

The Alpha King's Human Mate by HC Dolores

Chapter 66

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"They say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself." (=

Andy Warhol

After nearly an hour in the bath with Griffin, the water got cold enough to force us out. Of course, this wasn't until after Griffin had gently cleaned every part of me - and I do mean every part - with some expensive floral-scented shampoo that looked like it cost more than my entire wardrobe.

However, I couldn't deny that the bath had done wonders for my sore muscles. I could barely feel the effects of last night - although I wasn't completely sure if that was from soaking in the bath or because Griffin refused to let me do anything for myself. He even insisted on carrying me to the bed and toweling me off.

Thad initially protested, but after a few minutes, I could tell he wasn't going to budge. "I like doing it," he'd merely said as he wrapped my hair

in a towel.

I didn't have the heart to tell him that he'd done the hair wrap wrong. As he walked into the closet, I fixed it myself.

"I'm going to the training grounds today," he called from the closet, "I Chapter 66

do quarterly checks on the progress of the wolves in training. You said you wanted to be more involved. You're welcome to come with me, but it will be cold.")

I spend so much time in this castle that I forget I'm in Canada and it's still freezing cold outside.)

"I would like that," I called back, "The training...isn't that what I saw the other day? With that instructor and his students? Or is this something different?"

"Instructor Ivan is just one of my trainers," Griffin said, and I could've sworn I heard his voice darken at the name. "There are several of them, and they're responsible for training new pack warriors. Instructor Ivan is one of the best ~ as pig-headed as he is."

Griffin emerged from the closet, fully dressed in dark jeans, a long-sleeved black henley, and a thick jacket. In his arms, he held another bundle of clothes that I could only assume were for me.

"As he approached, I reached out to take them but he pulled them away. "Don't you want me to get dressed?" I asked, raising my eyebrows.

There was a teasing look on Griffin's face. "I don't necessarily want you to get dressed, but if we're going to make it out of this bedroom today, I think you'll need to."

I tried to grab for the clothes again, but it was no use — Griffin kept Chapter 66

them out of reach. What is he playing at right now?

"Okay, well, in that case...are you going to hand them to me anytime soon?"

That teasing expression never left his face. "No. But if you sit down and be good, I'll put them on you."

My face flushed and annoyance flickered through me. Does he have to find every opportunity to embarrass me? "I can put my own clothes on, you know."

"I know," he shrugged, "But I like taking care of you, little fox. It soothes my wolf. It makes me feel like a good mate." (=

It was hard not to lose my edge when he said that.

"You're a good mate, Griffin," I told him, "You already take care of me. You don't need to dress me just to prove that." (7

His eyes softened. "I'm glad you think so, little fox," he said, "Now raise your arms so I can put this shirt on you."

There's no winning with him.

I rolled my eyes as I lifted my arms up as instructed. (: Chapter 66

With a satisfied smile on his face, Griffin began pulling a warm long-

sleeved shirt over my head.

Thad never realized just how big the castle's grounds were, especially when they weren't covered in a thick layer of snow. Behind the castle, several large fields stretched into an evergreen forest.

On the field, several large groups of young werewolves were lined up, practicing various forms of sparring. An instructor stood in front of each group, their loud voices carrying across the fields.

This looks like one of the warrior training classes I took back home ~ just on a much larger scale. The classes at home didn't have more than twenty students at a time, there must be close to 200 wolves training here.

Although most of the wolves, save for the instructors, looked like young teens, their faces were intense and serious. None of them were goofing off or joking around — every single student was solely focused on the instructor.

Of course, that changed the moment that Griffin and I began striding toward the top of the field. Well, Griffin was striding with me in his arms. Despite protesting that I was completely fine to walk across the

fields, he refused to let me out of his arms.

At this point, I think his refusal to let me walk has less to do with me being "sore" and more with him getting to keep his hands on me all day. Chapter 66

As wide as the open fields were, you could feel the shift in the air as soon as the other wolves sensed Griffin's presence.

The instructors stopped teaching and the young wolves straightened up, bowing their heads.

"Your Majesties," a middle-aged, dark-haired man at the top of the field greeted us. He bowed his head, so I didn't get a good look at his face, but the heavy scars on his arms and legs spoke for themselves. This man had seen action.

"Instructor Benjamin," Griffin addressed him, coming to stand beside him. As he did so, Griffin gently placed me on the ground, but he immediately put a hand around my waist.

Although I was dressed warmly, it was still cold enough that I found myself snuggling into Griffin's warmth.

"We've been expecting your visit," the man, Instructor Benjamin said. He finally raised his head and I noticed that his face was scarred like his arms. "What do you think of the students, Your Majesty? This batch has been making good progress. I expect good things from them."

Griffin looked out at the rows of tense students with bowed heads. "Good," he finally said, "Now more than ever, trained warriors are important." Instructor Benjamin merely nodded his head in agreement.

I wonder if he's referring to the tension that's been building with Alpha Liam. Does Griffin think that conflict could escalate into some sort of war? Chapter 66 or battle? "You may return to your class, Instructor Benjamin. If you're pleased

with their progress, so am I." Instructor Benjamin gave us another bow and headed back to a group of students waiting for him.

I could tell the entire field of instructors and students were still on edge with Griffin's presence, but slowly, Instructor Benjamin was able to coax them back into regular training.

Griffin and I remained at the top of the field, watching the lessons go on. "What do you think, little fox?"

"Well, their training certainly looks more intense than what I'm used to," I said.

Yet, as I watched the young boys spar with each other or listen to their instructor, something nagged at me.

"There is one thing I'm curious about," I said, turning to look at Griffin. "What's that?"

"Why aren't there any girls training to be warriors? All of these students and instructors look like men."

It was the truth ~ I couldn't spot a single girl on the field. There was enough testosterone in the place to power a rocket. I knew that female warriors were unusual in most packs, but even at my dad's, warrior Chapter 66

training had been mandatory for everyone.

"Well, the class isn't off-limits to women," Griffin shrugged, "But parents are the one who send their children off to be trained. We simply work with what they give us."

"And they don't give you daughters?"

"Usually no. I can't remember the last time I saw a girl at one of these lessons."

"Don't you think that's kind of a problem?" I asked.

Griffin's eyes narrowed at me. "It's not surprising," he explained, "This training is for future warriors, and most female wolves won't become warriors."

I could feel myself treading on dangerous territory. The direction of the conversation was beginning to work me up, but I didn't want to have a blow-out fight in front of hundreds of other wolves.

"And why won't they become warriors?" I prodded.

"For a variety of reasons," Griffin said, "Many male wolves are very protective of their mates. They don't want to have to worry about them dying in battle, it would just drive their wolves mad. Not to mention, most female wolves just don't want to be warriors, not when they've got a family to take care of." Chapter 66

Griffin's explanation felt like a diplomatic version of the same misogynistic bullshit I'd been exposed to since I'd been dropped into the werewolf world. He could dress it up however he wanted, but it all summed up to the same thing: female wolves were expected to stay home and pop out a few kids while the male wolves got to handle the real danger.

"Don't female wolves have to worry about their mates dying in battle too?" I countered, "I mean, the risk is the same regardless of which mate becomes a warrior. If a female wolf dies in battle, she's leaving her family without a mother. But if a male wolf dies in battle, he's leaving his family without a father. Either way, it's still dangerous — but women should be able to take that risk if they want to."

I could tell that Griffin was beginning to get annoyed that I wouldn't drop the topic. "Yes, but we only train willing warriors," he said, "We can't train female wolves if they don't sign up. They're welcome to take the risk, but they've got to be the ones to do it."

"Well, maybe they're not signing up because they're not being taught that it's okay to. If you spend your entire life learning that you're supposed to be a housewife, you're not going to wake up one day and become a soldier. Not without a little encouragement." ")

Griffin remained silent, assessing me under his hard gaze. I couldn't tell if my words were actually sinking in or if I'd just royally pissed him off. Maybe both.

"Your Majesties," an accented voice suddenly cut through the tension. Chapter 66

Both Griffin and I turned around around.

When he caught sight of who had interrupted us, Griffin immediately growled, tugging me behind him.

Instructor Ivan stood several feet from us, his head bowed and his hands held up in surrender. He was practically shaking under Griffin's stare, but he held his ground.

"I mean you no harm, Your Majesties," he said, and he momentarily looked up to lock eyes with me, "There's something that I've come to talk to you about."