

Girl Talk

I sat in front of my vanity as Ta y talked about different looks as she pinned and curled my hair, but admittedly, I was more than a little distracted. I couldn't stop thinking about everything Caelan and I had done last night.

I flushed as I thought about the way his hands had felt on my body. He'd been so careful, sweet, and attentive last night, making me feel things I'd never felt before, things I didn't know I could feel.

I stared at my reflection, biting my lip and realizing that I was eager to do it again.

"Uh, Ta y," I asked hesitantly. "Could I, uh, ask you a question?"

"Of course," she quipped as she continued braiding.

"I was just wondering," I started as Iidgeted awkwardly. "What do...uh...what do men like?"

She paused as if considering her answer. "It depends on the guy really. Men like lots of things. Sports, fast cars, beautiful women, superheroes, video games, hunting. Why do you ask?"

"No... I don't mean like what interests them." I blushed furiously. "I meant like...in the bedroom...you know...intimate stuff..."

A wide grin appeared on her face. "Ah, now I understand. I take it that you and Caelan got up to some fun last night?" she asked, wiggling her eyebrows suggestively.

"Maybe," I admitted sheepishly.

"Oh! Tell me everything! What happened? Did you enjoy it? He did, you know, get you there, right?" she asked excitedly as she dropped into the chair next to mine.

I covered my face with my hands, sure it was as red as a tomato. "Oh my Goddess, Ta y. I don't know if I can share that with you. It's so personal."

"It's nothing to be embarrassed about, Shade," she assured me. "It's perfectly natural. We all have sex at some point. So, did you?"

I peeked through my fingers, nodding as Ta y squealed.

"Ah! Yes! Congrats on your first orgasm, girl!" she giggled. "How was it?"

"It was intense," I admitted. "I never knew that I could feel like that. He made it all about me though, and I want to do something for him in return. Something that he'd really enjoy, if you catch my drift."

"Well, each guy is different, and honestly, trying to imagine what Caelan might be into is"—she pretended to gag as I laughed—"just gross. I mean, the guy is like my brother, but I can tell you in general what seems to get them going."

"Okay."

"You can always start with a hand job. Most guys love that. Basically, you would grab his dick and run your hand up and down it like this," she explained, moving her hand to show me. "But you've got to be gentle. You know, stroke it softly, and let him tell you if he wants a little more pressure."

"And that feels good?"

"Yeah," she shrugged. "You can keep going like that till he comes, or you could take things up a notch and give him a blow job."

"A blow job?" I asked.

"Yeah, so that's when you put it in your mouth."

"What?! Why would I do that?" I squeaked

"Because he'll enjoy it," she laughed. "You might even enjoy it too. Realizing how much pleasure you can bring to your man like that is a real turn on. Whenever I give Dillon one, he's like putty in my hands afterward."

I shifted uncomfortably, not at all wanting to imagine my friend and her mate intimately involved like that.

"So, what do I do exactly when it's...uh, in my mouth?"

"It's a lot like the motion with your hand," she stated. "But you have more options to stimulate him. You can suck on it a little, tease it with your tongue, take it as deep as you can handle without gagging. Really just don't bite it, and you should be good."

"This is sounding more complicated than I imagined," I hushed with a sigh.

What if I mess up? I don't want to hurt him. What if he doesn't like it? Then what?

"You're thinking too much about it, Shade," Ta y said. "Just do what feels natural. That's the best way to handle sex. You and Caelan can experiment and learn what you both like together. Just be open and talk about what you like and don't like. I guarantee he's going to love anything you do for him."

"You think?" I asked. "I don't know anything about this kind of stuff."

"Dillon and I were both virgins when we got together. Neither of us really knew what we were doing, but we took the time to discover our preferences together. Now we know each other's bodies like the back of our hand." She smiled. "You guys will get there. Trust me."

There was a knock at the door a little while later, and Ta y went to open it, letting Caelan in as she gave me a mischievous grin.

"Ready for the meeting?" Caelan asked as he took my hand and kissed it gently.

I nodded, blushing furiously as all of Ta y's advice and stories came rushing back.

"Shade, are you okay?" Caelan asked. "Not that I don't love seeing that color on you, but your face is bright red."

"It's nothing," I squeaked, trying to hide behind my other hand.

Ta y giggled, winking at me. "Shade and I were just having a little girl talk."

Caelan gave her a confused look, and I pushed him toward the door.

"We should go, right?" I said quickly, dragging them both out into the hall. "Don't want to be late!"

Ta y's laughter followed us all the way down to the pack offices. When we arrived, Caelan opened the door to a small conference room.

Dillon was already seated, and Ta y bounded over to him. He waved at me with a smile, but I quickly averted my gaze. Ta y's stories were still too fresh in my mind.

Luna Maty, Alpha Leal, and Oliver joined us a moment later.

"How are you feeling this morning, Shade?" Luna Maty asked as she took the seat on the other side of me. "I know yesterday was a lot."

"Okay, honestly. A little anxious about all of this," I admitted, gesturing toward the table. "Maybe a little worried about what might have happened to my father."

She patted my hand softly, giving it a gentle squeeze before settling hers back in her lap.

"First things first," Caelan declared as everyone took their seats. "Has anyone been able to get ahold of Alpha Butch or any of the wolves from Thunder Moon?"

"I'm afraid not," Dillon replied with a shake of his head. "We've been trying all morning, but our calls have been unanswered."

"The border guard reported some activity on the Thunder Moon side. They've attempted to reach out but so far, no response," Oliver added.

"I don't like it," Caelan muttered. "Alpha Butch wouldn't just be a no-show to his own challenge, and he definitely wouldn't send his enemy to fight in his place. Dark Moon taking over has been his biggest fear. He wouldn't just hand over control like that."

He's right. My father isn't one to back down from a fight, and the fact that he didn't show up yesterday is alarming. And now no one can get a hold of anyone in the pack. What has happened to Thunder Moon?

"We could dispatch a few tau and upsilons," Dillon suggested. "We can't afford to be in the dark about what Alpha Huxley is up to anymore."

Tau and upsilons were pack spies. If Caelan deployed them and they were discovered, it could be seen as an act of war.

"Do it," Caelan commanded. "Now to the matter at hand, I'm sure you all have questions about last night. Obviously, the challenge didn't go as expected."

"That's an understatement," Dillon hushed sarcastically.

"What in the hell were they thinking?" Oliver exclaimed. "If they'd killed you, we would have retaliated."

I whimpered. We had come much too close to that becoming a reality last night for my liking.

Caelan placed a hand on my shoulder, and I gripped his fingers tightly.

"After some discussion with Shade, we agreed you should know the truth," Caelan announced. "I'm sure you're all curious as to how I managed to fight off eleven trained wolves."

"Well, Caelan...you *are* highly trained," Ta y offered, eyeing me cautiously.

"Not *that* well-trained," Oliver interjected with a snort. "I mean, don't get me wrong, you're good. Probably the best this region has ever seen. But eleven wolves at once? Not even on your best day."

"Shade, do you want to tell them or should I?" Caelan asked softly.

I chewed my lip, waving my hand for him to go on. I didn't trust myself to be able to explain it clearly. I'd never spoken openly about my abilities.

"Shade was granted a gift by the Moon Goddess. She can amplify emotions in others. She used it last night to encourage me to fight harder, and it somehow merged the two halves of myself to form what you witnessed last night," Caelan explained.

I glanced around anxiously, watching each of them for any sign of fear or disgust.

"So, it was you," Luna Maty said with a soft smile. "I thought it might have been. Thank you, Shade." Her voice cracked and her eyes sparkled with unshed tears as she reached out and cupped my cheek. "Thank you for saving my son."

"Tell us more about this gift of yours," Alpha Leal encouraged. "What is it that you can do exactly?"

"Dad," Caelan grunted.

"It's all right, Caelan," I assured him, squeezing his hand. "I can amplify emotions. I can't make someone feel something different, but I can enhance what's already there. I used my ability last night to enhance Caelan's anger and desperation. It was a more potent combination that I expected."

"Have you done that before?" Alpha Leal asked, leaning forward and watching me with interest.

"Not like last night," I replied, shaking my head. "I didn't even know it could change a wolf's form like that. I've used my gift a lot in battle, pumping up my father's troops, but nothing like that ever happened before."

"Interesting," Alpha Leal remarked, tapping his chin thoughtfully.

"Well, I think it's awesome!" Oliver exclaimed playfully. "Do you think you could supercharge me so I could finally kick some major butt?!"

I smiled, shrugging. The truth was I didn't know. I'd never tried concentrating my ability and wasn't even sure I could do it again. Last night, I'd been operating on pure instinct.

"That's a good question," Alpha Leal replied. "I think we should test this. See if Shade can repeat last night's miracle with Caelan or other wolves. We need to know to what extent this ability can be stretched."

"Dad," Caelan growled.

"I agree," Luna Maty said. "I say we all meet on the training grounds in thirty minutes. Ta y, send out a mind-link asking everyone to clear the area for a time. Let's see if Shade can do whatever she did at the challenge again."

"I don't know," Caelan hesitated. "I don't want to push her too hard."

"I'm not trying to force her to do anything she's not comfortable with, son, but this could be profound for the pack's protection," Alpha Leal explained.

"And we'll need to know with Alpha Huxley still in the mix," Dillon mused. "If he was willing to take such a risk before he saw what she can do, he's definitely willing to go to war now. He'll make another attempt to take her, you can be sure of that."

Caelan's fingers tightened on my shoulder. "He can try."

"You think he plans to use you as a weapon?" Alpha Leal questioned.

"Yes," I replied. "My father did, and if Alpha Huxley wants to take over more packs, I'm his best chance at doing that without meeting much resistance."

"He could use his alpha command to unlock her curse, and now that he's seen what the amplification can do, he'll be more eager to claim her for his own," Caelan explained.

"That settles it," Alpha Leal concluded. "We have no choice. We need to be ready for whatever he throws at us."

He and Luna Maty rose, exiting the room as the rest of us stood.

"Are you all right with this, Shade?" Caelan questioned softly as the others began to leave.

"I think so," I admitted. "I don't want to ever see you fighting for your life like that again. And they're right. Huxley is going to be even more eager to get his filthy paws on me after what he witnessed last night."

"Okay," he replied, taking my hand. "Let's go see what you can do."