

Alphas Bride 371

Chapter 371 – The Crossdressing Alpha (1)

Talia discarded her clothes and went to bed.

She didn't feel like doing anything, including washing up and putting nightwear on, so she huddled under the cover with only panties on. Normally, even the panties would be gone, but this time she didn't feel like getting completely naked. Why would she? Damon was not there and even if he was, she wouldn't get intimate with him.

Talia hoped that sleep will be dreamless and bring some form of relief and that in the morning she will be able to forget all the nasty images that came into her mind.

But Damon's presence was everywhere, not allowing her to relax because it stirred within her unpleasant memories, and for the first time since meeting Damon, Talia didn't want his intoxicating scent of the forest and the dark chocolate.

From the stories she heard, the Moon Goddess gives everyone what they need, and Talia wondered, is this what she needed? Yes, she knew that she was not Damon's first, but did she need to be constantly reminded that he embraced thousands of women before her? Were her struggles in the Red Moon pack not enough?

A lone tear slid down Talia's cheek and she buried her face into the pillow, refusing to cry. She will not cry. Not now, and not because of things she can't change. Her options were to accept the reality or to give up on Damon and reject the bond that was pulling them together but... how can she reject him?

Talia remembered that two days after they met for the first time, Damon took her away from the Red Moon pack, and Talia knew that from that day onward he wasn't sleeping around.

Should she hold it against him those initial days of him not knowing what to do with the bond? And if she thinks about their encounter in the kitchen of the Red Moon pack, then that makes it... one day? He needed one day to accept that he has a mate and to focus on her.

From the day they met, Talia thought of Damon as handsome, yet for weeks after that she was still thinking about exit strategies, leaving the packhouse, leaving the Dark Howlers pack, leaving him... isn't

that similar? The only difference was that she was not aware of the bond, but the attraction was there, and she was still thinking about running away.

Somehow, Talia remembered the scene when Damon came to the attic where she used to live. He licked her hand and grimaced with a question if that was poisonous. And then he sneaked her into the trunk of a car, and held her in the back seat so that she can sleep while leaning against him, and she woke up in a hotel room in his embrace. And Damon tended to her wounds, fed her, took her to a doctor and to the amusement park, and they shared cotton candy, and he was caring in an awkward kind of way that could easily be misunderstood for being bossy, but the truth was that he never did anything against her will and she really appreciated that.

Damon knew they were mates, and the urge to mark her was probably driving him crazy, yet he approached her slowly, and the only thing he asked for was that she doesn't leave him.

Talia remembered giving Damon the garland made of flowers, the same one that's dried in the room across the hallway, and that evening he kissed her. Sure, they did many other things after that, but that kiss was something Talia will never forget.

In these few weeks she was with Damon, Talia experienced stress and uncertainty, and she even faced dangers, but on top of it all... she was never happier in her life. Damon made her happy.

No matter how much she hated herself, she couldn't hate Damon.

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'KHM...'

The sound of Damon clearing his throat pulled Talia out of her thoughts and she pressed her eyes shut tightly. Sure, her emotions stabilized, and she loved him with every fiber of her being, but she was not ready to forgive him Nora.

'KHM... KHM...'

Talia forced her limbs not to move. She was determined to pretend to sleep, which was ridiculous because if Damon could feel her emotions, he knew she was awake, but if she didn't acknowledge his presence, he would go away... Or at least leave her alone.

"You promised to wear this tonight...", Damon's deep voice sounded in the room and Talia's curiosity was piqued, but she still didn't move. He continued, "Since you are not wearing it, I thought that I should give it a try."

That did it.

Talia moved a bit and cracked her eye open. A second later, both of her eyes were wide open as she stared at Damon who was standing next to the bed in red briefs (that were his) and red lacy see-through babydoll that should reach below his firm ass, but because of his stature, the poor fabric stretched over his pecs and reached his waist. Talia had no idea how come he managed to squeeze in there without ripping the delicate garment.

That was a sexy outfit Talia bought with Maya, but instead of sexy, Damon looked comical.

Talia coughed to conceal the fit of laughter that was bubbling inside her, and she reminded herself that she was angry at him and she should not give in only because of how his eyebrow arched sexily.

"If I knew you are into crossdressing, I would get a bigger size. Maybe I can get us matching outfits next time?"

Damon's lips stretched into a smile. Talia said 'matching outfits' which meant that she already forgave him, at least a little bit. And he could feel that her sadness was dissipating and was being replaced by different emotions such as care, remorse, joy, and longing.

He wondered if him dressing ridiculously will work, and now he confirmed that it will. Talia's mood improved, but he still needed to work for it.

Damon put his hands on his hips and rotated slowly so that she can see him from every angle.

"What do you think? Is red my color?", he asked and stuck his ass out to strike a pose.

Every color is your color, silly. In Talia's eyes, Damon was the most handsome man on the planet. How can there be a color that didn't suit him? "It's OK."

Damon pouted. "Just OK? Maybe I should go with pink next time. Or baby blue?"

"Pft!", Talia buried her face into the pillow to suppress her laughter. How can she laugh when she was angry? But how can she not laugh when Damon was so silly? And she knew that he was doing it for her.

"Kitten..." His voice came from her right.

Talia peeked to see him kneeling on the side of the bed. She wanted to tell him how an Alpha shouldn't kneel, and that reminded her of his words how she is the only one who can get him down on his knees. No matter what they did, Damon always treated her in a special way.

"I love to see you laughing. Don't hide it. I will do anything to make you happy."

"Anything?", Talia asked, and Damon nodded earnestly.

Chapter 372 – The Crossdressing Alpha (2)

"Dance for me.", Talia demanded, and Damon's eyebrows shot up, but his smirk told her that he was ready for this.

"In this outfit, I probably need a dancing pole.", Damon said.

Talia was not sure what a dancing pole was, but... "I'm sure you can manage. Do your best, my Alpha."

The last shreds of Damon's uncertainty dissipated when Talia called him hers and he knew that she forgave him, but she wanted a show, and he was ready to give her one. He said that he will do anything to make her happy and he was eager to prove it.

"Watch carefully, kitten... your man will dance for you.", Damon said while pushing himself away from the bed.

He went to the side table and got the remote. After two seconds of silence, drums sounded from the built-in speakers in the ceiling, and Damon started swaying his hips at the slow sultry song that filled the space.

It was the song "Leave the door open" by Bruno Mars.

"What you doing? Where you at?..."

Talia didn't recognize the lyrics, but Damon was singing.

"I'm sipping wine, in a robe... I look too good, to be alone..."

Talia agreed with this one. He was not wearing a robe, but he looked too good even in that ridiculous babydoll that was a few sizes too small for him.

It was a song from a man to a woman, telling her that he was waiting for her to come, and Talia thought how this was quite appropriate for their current situation. How long was Damon planning for this?

Damon spun swiftly three times and then his arms went high up above his head. After a moment of stillness, his torso swayed in wavy motions, and his hips rocked outrageously, making Talia's cheeks heat just by looking at him, but she couldn't look away.

"You're so sweet, so tight, I won't bite, unless you like..."

Damon winked at this last part and Talia stifled a giggle.

The prideful Alpha was wearing female nightwear and dancing, only to ease her hostility, and... it was working.

"Don't keep me waiting, there's so much love we could be making..."

Everything about the song and Damon's performance was melting Talia's resistance and she forgot why she was angry in the first place.

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As the song progressed, Damon was inching closer to the bed, and he extended his hand to Talia while singing, "I'm here just waiting for you. Come on over, I'll adore you..."

Talia had no idea at what point she placed her hand into his.

Damon yanked her out of the bed, and she landed into his embrace. The two of them danced to, "you want me like I want you".

Talia relished the feeling of Damon's body pressing on hers and the whole experience was enhanced by the sparks of their bond as they moved in unison.

Talia was only in her panties, and he didn't wear much more either, but there was one problem.

"Can you remove this thing? It looks ridiculous.", Talia said while hooking her index finger at the hem of the babydoll. She will never figure out how he managed to squeeze in there without ripping it.

Damon cocked an eyebrow. "You want it gone. Undress me."

Talia took this as a challenge. She gripped the fabric with both hands and with a light tug, it came apart where her nails dug into it, transforming a sexy babydoll into tatters.

Damon smirked. "Are you so impatient to have me and you can't spare a second to undress me properly?"

Talia looked up to him and her brows came together as the song ended and she remembered how they found themselves in the current situation.

"Is Nora the last one?"

Damon's playful face fell. "Yes."

"If any other of your exes appear, I don't want to see them close to you."

"Consider it done."

Talia's frown eased, but her expression was stern. "I mean it, Damon. Keep them away and don't expect me to clean your mess. You are mine and I have no intention of sharing you. If another woman gets so close with an intention to seduce you, I won't be so forgiving."

Damon's heart soared. First, this meant Talia forgave him, and second... she was claiming him as hers.

Damon cupped Talia's cheeks with his palms. "I will never accept any other woman. I am yours, and always will be. Tomorrow I will announce to the people at the party that you are my mate, and after that, everyone will know that if a woman thinks about getting close to me, she will mess with a mated Alpha."

Talia's eyes widened. "When you put it that way, it makes me think that those women will start targeting me so that you lose your mate."

"Only an idiot would think about going after Luna, but no matter what, I will do everything in my power to keep you safe, kitten. My wolf will do the same."

Talia couldn't speak for her wolf, and she wondered if she needs to wait for the beast to awaken before they could confirm if conditions were met for Damon to mark her. Talia had a feeling that once Damon marks her, their bond will be strengthened and no one will be able to stand between them, but until then... "And I will keep you safe, Damon."

At the same time, Damon leaned lower, and Talia got on her toes, and they sealed their vows with a kiss that reminded them that they were nearly naked.

Talia tugged on his underwear with impatience, and Damon smiled into the kiss.

He reached for her behind and scooped her up and Talia's legs wrapped around his waist.

Talia gasped when his erection pressed at the cradle of her thighs, and her whole body shook when Damon kissed the base of her neck, the place where his mark will come. Under Damon's touch, Talia's whole body was sensitive, but that spot on her neck was extra sensitive.

Without breaking the kiss, Damon walked to the bed with Talia in his arms and he lowered her gently with him hovering on top of her. His hands moved to her hips and his fingers gripped her panties.

Talia thought that he will rip them, but he didn't.

Damon slowly removed the garment down her legs, and he inched away to observe her naked perfection.

Damon's hands landed on Talia's thighs and moved lower. He stopped at her knees and then pulled her lower until her buttocks were at the edge of the bed.



Talia was not sure what he was doing. He just brought her to bed, and now he was pulling her to fall off?

When the movement stopped, Talia looked down and her eyes widened at the sight of Damon who was kneeling between her legs.

Chapter 373 – Damon's Favorite Pose

This was the second time in the same evening that Damon was kneeling in front of her, but this time was much more intimate.

Damon's lips lifted into a lopsided smirk as his hands moved at the back of her knees as he pushed her legs to open wider while lifting them.

Talia was flustered. She was lying on the bed, with her butt sticking off the edge, and her legs were sprawled open and raised for him to open up so he can see her completely. It was scandalous and she felt the urge to scoot away and close her legs, but Damon held her in place, and he had no intention of letting her wiggle out of this.

"Look at you, kitten...", Damon said in a sexy low voice. "You are beautiful."

Talia looked at Damon to see his face hovering an inch above her intimate bush and he took a deep breath and smiled in satisfaction like he just inhaled the best thing ever.

"You smell amazing, and you taste even better."

"Ah...", Talia cried when his tongue flicked her clit, and then he buried his face into her flesh and started kissing, licking, and sucking.

Talia's mind was a mess.

His tongue moved in mighty strokes, each sending cataclysmic sensations through her body, and she gripped the bedsheets to steady herself because the whole room was spinning.

Talia looked down to see Damon's head between her legs that were open as far as they go, and she couldn't believe that he was licking and sucking with gusto like he was enjoying the biggest delicacy.

"Ah...", a shaky moan escaped her lips and she plopped back onto the mattress while fighting with the madness that threatened to consume her.

"Mmm...", Damon hummed in satisfaction while worshiping her with his tongue. The mate bond allowed him to feel her emotions and it acted like a super-cheat to give her exactly what she needed to plunge into rapture.

"Call my name, kitten...", Damon spoke into her flesh.

"Da... ah... Dam...", she struggled to speak while gasping for air, and he loved it.

"Try harder", Damon demanded.

"Dam... Da... DAMN!", Talia ended with a curse and Damon chuckled, but his tongue didn't stop working.

Just a bit more... a bit more... and there it was. Talia inhaled choppily and her body tensed for a moment before she dissolved into a cry to the heavens, "DAMON!"

Damon greedily lapped the love nectar her body released. It was sweet and citrusy, and it was his favorite flavor in the world.

Talia's whole world was spinning, and she vaguely saw Damon removing his underwear and kicking it to the side, and then his majestic body arched above hers.

"How do you want me, kitten?", Damon asked in a strained voice.

Talia bit her lower lip to get herself present and she remembered what she heard was his favorite pose. From the back. Was it true? It didn't matter... Damon already told her that the only thing it matters was with whom he was doing it, and how was not important, but she really wanted to try it out.

Talia wiggled from below him and turned on her stomach before pushing herself backward with her hands.

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Damon stared at her ass that was up in the air, with her glistening pussy right under it, silently calling him to come closer.

Damon's palms landed on Talia's perfect ass-cheeks, and he gave them a squeeze.

"Is this how you want me?"

"Yes.", she confirmed. "Is this OK? Or should I get lower?"

"No need to do anything, kitten... just relax and enjoy the ride with your mate."

Talia held her breath in anticipation of what was coming.

Damon gripped her hips and moved her a bit to get all the way to the edge of the bed while he was standing behind her, and then she felt the pressure and the stretch that came with otherworldly sparks, and her eyes rolled at the back of her head.

This was a completely new angle and her whole body hummed as Damon made his way inside her.

"Oh, God!", Talia exclaimed when he was all the way in.

Damon smirked because he could feel that she was fine. More than fine. She loved it.

"Ahhh...", it was Damon's turn to release a shaky breath when he started rocking in and out of her.

He always loved taking a woman from behind, but with Talia, he missed seeing her lustful expression, but even with that caveat... this was unbelievable. Everything with Talia was so much better than anything else he experienced so far.

He gripped her hips and increased the pace. Every thrust wrapped his cock in addictive sparks that sent jolts of pleasure straight into his brain and he saw fireworks exploding in front of his closed eyes.

Talia was on her elbows and knees, and she looked down to see Damon's legs between hers, and she could also see his balls as he moved. Talia reached with her hand there and cupped his jewels.

"Fuck!", Damon cursed under his breath when she gave him a squeeze. His kitten was doing magnificent things to his mind and his body, and he loved every minute of it.

How can he allow her to stimulate him so much, without him returning the favor?

Damon's arm snaked around Talia's waist, and the tips of his fingers reached her clit that was right there, exposed and waiting to be touched.

"AHH!", a lewd sound ripped from Talia's throat when Damon started applying pressure on her clit in the movement of his hips.

Their emotions clashed and amplified each other, and Talia's moan mixed with Damon's groan as he released his hot load inside her pussy that was throbbing in the aftershocks of Talia's orgasm.

Talia plopped on the side, and Damon laid next to her.

After a few ragged breaths, Damon moved to cradle Talia in his arms.

Her body was limp and she was too lazy to move, so she let him do whatever he wanted.

Damon peppered kisses over her forehead, temples, and cheeks, and Talia closed her eyes and enjoyed every press of his lips against her skin.

"This, kitten...", he said breathily. "This is something only mates can experience. No other woman can make me feel this way, and no woman can tempt me to jeopardize what we have. Do you believe me?"

Talia nodded. She believed him.

Damon smiled and he moved to kiss her lips, and then he pushed her on the back completely as he climbed on top of her.

Talia inhaled a shaky breath as he made his way inside her.

"Every part of you is perfect...", Damon murmured close to her ear while slowly sliding in and out of her. "You are made for me. Only me..."

Talia embraced him with her arms and legs and her soul hummed in pleasure as their bodies merged into one over and over again.

Chapter 374 – How Many Women Are In The Dungeon?

Several orgasms later...

Talia laid in Damon's arms and they both relaxed while cuddling.

Neither of them wanted to sleep because they relished this peace that descended on them, and if they were awake, there was a chance for more sex.

"Damon?"

"Hmm?"

"Didn't I tell you that I need space and I don't want to see you? Why did you dress up in my nightwear and approach me? You probably felt how angry I was.", Talia said. Sure, she couldn't make herself hate him, and all those wonderful orgasms got her into a blissful state, but she still had questions.

Damon tightened his hold on Talia. "It's exactly because I could feel your emotions that I had to come here. Good or bad, I want to be by your side, kitten. If you are happy, I want to bask in your happiness. If you are angry, I want to be angry with you. And if you are angry at me...then, feel free to vent. Shout, punch, bite, do your worst. I will take it. The only thing I can't handle is when we are not together. I asked you this more than once, don't leave me."

Talia was moved by his words, and she had to point out, "I was not leaving you. I just wanted space to sort out my thoughts."

"If you want to sort anything, do it with me around.", Damon grumbled. He let out a long breath. "I hope you know that I didn't kick Nora out immediately only because I was hoping to send her away without causing issues. At least that's what I was thinking before she reached my desk, and that's the moment you got there."

Talia knew this but she didn't like seeing Nora get so close to Damon. There was a desk between them, and even if there were ten of those, Talia would still not be happy.

Talia was irked by Nora's confident and snobby attitude. It reminded her of Lisa. Would they act like that if they knew that Talia was Damon's mate? Probably not.

But there was a good side to this situation. If everyone knew that Talia was Damon's mate, they would suck up to her and probably backstab her when no one was looking. Like this, Talia got to see the ugly side of people, the side they would never reveal in front of a Luna.

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"What did you do to Nora?", Talia asked.

"Dungeon."

Talia lifted her head to look at him. "How big is the dungeon?"

Damon's brows came together. "Why?"

"It seems you are sending your exes there so, we should make sure we can accommodate all of them."

Damon didn't think it was funny. "Don't call them my exes. It sounds like I was dating them. And it's not like there are many of them."

"Five."

Damon didn't get it. "What?"

"So far, you sent five of your exes into the dungeon. Actually, Lisa is not your ex, so that makes it four, but she is still there, so I counted her in."

"Who are the other four?"

"Ashley and Heather.", Talia said. Seeing Damon's confused expression, Talia reminded him, "Two women who confronted me in front of the library. They were in the study, smearing me as someone who was claiming you shamelessly, and the two of them ended in the dungeon."

"Oh...", Damon made a sound of understanding. He forgot about those two.

"And then there is Jill. The woman I encountered in the restroom of the Shifters nightclub."

Damon remembered the incident and that he sent a woman to the dungeon, but he didn't see her face, so he was not sure which one is it. However, he sent her to the dungeon secretly. "How do you know about her?"

"Maya told me.", Talia said smugly. "With Nora and Lisa, that makes it five. I don't know about Lisa, but how long will the other four be there?"

"You should count Lisa in that group also."

Talia was alerted. "Did you sleep with Lisa?"

Damon tapped Talia's nose with the tip of his finger. "Those five are not my exes. They are women who dared to look down on you. They will come out when you decide."

"Oh...", it was Talia's turn to make a sound of understanding. She thought of them as Damon's exes and Lisa, and now that he put it that way, it made sense that he imprisoned women who crossed her, but... "Is looking down on me enough to earn them time in the dungeon?"

"Looking down on a woman? No.", Damon responded. "Looking down on my mate, yes. My mate will be the Luna of this pack. Disrespect to you is also disrespecting me, and the pack, and the Moon Goddess. It doesn't get worse than that."

"But they didn't know I am your mate."

Damon shrugged. "That doesn't matter. They all knew that you are the woman by my side. If they question the type of our relationship, that's disrespect to me, and that's..."

"Disrespect to the pack.", Talia finished instead of him.



Damon chuckled. "Exactly. Don't feel sorry for them, kitten. I am not an Alpha because I allow my pack members to walk over me. Thanks to me they have their current lives and freedom, that alone should be enough to require their respect. If they won't give it, they are free to leave, but I won't tolerate anyone living on my territory and enjoying benefits while looking down on me."

Talia stared at Damon while processing his words. With her, Damon was kind and gentle and playful and goofy, and it was easy to forget who he was... the Alpha of the largest pack in North America.

Talia pressed her lips into a line as she realized an important point. "I am sorry for leaving the study in anger. I was consumed by my emotions and insecurities, and I forgot to look at the situation for what it was. Nora came to your office and acted out of line, yet instead of kicking her out, I was only thinking how you slept with her."

Damon felt guilt eating him up. He was not a saint, far from it, but Talia was innocent in all this, yet she was acting like a grownup.

"Don't be hard on yourself, kitten."

"But I must.", Talia said. "I am not a girl from the attic anymore. I am the mate of the most powerful and handsome Alpha, and I will be his Luna, and I need to act like it. I know that you are mine and that you won't betray me, but I still walked out like an insecure girl throwing a tantrum."

Damon's chest swelled with pride. That's his mate! And another thing also swelled, in his crotch area.

Damon moved to push Talia with his body to lay on her back with him on top of her.

"I thought we were talking.", Talia said when she realized what he was up to.

Damon chuckled. "Didn't you say how you want to act like a Luna? The night is still young, and you need to take care of your Alpha."

Talia wanted to say something cheeky, but she realized that Damon was right. It was night, and she wanted to focus on him and not some random things.

#### Chapter 375 – Madness Of The Mate Bond (1)

Maddox cradled sleeping Tatiana in his arms as the first rays of sun hit the sky.

This never happened before. He was too excited to sleep and the adrenaline made him feel like he can go on without rest forever.

Tatiana's front was leaning on Maddox's left side and her shoulder perfectly fit under his armpit, like it was made to be there.

Her arm was draped over his muscular torso, ending at his waist, and his eyes followed that majestic sight all down to her perfectly manicured nails that were touching the bedsheet on his right.

Tatiana's warm strawberry-infused breath tickled Maddox's pecs every time she exhaled, and that on and off sensation was like a reminder that his other half was right there, he found her, it happened... and it was still happening.

It was so silent that he could hear Tatiana's heartbeats, and Maddox never felt so peaceful in his life. It was surreal.

He was not sure how long they were in Tanya's room, but he knew it was more than a day because daylight and darkness switched outside. Was it possible that they didn't come out of the room for two days? Or was it more? No matter how long they were there, it was not long enough. It will never be enough.

The two of them were mostly entangled with each other and they tried so many poses, and Maddox was hard just by thinking about how many more were left to try! They might invent some new ones.

He really wanted to continue exploring other angles he could use to make his Goddess cry his name breathlessly, but at the same time, he didn't want to disturb her sleep. After all they've done, she deserved some rest.

Maddox closed his eyes and he saw mental images of Tatiana's lustful gaze directed at him, challenging him to tame her, to claim her as his... and he did.

Sinking his fangs into Tatiana Wilkow and marking her as his was the biggest achievement of Maddox's life. EVER!

Yes, he is the Alpha of the Blue River pack, and Tatiana is his mate, which means she is the Luna of the Blue River pack, and there were many things they should talk about, but Maddox didn't want to think about anything beyond this room and the two of them.

Between sessions of intense sex, the two of them ate, cuddled, and slept a bit, but they didn't talk much. Maddox barely knew anything about Tatiana Wilkow, but somehow he knew that she was made for him and that no other woman will ever compare.

Tanya's naked body pressed on his, her soft curves perfectly filled the gaps that his hard muscles formed, and the sparks of their bond which danced wherever they touched told Maddox that all this was real.

It felt like they came into Tanya's room only moments ago, yet he couldn't remember how his life was before he met his Goddess.

Maddox now understood Damon's and Caden's words, how when one meets his mate, he gets hornier, but only for that one person. And Maddox's that one person was Tatiana Wilkow.

Everything about her was perfect. Her body, her voice, her expressions, the way she rode him wildly, and the way she submitted to his ministrations. It was all fucking perfect, it was all his, and he couldn't wait to do it again!

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Maddox's eyes shone and a wave of excitement washed over him when Tatiana stirred.

"Not now, Max...", she mumbled. "I need more sleep."

Maddox chuckled and gave her ass a squeeze. "Sleep, Tanya."

Tatiana groaned. "How can I sleep when you do that? And how can I sleep when you are horny? I can feel your emotions. And they make me horny also."

Maddox grinned. He loved the last part. This mate bond thing was wonderful!

Tatiana squirmed a bit and Maddox swallowed hard. Can he really allow her to go back to sleep?

He got an idea.

Maddox pushed her to lay on her back and when Tatiana frowned, he pulled the cover up to her chest level.

Tatiana was confused. Based on his emotions, she was sure that he wanted to go at it, but why was he covering her up?

Did her lusty Alpha learn some restraint? After only two days? She was not sure if she should be happy or disappointed by it.

"What are you doing?", she asked.

"Sleep, baby. Let your man take care of you.", Maddox murmured and kissed her forehead, then her nose, then he pecked her lips, her chin, every kiss was gentle as the touch of butterfly wings, and it was all infused with the delicious scent of coffee that Talia missed when he moved lower to kiss her collarbones.

Tatiana glanced at the time to see that it was barely past 5 AM. Considering how much sex they had, she should sleep like a log, and even though she felt a bit drowsy, she was energetic. Was this because of Maddox's mark?

"Ah...", a shaky sigh escaped her lips when he kissed her breasts and the electrifying sparks shot from her nipples down to her core in the rhythm his lips set while dancing over her flesh. How the hell was she supposed to sleep like this?

But with every next kiss, her drowsiness dissipated, and by the time Maddox planted kisses in the area of her navel, her eyes were shining with lustful glint.

She could sense his emotions and she knew that his arousal swelled when he inhaled the scent of goodness that pooled at her core.

Tatiana never knew that so much pleasure can be packed into one man. Maddox had an impressive body, and his cock was extraordinary in more than just size and shape. His scent and flavors of coffee were addictive, and it was all amplified by the delightful sparks of their bond.

Maddox's stamina left Tatiana in awe, and before Maddox, Tatiana was not aware that she could go for so long without collapsing.

He brought joy to all of her senses, but the most striking was their bond through which she could clearly feel his emotions. Without any word spoken, Tatiana knew that Maddox approved of her in every way possible, and he wanted her more than anything, which allowed her to relax and enjoy all the wonderful sex he was giving her.

Maddox wanted to be sneaky and kiss her under the cover, to drive her crazy until she can't stand it and she begs him for a release instead of that boring sleeping she wanted to do. However, Tatiana kicked the cover away, exposing their bodies to the morning sunlight completely and her scorching gaze directed his way told him she was wide awake.

"Good morning, my dear...", Maddox murmured, and Tatiana was not sure if that was for her or her pussy because he was right there, his face hovered an inch above her neatly trimmed intimate curls. Tatiana went with the latter.

"She was missing you.", Tatiana said cheekily.

Maddox's lips stretched into a grin. "I was missing her also. I was missing you a lot..." And then he buried his face between her legs and Tatiana's head plopped backward into the pillows.

Chapter 376 – Madness Of The Mate Bond (2)

"Yes... yes...", Tatiana chanted wantonly while fisting Maddox's hair, and her legs spread as far as they go to give him better access.

He was licking and sucking expertly, right where she wanted, but she also wanted more because it was never enough.

Maddox growled while gripping her hips from under her thighs, and he lapped at her like a parched man. Each stroke of his tongue brought him another dose of delicious strawberries and he knew that his addiction for Tatiana reached the point of no return, but he didn't care. He was ready to drown in Tatiana's flavors.

Under Maddox's ministrations, Tatiana's body coiled and arched, as it had a will on its own, and she moaned without restraint.

"God... Yes! Yes... YES! Don't stop!" If he stopped now, she would commit murder.

Tatiana's words stirred Maddox to suck harder and he inserted two fingers into her, thrusting in and out of her for added stimulation.

"Fuck, Max!", Tatiana cursed just before an orgasm crashed on her and she saw stars spinning in front of her closed eyes. There was Orion's belt, and Ursa Major, Cassiopeia... was that the Milky Way?

Her whole body was pulsating in the rhythm of her wild heartbeats, and she wanted a breather, but Maddox continued devouring her pussy, like he didn't notice that she reached her peak. Every move of his tongue delivered another charge of addictive sparks, pushing her higher up, not letting her go back to Earth.

Maddox hummed in satisfaction as her body released juices that tasted like strawberries and honey. It was his reward for good performance, and he had no intention of letting it go to waste. Every drop was precious. Every drop was his.

"Mine... Mine...", he mumbled, and she felt his lips moving against her flesh.

Tatiana gasped when she realized that she was approaching another level of ecstasy she didn't reach before.

"Max... oh... you...", she cried unintelligibly while struggling to breathe.

Should she tell him to stop before she passes out? At this rate, she feared that she might fall into madness from overstimulation.

Tatiana was never so conflicted. How can she choose between her sanity and another earth-shaking orgasm?

Tatiana fisted his hair and she hoped that he won't stop. Ever.

Maddox was lost in his daze, but he could feel Tatiana's emotions that told him she wanted him to continue. He had no problems with that.

Maddox was determined to tame the Goddess below him with many mind-blowing orgasms. He wanted her to think about him, and him only, every moment of every day, until the end of time. She was his!

His lips latched around her clit, and he sucked harshly while his tongue did its magic. Maddox's fingers curled inside her, and the tips of his fingers caressed her G-spot.

"FUUU...! MAX!", Tatiana screamed as her body fell apart into atoms, and she was completely lost in rapture.

All of her nerve endings fired up, and it was so stimulating that she felt weightless. Did her soul leave her body? Is there such a thing as dying from too many orgasms?

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Tatiana's emotions surged into Maddox, and he moved with haste. He got on his knees with Tatiana's legs in his hands, keeping them together and pointing up, exposing Tatiana's thighs and her perfect ass.

Maddox would enjoy the view if he was not aroused beyond belief. His throbbing cock reminded him that he didn't get his release.

Tatiana felt the pressure and the stretch, and her body arched upward as Maddox started thrusting inside her with urgency. No matter how many times they had sex, he stretched her in ways like it was the first time. Ecstatic friction mixed with a hint of pain, and she loved it.

Through her lusty haze, Tatiana could see Maddox's broad shoulders framing her legs, and his hand holding her ankles, lifting her buttocks up from the mattress. She loved how strong he was, but... where did his other hand go?

'SLAP!'

"Ahh!", Tatiana moaned when Maddox slapped her ass and her eyes flashed in outrage. How dares he spank her? But the stinging pain morphed into pleasure and delivered another type of stimulation.

'SLAP!'



This time, his hand lingered on her ass, and he gave her a squeeze before he caressed the throbbing area. She was sure that his fingers left the mark right there, but it was delicious, and she loved it.

"Again, Max... Harder...", Tatiana demanded, and Maddox grinned.

Instead of spanking her, Maddox spread her legs apart and his body arched above hers.

Movements of his hips became torturously slow, and Tatiana raked his back with her nails in frustration.

"Fuck me, Max. Why did you slow down?", Tatiana asked.

Her angry voice laced with lust was music to Maddox's ears.

Maddox loved the feisty side of his mate and the fact that such a fantastic woman was his, made him elated beyond belief. He hoped that she won't lose her spunk because he loved conquering her over and over again.

Maddox's eyes flashed with delight at the sight of the red-ish mark that was forming on Tatiana's neck. His mark.

Maddox leaned lower and kissed his mark and Tatiana's whole body shuddered.

Maddox heard stories about how the mark is super-sensitive and when mate touches it, it's like another erogenous zone. But the main point was that it acts like that only for mates. For non-mates, it's a repellent because mate won't stand anyone else touching her here.

Tatiana's mind was a mess. Why did he slow down the assault on her insides?

Tatiana knew that Maddox was playing a game where he was showing his dominance, and she wanted to fight back because she wanted an orgasm, damn it!

Unfortunately, her body refused to cooperate. She was completely under his spell.

She realized that she needed a different tactic.

"Maxy, baby...", Tatiana purred into his ear, and she smirked when she felt his body jolting. "Fuck me hard. Show me what an Alpha can do for his mate..."

How can Maddox say no to that? But he had a different idea.

"How about you show me what a Luna will do for her mate?"

Before Tatiana could respond, Maddox's arms wrapped around her and he rolled them over, placing Tatiana on top.

Tatiana's smirk told him that she accepted the challenge. She loved to be in charge, and the fact that he initiated it, stirred her further to prove how she can make him feel good.

Maddox watched as his naked Goddess moved with elegance, rotating so that her back was facing him, and he stared at her perfect ass as she lowered herself on him.

"Fuuuuuck...", Maddox cursed under his breath when Tatiana held onto his legs for leverage and started riding him.

Her ass moved up and down, adding a small rotation as her pussy enveloped his cock in an airtight fit and charged him with addictive sparks that muddled with his mind.

She was moving faster and Maddox was not sure how long he can hold on.

"AWOOOOO!", a loud howl ripped from Tatiana's throat, shaking the windows, and catching Maddox by surprise.

Before Tatiana's howl died completely, Maddox groaned when her insides coiled around his cock, pushing him over the edge and he twitched as he shot his hot seed inside her.

Maddox's mind was a mess and he appreciated the fact that Tatiana didn't stop moving, even though her body was convulsing in ecstasy.

His Goddess was perfect.

Chapter 377 – Coffee And Strawberries (1)

Breakfast was served in the garden.

The morning sun was not too hot, and the breeze was providing a pleasant cooling effect. The atmosphere was enhanced by the song of birds that were hiding in the trees and the good mood of people who were seated at tables.

Talia decided to sit with Mindy, Maya, and Kalina, she didn't see them since dinner.

Damon was not pleased when Talia urged him to sit with Tony and Caden.

"We are hosts...", Talia reminded him, and Damon grumbled something she didn't understand.

Damon pulled a chair for Talia to sit and went to the table where breakfast items were arranged in a buffet style.

Only after making sure that Talia had a plate full of food in front of her as well as a glass of orange juice, Damon went to sit with the guys.

Paul, Nate, and Greg were seated at another table.

"Did you hear that howl this morning? It was before six o'clock.", Talia said to her girlfriends. "Do you know who it was?" Damon was sleeping like a log, and he didn't hear anything.

"It was my sister.", Kalina said, making Mindy, Maya, and Talia look at her.

"Are you sure? It sounded like a call for hunt.", Maya said.

Kalina nodded. "Yeah. I'm sure. That was Tanya."

"Well, at least you know that she was having a good time.", Mindy said cheekily. "I told you that my brother will take good care of her."

Maya chimed in, "Was he taking care of her, or did Tanya take care of Max?"

After a moment of silence, Maya, Mindy, Talia, and Kalina burst into giggles.

When they settled down, Maya spoke to Talia, "I heard that Nora is in the dungeon. Care to share what happened?"

Talia looked at the other faces at the table and she saw that Kalina and Mindy were also curious. Talia gave them the short version of Nora coming to Damon's study and throwing herself at him. She skipped the part of Damon knocking Nora out, it was not necessary.

"Oh, it seems that tonight's party will go smoothly.", Mindy commented. "With Marcy and Nora out of the way, there is no one to stir the pot."

Talia was not so sure. "Let's hope so."

There were more than fifty people on the guestlist, but other than Elder Charlie and Elder Samson, Talia didn't know anyone else who will come. They also invited Shaman Gideon, but he didn't respond to the invitation so they were not sure if he will show up. That left a lot of unknown faces, and Talia couldn't predict how they will react when Damon introduces her.

What if they hope for someone with a good background to be Damon's mate? What if they expect someone like... Marcy?

Damon offered Talia an option of introducing her as just Talia, and if anyone asks, they would say that she is his assistant. By dinner time, Talia will get a chance to mingle with the guests casually, and after that, they can reveal they are mates, once Talia was comfortable. But how comfortable can she get during two-to-three hours? She was nervous.

Talia had no idea how things will play out, but the good part was that her friends were here. She knew that Mindy, Kalina, and Maya won't let her suffer a loss.

The chatter stopped when Maddox and Tatiana made appearances.

Maddox's arm was around Tatiana's waist, holding her against him possessively and Tatiana's hair was flipped to the right to showcase Maddox's mark that was forming on the left side of her neck.

"What did we miss?", Maddox asked no one in particular.

Kalina bolted to her feet and ran there to give her sister a hug.

"Come and join us at the table. So many things happened, and I want to hear how are you doing...", Kalina chirped and dragged Tatiana while ignoring Maddox's grumbles of protest.

Damon waved at Maddox to come. "Get a plate of food for Tanya, and then you can join us." It's not that Maddox wouldn't join them on their own, but there was a danger of Maddox making a scene because Kalina took his mate away.

Damon knew very well that Maddox's urge to feed Tatiana was at its peak. The only question was if Maddox will let her eat on her own or if he will insist on feeding her.

It was apparent that Maddox didn't want to separate from Tatiana, even for that little space that was required in order for them to sit at separate tables.

Maddox felt joy radiating from Tatiana and he watched as she craned her neck to show his mark to Kalina, Talia, Maya, and Mindy. That helped him settle his emotions a bit.

Maddox nodded stiffly at Damon and made his way to the table that was set up with breakfast items.

Damon didn't understand why Maddox and Tatiana left their room. They already delivered them food, more than once. But then Damon picked up through the mind-link that Rose was on her way to change bedsheets and give fresh towels, which explained why the newly mated couple was out in the open.

Damon wanted to take advantage of this situation to share some details with Maddox and Tony (Caden knew everything already), and to tell them that there will be a party tonight they should attend.

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"Why don't you sit with guys at the table?", Mindy asked Maddox when he brought two plates, both heaping with food. He placed one plate in front of Tatiana, and the other one next to her. It was obvious that Maddox wanted to sit with the women at the table.

Maddox frowned at Mindy in disapproval. Why was she chasing him away?

His hostility dissipated when Tatiana put her hand over his while saying sweetly, "Maxy, baby, how about you eat with guys? I give you half an hour and then we go back upstairs."

Maddox's eyebrows shoot up in agreement. Half an hour. He can do that. Maybe.

He leaned to kiss Tatiana on the lips once, twice, every kiss mixed his flavor of coffee with hers of strawberries... and then he said, "Make sure you finish that. You will need the energy."

'PAK!'

Tatiana slapped his ass and she shook her hand that was throbbing. How can a man be so hard?

Maddox grinned cockily. "Save that for the upstairs, doll."

He gave her another quick kiss before walking away with his plate of food.

Tatiana watched Maddox's tall and muscular frame as he moved, and she couldn't stop herself from imagining his body without any clothes. Her eyes fell on his firm ass that stretched his shorts, and she bit her lower lip while graphic images of her spanking Max flashed in her mind. Or will he spank her again? Both options were hot, so they will definitely do both.

Everything he did felt right. It was like he knew exactly where, how hard, how long, and in what way to touch her. The last two days passed in a daze, and she was not sure if they really happened or if she imagined it all.

Chapter 378 – Coffee And Strawberries (2)

Kalina giggled at her sister. "It seems you are enjoying with your mate."

Tatiana released a long breath. "What is there not to enjoy? He is... fantastic. He made me fly so many times. I only worry that when this enamored daze disperses, I fall hard on my ass." The ass that was still remembering Maddox squeezing it harshly.

Tatiana couldn't believe that she enjoyed being manhandled. Wasn't she the dominant one? But with Maddox things were different. She never saw anyone so handsome, powerful, annoyingly confident, and he smelled great and tasted even better. Every part of him was made for pleasuring her.

Tatiana was not inexperienced, but she never came so quickly and so strongly, and she couldn't wait to do it again.

Tatiana had a good life so far, and she couldn't imagine what changes will happen with Maddox's appearance, but she knew that life without Maddox was not an option.

To make things more complicated, Maddox marked her. That sealed their bond, and she became his Luna, the Luna of the Blue River pack. It was a big deal, yet she didn't know a thing about that pack, including where it was.

Sense of urgency swelled within Tatiana. She should educate herself about so many things. What is the situation in his family? She knew about Mindy, but what about their parents, Beta, and other high-ranking members of the pack? She heard that Beta and Gamma are usually very close to the Alpha, like extended family. Should she buy them presents?

"Don't worry, Tanya.", Talia said. It was obvious that Tatiana was freaking herself out. "Every relationship has ups and downs, but the mate bond is assurance that both of you will do your best to make it work, and that's the only thing that counts."

Kalina nodded in agreement with Talia's words, and added to Tatiana, "Just how you are in a daze, he is as well. Keep in mind that the bond works both ways. No matter what's ahead, you will be in it together."

Tatiana smiled a little, but she couldn't stop herself from worrying about that together part.

She had a life and a company in Europe, while Maddox had a pack in the States. How can they take care of the people who depend on them, and be together, when those two are on different continents?

It was easy not to think about it while lost in the throes of passion, but now that her head was clear, all kinds of worries filled her mind.

Tatiana closed her eyes and took a deep breath while trying to compose herself. The second inhale filled her system with the scent of coffee and her lips lifted into a smile.

"Thank you for the coffee...", her voice trailed when she opened her eyes and realized there was a glass of water in front of her.



"I got you water. Do you want coffee?", Maddox asked with concern on his handsome face.

While they were in the room, Tatiana drank only water, so he assumed that was what she wanted. Did he fail to bring to his Goddess her beverage of choice?

Tatiana looked into his endless chocolate eyes and all her doubts dissipated.

He was slightly leaning above her, and she reached to caress his cheek with her hand.

"For the last couple of years, I am used to thinking about my work, my employees, and my customers", Tatiana said. "And since I've met you, I am selfishly thinking only about myself."

Maddox was not sure from where that came, but he knew how to answer, "I feel the same, Tanya. While we were in your room, I didn't think about my pack not even once, and I don't know if that was a good thing or a bad one, but I know that I love having you on my mind." And on my cock.

Mindy tched in annoyance. "Do you guys hear yourself? Both of you were thinking about others to the point that now you feel guilty because you are happy. The world will continue spinning without you sitting in the driver's seat. Enjoy what you have."

Mindy's words got Talia thinking. Everyone had their sets of worries, and it was just a matter of whether they will allow worries to consume them or focus on the positives.

Talia's sight drifted to Damon. He was chatting with Caden and Tony, and the mood was good, and then he paused and turned to meet her gaze. Did he feel that she was looking at him? Probably.

Their smiles mirrored each other, and Talia loved that they were sharing the invisible connection which confirmed how what they have was special.

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"Well said!", Maya exclaimed, and Talia jolted while wondering what she missed. It was easy to get lost in Damon's icy-blue gaze that did funny things in her stomach.

Talia saw Damon smiling smugly, and she knew he enjoyed the fact that he can distract her easily.

"You are wise beyond your age.", Maya told Mindy. "If I didn't know better, I would assume you have a mate."

Mindy rolled her eyes dramatically. "It's because I don't have one that I can see clearly. I know Max since I was born, and I never saw him this..." Mindy's voice trailed when she saw that Maddox and Tatiana were making out. "I wanted to say I never saw him that happy, but now I will go with horny."

Kalina, Talia, and Maya burst into giggles, but all three of them secretly stole glances at their mates that were at the neighboring table, and they wished to be closer to them. Touching distance is the best. Clothes are optional.

The guys felt the same as their mates, but there was a sense of how it's manly to show control and not succumb to urges. However, everyone had their breaking point.

"Max!", Damon shouted. "Leave Tanya alone and get your ass here! You said that you will only give her water. That's more than just water!"

Damon was irritable because Max was getting sugar from his mate, while Damon was sitting with guys and controlling his urges to taste Talia.

Maddox broke the kiss and grinned at Damon. "Tanya wanted coffee also. How can I say no to my mate?" He looked at Tanya and caressed her cheek with his thumb. "I will do anything to make you happy."

Tatiana looked at Maddox dreamily. Normally, she would call him out on bullshit because no one spouts such cheesy lines and means it, but in this case, Tatiana could feel his emotions and she knew he meant it.

"Thank you for the coffee."

"Anytime, doll...", Maddox said in a sexy low voice. "It seems you want more."

Tatiana's eyes flashed with delight. She always loved coffee, and she tasted many blends, and Maddox's flavors were hands-down the best coffee she ever had. After marking, his flavors intensified and acted like a drug. She was addicted. It was never enough.

Kissing was only a small sip from the cup of pleasures Maddox can provide, and Tatiana was eager to accept whatever he was willing to give.

Seeing that Tatiana's lips were slightly parted, and her eyes darted from his eyes to his lips, Maddox smiled and then he kissed her again.

Chapter 379 – James' New Friends (1)

James made his way into the garden, and Damon stood up to meet him.

The two of them talked before breakfast, and Damon told James about the situation with Nora.

James was not surprised to hear that Nora found her way into Damon's study when no one else was around, but he didn't expect that Nora would end up in the dungeon. That only confirmed James' guess how Talia was important. Very important.

James also respected the fact that Damon rejected Nora. James knew very well that his father never refused a free meal.

Damon told James to include in his (aka George's) daily report how Nora was disrespectful toward Alpha Damon and that she was sent to the dungeon to reflect on her actions, per request from Damon's future Luna.

Of course, Alpha Edward will think that the future Luna is Marcy, and by the time that's clarified, Damon will secure Talia's position and protection.

"Done?", Damon asked, and James nodded in response. "Any problems?"

"No problems. I already got confirmation that things are progressing well. Did you arrange for the things I asked?"

Damon's evaluation of James changed. He was not only observant, but also calculative, smart, proactive, and he knew how to ask for what he wanted.

The thing was that Damon didn't ask James to confirm with Alpha Edward anything, yet James did it on his own.

Damon thought how having that youngster on his side would be a good thing, but if James turns against him, it could be dangerous. However, they already started this dance, and the only thing Damon could do is to keep his eyes on James and stay vigilant.

"You can head out after breakfast.", Damon said. "Until then, you should get to know guys who will accompany you."

Damon's eyes lost focus for a moment and then he turned to look at the main entry. A second later, three figures emerged.

They were three teenagers, two boys, and a girl. They all looked to be about James' age.

"James", Damon called. "These are Zack, Eric, and Petra. They might be young, but they are my junior warriors and they each have qualifications you asked for. Zack and Eric can drive, Petra will get her license after she turns sixteen years old. In addition, they all went to human town at least a few times, and they will double as your bodyguards. I assumed that you would prefer this arrangement compared to having a few older guys going with you."

James nodded in approval and listened to the instructions Damon gave to the three teens.

"You have the list of places James wants to visit. It is not set in stone, as you are welcome to suggest alternatives and make adjustments as needed. If there is any emergency, let me know. Keep your phones on, so we can track you with GPS if anything happens unexpectedly. When you are in human town, he will not be James, the future Alpha of the Red Moon pack. There, he will be James, your friend. Don't stand out, don't cause trouble, but above all, don't let anyone bully you and prioritize safety. If James is pleased with your performance today, you will get to accompany him tomorrow as well."

They all nodded in understanding, and Damon gestured toward the table with food while saying, "Help yourself with breakfast. When you are done, you are free to leave."

With that, Damon returned to his table.

James shook hands with three teens and they exchanged names while assessing each other.

Zack looked like a quiet guy who spoke only when spoken to.

Erik had a big smile on his face, and the only thing bigger was the lens of the camera that was hanging around his neck.

Petra was a girl with a hair full of curly brown hair, and her keen gaze told James that she shouldn't be underestimated.

James didn't realize that he smiled brightly while talking with his three companions for the day. While imagining his days ahead, James always saw himself doing things alone, while one or two older guys stood at the back and watched him. But with three teens, James will look like he is hanging out with friends.

Who knows, maybe he actually makes friends? That would be first.

At the Red Moon pack, he is surrounded by trainers and tutors, with George being among the youngest ones. Teens that are James' age are looking at him like he is some untouchable royalty because status and rankings are strictly respected in the Red Moon pack.

James found it refreshing to be able to engage in conversation with kids his age and they didn't look like they swallowed a stick.

James, Petra, Erik, and Zack got food and sat at a table that was prepared for them.

"You must have these feasts often.", Petra said while gesturing toward the table that was full of breakfast items. Her plate had the most food piled up among the others.

"Not really.", James said. When he saw that Petra's curious gaze was directed at him, James added, "I mostly study and train and days are the same. This is different." Very different.

James realized that they probably think he has a super exciting life as the future Alpha of the Red Moon pack, and he really didn't want to disappoint them, so he decided to stir the conversation in a different direction.

"Alpha Damon said you are junior warriors. What does that mean?", James asked.

To his surprise, it was the silent Zack who responded, "At the age of sixteen, students who perform well in school get a chance to start training, assuming we pass the physical and mental exams."

Zack opened his mouth to say more, but James raised his hand, indicating that he had a question.

When James saw that Zack, Erik, and Petra looked at him strangely, James cursed himself. This was a habit he got from his tutoring, don't speak without permission, and he just asked for permission to speak.

James wished to disappear. Who talks to peers by raising hands to announce he wants a turn? How embarrassing.

James cleared his throat awkwardly before asking, "You need to have good grades and pass exams in order to become a warrior?"

They all nodded in confirmation, and Zack corrected James, "Junior warrior. We attend training and get evaluated based on our performance, however, we don't get official duties until we finish high school, and there are additional tests we need to take, both physical, mental, and emotional..."

James thought how all that was fascinating.

In the Red Moon pack, it's assumed that everyone will start training by the time they are ten years old, and if they don't show promising results early on, they will be dismissed from the path to become warriors and will get labeled as Omegas.

Compared to that, in the Dark Howlers pack, Alpha Damon was prioritizing regular education and one must be an exemplary student if he/she gets to train before finishing high school.

This concept was novel for James and he was eager to find out more.

Chapter 380 – James' New Friends (2)

"Can one be a warrior without starting as a junior warrior?", James asked.

"Of course", Zack responded. "Normally, after high school, we would join as warriors in training. Right now, we have the same status as warriors in training, but we are at an advantage because we started earlier. After we finish school, we will turn into warriors in training, and we will be eligible to take tests needed for becoming regular warriors and get ranks assigned."

"You can think of us as elite forces.", Erik added proudly. "Most of us who join early get ranked by the time we reach twenty years old. Zack's grades are so good that he got a scholarship and is attending school in the human city."

James' eyes sparkled with curiosity as he turned to Zack. "How can you go to a human city regularly? What if someone upsets you and you shift in front of humans?"

Zack smirked. "I had to pass endurance tests where I proved I can control my wolf. If one can't pass that, he can't leave our territory without supervision, no matter how good his grades are.", Zack said and patted Erik's back. "Like this guy here."

Erik puffed his cheeks in annoyance. "I passed the test last month." He turned to James. "I can continue high school in the human city starting September, but I have a good thing going on here, so I decided to stick around until college."

James' mind was spinning. College? That was something he saw in movies and it comes with staying in dorms and numerous parties where students drink and make out. It's fantastic!

James had so many questions, but he wondered if he will ask too much and reveal how ignorant he was. He should be the next Alpha, cream of the crop in every way possible, yet he was painfully aware that his eager expression was betraying him. However, this was his chance to get answers and he was willing to risk it.

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James schooled his features to look cool, and asked, "So, how long are you guys training to be warriors?"

"I'm on my second year, and so is Erik", Zack responded. "Petra just finished her first year, but don't let that fool you because she can wipe the floor with us."

Petra rolled her eyes, and James was focused on her cheeks that swelled from all the food in her mouth. He thought that if she opens her mouth, the food will spill, but she still managed to say to Zack without making a mess, "Don't make it sound like I am a violent person."

She touched her nose and said to James. "I am training to be a tracker."



James' eyes widened. "You get specialization so early on?" In the Red Moon pack, they all start with hellish trainings to build their strength and stamina. It takes years to reach the point where they can choose a specific field, and even that's reserved only for the best ones.

Erik responded, "I wouldn't call it specialization. It's more like exploration. Petra expressed her desire to be a tracker, so veteran trackers from our pack will give her personal lessons once or twice a week, depending on availability. We get real specialization only after we become warriors. Zack wants to be a scout, and I am a fighter."

"A fighter?", James asked. "That's the basic route. Don't you want anything specific?"

"I know what you are thinking.", Erik said. "You are wondering why a genius like me would pick the least exciting path. However, going through the training as a fighter will give me the foundation I need to be a General, which is my ultimate goal."

James pointed at Erik's camera. "You look like a photographer, and not a general."

Erik caressed his camera with the tips of his fingers gently. "I am the president of the photography club in our school." He puffed his chest proudly, and continued, "My photos are published regularly in the school's paper, and in the Darkbourne's magazine. I get to guide aspiring photographers, which counts toward my leadership skills as a junior warrior. As for achievements, I won a few photography competitions that were organized by people outside our territory, by humans mostly. My mentor said that if I continue like this, I will get to be an intern at WW Magazine, and after that a job will be waiting for me..."

James blinked while wondering if this was a different pack or a different planet. Clubs? Studying in human city? Awards? Internships? Mentors for photography? They had no such things in the Red Moon pack where everything was geared toward warriors, and James concluded how teens in the Dark Howlers pack are having exciting lives. They had so many options!

James' admiration for Damon as an Alpha rose by a few notches, and James decided to find out more about the Dark Howlers pack in addition to having fun.

"What other clubs and activities are available? Is that something you do on your own, or is the pack supportive?"

Petra, Erik, and Zack were not sure what to think about James. They all had an impression that people with Alpha bloodlines are above them. After all, individuals like James attend exclusive training and parties and appear in magazines. Compared to such people, Petra, Erik, and Zack were invisible.

However, instead of being a prideful teen with an Alpha bloodline, James resembled a curious countryside kid who came into a big town.

Alpha Damon told them to be good to James and to entertain him to the best of their abilities. They even got a promise of a reward if they do a good job, so they couldn't complain. They knew that Alpha Damon was generous when giving rewards and they hoped to get the latest PS console. Or maybe a full day pass to the amusement park.

When Beta Caden told them details of their assignment, Petra, Erik, and Zack assumed that James might ask for some secretive information about their patrols or security drills.

Teens don't know the super-secretive stuff, but a few spies could collect bits of information that are seemingly irrelevant, and piece it together into something that could be used to sneak into their territory or to plan the vulnerable place and time to attack.

James seemed friendly and the teens wondered if he was genuinely interested in all that regular stuff or if he was just a good actor. Or was he buttering them up by starting easy, so they lower their guards?

They were not sure what to think, so they all stayed vigilant while making sure they don't reveal more than what was publicly available. Better safe than sorry.

By the time they finished breakfast, James found out that Petra was the youngest of the three. She will be sixteen next month, and that made her two months older than James. Zack and Erik were seventeen years old, and the two of them had driver's licenses not only for cars but for motorcycles also. James thought how that was amazing.

All three of them were attending high school, and the school in Darkbourne followed the same curriculum humans have with the difference that PE classes were more intense.

Erik was the president of the photography club, Petra was into astronomy and pottery, and Zack was the star of the fencing club in the school he was attending. All three of them were regularly participating in various activities that are offered in the Darkbourne's community center, and James took a mental note to ask them about the evening gatherings next to the lake. It would be awesome if he could join them.

But the most amazing for James was that it seemed how every path was equally valued, and neither of the three was obsessed to become a warrior. They saw it as an honor and a way to contribute, and that was different compared to what James was used to.