

Alphas Bride 261

Chapter 261 - The Guests Are Here (1) [Bonus ]

"AWOOOO!"

A loud howl shook half-open windows and Maddox jolted from his sleep.

In his sleepy haze, he was confident that his limbs were obstructed with thick vines, so he haphazardly waved his arms and legs in order to break free, but no matter how much he moved, the vines were coming back.

He was starting to panic. What the hell was going on?

Maddox harshly pushed one of the vines that were closing in on his neck when... "Aww!", a muffled female cry was heard from his left, and Maddox realized where he was.

The Dark Howlers pack. Guest bedroom.

Those things obstructing him were not vines, but female legs and arms. Four legs and four arms, to be precise, because he had two she-wolves in bed with him. He picked them up in the Shifters nightclub last night.

Maddox pushed the arms of his bedmates away so he can sit upright.

The mystery of his location and restraints was solved, but what was that noise?

Maddox shook the blonde on his left, the one who made sounds previously. "What was that howl?"

The female groaned before responding, "My Alpha." She would recognize that voice anywhere.

Maddox shook her again with, "Is there some emergency?" Why else would Damon make such a ruckus early in the morning?

"There is no emergency. It sounded like he was going to hunt."

Maddox's lips twitched. What hunt? At this time, Damon was probably in bed with Talia. Did he need to make noise for everyone to hear? Was he rubbing it in?

Maddox had a good idea what Damon and Talia were doing right at that moment, and he remembered that Damon told him how being with a mate is incomparably better than anything he experienced before.

Maddox looked left and right at the two she-wolves by his side. A blonde and a brunette. Both of them were fine women with curves in all the right places, ample breasts, and wide hips, just how he loves them.

Last night, they did all kinds of things that would put the world-famous contortionists to shame, and it was good, but not more than usual.

If taken daily, even the finest wine starts tasting ordinary.

Maddox frowned while wondering, is it possible that there is a girl for him out there, one that will make him forget about bedding two or three women at the same time? Surely, the pleasure is there, but it never made him howl randomly.

Maddox plopped back on the bed and women's limbs slithered toward him to trap him again, and this time he didn't resist.

Two hands moved toward his crotch area, one from each side, under the cover, straight toward his morning tent, and Maddox pushed all unnecessary thoughts away because the last night's party was still not over.

The only decision he had to make was if he will pounce first on the girl on his left or on the one on his right. Or maybe he can stack them one on top of the other and just go at it. He did that last night and found that it was efficient.

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In the garden...

"Breakfast is this way...", Lily explained to Kalina's sister (aka Tatiana) as she led the way into the garden where the breakfast was being set up on one long table.

Lilly and Ivy are Omegas from the Lightclaw pack that came to accompany Kalina, per Luna Alicia's suggestion.

Two Omegas arrived last night. They slept in the common building where Omegas are staying and returned early morning to help with breakfast preparations.

Their other task is to help newcomers from the Lightclaw pack feel at home, so Lily and Ivy familiarized themselves with the packhouse of the Dark Howlers pack beforehand, and now Lily was guiding Tatiana while Ivy was helping with food preparation.

The breakfast was set up buffet-style with various pastries, spreads, fresh fruits, and hot and cold beverages.

Three circular tables could accommodate six people each, so there was plenty of seating to choose from.

Dawn passed by Lily and Tatiana with a big covered plate in her hands, and Tatiana's nose moved as she picked up the scent of freshly roasted sausages. It smelled good.

Maya and Caden were sitting at one of the tables and they observed Tatiana, a tall brunette that looked like she came from a fashion magazine. Her hair was flat-ironed straight, spot-on makeup and dress that fit her perfectly and matched her shoes. She had jewelry on, and even her shiny nails looked expensive.

Lily introduced them when they reached there. "These are Beta Caden and Beta Maya. Betas, this is Tatiana, Kalina's sister."

"Thank you. You may leave.", Maya told Lily and turned to Tatiana who already sat at their table. "We are glad you decided to visit us with Kalina. I am Maya. I hope you will feel at home and tell me if you need anything..."

After exchanging pleasantries, Maya gestured toward the table where food was being set up. "All the food will be out soon, and you can help yourself."

"Do people normally sleep late here?", Tatiana asked.

Maya shrugged. "Not really. I'm sure everyone is awake and getting ready for the day. People should be here in time for breakfast. You can start with a beverage."

Tatiana let out a long breath. "Coffee sounds good."

Caden stood up. "Allow me. How do you take your coffee?"

"Large. Black. No sugar."

Caden nodded in understanding and scurried toward the table with beverages. He didn't feel like chit-chatting with that posh woman (aka Tatiana). There was nothing wrong with Tatiana, however, when Maya was around, Caden was always on pins and needles when another (unmated) female was around because he needed to be polite toward the woman while not being too polite and making Maya jealous.

"Did you sleep well?", Maya asked Tatiana while trying to start a chit-chat. In Talia's absence, Maya was the host.

"Not really.", Tatiana responded and before Maya could make a fuss about it, she quickly added, "I'm jet lagging. Every time I come to the States it takes me days to adjust, and when I can finally feel like a person, I return to Europe."

"I see...", Maya didn't understand because she never left the United States. Normally, werewolves can function well after skipping a few days of sleep, but eventually, the fatigue will catch up to them. "Let me know if we can make things easier for you."

"Coffee helps.", Tatiana said, and she looked gratefully at Caden who was approaching with a steaming cup.

"Good morning, people!", Mindy called cheerfully as she approached the three people at the table.

She greeted Maya and Caden and then got introduced to Tatiana.

"Do I have something on my face?", Tatiana asked when she saw that Mindy was giving her a second (and a third) lookover.

"No, no...", Mindy said. "It's just that considering Lina's style, you are... different."

Kalina has short hair, styled in a pixie cut, she has tattoos and a sport-ish style of dressing, while Tatiana is sophisticated with long shiny hair, immaculate skin, and extruding elegance all over.

Compared to Tatiana, Kalina is a tomboy.

Tatiana put her fingers over her lips and stifled a laugh that sounded gentle like birds chirping. "We get that a lot. Lina is into excitement and adventures, while I am into other things."

How can Mindy miss this opportunity for asking questions? She never had issues saying what was on her mind. "Other things? Like...?"

"Fashion.", Tatiana responded, and after a dramatic pause, she added, "I am a fashion designer and I have my company in Europe."

Maya stared at Tatiana, and now she understood why Kalina's sister looked like she came out of a fashion magazine. Tatiana IS a fashion magazine.

"Wow!", Mindy exclaimed. "That sounds fantastic. I would love to see some of your works."

Tatiana smiled. "Sure. Once we get our hands on a tablet, I can show you some. Actually, I have some pieces here with me, I brought them for Lina..."

"Ah...", Mindy made a sorrowful sound. "I wish that my sister is a fashion designer."

"What is your sister?", Tatiana asked.

Mindy made a face. "SHE is my brother who is an Alpha. Other than leading a pack and bedding women, he is not good for anything else. If he is not my brother, I wouldn't speak to him..."

Chapter 262 - The Guests Are Here (2)

Tatiana was not sure how to respond to Mindy's words. Shouldn't Alphas be feared and respected? Sure, they are brother and sister, so she won't be punished, but how can Mindy describe her brother as an almost-female womanizer?

As much as Tatiana was an opinionated woman, she didn't dare act brazenly. After all, she was a guest here and she didn't want to offend anyone.

"Before meeting Tony and his family, I didn't get a chance to interact with Alphas.", Tatiana responded politically. "I stick to my small circle of friends who are mostly humans."

Mindy had an idea about this because Kalina told her how she and her four sisters left home in their teens in order to learn about the world and integrate into society. Their family is a bit odd because they are not part of a tightly-knitted pack like what's normal for North America. Instead, they live scattered among humans, and they meet occasionally with other families who embraced a similar lifestyle. Kalina called them werewolf-gypsies.

Kalina also mentioned that her oldest sister is into fashion, but she didn't mention details.

"It must be fun to travel and show your work.", Mindy's eyes sparkled as she imagined a high-fashion show, a catwalk, lights, and names of her charities on the wall in the back. That would attract boatloads of donations! "Do you participate in fashion shows? Or do you work for magazines or specific retailers? How much are you involved in picking your models? Guy models are pretty."

Tatiana made a face. "Pretty, yes. Handsome, no. They are skinny for my taste."

Mindy agreed with this. For werewolf standards, models are super-skinny, but that's only because they are serving the human fashion industry and in the last few decades, humans became obsessed with slim figures. But models aside, "Living a life of a fashion designer must be luxurious."

Tatiana bobbed her head. "I'm doing alright."

"Alright? That's an understatement", Kalina said from the door. She heard her sister.

Everyone turned to see that Kalina and Tony made an appearance with four other individuals behind them. Those four people Tony brought with him from the Lightclaw pack for training. Three men and one woman.

"What do you mean, an understatement?", Mindy was curious.

Kalina lifted her chin proudly. "Did you hear of the brand, Dama T?"

Mindy paused and then her eyes lit up when she realized what Kalina was talking about.

"Dama T is you?", Mindy asked Tatiana and when the latter confirmed with a nod, Mindy patted her chest dramatically.

Dama T is a popular fashion brand with a unique way of combining elegant and practical, and other than being super-exclusive (and super-expensive), the wait to get a garment is months. MONTHS!

No wonder Tatiana was dressed up fancily. Those were clothes she designed herself!

Mindy looked at Tatiana with renewed interest. "You are my best friend."

Tatiana stifled a laugh. "You make friends easily."

Mindy raised her glass of orange juice in a toast. "What can I say? You are a best friend material. I can tell."

Tatiana shook her head helplessly and clinked her coffee mug with Mindy's glass of orange juice. She thought that Mindy was entertaining.

Mindy didn't connect it right away, but she was familiar with the Dama T brand. The success is contributed to one talented and business-savvy designer, a she-wolf who likes to keep a low profile, and that's Tatiana!

Tatiana is independent, smart, and successful, and she built her brand from the ground up without relying on a man. That's Mindy's cup of tea.



It's not that Mindy dislikes when a woman relies on a man, but she saw too many she-wolves rising dust only because they have a strong backer. Women like Tatiana are self-made and Mindy respects that immensely.

Maya and Caden helped everyone settle for breakfast, and Tony introduced the four newcomers: Paul, Greg, Nate, and Meg.

They were all in their early twenties, and Tony was considering them for various high-level positions in the Lightclaw pack once he becomes an Alpha. He still didn't decide who of the four will take which position, but he hoped to get additional guidance from Damon and Maddox as they go through the training.

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The atmosphere was lively when Damon and Talia joined for breakfast.

Mindy, Kalina, and Tatiana were chatting in a lively mood, and Tony was at that table, feeding Kalina and making sure her plate was always full.

The second table was occupied by Paul, Nate, Greg, and Meg.

Maya and Caden were moving between two tables while ensuring that everyone feels welcome.

Damon scanned the faces and grinned at Talia.

"What?", she asked.

"I told you we won't be last.", Damon said proudly. "Max is still not here."

Talia would respond something snarky, but Damon's happiness amplified hers and she ended up laughing. She was never so happy, and neither was he.

Talia and Damon introduced themselves to new faces, and greeted the familiar ones, before sitting at the table with Mindy, Tatiana, Tony, and Kalina.

Damon went to get food for himself and Talia, and Talia was quick to exchange hugs with Kalina and Mindy.

Mindy smiled knowingly at Talia. "You look three orgasms happy."

Talia's eyes flashed in shock. What did Mindy say?

Behind Talia, at the table with breakfast, Damon's ears perked up. He turned toward Mindy and raised four fingers before mouthing to her, 'four'.

Of course, Kalina didn't miss this either, and both Kalina and Mindy burst into giggles.

Talia's face fell when she realized that Mindy and Kalina were looking over her shoulder. Talia snapped to look at Damon who was busy putting croissants onto a plate, like nothing fishy was going on.

Talia pressed her lips into a line and took a mental note to get back at Damon. She was not sure what he did, but she knew he did something. And it was mischievous.

Damon returned while carrying two plates full of food and then he went back to get one coffee for himself and an orange juice for Talia.

After settling next to Talia, Damon started cutting what needed to be cut and spreading what needed to be spread, and then he fed Talia one bite at a time, without care that everyone was watching.

Actually, Tony was doing the same to Kalina, so neither of the two guys was standing out.

Both Talia and Kalina enjoyed pampering and Talia noticed the mark on Kalina's neck. It was partially hidden with the collar of Kalina's blouse and Talia took a mental note to ask about it later, in private.

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In the kitchen...

Stephanie was having breakfast with Dawn, Zina, Ivy, and Lily.

Maya came to the kitchen earlier to tell them that they can eat in the garden with everyone. "One table is completely free because Axel and his party are not here yet."

Stephanie refused. "It's fine. We have everything we need here."

Ivy and Lily thought how that was strange. In the Lightclaw pack, Omegas will never eat with high-ranking members unless it's an official event that everyone is attending.

Dawn and Zina approved of staying in the kitchen. It would be one thing if it's a party and they can mingle, but this was breakfast, and the atmosphere was much more formal.

"We can talk freely here, and if we join you we will need to be quiet.", Zina said to Maya. She mostly said this because of Ivy and Lily. It was obvious that the two newcomers were very strict about respecting hierarchy.

Dawn and Zina were full of questions about the Lightclaw pack, and Ivy and Lily took turns answering them.

Stephanie's head whipped toward the door a moment before a figure appeared there.

"Why are you here?", Stephanie asked Lisa stiffly. She didn't want to cause a scene and they agreed that Lisa will stay in the apartment while Stephanie is in the packhouse.

"Am I not welcome?", Lisa asked, feeling wronged. "Every pack member can come here."

"True.", Stephanie confirmed. "But no one comes unless they have some business here. That's why I asked, why are you here?"

Lisa's eyes moved over Dawn and Zina, and her eyebrows shoot up when she saw Lily and Ivy. "I know you."

"Yes, Miss Lisa", Ivy responded. "We met more than once in the packhouse of the Lightclaw pack."

"Tony brought you with him.", Lisa guessed.

"Not exactly.", Lily responded. "We are here to serve Miss Kalina."

Lisa's expression stiffened.

"Lisa?", Stephanie called, and Lisa saw that her mother's brows were furrowing.

"Mom, I know what you are going to say.", Lisa said. "It's OK. Everyone knows that Tony abandoned me when he found his mate and I am having a difficult time accepting the reality. I was sitting in the apartment and going crazy. I need to end this."

"By coming here?", Stephanie asked with disapproval obvious in her voice.

"What else can I do? Don't worry, I won't cause trouble. I just want to see them. Maybe if I see Tony and Kalina happy, I will be able to accept that the last few years of my life were a lie and I need to move on."

Stephanie loved that Lisa finally spoke about moving on, but... "I don't think this is a good idea." If Lisa loses her cool and causes an incident, Alpha Damon might really punish her.

Chapter 263 - The Guests Are Here (3) [Bonus ]

"Don't you need to talk to Tony and the group he brought here?", Talia asked Damon softly, only for Damon to hear.

They finished with breakfast and were chatting over beverages while snacking on fruits.

Damon cocked an eyebrow at Talia. "Are you chasing me away?"

"Of course, not. But they came here to train. Shouldn't you spend some time with them?"

The truth was that Talia also wanted to chat with Kalina and Mindy, and Damon's presence made it impossible to have a girl chat. And because of Damon, Tony was there also.

Damon hugged Talia tightly and spoke into her hair like a child who was wronged, "They will be here for many days with plenty of chances to train and talk and..."

"And I'm not going anywhere.", Talia interrupted Damon. "I want to talk to ladies and see if they want to go shopping, and you have your things to do."

Mindy's eyes lit up. "Did someone say, shopping?"

Damon rolled his eyes at Mindy but didn't say anything. Mindy's blatant way of speaking always rubbed Damon the wrong way, but he ignored her on those few occasions they met because of Maddox. However, since Talia was here, this was his third time to see Mindy within a month and there were instances when he wanted to install a zipper on her mouth.

However, Damon knew that Talia was right, but that didn't make it easy to separate. He wanted Talia in his touching distance all the time.

Yes, he was going to the neighboring table, and he knew that soon they will head to the training grounds for Tony and his people to see the equipment, meet Damon's generals, and discuss upcoming training, but even if his distance from Talia was only three steps, that was three steps too many.

Damon looked at Talia and then gave her a long toe-curling kiss, right there in the garden, for everyone to see.

When Damon inched away, Talia was breathless and flustered.

"Think about me while I'm away, kitten.", Damon said with all the seriousness in the world, and Talia was not sure how to respond to this because his emotions confirmed his insecurities and yearning.

Instead of saying anything, Talia gave him a big hug.

Yes, Damon was an Alpha, feared and respected by many, but to Talia, he was Damon. Just Damon.

They held each other in silence, enjoying their mixed scents and everything was the way it should be.

Eventually, Talia spoke, "Focus on what you are doing, so that you finish as soon as possible. When work is done, we can have fun. I miss you already."

After a few quick kisses, Damon stood up reluctantly and beckoned Tony to follow him to the other table.

Maya joined Tatiana, Kalina, Mindy, and Talia, and five women started discussing plans for the next few days so that they can come up with what they needed to buy during their shopping outing.

Talia's eyes rested on the other table, and Mindy noticed.

Mindy playfully nudged Talia. "Damon will not disappear if you don't look at him."

"I know."

"So why are you looking there?", Mindy challenged her.

"I was not looking at him.", Talia said.

Before Mindy could ask more questions, Talia stood up to walk there.

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Since Damon left and Maya joined, Mindy and Tatiana were leading the discussion related to girl-shopping and Talia noticed Meg glancing their way.

As someone who was ignored and neglected for most of her life, Talia was sensitive to these things.

Talia approached the second table and put her hand on Damon's shoulder. This small act made everyone look at Talia.

Talia glanced at everyone before asking Damon, "Is it OK if Meg joins us for the morning?"

Damon was amazed to see that Talia took the initiative to invite Meg. His little kitten was taking care of their guests, like a true Luna, and Damon was delighted to see her grow.

Tony frowned. "We came here to train."

Talia's gaze didn't move from Damon. "You said that there will be plenty of chances for them to train, and we are going shopping as a group only today."

How can Damon say no to that? "If Meg wants to join, I don't see a problem."

Tony's frown deepened. Why was everyone talking like he was not there?

Meg's eyes sparkled and she swiftly stood up and bowed toward Tony. "I will make sure to make up for whatever I miss."

Damon cocked a finger beckoning Talia to come closer. "I fulfilled your wish. How will you repay me for this, hmm?"

Talia's eyes flashed in shock as she didn't miss Damon's suggestive tone. But more than his tone, his left hand landed at the back of her knee and was inching higher under her skirt!

"In private.", Talia responded in an urgent whisper.

Damon's lips curved into a mischievous grin. "That's exactly what I had on my mind."

Talia was flabbergasted. She meant that they should discuss that in private, and not that she will repay him in private, but then... was there any point in arguing with Damon?

Talia moved her legs so that Damon's naughty hand can't reach her, and she swiftly leaned to peck his lips. "Thanks, you are the best." With that, Talia turned to walk away with Meg by her side.



Damon looked at two retreating backs, one belonging to a brunette-something and the other one was his mate's, his kitten, the most dazzling woman in the world.

He couldn't wait to be done with work and to return to his fun with Talia. Ah, he was hard already! That made it difficult to focus on a talk about training with five guys at the table.

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Meg accepted Talia's invitation gladly, but when she reached the other table, she hesitated.

Meg grew up in the Lightclaw pack where hierarchy is strictly respected, and at the table in front of her was her future Luna (aka Kalina), a celebrity with an Alpha bloodline (aka Mindy), and a Beta (aka Maya). Talia and Tatiana didn't have any official standing but both of them had an exquisite aura that told Meg they are not to be trifled with.

Maya pushed the plate with fruits closer to Meg. "We will go to the beach at least once, so you will need a swimsuit. Other than that, we will go to a spa and maybe overnight camping..."

Meg listened as Maya was telling her plan of activities for the next few days and she relaxed seeing that everyone was acting normally.

Kalina scooted closer to Talia. "I see that you and Alpha Damon are still going strong. Actually, you are chummier than you were at my pack." She looked at Talia expectantly, obviously waiting for Talia to clarify her relationship status with Damon.

Talia glanced around the table. Everyone seemed friendly. Meg was totally focused on what Maya was saying, Maya and Mindy already knew, and it was only a matter of time before others hear about it also...

Talia's heart pounded wildly, and she inhaled forcibly before saying, "We are mates."

"I knew it!", Kalina exclaimed excitedly. "No wonder you are so clingy." Kalina glanced at Talia's neck. "Don't worry. It gets better after marking."

"It does?", Talia asked, genuinely curious.

Kalina nodded and craned her neck to expose Tony's mark on her neck. It looked like a dark brown tattoo in the shape of a wolf's paw that extended into a crescent moon.

"Once his mark is on you, it's like confirmation that you belong to him. Many guys won't hit on you once they see you are taken, and also, no one wants to provoke an Alpha.", Kalina explained and lowered her voice as she continued, "I assume you have your reason for not announcing it. Are you planning a big surprise party?"

Oh, boy. Somehow, Talia knew that she will need to explain this. Again. "It's nothing like that. Damon needs to deal with some things first."

"Like what?", Kalina continued probing.

Talia hesitated, unsure how to say this. But there was no way to make it sound more pleasant. "Marcy will be here tomorrow this time."

Kalina blinked once, twice, and then she asked, "Marcy, who? The one who came onto you in front of the restroom at my party?" And after that Marcy was trying to get close to Kalina, but that was not related to Talia.

Chapter 264 - The Guests Are Here (4)

Kalina was not sure if her ears malfunctioned. Did Talia say that Marcy was coming? Marcy, from the Red Moon pack?

Seeing that Kalina was shocked, Talia explained, "Marcy believes that Damon will make her his Luna, and even though he never made any promises, and they are not engaged, he didn't reject her outright either."

"What?", Kalina blurted out before Talia could say anything else.

Talia raised her hand, indicating to Kalina to be patient. "Damon has no intention of making Marcy his Luna, but considering her background, he couldn't reject her outright without a valid reason and if he announces that I'm his mate, he fears that they might target me in order to make him mateless. Damon needs to deal with the situation delicately in order not to escalate."

Kalina didn't like this. "And what will you do while he handles Marcy delicately? Now is Marcy, and tomorrow will be another she-wolf with a powerful background. What will happen when Marcy comes? Are you going to watch as she throws herself at him?"

"Don't make him look like a bad guy.", Talia was quick to jump to Damon's defense. She couldn't say that Marcy coming was her wolf's idea, but Talia knew the reason behind her wolf's actions and even though Talia thought that her wolf was harsh, Talia didn't completely disagree with her wolf either.

"It is a way for him to show his sincerity.", Talia said eventually.

Kalina glanced at Mindy who observed all this in silence. "You knew about this."

Mindy had nothing to hide. "Lia told me last night."

"And you are OK with that?", Kalina asked Mindy.

"What do you expect me to do?"

Kalina pinched the roof of her nose. "There are so many ways this can go wrong."

Tatiana snorted while keeping her coffee mug back on the table. "And there are so many ways for you to stay out of other people's business."

Kalina frowned at her sister. "Lia is my friend, and I am worried about her."

"Worry is one thing but poking your nose in someone else's relationship is another. It's obvious that Talia is not comfortable with this. Instead of adding oil to the fire, you should ask how you can help or stay out of it.", Tatiana said in an official tone of an elder sister.

"This is not some random Dick or Harry. This is Talia's mate.", Kalina said.

Tatiana shrugged. "You can call him Dick, Harry, or whatever you want, but if he is a cheater, the mate bond won't turn him into a saint." Tatiana glanced at Talia. "I'm not saying that your Damon is a cheater. I was just talking in general."

When Talia gave a stiff nod, Tatiana continued talking to Kalina.

"Regardless of if they are mates or not, when one of them sleeps around, the other one is suffering. But this is Talia's relationship and unless you have proof that Alpha Damon will get chummy with another woman, I suggest you tone it down."

Kalina and her sisters grew up in an environment that was mostly consisting of humans, and they are not advocates of a concept of how the Moon Goddess knows best, and that the mate bond is a universal recipe for happiness. They believe that for a successful relationship both sides need to make effort, and the mate bond only makes things easier. However, if a person is crooked, no amount of mate bond will fix that.

Kalina pressed her lips into a line and turned to Talia. "I am sorry. I didn't mean to draw a wedge between you and Alpha Damon. I was talking from my perspective. If Tony was planning to get close to his ex, for whatever reason, I would be unsettled."

"I am unsettled also.", Talia admitted. "But Damon is an Alpha, and Marcy is a daughter of an Alpha who is set on making Marcy Damon's Luna. I can't prioritize what's comfortable for me and risk a war

between packs. It might take a few days, but Damon said he will handle Marcy and send her packing, and I believe him."

Kalina swallowed counter-arguments and decided to pat Talia's hand while comforting her, "I'm sure it will be OK. I can see that Alpha Damon adores you. If you need something, let me know."

"We can hide a body. Or make it look like an accident.", Mindy chimed in. Since her last night's talk with Talia, she was thinking about it.

"I would never suggest something like that if privacy was not guaranteed. I know that my sister won't rat on me, but others...", Kalina's voice trailed as she glanced at the table where guys were sitting. They are werewolves, and if they focus, they can hear them. And Meg and Maya were right there!

Talia stifled a giggle. "I am happy to have you as friends." She really was.

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Maddox got out of the bathroom, fresh as a daisy and ready for the day.

He paused at the sight of a bed that had two naked she-wolves on it. Did they go back to sleep?

Maddox shook his head and approached the bed stealthily.

'SLAP! SLAP!'

Two white buttocks got Maddox's bright red palmprint.

"Aww!", female voices cried in protest as they were jolted awake.

"That was not nice.", the blonde woman said while rubbing her buttocks.

"You liked it last night.", Maddox said with a grin.

She pouted. "That was with you inside me." She gave him a sultry look, obviously inviting him back to bed.

Maddox felt something stirring in his groin area.

'Down boy! At this rate, we won't come out of this room.', Maddox mentally communicated with his growing cock, but the guy down there was not listening because the brunette spread her legs and was touching herself.

Maddox swallowed hard and he peeled his eyes from two women with difficulty. Damn it!

"Sorry ladies, but this Alpha has work to do." And he was hungry also.

Both women made soft cries of displeasure, but Maddox stood unwavering.

"You know the drill." He gestured toward the bathroom. "Feel free to freshen up, and then scam."

This was a standard procedure for an Alpha. Actually, by not kicking them out before dawn, Maddox showed courtesy. Normally, an Alpha won't spend the whole night with a she-wolf he hooked up with, and these two got a night and the morning.

The blonde was not willing to leave easily. "Can we hook up tonight?"

Maddox paused. The two she-wolves are fine-looking women, open to do whatever he asked, but there are plenty of those for him to pick a different one every night, which he usually does. However, he didn't feel like refusing her outright either.

"I will be in the Shifters tonight. Anything is possible.", Maddox responded mysteriously before leaving the room.

The blonde pouted and plopped back in the bed.

The brunette spoke, "Why did you ask if you knew that the only answer will be a rejection?"

"Can you blame me?"

The brunette exhaled with a dreamy expression. "No. Last night was fantastic. Let's hit the shower."

"We can stay here for a minute." The blonde hugged the pillow Maddox slept on and she took a deep breath, inhaling his scent.

"If Alpha Maddox returns and we are still here, we will be punished."

The blonde giggled. "If punishment is spanking, he can punish me anytime." Her words were defiant, but she still scooted off the bed and headed to the bathroom with the brunette following two steps behind her.

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Maddox walked down the stairs in a good mood.

Other than Damon waking him up with that wretched howl, Maddox's morning was fantastic and if he was not so hungry, he would still be in his bedroom with those two she-wolves.

The uncomfortable gaping hole in his stomach made him think about what he will eat first.

Breakfast at the Dark Howlers pack often included scrambled eggs, sausages, and waffles. But there were other delicacies also. Stephanie was not a trained cook, but there was always a taste of motherly care in the food she made and that is something difficult to find.

Maddox's stomach growled and he sped up toward the dining room.

His steps slowed down when he saw a young woman leaning into the closed window to see outside into the garden. Her chestnut-colored hair fell on the side, concealing most of her face, but he was almost confident that he has never seen that Omega before.

A new girl working in the packhouse? Possible.

She was so consumed with whatever was outside, that she didn't notice him.

What she was up to? Was she peeping?

The double door leading to the garden was open, only a few steps away, and she could easily walk out and see better what she wants.

She was standing on her toes, bending at an awkward angle over the windowsill with her ass perked up.

Maddox was always an ass-guy, so he stopped to give her another look. Her behind was not so well rounded compared to the ones he left in the bed, but she was not bad.

Maddox's nose picked up a mouthwatering scent of coffee. He really wanted some now.

Chapter 265 - The Guests Are Here (5) [Bonus ]



Lisa stood at the window, hungrily taking in the sight of the garden.

Lisa was happy that Stephanie let her come after some fussing. Lisa was determined and even if Stephanie somehow restricts Lisa now, it would only make Lisa bolder for the next time.

Lisa knew that her mother was watching her from nearby, but Lisa didn't care. As long as Lisa got what she wanted, it was fine. And she really wanted to see Tony. In person.

What was Lisa trying to achieve by peeping on them? Or was peeping just the first step and she would approach them? Lisa was not sure, but her heart tightened with longing at the sight of Tony who sat there with Alpha Damon, Caden, Nate, Greg, and Paul, and her legs refused to move as she drifted into memories.

Lisa recognized three men that Tony brought with him, of course, she did. They were all mingling together not so long ago. Lisa also spotted Meg at the other table, another familiar face from the Lightclaw pack.

They were chatting and eating, and they moved on with their lives like Lisa never existed. Was no one missing her?

Lisa's anger was appeased when she saw that Kalina and Tony were sitting at separate tables.

Tony never allowed Lisa to join when he was doing business as the future Alpha of the Lightclaw pack. Seeing that Kalina was also separated from Tony, made Lisa feel better. A little bit.

Lisa was lost in her thoughts, and she didn't notice Maddox approaching her.

"Mhm..."

Lisa jolted when Maddox cleared his throat behind her.

She turned to face him swiftly and patted her chest dramatically.

"Alpha Maddox", Lisa said when she found her voice.

"I assume the breakfast is in the garden today.", Maddox said while studying Lisa's features. She was definitely a new face.

Lisa nodded in small jerky movements.

Maddox looked down at her seriously. "I suggest you stop acting secretly because Alpha Damon might mistake you for a spy. You don't need to escort me. I know the way. You can go about your duties."

Maddox winked at her and moved along.

Lisa blinked. Was Maddox flirty with her?

Ha! Another Alpha took interest in her! Tony was not the only one!

In the next moment, Lisa's brows came together in a frown.

What the hell!?! Did he just tell her to go about her duties? Did he treat her like some no-name Omega?

She balled her hands into fists.

Lisa knew who Alpha Maddox was, yet he didn't recognize her! But of course, Tony didn't take Lisa with him to official gatherings. How could Alpha Maddox know who she is?

Lisa's dejection mixed with rage. She was known as Tony's girlfriend, some even thought of her as the future Luna of the Lightclaw pack and now...? Who was she now? A no-name Omega?

Lisa felt wronged and she couldn't accept that her dreams slipped through her fingers. There was nothing she could do about it.

She turned back toward the window and her eyes bulged out when she realized that Tony was not at the table. Where did he go? And Alpha Damon was also missing.

...

...

Outside, a minute ago...

Tony asked Damon if they can take a walk. It was obvious that he wanted to discuss something in private.

"What do you think about the four I brought with me?", Tony asked Damon. "I am interested in the first impressions."

Damon frowned when he glanced behind. He didn't like that Talia was out of his visual range. That girl is like a magnet for trouble.

Damon thought that Tony wanted to talk about something important, yet he asked about first impressions. What the heck? Will he be asking about second and third impressions also? How insecure can a guy get?

Damon reminded himself to be nice. Tony came because he needs help and Tony's father is a shitty example of an Alpha. Damon didn't approve of those old-fashioned practices Lightclaw pack is following, because selected few are prospering while others are serving them, like they live in Middle Ages.

If Damon can help them evolve into a modernized pack by showing Tony the way, he will do it.

The first step is that Tony needs to gain confidence.

"What are you expecting me to say?", Damon asked.

"When you enter the room with Caden, everything stops, you command attention, and for me... that's not the case."

"Caden and I are doing this for a decade, and you didn't even start.", Damon offered a few words of encouragement. "You wanted to hear my first impression. I noticed that your people fear you and are looking for your approval. That's not the right way."

Tony needed more information. "Can you elaborate on that?"

"Caden is my Beta. I can make him submit, but I won't because I don't need him to just follow my orders. We established a few basic rules, and other than that, Caden is free to do what he believes it's right. He is my right hand, my friend. We depend on each other in the conference room, and when facing rogues. I want Caden to use his head and he can't do that if he fears the consequences of angering me. In private, we are talking as equals, and I expect his honest perspective. In public, there is respect that goes both ways. Do you understand where I am going with this?"

Tony understood that this was triggered by Meg bowing to Tony while talking.

"I will ask them to be more casual.", Tony said.

"You will need to do more than that. In order to have reliable people around you, you need to reach the point where you will trust each other. That will take time. Ask yourself, do you want them to watch your

back on the battlefield? Will they be just your meat shields, or will you put yourself at risk for them? That will make the distinction if they are your hands or your pawns."

Tony nodded at Damon's words and switched the topic to something that was less abstract, "I look forward to you testing their performance. I have high hopes for Meg."

"Meg?", Damon asked with surprise obvious in his voice.

Damon assumed that Meg came here as support or a backup, yet now it seemed that Tony had other plans for her. It's not that Damon was looking down on Meg, but at The Lightclaw pack, females don't hold high-level positions.

Damon was hoping that Tony will start changing the obsolete practices of his pack, but having a female holding a high-level position from the start will definitely cause waves and Tony didn't seem like a guy who can withstand it.

Tony understood what Damon was thinking. "My father wants Paul to be my Beta because Paul's father is my father's Beta. But Meg is faster and smarter than Paul. Her grandfather was a Beta, so she has it in her blood. Meg is dependable, and I went to high school with her. Nate and Greg are also good guys, but out of the four, I have the most confidence in Meg."

Damon was surprised. It's not that Tony wanted to give Meg a high-ranking position, but he wanted to make her a Beta! That's second only to Alpha.

"Will your father allow a female Beta?"

Tony made a complex expression. "He won't like it, but we are talking about my Beta, not his. To be honest, the best would be if Meg finds her mate and he ends up being a Beta. Then I would take him and her mate as my Betas."

Damon's enthusiasm deflated when he heard that Tony was looking for an easy way out.

"Don't forget what I told you. A pack can't have two Alphas. When the time comes, you will need to decide if you will stay in your father's shadow or stand up to him. And things might turn ugly."

Tony responded with a stiff smile and, "That's why I am here. Teach me what an Alpha should know, and you will have my eternal gratitude..."

...

Maddox walked into the garden and after identifying the table with food, Maddox's eyes moved from the closest round table (that was empty) to the second table where Caden and three other guys were sitting, and then he glanced to the last table where he spotted Mindy among a bunch of females.

Caden raised his hand to wave at Maddox in greeting, and the latter pointed at the table where food was.

Food first, then everything else.

The closer Maddox was to the food, the hungrier he was.

Maddox poured himself a cup of much-needed coffee and took a sip while eyeing the choices. Everything was edible, and he was not a very picky eater, so he took a slice of toasted bread (because it was the first thing next to hot beverages) and started applying strawberry jam on it.

The moment Maddox took a bite of toast with strawberry jam on it, a small breeze reached him, and Maddox took a deep breath.

Why did the strawberry jam smell so good?

Maddox sniffed the toast in his hand. It smelled of strawberries, but there was something even more strawberry-ish coming from somewhere else and it made him drool a little. What the...?

On an instinct, Maddox straightened up and looked at the table where Mindy was sitting with five other women.

For a moment, Maddox's sight blurred, and he zeroed in on a brunette that had long shiny hair. Her back was facing him, but Maddox saw a pair of long legs sticking out of a black minidress.

Chapter 266 - The Guests Are Here (6)

At the table where Talia, Maya, Mindy, Kalina, Tatiana, and Meg were sitting...

Mindy looked at Talia with a sulky expression. "Now that I know you and Damon are mates, I guess we can forget about beach volleyball with men vs women."

Talia didn't understand from where that comment came. "Why?"

"Will you play against Damon?", Mindy responded with a question, and then she turned to Kalina. "And you also. Will you play against Tony?"

"Them being mates doesn't mean they lost their minds.", Tatiana said while rubbing her right temple. Was she getting a headache? "Don't underestimate my sister. And I have a feeling that Talia also has a fighting spirit."

Mindy bobbed her head. "I am not underestimating anyone, but I grew up with a typical Alpha, and I can confirm that Alphas don't like to lose. If they play in opposing teams, one of them will lose and in that case, guys will either sulk because they lost or will be rubbing it in." Probably rubbing it in because Alphas are unmatched in competitions that are about anything physical. "I wanted us to play girls vs boys, but I don't want to cause discord in any relationship."

Talia wanted to say how Tatiana was right, but Mindy had a point also. Unless she teams up with Damon, the next few days will be difficult no matter if Damon lost or won. But then... she wanted to be in a team with Damon.

Tatiana cocked her eyebrow at Mindy. "Why are you talking like that's a guy thing? Do YOU like to lose?"

Mindy paused. Tatiana was right. Mindy hates losing, but this was more about accepting a loss and she knows that Maddox will rather pull his hair out than suffer a loss. At the Summer Solstice festival, Maddox was cool, but when they reached home, he threw a fit because their soccer team didn't reach the finals (and won), and he punished them all with an increased training regime.

But Mindy didn't want to argue with Tatiana on this. In a way, both of them were right and Mindy wanted Tatiana to have a good opinion of her, so she yielded. "I admit. You are right. And that's why the two of us are going to be in a team, Tatiana."

Tatiana's neatly groomed brows came together in a frown. She was not in the mood for chasing a ball. Other than not being the sport-ish type (for a werewolf), she was heavily jet lagging, but she didn't want to complain because it might make her sound weak, and she will never admit weakness.

However, she decided to say, "If we are a team, stop calling me Tatiana. Friends call me Tanya."

"Tanya.", Mindy said with a satisfied smirk. Finally, Tatiana confirmed they are friends! Ah, it took Tatiana one whole breakfast to accept Mindy!

Talia perked up when Tatiana told her that she can call her Tanya also. Ah, another friend!

"I heard that Lina calls you Lia. Can I call you like that?", Tatiana asked.

"Sure. Lina is the one who gave me that nickname.", Talia said cheerfully and then her face dropped. "Are you alright?"

"Oh, my...", Kalina said under her breath while staring at her sister who seemed to be in a daze.

"Oh, my!", Mindy exclaimed when she realized that Maddox was approaching them with an equally dazed expression.



"What's going on?", Talia asked with panic in her voice. Why did Tatiana and Maddox seem to be in some trance? Was something wrong with the food?

"Mates", Maya said breathily, and Meg's eyes were darting from Tatiana to Maddox, resembling someone who was following a ball during a ping-pong match.

It was always exciting to see the moment when mates recognize each other.

Talia's eyes widened and her heart rate increased when she realized what was happening right in front of her. Mates! This was important!

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Tatiana turned backward robotically and stood up in slow motion while staring at Maddox who stopped when he was one step away from her.

Everything stilled. Even the birds muted their chirping as Maddox's and Tatiana's eyes regained focus.

Maddox swallowed hard while wondering what happened. One moment he was starving and taking a bite of toast with strawberry jam over there, and now he was standing in front of the most beautiful woman in the world who smelled of strawberries and it was so delicious that saliva pooled into his mouth. And he was not hungry anymore, at least not for food, but he definitely wanted to sample the Goddess in front of him.

Tatiana blinked. How was it possible that there was such a handsome man in the world? And he smelled delicious, like dark coffee. Bittersweet and rich with a promise of a velvety smooth texture and Maddox's sun-kissed tan gave him a tropical feel, like Kona Coffee from Hawaii.

Every cell in Tatiana's body screamed to drink him up.

Maddox stood awkwardly, unsure what to do. His brain was stuttering, and he couldn't come up with anything reasonable. His instincts told him to get closer, but he didn't even know her name. Yeah. A name. That's a good start.

"I am Max."

Maddox's deep voice made Tatiana feel funny in the pit of her stomach. She was never aroused just by the sound of someone's voice. Mates!

Did he say his name is Max? Who cares?

Tatiana grabbed Maddox's collar and yanked him down and his body bent like it was made out of soft clay, for Tatiana to do what she wanted.

Their lips touched first, jolting both of them with fantastic sparks, and Tatiana devoured his lips with urgency. He was delicious, better than she imagined.

A few moments later, Maddox realized what's going on. That enchanting woman was kissing him!

And it was not just kissing, but there were sparks, and she smelled amazing, and her tongue was in his mouth already!

Damn! That's his mate, and she is a spitfire!

Maddox's big arms wrapped around Tatiana and pulled her toward him.

The moment their bodies connected, his tongue caught up with Tatiana's in a seductive dance that consumed them completely.

Neither of them cared that there was an audience around them.

Tatiana was ecstatic that her mate was so impressive.

Maddox's body was firm as he towered above her, and his solid embrace cocooned her with a promise of endless carnal pleasures. His addictive flavor was even better than his scent because it came with spicy afternotes that entered Tatiana's system and ran through her veins, embedding Maddox's existence as part of her.

Her fingers laced into his hair, and she gripped it firmly. Mine!

Maddox was already half-hard and when Tatiana moaned into his mouth, his cock lurched painfully in response. He really wanted to push her on the ground right there and claim her every cavity as his.

Talia was surprised by this development and happy that she got to see it up close. It was her first time to see mates recognizing each other, and it was fantastic!

Talia's eyes moved to the side, and she smiled at the sight of Damon who was standing there and staring stupidly at Maddox and Tatiana, obviously wondering what's going on.

Until a few seconds ago, Damon was talking with Tony, but when he felt Talia's panic, he rushed back thinking that the silly girl got herself into some kind of trouble again. Talia was upset because Tatiana's behavior was odd, but Damon didn't know that, and now that Maddox was making out with Kalina's sister for everyone to see, Damon was totally confused.

Damon saw Talia approaching him and he extended his arm toward Talia while looking at her questionably.

Talia accepted Damon's hand and snuggled in his embrace before whispering, "Mates."

Damon needed a moment to process this.

An evil grin appeared on Damon's handsome face. Maddox, who was making fun of Damon for being a wuss with Talia, was now standing there and kissing Tatiana like there is no tomorrow, and Damon definitely saw that Tatiana kissed Maddox first.

Ha! Damon will have a blast with this. A woman made her first move on Maddox! Who is a wuss now?

Damon felt that Talia's emotions were warm and fuzzy, and his heart cracked.

"What's wrong?", Talia asked softly.

Damon pressed his lips on her forehead and spoke without pulling back, "If I was not an immature idiot, I would hold you like that when we met the first time."

Damon never paid much attention to these scenes, but he knew that when mates meet, their bond is forming and emotions are sizzling, and he regretted that Talia missed it, and it was all his fault.

Talia didn't agree. "If you came onto me like that, I would run for my life, and when you caught me, I would die of anxiety. I was timid and ignorant and..." Unworthy. Was she worthy now? Talia was not sure, but she was working on it.

"You are perfect, kitten", Damon murmured and tightened his hold on her. "I guess both of us came a long way since then."

Talia nodded in agreement with this. In just a few short weeks, Damon transformed from a scary Alpha to someone she relies on, someone who makes her feel safe. He is her home. Her everything.

Chapter 267 - The Guests Are Here (7) [Bonus ]

Author's note:

Maddox and Tatiana broke the kiss and they stared at each other with foolish grins on their faces, unaware that Mindy was two steps away from them, shifting her weight from one leg to another while counting silently to ten.

When Mindy reached to ten, she pounced on the duo, wrapping her hands around both of them.

"I have the best sister-in-law!", Mindy exclaimed, ignoring her brother's glare. Mindy turned to Kalina and waved at her to come. "We are family now! Come! It's time for a group hug!"

Kalina smiled helplessly and walked to the trio, but she didn't join the hug.

"Congratulations. I am happy for you.", Kalina said and tugged Mindy's arm. "We should give them space so they can get to know each other. We can do hugging and everything else later."

Mindy bobbed her head. "They will get to know each other, alright. And while they are doing that, we should celebrate! Oh, I should call mom and dad and tell them! This is big news!"

Kalina put her hand on Mindy's shoulder and gave her a squeeze in a silent plea for Mindy to calm down. "Don't tell them because they will make a fuss and start with formalities. We should give them a few days to enjoy."

Kalina knew this very well. After only two days of bliss with Tony, he took her to the Lightclaw pack, and all the future-Luna commotion that waited for them there cast a shade on her happiness.

Mindy pressed her lips into a line. She really wanted to be the first one to tell their parents that her big brother found his mate, the Luna of the Blue River pack. But seeing Kalina's serious expression that spoke volumes, Mindy decided to hold back on it.

"OK. Then... Let's buy some stuff during our shopping and we can celebrate here, just us." Mindy turned to Talia and shouted, "Join us in planning! We need to accommodate changes for our beach outing this afternoon!"

Tatiana was jet lagging, and she was dazed by the newly found mate bond, so her brain was not as alert as normally. She blinked once, twice... Did Mindy call her 'sister-in-law', or did she imagine it?

But before Tatiana could make sense of her current situation, Damon and Talia approached them, and they were followed by Maya, Meg, Caden, and the others, everyone with smiles on their faces, ready to give hugs, shake hands, and shower them with congratulations and well wishes.

...

From inside the packhouse, Lisa observed the scene of Maddox and Tatiana kissing, and then Mindy giving them a hug, and then others gathered there as well.

Lisa already heard that Kalina's sister will be coming, and considering that Tatiana was the only unknown face, Lisa easily guessed which one was Kalina's sister. Why did she become the center of attention?

Lisa didn't like this.

Talia was too cozy by Damon's side, with Damon holding her close to him. Tony's arm was wrapped around Kalina's shoulders, and they spoke something with Maya and Caden and then everyone burst into laughter, Mindy, Nate, Greg, Paul, and Meg included.

Lisa had no idea what's going on, but she knew that the mood outside was good, and she was not included.

Even a total newcomer like Tatiana was accepted as part of that group while Lisa stood on the side like an outcast. Where is justice?

She couldn't hear what they were talking about, but she definitely heard when Mindy shouted how they will be going to the beach in the afternoon. That gave Lisa an idea.

...

...

When everyone congratulated them, Maddox turned to Tatiana.

"How about we sit there?", he gestured toward the table that was empty so far, and Tatiana nodded in agreement.

Maddox pulled a chair for her to sit, and she watched him as he dashed to the table with breakfast items.

Why did Maddox decide to get food without asking Tatiana if she was hungry? Maddox was not sure, but he had an inexplicable impulse to feed her. And it was more than just food; he had an urge to make sure her every need and want was satisfied, and that urge was maddening, so he hurried up, disregarding the fact that he didn't know her name at this point.

Tatiana couldn't stop staring at Maddox. That gray suit jacket was unable to hide his outrageously handsome body that captivated her attention completely as he filled two plates with food haphazardly.

One sausage bounced off the plate and fell on the ground and Maddox took a napkin to pick it up, instinctively looking at Tatiana and he froze when he met her intense gaze that had a dash of amusement in it.

Maddox panicked.

His Goddess was watching him!

Why did she see the moment when he dropped food?

He was never this clumsy!

Will she think that he was incapable?

Ah! There was no trashcan in sight!

What should he do now with that sausage? There was no way he will put it on the plate for his Goddess to eat.

Should he keep it on the table, or maybe stuff it in his mouth?

After a moment of hesitation, Maddox wrapped that sausage in a napkin and kept it in the pocket of his cargo shorts. He will deal with it later.

Now it was important to put enough food on plates because he can't allow his Goddess to go hungry!

...

From the other table, Damon sat next to Talia and his eyes didn't leave Maddox who was scrambling at the table with food.

Kalina, Mindy, and Meg were busy coming up with ideas on how to make their beach outing special. Mindy produced a pen and paper from somewhere, and she was writing down things that need to be added. Mostly food items.

Talia turned her attention to Damon because his emotions were fluctuating.

Playful, vengeful, mischievous... what's going on?

Talia noticed that Damon was looking at the newly mated couple and she poked him to get his attention. "What are you up to?"

"Me? Nothing.", Damon said innocently.



He knew that with Talia's virtuous personality, she won't participate in whatever mess-with-Maddox plan he was coming up with, and she will probably scold him also. Denial was the best option, or he won't get his fun.

Talia didn't believe him. "I can tell that you are scheming something."

Damon looked at the little woman by his side being all fierce and it turned him on.

"Are you hungry?", he asked.

Talia was surprised by this sudden change of topic, but she still responded, "No, why?"

"I see Max feeding his mate, so I wondered if I should do the same to mine."

Talia glanced at Maddox and saw him walk toward Tatiana with two plates that were heaping with food. "No need. You already fed me. I'm full."

Damon inched closer and whispered, "There is more than one way I can fill you up, kitten."

Talia jolted when he squeezed her thigh under the table, and her face exploded in blush.

She knew that he was being naughty and that was something she couldn't match him, but she still responded shyly, "You did that also."

"Mmm...", Damon hummed in approval. "I can do much more than that."

He kissed her cheek and then continued trailing small kisses closer to her lips while murmuring, "How about we go to our room for seconds? Or we can use one of the free rooms on the first floor..."

Talia turned and gave him a quick peck on the lips in an attempt to pacify him, before protesting in an urgent whisper, "People are watching."

"No one is looking at us, kitten..." And even if they were looking, Damon didn't care.

His hand landed at the back of Talia's head and in less than a second her defenses fell completely, and she parted her lips, granting access to Damon's tongue to deliver a toe-curling kiss that came with his addictive flavor of the dark chocolate.

...

Maddox was cutting food for Tatiana in bite-sized pieces and then he offered her a fork that had a well-proportioned piece of a dinner roll, egg, and sausage, to create a perfect bite.

"You said your name is Max.", Tatiana said before opening her mouth to accept Maddox's offering.

Maddox nodded, understanding that this is the part where they officially introduce themselves. He was ready for this.

"Maddox River, Alpha of the Blue River pack. Your mate." This last part was awkward to say, but it sounded so right that Maddox ended up smiling goofily.

Tatiana frowned a bit when he said that he is an Alpha.

Will he expect her to stay in his pack?

She has a business to run and shows to attend! However, seeing how docile Maddox was, resembling a cuddly bear, Tatiana was confident they will find a compromise.

Chapter 268 - The Guests Are Here (8)

Tatiana's chewing slowed down as she studied Maddox's handsome face, and then a thought hit her.

"You are Mindy's brother."

Maddox cocked an eyebrow. "I am older, so she is my sister."

Tatiana didn't care about that nonsense.

She was trying to match this handsome man with the image Mindy portrayed. Almost female, womanizer, stubborn, overbearing.

How can he be compared to a female? In Tatiana's opinion, Maddox was the manliest man she ever saw, and she saw many.

A womanizer? Tatiana remembered that he was just standing there and staring at her stupidly and she ended up kissing him first. How can that be called a womanizer?

Stubborn? Overbearing? Those also didn't match this man who was smiling silly and feeding her, taking the role of a servant, and not someone who wants to dominate.

After a moment of thought, Tatiana pushed Mindy's words aside.

Surely, as his sister, Mindy had the right to exaggerate and joke about those things.

"Tell me about yourself.", Maddox said.

Tatiana smirked. "Do you normally take half an hour between kissing a woman and asking for her name?"

Maddox froze. What did she say? Did he make the mistake of treating her like other women? It was not on purpose!

"I was stunned by your beauty. Besides, I could swear it was less than a minute.", Maddox said.

Tatiana stifled a laugh. She had no idea how much time it passed, but Maddox's expression was comical.

"Tatiana Wilkov. I am the oldest one among the five sisters of the Wilkov family. Born in Poland, currently living in Italy. I came to visit Kalina, my youngest sister because she found her mate."

"Tatiana...", Maddox murmured. He never heard a prettier name in his name.

"Friends call me Tanya."

"Tanya...", Maddox repeated. This sounded better than Tatiana. Everything about this Goddess was amazing. Even her name.

Maddox didn't want to waste any time exchanging information. He wanted to pounce on Tatiana and mark her and put his babies inside her. It was crazy and unreasonable, but his instincts told him that he needs to impregnate her as soon as possible like there was some time limit.

But he couldn't act on those instincts because he didn't want Tatiana to see him as a horny savage.

He needed to strike a conversation. Something interesting and stimulating. As an Alpha, he had many of those in the past... conversations. He can have one now.

But... what should he say? He really wanted to leave a good impression.

"So, what do you do when you are not visiting your sister and stealing my heart?"

Maddox facepalmed internally. Did those cheesy lines come out of his mouth?

Ah! If he knew that he will meet his Goddess, he would look up some women-wooing tips online!

Tatiana cocked an eyebrow. "I am not stealing anything. I am just taking what's mine."

Maddox stared at Tatiana as the pressure in his groin increased rapidly, and then he shifted to adjust his hard-on. How can a woman arouse him so easily?

Normally, he would be outraged to hear a woman claiming him as hers. He is an Alpha and if there is any claiming happening, he will be the one doing it!

But when those words came out of Tatiana's mouth, the only thing he wanted was to kiss her.

Heaven and earth could flip and if Tatiana said that it was fine, Maddox will agree. It was fine.

He chuckled. "Seriously... what do you do normally?"

"I'm into fashion..."

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Mindy, Maya, and Meg discussed things needed for the beach. As an extra touch for celebrating Maddox and Tatiana as mates, the girls decided to add bite-sized snacks, a cake, alcohol, and meat because they will be having a barbecue party in the evening.

Since it was a warm summer day, Maya suggested that they have things prepared by Omegas and brought to them later.

Talia was sitting and observing, and under the table, there was a war. Damon couldn't stop fondling her and he did that with a serious expression like he was interested in the cake flavors.

Talia couldn't believe how mischievous Damon was. The more time they spent together, the more she realized that he is a child who doesn't know when to stop, but this was a big man who can't be put on a timeout.

The only thing she could do was to avoid him.

Talia stood up abruptly and grabbed the list from Maya's hands.

"I will take it to the kitchen and discuss it with Stephanie.", Talia said.

"Now?", Damon asked with a frown.

"They are probably cleaning after breakfast. If I delay, Steph will leave."

Damon pouted. Talia had a point, but he didn't want her to leave. He was really enjoying her proximity. "Let Maya do it."

"Didn't you say I am the host? As a host, I will handle this."

Damon was out of arguments. "Come back quickly."

Talia leaned and gave him a quick kiss on the cheek. "Shouldn't you head to the training grounds with the guys? After I discuss this with Stephanie, we will go shopping."

Damon's brows furrowed. Talia was right.

And just like that, Talia avoided Damon's fondling under the table.

She didn't want to separate from him, and she wouldn't mind him touching her if they were alone. However, privacy was not an option because they had guests, and she wanted some girl-time also. In addition to that, he had things to do, and at least one of them needed to act like a grownup.

Talia was walking down the hallway, with the door of the kitchen getting closer with her every step when...

"Ahh!"

Talia screamed when someone tugged her from behind and she ended up in the side room.

'BANG!'

The door closed behind Talia and she blinked at the person whose eyes lost focus for a moment.

"Dawn, what are you doing?", Talia protested.

Dawn smirked. "You will see in a minute."

There was no need for a minute because only a few seconds later, the door opened, and Zina entered.

Zina and Dawn stood side-by-side, facing Talia and blocking the door, both with their arms crossed over their chest.

"You are avoiding us for so long. It's time to talk.", Zina said with a mischievous grin.

Talia bit her lip guiltily. Ever since she went to the Lightclaw pack with Damon, she knew that Dawn and Zina were bubbling with questions, and she made sure they were never alone so that two nosy women can't ask tricky questions. And now they kidnapped and are holding her hostage in this room.

Talia was not sure if she should laugh or cry, but she knew that Dawn and Zina were determined and there was only one way out.

"What do you want to know?", Talia asked.

Zina rolled her eyes. "Don't play stupid. You know what we want to know. What's going on between you and Alpha?"

Talia hesitated. Should she tell them? They will find out anyway, the only question was when and from whom. But, what if they hate her? Will they look at her differently? What if they think she is not worthy of being Damon's mate, his Luna?

Talia loved that Zina and Dawn spoke to her openly about everything, from how to make French toast to sleeping with guys. What if they stop talking to her?

"Well?" Dawn's question got Talia's attention. "Will you tell us, or will you leave us guessing?"

Zina frowned a bit. "I thought we were friends but seeing that you were avoiding us and now you won't talk... maybe I was wrong."

Talia steeled her resolve.

"We are mates.", she said.

Dawn and Zina had matching confusing expressions.

"What did you say?", Dawn asked.



"We are mates.", Talia repeated.

When Dawn and Zina stood there without moving, Talia nodded to confirm they heard her right. Both times.

"Wow!", Zina said under her breath. "Mates, eh? Why didn't you tell us? I mean... we were cooking and messing around and..."

"I didn't know.", Talia said in her defense. "My wolf was hurt and whenever Damon told me that I'm special, I thought that he was teasing me. And before you ask, we didn't announce it because there are many things we need to figure out, and we will reveal it when we are ready. At this point, Maya and Caden know about it." Talia gave a short version, and she was relieved to see Zina and Dawn nod in understanding.

"That's amazing!", Dawn said eventually. "Will you let us be your bridesmaids?"

Talia's brows came together in confusion. "What's a bridesmaid?"

Zina responded, "Those are women who get nice dresses and help the bride get ready for her wedding, and they are part of the wedding party. It's a human custom, and it became popular with us recently."

Talia looked at Zina and Dawn helplessly. "We didn't talk about that, but if I need bridesmaids, I will definitely count on you."

"Yaaay!", Zina and Dawn exclaimed in unison, and both rushed at Talia to give her a hug.

Talia hugged Zina with her left arm and Dawn with her right one, happy that those two were still acting freely with her and they didn't mention Talia's non-existent background.

"Imagine, we will be bridesmaids at the Alpha's wedding!", Dawn said excitedly. "The WW Magazine will be there and many guests. We will definitely find our mates there."

Talia's heart cracked at the thought that neither Dawn nor Zina have their mates, yet they were truly happy for her.

She never wanted a big party, but because of Dawn and Zina... "I will tell Damon to invite everyone. I'm sure you will find your mates."

"Hehehe...", Zina giggled foolishly. "It's good to be chummy with the Luna."

Chapter 269 - Heaven Collapsed (1)

Maddox fed Tatiana and listened to her talking about herself.

His hunger was long forgotten, and he couldn't register his empty stomach because his heart was full.

Tatiana's voice was melodious, sounding like a song of a nightingale, pulling him into a dimension where colors shone brightly, spring breeze caressed his cheeks, and everything smelled of strawberries.

Maddox heard something about a catwalk, fashion shows, Paris, Milan, New York, and London, but even though he focused mightily on what she was saying, her words refused to register as meaningful sentences in his mind because his attention was on Tatiana's enchanting lips that moved as she spoke, and he really wanted to taste her again.

The memory of their kiss and Tatiana's tongue expertly flicking his in inexplicable ways made him hard. Everything about Tatiana made him hard.

Seeing Maddox's goofy expression and that he was stuffing food into her mouth in the middle of a sentence, Tatiana had a feeling that Maddox didn't hear most of the things she said.

Tatiana didn't talk more than a few minutes, but she saw that her words were being wasted as the super-hot male specimen in front of her was obviously somewhere else... in bed probably, naked, with her (hopefully).

She wondered if his problematic attention span was something permanent. Surely, as an Alpha, Maddox should be able to focus on the person he is conversing with.

But Tatiana would be lying if she said that she didn't want to jump on him and ride him wildly.

The pull of the mate bond was impossible to resist, and it made her needy for his touch and for his addictive taste of coffee.

Tatiana is a passionate coffee lover, and she tasted many hedonistic brands, but the Maddox brand was at the top of her list because it was the only one that could stimulate every cell in her body.

The sparks upon their touch created tingles that made her feel alive and she wondered how will an orgasm feel when powered with the energy of their bond.

"What's on your mind, Max?"

Maddox's smile widened. His nickname sounded sexy when it rolled off Tatiana's tongue laced with an Eastern European accent, making it exotic. And he wanted her tongue to roll around a certain part of him that was standing in attention, eagerly waiting to be introduced and to prove its worth.

Maddox took Tatiana's hand into his and kissed the back of her palm.

A low hum formed deep in his throat as he savored addictive sparks that danced over his lips. The mate bond was fantastic!

"I am thinking that we should finish food and find some privacy.", he admitted his thoughts after running them through the no-lust filter because saying how he wanted to be balls deep into Tatiana didn't sound appropriate at that moment.

"I am done with food."

Maddox's eyebrows shoot up and he stared at Tatiana while processing her words.

It took him a moment to spring up to his feet.

He winced when his erect cock smacked into the table as he stood up, and he swiftly put his free hand there to press on it with the inside of his wrist while controlling his facial muscles not to grimace.

The searing pain came a second later, making him tear up a little. Maddox gritted his teeth and showed an ugly smile while chanting internally how it wouldn't be appropriate to cry. Not in front of Tatiana.

Damned shorts! If he knew that this would happen, he would wear jeans that are firmer and more effective in keeping his erection from sticking out.

But who would guess that after exhausting himself with two she-wolves for hours, his guy down there would still be eager to explore a woman? And this was not just any woman. Tatiana was a Goddess.

Luckily, his Alpha healing worked fast to soothe the piercing pain.

But... did Tatiana spot anything odd? Was she thinking of him like a horny teenager?

Well, he was horny, for her, and he hoped that she didn't notice because he wanted to appear cool.

"We can go to my room.", Maddox said in a deep voice, and he smiled when Tatiana responded with a nod.

Maddox was all giddy from excitement and Tatiana appeared composed, but her fiery gaze told him that there was a storm brewing inside her. Seductress!

He didn't let go of her hand as she stood up in slow motion, and Maddox's free hand moved around her waist as they walked into the packhouse.

That curve of her body under his palm felt just right and he gave her a little squeeze while pulling her closer to him as they walked side-by-side, and Tatiana didn't resist when their hips connected.

Maddox felt like howling in anticipation of what's coming. He just knew it, they will have sex! And lots of it! And it will be amazing!

...

...

Maddox and Tatiana were two steps from the door that will grant them access to the packhouse, when...

"Max! MAX!"

Maddox's face fell when he realized that Damon was calling.

He turned in one swift move and hissed at the unwanted third party, "What?"

Damon sashayed toward them with a big smile on his face, obviously enjoying this.

"Did you finish your meal? We are about to head to the training grounds."

Maddox frowned. "What does that have to do with me?"

Damon blinked innocently. "Don't tell me you forgot. We will be training, and you volunteered to show Tony and his people some moves. That's why you are here, freeloading on my food."

Maddox silently cursed Damon and if a look could kill, Damon would be sliced into a million pieces.

Maddox couldn't understand what Damon was doing. It was obvious that Maddox was going with his mate inside to get frisky.

Maddox picked up many girls with Damon as a witness, but Damon never interfered. Why did Damon turn into a third wheel now when it was important?

He wanted to tell Damon to scram, but Damon was the host, and bickering in private was one thing while being disrespectful in public was another. Not to mention that Damon's temper can flare at the slightest provocation and Maddox is not the one to let it pass, but if they end up in a fistfight, Maddox can forget about having sex with Tatiana... unless she visits him in the hospital and... no, no, that's not an option. He wanted her in his room, two minutes ago!

This required finesse.

"I will join you later.", Maddox responded with a stiff smile.

Damon tilted his head and eyed Maddox with amusement. "Don't take too long. This is our first day and we will be checking the equipment and solidifying the plan. You don't want to miss it."

Maddox's nostrils flared in anger, and he squeezed through his teeth, "I said I will join you. Later."

Damon raised his arms defensively. "Now, now. There is no need for violence. I am just reminding you of the work that we all gathered here to achieve." He glanced at Tatiana. "I understand you just found your mate, but..." Damon lowered his voice and looked at Maddox with concern. "You don't want people saying how finding a mate made you forget your duties or worse..." Damon inched closer before continuing, "...turned you into a wuss."

Hearing the word, 'wuss', made Maddox suddenly realize why Damon was obstructing his path to Heaven.

Damon was getting back at him!

Maddox realized that Damon was sitting there and watching them, waiting for the right opportunity to strike, and he caught Maddox off-guard. Well, it's not that Maddox had any guards up while feeding Tatiana, but he was on his way to the bedroom, only a few steps away from tasting his strawberry-flavored bliss, and Damon got in the way!

Was it because Maddox wanted Talia to come to the Blue River pack during the Summer Solstice festival? At that time, Maddox knew that Damon was interested in Talia, but he didn't know they were mates! Or was it because Maddox teased him last night? How can Damon be so petty?

Maddox would give Damon a piece of his mind if Tatiana was not right there, watching. He needed to leave a good impression. It was important!

Unfortunately for Maddox, he was too aroused and upset to think straight and come up with a solution to ditch Damon without ruining his image in Tatiana's eyes, and Damon's smug smirk told Maddox that Damon won't give up easily.

How can he get out of this pickle?

Cold sweat appeared on Maddox's forehead as he and Damon were engaged in a silent staring contest, no one willing to back down. Actually, Maddox would back down in a heartbeat, but that wouldn't be cool, and he knew that Damon got on his case and the bastard was enjoying it!

Maddox felt like crying. How can he get this nasty Alpha off his back?

Suddenly, a flash of inspiration hit Maddox and he glanced behind Damon. "Lia is calling for you."

Damon swiftly turned to see where Talia was, and he frowned when he realized she was not there. Of course! She went to talk to Stephanie in the kitchen!

"You...", Damon's curse was cut short because Maddox was not there either!

Damon gritted his teeth. Maddox used the moment of Damon's attention slipping and he disappeared with Tatiana in tow.

Damon let out a low growl. He will get Maddox for this. Later.

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Chapter 270 - Heaven Collapsed (2) [Bonus ]

'BAM!'

The door of Maddox's room closed fiercely as Tatiana and Maddox were connected in an unbreakable storm of frenzied kisses while their hands tugged on their clothes with urgency.

They were starving for each other, and even though they just met, both of them knew it will be fantastic.

Their minds were muddled with animalistic arousal they couldn't extricate themselves from, reducing everything to their feverish urge to copulate.

That's how the mate bond usually works.

Mates are created to give what the other one needs, and right at that moment, both Tatiana and Maddox needed to fulfill their desire to become one.



Before Maddox's jacket fell on the floor, Tatiana's hands slipped inside his polo t-shirt, and she relished the firm landscape of his muscles under her palms. Everywhere she touched was firm, and it was majestic. Just the thought of those muscles rippling as he thrusts inside her was making her legs shaky.

Maddox let out a low growl when sparks of their bond started dancing on the skin of his back as Tatiana touched him impatiently, amplifying her addictive flavor of strawberries and making him crave for more.

Maddox never thought about Heaven, but he knew that if there is such a thing, he will reach it right here, with Tatiana in his embrace.

He couldn't wait to jab himself inside her and feel those same tantalizing sparks on his cock. The scent of her arousal made him feel like he was drowning in lust and he had no desire to stop because the only way out of this was closer, faster, more... more of Tatiana, and he was eager to take it.

Maddox groaned in frustration when the zipper at the back of Tatiana's dress refused to cooperate.

He gripped the edge of the minidress with an intention to rip it into smithereens, but before he could do so, Tatiana broke the kissing frenzy to say, "Don't you dare ruin my dress."

"I need help with the zipper", Maddox admitted grumpily.

His chest rose and fell rapidly, reflecting the chaotic state of his body.

Tatiana's eyes flashed with amusement, and she giggled while turning her back to Maddox and pulling her hair out of the way.

Maddox stared at Tatiana's exposed neck and licked his lips. That was the marking spot, and he wanted to bite her right there.

He bedded many women and saw even more necks, but he never felt such a strong pull to mark a woman and claim her as his.

It was ridiculous. They just met! But he knew that this was the mate bond working, and there was nothing he could do to stop this madness.

Maddox leaned closer and kissed the spot and Tatiana released a soft moan that made his cock lurch painfully, reminding him why they came here.

Sex first. Marking later.

His attention went back to the tricky zipper at the back of Tatiana's dress. He was one zipper away from reaching Heaven!

The blasted thing was slippery! His palms were sweaty!

Maddox rubbed his hands nervously and just as he touched the zipper and confirmed he has a good hold on it, he heard Tatiana say icily, "And you are...?"

Maddox felt dread gripping his heart as he slowly raised his gaze to see to whom Tatiana's words were directed and his stomach dropped at the sight of two women wrapped in towels, standing at the door of the bathroom and looking at them.

His brain stuttered and refused to process the scene in front of him.

Why were they still there? Didn't he tell them to scram!?

This... will be a problem.

A big one!

It took Tatiana less than a second to see women's garments scattered on the floor of the bedroom, and the messed up bed. She was not stupid.

...

...

A minute ago, in the bathroom...

"Hurry up!", the brunette urged the blonde who was still under the shower.

"Hold your horses", the blonde responded with a grimace. She didn't want to leave. The shower was massive, and this was only a guest bedroom. She wondered how big is the shower in Alpha Damon's room. The Omegas who are cleaning there say that it's a sight to behold and that it can't be described with words.

When she saw that her friend was glaring at her, the blonde turned off the water, grabbed a towel to wrap around her naked self, and explained, "Alpha Maddox went to breakfast less than twenty minutes ago. With Alpha Damon and other guests there, he will take at least an hour, and by then we will be long gone."

Both of them jolted when they heard the door closing with a loud bang.

"I told you!", the brunette hissed under her breath.

"Let's fight after we get out of here."

The brunette frowned, but she knew that the blonde was right. Their priority was to get out. Alive.

Maybe it was not all bad.

Did Omega come to clean? But an Omega wouldn't dare to slam the door like this.

Were they under attack? No, they would hear the warning through the mind-link.

Or was that Alpha Maddox? Was he angry because they were still there?

Unfortunately, the bathroom had a narrow long window at the top and they couldn't squeeze through it to escape.

Two women wrapped in towels huddled at the door and listened attentively while not daring to make noise, not even through their mind-link.

There was no sound from the bedroom. Did they hear it wrongly?

Maybe an Omega came to clean the room, and the draft slammed the door to close?

"Open and see what's going on", the blonde urged the brunette.

The brunette was not willing to make the first move, but if that was really Alpha Maddox and he was angry, it didn't matter which one came first.

She opened the door slowly and the blonde squeezed so that both of them can peek into the room to see Alpha Maddox locked with some woman in a steamy kissing session.

'What the hell?', the blonde spoke to the brunette through the mind-link. 'One might think that after everything we did, he would be sated.'

The brunette rolled her eyes. 'Sweetie, there is a reason why every woman dreams about being mated to an Alpha. They are insatiable.'

'What should we do?'

The brunette was thinking about options, but the only thing that made sense was... 'We can hide in the bathroom and try to sneak out while they are going at it, assuming that they won't come here to freshen up first.'

They both experienced Alpha Maddox's stamina and they knew he can go at it for hours, and that should give them plenty of time to escape.

However, sneaking out was not recommended because he is an Alpha with heightened senses and if he catches them doing something fishy, they might lose their lives.

'That doesn't sound good.', the blonde responded.

'We can ask them to join in the fun.'

The blonde frowned. This was NOT the time for joking! But she had to admit that the best option was to ask if they can have a foursome. After all, Alpha Maddox didn't mind threesome last night (and that morning), what's one more person? He will either agree or kill them on the spot.

Both of them regretted not hurrying up. Why did they stick around to shower?

And then the woman (aka Tatiana) turned and noticed them.

Ah, this was a disaster!

Back to the present...

Two women wrapped in towels stood frozen under Alpha Maddox's murderous glare, and Tatiana's unreadable expression was not much better. Foursome was definitely NOT an option.

Tatiana concealed her rage behind a well-rehearsed smile. "You didn't tell me we will have company, Max."

Maddox was confident that Heaven collapsed into a nightmare as all color drained from the world that got veiled in ominous shadows.

"Is this why you asked me to come here? I assume that one woman is usually not enough to satisfy you, but I must say that I am disappointed because you got two extra women without checking what I can do."

Tatiana addressed two women. "Did he bring you here together? Or one by one? Which one was first?"

The blonde spoke, "He brought us together, from the Shifters."

That name rang a bell. Kalina mentioned that their hosts are in the Shifters nightclub, but Tatiana was too tired to care, however, that confirmed Tatiana's assumption. "You are here from last night. Two of you are the reason why Alpha Maddox was late for breakfast."

Maddox swallowed hard when he heard Tatiana address him as 'Alpha Maddox'. That was NOT a good sign.

Maddox was never this lost in his life.

His hands and legs were cold, and his insides churned painfully. Is he going to vomit now? Ah, the room was spinning, and he was on the verge of collapsing, but if he didn't say something, it will only escalate.

"Tanya, I..."

Tatiana's body twisted at her waist as she turned to face him.

'SLAP!'

A hard slap landed on his left cheek that now throbbed as Tatiana's red palmprint appeared right there. She has a heavy hand.

"I was never this humiliated in my life.", Tatiana said, her voice laced with venom striking straight into his heart.

She moved around Maddox unhurriedly, but Maddox was unable to summon the strength to move a muscle.