained. "I always assumed it was more of a pack lifestyle than a choice." Carson shrugged. "It could be," he said. "I just didn't adhere to it. Does that bother you?" "No," Serena said, shaking her head. "I enjoy simplicity. Something I lack a good deal in my life." Carson laughed. "I imagine so," he said. Serena smiled at him, the candles flickering slightly. "But you still went through the trouble of getting this flower arrangement and setting up this romantic dinner," she pointed out. "Well, why can't romance be simple too?" he asked. Serena shrugged. "I guess there is no reason it can't," she said. Carson nodded. "Good, How is everything?" he asked. "Delicious" Serena said, finishing off her last bite of steak. "I'm almost sorry to be done."

"You're not done yet," he said. "I've got dessert too. How do you like chocolate mousse?" Second Date Serena's eyes widened for a moment. "Wow," she muttered. "You really did go all out." "Then again, sometimes romance shouldn't be simple," Carson said. He retreated to the kitchen and came back with two dessert plates, each one holding a slice of seven-layer mousse. Serena's jaw dropped slightly. "That looks...amazing," she said. She wasn't sure how she could eat the whole thing! "Don't be shy, dig right in," Carson said, grabbing his own fork and taking a big bite. Serena cleansed her pallet with a sip of wine, and then took a bite of the mousse. It was the perfect amount of fluffy and sweet, practically melting in her mouth. "Oh my," she muttered through the bite, swallowing. "This is great service." Carson grinned at her with chocolate smudged teeth. "Tell me a little more about yourself," he said when they were done with their desserts. Miraculously, Serena had been able to finish the whole mousse. "Okay," she said softly. "I'm a werewolf from Starseeker pack, I have a twin brother. My mother and father are Alpha and Luna, and I have twin kids." Carson smirked at her. "I know all that already," he reminded her. Serena gave a reluctant smile. She wasn't sure what to tell Carson. Most of her experiences since coming the Night Sky had been work related. She didn't want to just talk about work. She didn't want to just talk

about her kids. She also thought it would be inappropriate to talk about Logan and Holly with the Beta while on a date! "Olivia, Oliver, and I recently moved back into our house,"

Serena said. "It is nice to have our own space again." "You found it difficult to live with the Alpha?" Carson asked, raising an eyebrow and topping off their wine glasses. Serena shrugged. "Not in the strictest sense," she said. "Raising kids in someone else's household is always complicated." "Yes, that sounds right," Carson said. "Holly didn't give you too much of a hard time?" "Fortunately, we weren't around each other much," Serena said with a sigh. Carson chuckled. "She can be difficult," he said. "That's not..." Serena trailed off. She didn't want to get a reputation as a gossiper. "She's just not very practiced with kids." After finishing her glass of wine, Serena decided it was getting late enough for her to go home. The kids would already be asleep, but she didn't want to stay late and give Carson the wrong idea. "I should get going," she said. "If you must," Carson said. He stood up and retrieved her sweater. "I hope you'll join me again for another date." He walked her to the front door.

"I did have a really great time tonight," Serena said. "Thank you from the break from my routine, and the delicious food. I'll be full forever." Carson laughed. "Next time, we can do something with the kids again," he said. "I want them to be comfortable with me too."

"That would be great," Serena said. She didn't know if she wanted to start dating Carson, but he was nice to her, and he wanted to get to know the kids. She couldn't live like a nun just because she was concerned about telling Logan about the kids they shared! Still, she had her reservations about getting in too deep with the Beta. Eventually, she would have to tell Logan the truth, and when she did, if she was involved with Carson, it could hurt him and Logan. More than that, it could cause unnecessary tension between them. "Carson, I really like spending time with you, but I'm sort of in a place where I need to take things very slow," she said. "For my kids, because I'm still focused on establishing my career." Carson put his hand on Serena's shoulder. "I get it," he said. "I'm not in a rush, and I'm not going to pressure you." She felt herself blush as she smiled at him. He did make her feel really good!

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 56

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 56

Chapter 56: Confiding

Logan was invited to the hospital when the new maternity ward was completed. He thought it was a little ironic that it was the maternity ward he was going to tour first. Serena met him in the waiting room. She was smiling and seemed...happy. He wondered if she really had been miserable living in his house with him. Though, in all honesty, she'd been so busy, he'd hardly seen her. He hoped her joy was linked to the renovations in the hospital starting to wind down. "You wanted to show me the maternity ward," Logan said as a greeting. Serena nodded.

“Yes, come on,” she beckoned him to follow. The maternity ward had its own rooms separate from the rest of the hospital. They were delivery rooms. There was a nursery and an infant ICU. The staff working in the maternity ward were designated to that ward alone, and all the supplies were kept separate. “We were able to add two more delivery rooms, which is good since the pack keeps growing,” Serena was telling him. “The nursery has been updated with new cradles, swaddles, and some newer equipment that is known to increase infant survival rates.” “That all sounds good,” Logan said absently. There was a newborn in one of the cradles. The nursery had a large window that Logan could look through at the new pack member. He sighed, unable to pull his eyes from the sleeping, mushy looking baby. “Are you alright, Alpha?” Serena asked coming to his side. He gave her a strained smile. “Yes,” he said with a nod. “It won’t be too long before that is your child in there,” she said. “How is Holly doing, she hadn’t come in for a checkup?”

“She’s fine,” Logan said absently. “I think she’s fine. She hasn’t brought it up at all. She would if something was wrong.” Logan sighed again, shaking his head and backing away from the nursery window.

“Well, please remind her to come in for her checkups,” Serena said. Logan nodded, but he wasn’t really listening to what she was saying.

The idea that Holly was pregnant hadn’t fully sunk in yet. He was holding it at a distance because he didn’t want to accept it. “I’m not ready,” he said suddenly. He wasn’t sure if he had said the words out loud, but Serena turned to face him, her eyes soft. “Not ready for what?” she asked. Logan shook his head. He needed to talk to someone! His mother wouldn’t want to hear it, because she was urging him to find a Confiding Luna. He couldn’t tell Holly, or she would freak out even more. Normally, Carson would have been his ‘go to’ for advice, but he hadn’t seen Carson much since he’d had dinner with Serena. She was a mother, she could understand his fears.

“I’m not ready to be a father,” he said. Serena’s eyes changed quickly. Logan thought he saw a flicker of anger, then sadness, but quickly, she composed herself and became compassionate. “It is a big responsibility,” she admitted. She walked closer to him, placing her hand on his shoulder. “Logan, have you talked to Holly about this?” He shook his head. “No, no, I can’t do that,” he insisted. “Holly wouldn’t like that very much.” Serena gave a humorless chuckle and dropped her hand. “Perhaps not, but Logan, the two of you are in this together, and you have to tell her the truth. Otherwise, it is only the child that stands to get hurt,” she told him. Logan sighed. “I know,” he said turning from her and throwing his arms up in the air. “Trust me, I get it. I’ve seen what you’ve gone through with the twins to keep them happy and having such a good life. You do an amazing job, but I know I’m not ready for that responsibility.” Logan sighed, bowing his head slightly. All his confessions were tumbling out. He’d been holding them so close, so deep inside, that he hadn’t even been able to admit them to himself. Now that he started, he couldn’t stop! “I love the twins,” he said more gently. “I love being

around them, I love playing with them. Beyond that...I don't know what I am doing. I don't know how to be a father, and I didn't want this. Not now, now with ...” he trailed off. “Logan,” Serena said his name firmly. He turned to look at her. She had her hands on her hips, like a mother ready to scold him. He flinched. “I understand the fear and uncertainty. Trust me, I do. When I found out I was going to be a parent...it wasn't what I had planned.” “But you went through with it,” he said. “And you are so good at it. I have no way of knowing if I will be good at him.” Serena smiled at him, such a warm smile it lifted his mood incredibly “I think you'd be great at it,” she said. “Really?” he asked. Serena nodded. “Of course,” she said. “But you have to be ready for it. You have to want it. That is what made my situation different. When I found out I was pregnant, I weighed my options, and I realized it was what I wanted.”

“And if it isn't what I want?” he asked her. Serena sighed, shrugging.

“I can't answer that for you,” she said. “That is a conversation you have to have with

“You're right,” Logan said softly. It was a conversation he was dreading having with Holly! “Alright, show me the rest of the renovations,” he said, moving on. “Everything looks really great so far.” “It does,” Serena said with a nod. “Who knew that a fresh coat of paint and bringing the hospital into the modern decade would work so many wonders?” Logan raised an eyebrow at her, and Serena laughed. Logan smirked at her. Serena finished giving Logan the tour of the maternity ward. She'd been surprised when he confided in her, but she knew what it was like. She remembered how she felt like she had no one to turn to, not her family, not her pack, no one. Logan wasn't lacking family, friends, or pack, but she imagined he felt very alone in this particular situation. Knowing that he wasn't ready to be a father, and that he'd opening admitted it, gave Serena her own thoughts to mull over. She'd been leaning towards telling Logan the truth, for the sake of her kids like her mother had said. It seemed like the right thing to do.

Now that Logan had confessed to not wanting to be a parent, she wondered if it would do more harm than good. Whether he knew the truth or whether the kids knew the truth, the dynamic of their relationship would change, regardless of if he wanted to be an active parent or not. It certainly complicated an already complicated situation. Telling Logan he was the father of her kids would mean he'd have to make a decision. He'd either need to step up or back off. Especially once she told the twins the truth. They loved him so much, though, and she didn't want to hurt them by having him run off or back away from spending time with them. Groaning, Serena went to the nurse's station to file her end of the day paperwork. “How'd the tour go?” Adriana asked, stepping up beside her. Serena rolled her eyes. “It was as good as it could be,” she said. “I think Logan is have an existential crisis.” Adriana laughed. “We all go through it,” she said.

“Yes, but he really seems to...” she trailed off. “I don't know...like really bummed out.”

“About anything in particular?” Adriana asked. Serena sighed. She couldn't betray the Alpha's confidence. She didn't know if Holly's pregnancy was common knowledge yet, nor did she want to gossip about Logan's personal problems. In a way, they were her

personal problems too. Adriana was her friend, but the Alpha had confided in her about something he clearly hadn't been able to raise with anyone else. As someone who had been there, had been on the "am I ready" side of an unexpected pregnancy, she understood how hard that could be. "He's got a lot going on," Serena said vaguely. "Yes, it doesn't seem like Moonshine is going to back off anytime soon," Adriana said, filling in the vagueness with what was most obvious. "And I heard Flo has been asking him to find a Luna so she can resign. I don't envy him right now."

"He'll be okay," Serena said with a firm nod.

"He has to be," Adriana said. On her drive home, Serena thought about her decision to keep and raise her kids. Looking back, it hadn't seemed like a hard decision at all. She knew that was just hindsight. In the moment, it had been an incredibly difficult decision. Logan was at a disadvantage, because he had the pack to consider, and he had to make the decision with someone else. Serena had been on her own, and that had made it easier, in many ways.

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 57

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 57

Chapter 57: Birdwatching

"Birdwatching?" Serena asked when Carson showed up at her door on her day off. "Yea, it is a fun activity," he said. "We can go outside, the kids will love it." Serena looked over her shoulder at where the kids were playing on the floor. She'd wanted to spend the day with just them, but now Carson had shown up for a day together.

"Have you ever been?" he asked. "Not in any official capacity," she admitted. "I guarantee fun," Carson said. "Kids, do you want to go birdwatching?" Serena asked, turning to talk to Olivia and Oliver.

"With Logan?" Olivia asked, jumping up. Serena stepped aside so they could see it was Carson at the door. "Logan is busy today," she said. "You remember my friend Carson? He wants us all to spend the day together. Doesn't that sound like fun?" "Okay," Olivia said, less enthusiastically. Oliver remained quiet, but they both pulled their shoes on. Serena turned back to Carson. "Logan promised he'd come see them after we got all moved back in," she explained. "He hasn't had the time yet though, being Alpha and all." "I see," Carson said with a nod. "Well, I will make sure we all have fun, anyway." "Let me get my shoes and a sweater," Serena said. She grabbed what she needed and found Carson on the porch with the kids. He was showing them how to use a pair of

binoculars. "Do I need any special bird watching equipment?" she asked. Carson shook his head. "Nah," he said. "I've got two pairs of binoculars, and I know all the best places to see birds."

"Alright," Serena said. She took the kids hands in hers. "Lead the way."

Carson headed off the porch and turned to the left, bringing them in the direction of the tree line. The intermittent forest spread throughout the pack territory was a great place to see wildlife.

"I'll climb to the very top of a tree so I can see the whole forest," Olivia was saying, chattering to Oliver. "You can't climb that high!" Oliver argued. "Mommy, can Olivia climb that high?" "Neither of you are going to be climbing trees. We are going out to see birds," Serena said.

*Birds are in trees," Olivia pointed out. Serena chuckled. "She has a point," Carson said. "Don't encourage her," Serena teased. "I'll be the one chasing her up trees.

"Over here," Carson said, waving them over. He crouched down low next to a bush and put his finger to his lips.

"Okay, you two, keep quiet," Serena muttered to the kids in a whisper. Oliver nodded. Olivia made a face, but she didn't argue. Serena crouched down with the kids and Carson handed her a pair of binoculars. "There is a woodpecker over there," Carson said, motioning in the direction he saw the bird. Serena looked in her binoculars first. She saw the woodpecker standing on the tree trunk with a grub in its beak. "Do you want to see?" Serena whispered to Olivia. She nodded, and Serena picked her up, holding the binoculars so her daughter could see. "How about you, Oliver?" Carson asked. He opened his arms, but Oliver took a step back

"I'll wait for Mommy," he said. Serena set Olivia down and then picked Oliver up so he could see.

"Oliver's a little shy," she whispered, leaning closer to Carson. She didn't want him to feel bad, but he shrugged like it wasn't a big deal. Serena was happy he wasn't taking it personally Kids were always saying and doing things that could offend adults, but it was nice to see at least one who wouldn't be offended by her kids. When the woodpecker flew away, Carson led them off in another direction. "Can we do something else, Mommy?" Olivia asked.

"Yea this isn't as fun as being with Logan," Oliver added. Serena could have slapped her forehead with her palm, if she hadn't been holding her kids' hands.

"This is fun," she said, "being out in nature."

Carson looked back at the kids and smiled.

"Buowalching isn't your thing, huh?" he asked. Olivia shrugged.

"You're not very fun to be around," she said. Again, Serena felt embarrassed

"Carson I'm sorry," she said quickly "They obviously haven't learned how to be polite." Carson chuckled and shook his head.

"Don't worry about it, he said

"Obric you need to apologize to Carson" Serena told her daughter. "Hot stie snapped, I want to see Uncle Logan. He is more fun!" Serena gave Carson an apologetic look

"Maybe we should call it a day" she said

"Good idea," he said. If she didn't do anything, Olivia would throw a full-on tantrum. As they headed back to the house, Serena let the twins run ahead a little and play. Carson came up beside her. "I'm so sorry," she said to him. "I was having a good time." Carson grinned. "I guess they're a little too young to appreciate a stand-still activity," he said. Serena smiled and nodded. "It would seem so," she said. "Maybe a hike with snacks at the end next time." "That sounds like a good idea," Carson said. They walked in silence for a ways. Serena enjoyed being near Carson. Every now and then, his shoulder would brush against her arm, and it would always startle her. It wasn't an uncomfortable feeling though, and she found herself smiling and blushing a little bit every time it happened. Olivia and Oliver let themselves into the house. Serena rarely locked the door. The pack was such a stable, friendly community there wasn't a lot of crime. It was easier to have the kids be able to get in when Dana brought them back from daycare. Serena paused on her porch with Carson. She didn't want to invite him in because she wanted to have a chat with the kids about politeness. Carson didn't make a move to leave, though.

"Thanks for getting us out of the house," she said. "I'm sorry it didn't go the way you wanted it to." Carson shrugged. "Don't worry about it, I have a good time any time I see you or the kids," he said. "I appreciate that," Serena said. She bit her lower lip, smiling at him and flirting a little. Carson grinned.

"So, I'll see you again sometime, then?" he asked. "Yea, we can plan something that the kids will like," she said. "I can help with that."

"Great, I'm looking forward to it," Carson said. He nodded and then left the porch. Serena sighed, heading inside where the twins were playing on the floor with their toys again. "The two of you were very rude today," she said, letting the door close behind her. "Carson wanted to spend the day with us." "He's no fun," Olivia said. "We want to see Logan!" Serena rolled her eyes. "I know that, sweeties," she said, taking a seat on the couch so she could be close to them, "But Carson is mommy's friend, and you two hurt his feelings. I know neither of you like it when your friends hurt your feelings." "No," the both grumbled.

“So, next time Carson invites us out to do something fun, I want the two of you to be on your best behavior, okay?” Serena asked. The kids nodded in a non-committal way. Birdwatching Serena sighed, letting them go back to playing together. She was embarrassed that they had been so blunt about not wanting to spend time with Carson. She was starting to like Carson, which was complicated in itself.

The fact that her kids wanted to spend time with Logan more made her want to tell them he was their father. Now that he had confessed to not being ready to be a parent, Serena found herself in yet another hard spot. With the kids busy playing, Serena leaned back on the couch and lost herself in thought. Carson was nice. He liked the kids, he wanted to get to know them and her. He was solid, and strong. Serena wasn't sure she could ever have anything more with Carson because of her connection to Logan. Whether Logan and Carson knew it or not, Serena knew the truth, and she wouldn't feel right being the woman between them in any capacity. She didn't think it was fair to pursue a relationship with anyone until Logan knew the truth. Telling him the truth was made more complicated by both Holly being pregnant, and the fact that he didn't want to be a parent. Serena sighed. She hadn't ever planned on seeing the father of her kids again. It would have been easy to go on with her life, settle down with someone, possibly even her mate if she ever met him. Now, she was in a dangerous position and someone was going to get hurt. She didn't want it to be her kids! But how long was she willing to put her whole life on hold for someone who didn't want to be a parent?

[Previous Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 58

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 58

Chapter 58: Bloodwork

“Serena, I got the lab results back for the annual physicals,” Adriana said, dropping a pile of folder in front of Serena at the Nurse's station. “Thanks?” Serena asked, looking up at her boss and raising an eyebrow. Adriana chuckled. “Can you go through them and make sure everything is normal?” she asked. “Sure,” Serena said. “You can use my office if you want some privacy,” Adriana offered. Serena left the nurse's station, a large stack of files in her arms. Going over the bloodwork numbers was necessary work, but it was monotonous all the same. “I'll bring the next batch in when the lab finishes them,” Adriana called after her. Serena waved a hand over her shoulder in acknowledgement.

Annual blood panels would test for any potential diseases or health concerns that pack members had to be aware of. It also covered pregnancy in females. Serena took a seat at Adriana's new desk. She had gotten an entirely remodeled office with the rest of the hospital renovations. She got right to work going over the blood panels. Pen in hand, Serena made small marks next to any of the results that had come back with levels that

warranted further investigation. Most were small, just little deficiencies here and there, or low or high blood pressure, cholesterol, and sodium levels.

If there was anything more concerning, Serena would circle it and put a sticky note on the page with her notes on the test. Of course, she had to go back and compare each result with the medical history of each pack member to make sure the results aligned with any pre-existing conditions they might have.

After a while, Serena had her legs up on Adriana's desk. She was leaning back in her chair, chewing on her pen cap as she went over another file of medical history and new lab results.

Her eyes were starting to blur a little, all the results bleeding together.

"How's it going?" Adriana asked, coming in with another stack of files. "I think I'd read this one already." Serena mumbled, tossing the page on the desk. She rubbed her eyes and stretched. "I know, it is a lot to go through," Adriana said. "I'm here to help for a few hours, though."

"Thanks," Serena said with a smile. She stretched her arms over her head. "I'm not giving you your chair back."

Adriana laughed and pulled another chair up to the opposite side of the desk.

"You seem like you are due for a break," Adriana said, handing Serena a small bag of chips. "Yes, please!" Serena said, popping the bag open and indulging in the snack. "Are the kids settling back into the house alright?" Adriana asked, getting comfortable with a file. "They are," Serena said. "They keep pestering me about seeing Logan again." "Oh, they miss him?" Adriana asked, looking up from the paper in her hands. "They think he is fun, more fun than my other friends," Serena said with a sigh. "What other friends?" Adriana asked, raising an eyebrow. Serena sighed. She hadn't talked about it much with anyone, because she didn't want word to get back to Logan before she really knew what was going on. She wanted to

talk to someone though, someone closer to her age than her mother. "Beta Carson and I have spent a little time together, socially," Serena explained. "Like, you're dating him?" Adriana asked. "No, no!" Serena insisted, shaking her head. "Nothing like that. I mean, I think that is what he wants, but things are..complicated." "Complicated how?" Adriana pressed. Serena sighed, finishing off her chips. "With the kids and everything," she said vaguely. "Carson doesn't like them?" she asked. "No, he likes them a lot," she said. "They think he is a little boring. Besides, I didn't come here to date. Sure, I'd like to settle down, eventually, but my focus right now is my career and my kids." Adriana laughed, shuffling some files around. "Well, at least you are making connections within the pack," Adriana said. "Beta Carson is a good man." "Yes, he is," Serena agreed,

picking up another folder to get working on. She scanned over the bloodwork, and something didn't look quite right. Tilting her head to the side, Serena hummed.

"Something wrong?" Adriana asked. "Maybe, I don't know," she said. "There was another file I was looking at." "Whose?" Adriana asked.

"Holly's" she said. Adriana raised an eyebrow and shifted some of the folders around.

"Here it is," she said, handing Serena Holly's file.

Serena took out the most recent blood panel results from Holly's annual physical and compared it with the other one she had in her hand. "This female," Serena said, handing over the blood panel she was reviewing. "Does it look identical to Holly's?" She passed Adriana both sheets. Adriana hummed as she looked them over. "They do look very similar. You better have them both in again to make sure the samples were run correctly," she said.

Serena picked up the phone and called both Holly and the other female. The first female was easy and compliant. She was concerned that something could be wrong and scheduled her workup that afternoon. "What do you want?" Holly asked when Serena called her, letting her know who it was. "There are some concerns about your recent bloodwork," Serena said. "I think you should come in so we can take another sample and run the tests again." "Concerns, what kind of concerns?" Holly asked snidely. "Like the results are identical to another female," Serena said. "The samples might have gotten mislabeled. Can you come in so we can run the tests again?" "No!" Holly snapped. "Why would I do that? You messed up at your job, and now I have to rearrange my whole schedule just so you can fix the mistake?" Serena blinked several times, surprised by Holly's hostile reaction. Most expecting mothers were more concerned about their health and the health of their babies if anything came up as a possible problem. "This is a matter of health, your health and the health of your baby." Serena pointed out. "It would be best to confirm that everything is okay." "Look, I know my body," Holly insisted. "I am fine, my baby is fine. I don't need to be poked and prodded. More blood draws would just be stressful and cause the baby distress." "A blood draw is perfectly safe for a fetus and expecting mother," Serena assured. "I'm not doing it!" Holly snapped before hanging up. "That sounded like it went well" Adriana said with a chuckle. Serena shook her head. "Yea, it was great" she muttered. "I don't know why she was getting so defensive. It seems like she isn't that concerned about getting the right results, or learning whether or not her baby is healthy."

"She is high maintenance," Adriana agreed.

"Should I tell Logan?" Serena asked. Adriana scoffed.

"That is drama I don't want to get involved in," she admitted. "But it is a little suspicious."

"Yea, it is," Serena agreed. When she had been pregnant, she knew she couldn't be too careful. If a doctor had told her she needed her blood drawn again, she wouldn't have hesitated, just like the other female that was coming in that afternoon! "You look like you're thinking hard," Adriana said. Serena sighed. "I got the sense that she was hiding something," Serena admitted. "Like she was mad at me for discovering her lie. I don't know what she could be hiding though! Without the follow up bloodwork there is nothing I could know." "You think she is trying to keep a secret from getting out?" Adriana asked. Serena shrugged. She wouldn't put it past Holly to try something nefarious, but she didn't know what a female like Holly would need to lie about. She had pack status, she had a strong bloodline, and she was with the Alpha. Serena shook her head, breaking up her thoughts. "I don't know" she admitted. "I should tell Logan. If Holly is endangering their baby for any reason, he has the right to know." "That is a dangerous line to cross," Adriana warned. "I'm telling him as a doctor, not as a friend or gossip," Serena pointed out. "Just, be careful" Adriana warned. "Holly isn't the forgiving type. I wouldn't want to get tangled in her mess, especially if she is lying and desperate to cover that up." Serena shrugged.

"I'm worried about her baby, and that is something that Logan has an interest in too," Serena said. "There is no reason she should be hiding anything from him, no reason that she should be denying herself or her child healthcare right now. The Alpha has the right to know and intervene if need be." "Lagree, but I'm not making the call," Adriana said with a smirk. Serena rolled her eyes and picked up the phone again to call Logan.

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 59

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 59

Chapter 59: Jealous Anger

"What is it, Serena?" Logan asked coldly when she called him. Serena cleared her throat. She stuttered a little. Logan rolled his eyes. Another pack member had recently told him about Carson's day with the twins and his other dinner date with Serena. Logan thought it was strange that she hadn't mentioned it to him at all, that Carson hadn't said anything either. He didn't know why she would want to hide the fact she was seeing someone else from him. It had bothered him, especially after he'd confided in her. He thought they were friends, but clearly, she did not value or respect him the same way he did her. "Is this a bad time?" Serena asked. Logan grunted. "Not really," he said gruffly. He couldn't help the tone in his voice. There was too much anger and emotion he had towards her at the moment, and he couldn't temper it because he hadn't had a chance to sort through it all. "Okay, well, something has come up. I was hoping you could come by the hospital and we could talk about it," she said. She was being pleasant enough. Logan wondered if she was finally going to fess up about her relationship with Carson. He wondered why Carson hadn't told him either. Not that the Beta's relationships were

his business, but as friends, he would have thought Carson would have let him know if there was a romantic interest in his life. It still bothered him that the two of them were dating in the first place! "I might be able to spare a few minutes this afternoon," Logan said tightly. "Thank you," Serena said. "I'll be in Adriana's office. You can find me there any time." "Alright," Logan said. He hung up quickly. She was being so professional and friendly. It grated his nerves even more!

Growling to himself, Logan pushed away from his desk, the wheels on his chair grinding against the wood floor. One dinner had been odd enough, but he hadn't thought any more had come out of their spending time together.

Now he had found out that Serena and Carson had eaten a romantic dinner together and spent a day with the twins! Logan had to admit that he was bothered by the twins spending time with Carson too. He shouldn't be, he had no reason to be, but it was there.

He'd been busy with Holly and Moonshine, and he hadn't had the chance to make good on his promise to see them. Logan felt guilty for not getting to see them, and hunt that Carson had found the time! The Alpha amused himself with thoughts of giving Carson more responsibility so he wouldn't have the time to spend with Serena or the kids socially.

Sighing, Logan grabbed his sweat shirt and headed out of his office to the hospital. Whatever it was that Serena wanted to talk to him about, he figured it would be better to get it over with.

He walked hurriedly, the brisk, chilly air cooling his anger enough that he knew he could at least talk to Serena without exploding. As long as she was honest with him about things. He wondered why she had to call him to the hospital to talk about personal relationships, but that was where he had opened up to her about his concerns of being a parent. Maybe it felt like a safe place for both of them. Logan arrived at Adriana's office. She wasn't there, but Serena was sitting at the desk with a pile of medical files. She had to pages on the desk in front of her. "Thank you for coming, Logan," she said, standing up. "I'm sorry if the timing is bad." "The timing is fine, Serena," he said, waving away her concerns. She smiled at him, and he felt silly for being so angry at her before. She was a respectable, noble female, and she wouldn't purposely hide anything from him. She wasn't the most forthcoming, but he still trusted her to be honest. "Adriana and I were going through the bloodwork results from the annual physicals," she said, putting her hands on the pages on the desk. "Okay," Logan said, realizing that what she wanted to talk to him about wasn't personal at all. He clenched his fists at his sides.

"Holly's bloodwork came back strange," she said. "Strange how?" Logan asked, fire returning to his chest. "Well, it is identical to another female's bloodwork," Serena explained. "I called them both back in to rerun the tests. The other female agreed, but

Holly...she refused and hung up on me.” Logan closed his eyes, sighing to keep his temper under control. He didn’t care about whatever stunt Holly was pulling now! All he cared about was why Serena hadn’t told him about her relationship with Carson.

“There’s nothing else you want to tell me?” Logan asked, ignoring what Serena was telling him “About what?” Serena asked, creasing her brows. “About you and Carson?” he asked bluntly “What about us?” she asked. She was so casual about it that it baited him further. Logan growled, throwing a hand out to the side angrily

“Stop lying!” he snapped

“Logan, I asked you here because I think Holly is hiding something, or at least not taking the health of her baby seriously.” Serena said, holding up the paper.

“What would Holly have to lie about?” he asked. “I trust her. She wouldn’t have anything to hide.” “Logan, look at these blood results,” Serena insisted, shoving the pages towards him. Logan snarled. “Tell me about your relationship with Carson, first,” he snapped. Serena audibly swallowed.

“We don’t have one,” she said.

“That’s another lie!” he hissed through clenched teeth. “Did you really think you could hide it from me? Why would you? I’ve always been honest and open with you!” “Logan, I’m more concerned about the health and safety of your child right now,” she said, waving the papers in front of his face. “It is possible that Holly’s sample got mixed up with this female, or vice versa, and I won’t know until I run their results again. Either way, one of them wasn’t tested properly, so both should be tested again.” “So, the hospital screwed up, and that means Holly lied and has a secret?” Logan asked, crossing his arms. “I think the only person who has a secret here is you!” “Carson and I do not have a relationship!” Serena snapped. “We’ve spent time together socially but...” she trailed off.

Logan rolled his eyes, taking that to mean she was hesitating in telling him the truth about her feelings or the nature of their relationship. “I don’t think Holly is hiding something because there was a potential lab mix up.” Serena said, getting back on topic. Logan hated how professional she was being

Il this. He wanted to get a reaction out of her, to force her into revealing what he thought he already knew!

“Why, then?” he asked moodily.

“When I asked her for a follow up, she refused, not caring that the health of her baby was a concern,” Serena said. “Refusing the test is purposeful endangerment of her child, your child. That is why I think she is hiding something.”

“No, you’re wrong,” Logan said, shaking his head. “I have the lab results right here,” Serena argued. “Adriana heard me make the call.” Logan snatched the pages from her hands. He looked them over. He had no idea what he was looking at, medically speaking, but the pages looked like they could have been typed up on any old computer, or just photocopied and stuck in a random file. The only thing different on the pages was the names at the top and the corresponding birth dates. From a science perspective, it looked like the same blood sample had been tested and then recorded as the results for two different females. That would have been a lab screw up, not something Holly had done. “Why should I trust you?” he asked. “How do I know this is the truth? You’ve hidden other things from me.”

“Logan!” Serena gasped. “I wouldn’t like about this. Not when it comes to my job, not when it comes to a baby, your baby!”

For a moment, Logan was touched by her concern in regards to his unborn child, specifically. He wasn’t ready to drop his anger though. He couldn’t deny that it was a little concerning that Holly was refusing a follow up. She was more of an advocate for the baby than he was, but she clearly didn’t have any idea how to put a child first. Logan tossed the papers back on the desk with a sneer. “I can’t trust you, Serena,” he said. “You lied about your relationship with Carson. I think you are capable of lying about this too, of falsifying results.” Logan watched as anger exploded in Serena’s eyes. “What the hell did you just say to me!?” she snapped, losing all composure. Logan felt a surge of triumph.

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

Kids from One Alpha By Selena Lynch Chapter 60

Kids from One Alpha

Chapter 60

Chapter 60: Professionalism

“What the hell did you just say to me!?” Serena snapped. Her anger filled her, turning her face red and making her hands shake. Never in her life had her professionalism been questioned, and it was all because of some macho pissing contest that Logan felt like he needed to have! “How dare you question my ability to do this job! How dare you question my integrity!” Her voice was rising in volume, and Logan took a half step back. Serena stepped around the desk, closing in on him, her anger causing him to step back again. “Serena, it is a serious accusation to claim that Holly is lying about something medical,” Logan pointed out. Serena scoffed, crossing her arms. “It is a serious accusation of accusing me of falsifying reports!” she shot right back. “And this has nothing to do with what I think about Holly, this has everything to do with the fact that you think I’m dating your Beta, and some controlling Alpha complex makes you mad about it!” Logan looked like she’d just slapped him in the face. “Is that an admission?” he asked. Serena fumed, nostrils flaring. “NO!” She roared, throwing her arms up into

the air. "What the hell is going on with you?" she asked. Hands still shaking, Serena shook her head. How could she ever tell Logan he was the father of her kids if he thought her capable of falsifying reports and test results? She had a third-party lab do the tests, but it was still a huge accusation. If he really felt that way, he'd never believe her about the twins. "What is going on with me?" Logan asked. "Why wouldn't you tell me that you and Carson are together? I thought we were friends."

"Friends?" Serena asked with another scoff. She leaned back, sitting on the edge of Adriana's desk. "Friends? You have the audacity to say we are friends after you question my professionalism and claim I'm capable of falsifying lab results?" Logan sighed, looking down at the floor. Serena didn't care anymore what was going on with him. He was frustrated and upset, that was obvious, but now he was taking it out on her, and that she wouldn't stand for!

"Logan, first of all, it would compromise my career if I ever did something like that," she pointed out, working to appeal to his rational mind. "As the sole supporter of my kids, I would NEVER do anything to take that support away. Not to mention, the machines in the lab print out the reports automatically after the blood has been tested. Do you know what kind of computer knowledge it would take to hack that system and create an identical report on a desktop machine?" Logan shrugged, sighing.

"A heck of a lot more than I have!" Serena snapped. "You know, I am allowed to have friends in the pack. More than that, even if there was something going on with me and Carson, which there isn't, why would it be your business?" "You're a pack doctor and Carson is by Beta. I should know about those interpersonal relationships," Logan defended. Serena rolled her eyes. "My personal life is my personal life," she stated bluntly. "I can spend time with you want, and I can let my kids spend time with who I want them to spend time with. I don't owe you anything, Logan, and you have no claim on me or my kids!

Logan's shoulders sagged slightly. Serena felt satisfied at standing up to him, but suddenly she regretted her words. If she'd told Logan the truth about being the twins' father, then he would have a claim to them, and who they spent time with would be his business. Shaking her head, Serena went back to sit at the desk. She took deep breaths, calming herself down after her outburst. It was a little out of character for her, but Logan had made her so mad! "I think you should leave," she said after Logan stood there silently for a while. "If you'd rather yell at me than focus on the health of your girlfriend and your unborn child, then you're of no use to me here." Logan snarled, lifting his head and glaring at Serena. She raised an eyebrow at him. "Besides, I still have a lot of work to do," she added. Logan snorted in annoyance, but he turned on his heel and exited the office. The moment he was gone, Serena sighed a huge sigh of relief. The Alpha's anger had filled the office with a suffocating force. Now, she could relax and think about what had happened. She and Logan had had fights before, but nothing so personal, nothing so raw. She'd never seen the full force of his temper, fueled by

jealousy, control, and possessiveness. That was not a side to him she wanted to see again. It was not a side that she wanted her kids to see either. Olivia and Oliver loved him. She never wanted them to cower before him. Shaking her head, Serena went back to her reports. She still had a full stack to go through. She'd have to find a way to get Holly's compliance, without Logan's help. She couldn't understand why he had been so focused on her and Carson. It wasn't like she didn't have other friends in the pack. She had Dana and Adriana, and she spent time with them and the twins all the time! So, clearly, Logan's problem was that Carson was male, or that Carson was his friend. It was just testosterone and Alpha male headbutting. Serena didn't like it. "Everything okay in here?" Adriana said, popping her head through the office door? "Fine." Serena said with a nod. She didn't even look up from her reports.

Nurses said they heard yelling when Logan stopped by," she said. Serena looked up Professionalism from her report this time. "Oh, that," she said. "He had a few choice things to say about me telling him Holly might be hiding something." "I told you that was a conversation I didn't want to have," Adriana said with a wink. Serena chuckled. "Yes, I should have expected something like that from him," she said. She sighed and set the folder she was reviewing aside.

"If you want to call it a day, I can finish up those reports," Adriana said. "It has been a slow day. She walked into the office and stood beside the chair Serena was in. Serena yawned and stretched.

"Are you sure?" she asked. "I don't have many more to go through." Adriana patted her shoulder.

"Look, I know the Alpha can be a bit abrasive," she said. "Maybe you should go home early, relax, spend some time with your kids." Serena smiled up at her friend. "That sounds wonderful," she admitted. "Thank you." Adriana nodded as Serena got up and collected her things. She was looking forward to hugging her kids after such a hair raising fight with Logan. Again, the thought that she was going to have to tell him the truth sent a shiver through her. Would he even believe her? She'd have to time it right, with enough distance between this fight. Also, she'd have to make sure it didn't seem like some attempt to usurp his relationship with Holly Those were two new complications to the whole problem! It gave Serena a headache to think about. She groaned, rubbing her temples as she went to her car. Logan obviously had a lot of his own problems he needed to sort out. Whether they were about his feelings towards Holly, being a child, letting Serena have other men in her life...she had no idea where his anger originated from. She knew that whatever he was feeling and going through was a little deeper than him thinking she and Carson were dating secretly. The idea that Serena would feel the need to keep her personal relationships a secret was another thing she couldn't understand. Logan felt betrayed and paranoid that some of the people closest to him were keeping secrets and carrying on behind his back. She knew that said more about him than it did about her, but it still bothered her.

When she got home, Serena she was happy to see that Dana already had the kids out in the yard playing. She smiled to herself, leaving all the bad energy about her argument with Logan and her confusing day at the hospital in the car. Stepping out to greet her kids, she put on her 'mom hat,' forgetting about anything 14

that bothered her or that could drag her down. She was there to enjoy her kids. Opening her arms, she invited them to hug her. Olivia and Oliver threw themselves at her, nearly knocking her over. Serena laughed, hugging them tightly. She loved her kids, and she was committed to giving them the best life ever, with or without their father in the picture!

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)