

Chapter 35

GRAND LORD VLADYA

Vladya stiffened, anger coursing through him at the remark. "Not the girl," he blurted out, regretting his words the instant they left his lips.

Ottai and Zaiper looked surprised, but they were not half as shocked as Vladya himself.

"You are interested in the human girl? You?" Ottai exclaimed.

"I am not," Vladya stated calmly, relieved that his voice remained composed. He resumed his scribbling. "She belongs to the feral."

"Nonsense. Matters like that do not concern you. I have had nearly every slave, every maiden you have been with, and you have never batted an eyelash." Zaiper's gaze grew more penetrating, suspicious. "Is this girl different? Do you want her?"

Vladya would sooner sever his own arm.

He signaled to the soldier, who stepped forward and took the scroll from him. Rising from his throne, he approached Zaiper and stopped in front of him. "If you ever speak of this again, you will not like the way I respond."

The second ruler's face paled, and he cleared his throat. "There is no need to get so serious. Fine, you do not have an interest in the girl. That's a good thing for me, as I am considering having either her or the boy. So, let's not dwell on it. No need to get all... like that."

Ottai stared at Vladya, puzzled, but Vladya ignored him, returning to his throne and lowering himself onto it once more.

An awkward silence hung in the air.

"Anyway, let us discuss the preparations," Lord Ottai finally broke the tension.

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EMERIEL

As the hours passed, the beast made no move to attack Emeriel while he cleaned, and by the time he was done, his fear had somewhat abated.

Perhaps the creature had some sort of routine, a specific time or day when its instincts demanded certain needs.... Perhaps today was not the day it became horny.

It made sense, in a way. It would explain why Aekeira was not sent in all the time and why his bloodhost only visited occasionally. The thought was oddly soothing and calmed the last of his fears.

Exhausted, Emeriel decided to take a brief respite.

And what better place to find safety and tranquility than a spot that both slaves and masters avoided like the plague.

Emeriel settled on the floor in front of the imposing metal gates, his legs folded under him, leaving some distance between himself and the gate.

"It's not as if you would understand a word I say, right? Sometimes, it's simply hard to believe you were once the great grand king," he spoke aloud. "You probably have even more reason to hate humans than Grand Lord Vladya does."

The feral creature laid down, its jaw resting on the floor, eyes still fixed on Emeriel.

"I bet you don't even recall what you did to me. Why did you do it? Why me?" Emeriel shook his head. "I don't understand. But what baffles me the most are the strange things that have begun to happen to me since that night. I do not like any of it, Grand King."

Whispering those words made them all too real, causing goosebumps to break out on his arms. "Why does my body react to you? Why do I see you in my dreams? Why do I think about you all the time? Why does my body... why does my body crave more of you?"

Emeriel's attention shifted to the food nearby.

It was meat, but not as raw as the one next to it. Rising to his feet, he carefully took a plate from the tray. The aroma wafted up, tantalizing his senses.

"I could eat this, right?" he asked aloud, still eyeing the steak.

When he looked up, a gasp escaped him.

The beast stood close, having left its previous spot. It could easily reach out and grab Emeriel.

I shouldn't have come here. I should have listened to the soldier and left. Fear rooted him in place, no longer was there a point to running. The creature could easily break free and catch him.

They locked eyes, a tense silence enveloping them.

Then, unexpectedly, the beast crouched down on the floor, sitting. Waiting.

A wave of relief washed over Emeriel, but he still moved to leave.

A low rumble from the beast stopped him in his tracks. Helplessly, he remained where he stood, unsure of what to do.

In the end, he cautiously lowered himself back to the floor, watching for any reaction from the creature. To his relief, it did nothing.

That has to be a good sign, right?

"Look, I know I have angered you. I invaded your privacy, but..." Emeriel paused, realizing the beast was staring pointedly at the food in his hands.

Shit. Of course, I shouldn't have picked up the plate.

Driven by some unknown force, Emeriel stood up, his legs moving on their own accord, carrying him closer to the beast. "Would you like to eat?" he offered, tossing the steak toward it.

The feral creature eyed the steak then glanced at Emeriel, before he lowered his head taking a bite.

Surprised, Emeriel threw another piece of meat. And then another.

The beast devoured them all, and a surge of pleasure shot through Emeriel.

Before he knew it, he was feeding the beast.

GRAND LORD VLADYA

After the meeting, Grand Lord Vladya's mood grew darker as he made his way to the forbidden chambers. Turning the corner into the corridor, his legs abruptly halted. Trays filled with empty plates lined the wall, meticulously arranged.

His brows furrowed as he cautiously approached. Daemonikai was crouched in his usual posture behind the barricade, but the beast was sound asleep. In a deep slumber that always followed a well-fed belly.

Someone had managed to get the beast to eat. And judging by the placement of the empty plates in the hallway instead of the room, this person had not only succeeded in feeding the beast but had also hand-fed it.

Grand Lord Vladya was too stunned to speak.