

Alphas Bride 171

Chapter 171 - Talia's Punishment

"WAIT!", Maddox shouted after Damon who was walking away with Talia in his arms. "What should I do about these two?"

"I'm sure you can think of something!", Damon shouted back without halting his steps.

Maddox stood frozen with his mouth half-open.

Why was Damon treating him like a cleaning crew!?

Maddox cursed loudly. He is an Alpha, damn it!

He has people taking care of these things!

But now there were no people because he came with Mindy, and that gave him the idea...

'Mindy! I need your help.', Maddox called through the mind-link. 'Come at the back of the garden, behind thuyas...' He was giving her instructions while ignoring Mindy's grumbling about how she was in the middle of chatting with Kalina.

If this was not such a high-profile event, Maddox would just walk away, but what if those two guys wake up and start talking nonsense?

Ah, if he knew it will end up like this, he would stay at the table instead of following after Damon!

Unfortunately, someone probably saw him coming here, and he got implicated. What a bother...

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"Can you keep me down?", Talia asked Damon with an urgent whisper when she realized that he was walking toward the party with her in his arms.

"No.", Damon responded with finality and Talia hid her face in the crook of his neck, hoping that she can turn invisible or at least that no one will pay attention to them.

Damon's destination was not their table. He took a turn into the packhouse, and Talia tried not to think about how many guests from the garden noticed them before they disappeared through the closest open French doors.

Talia tensed when she heard another wave of chatter, and she couldn't believe that Damon was carrying her through the event hall that was full of people.

The intense glares from various misses were burning her skin.

Talia's face was hidden, but based on her dress, everyone knew that she was Damon's date.

Talia felt like crying. If Marcy and Nora came to her previously to stir trouble, after this, those two will come at Talia looking for blood.

With the clamor quieting down, Talia peeked over Damon's shoulder to see that they were in the hallway. "Are we really leaving the party?"

Damon didn't respond.

Talia stared at his face, and she smiled when she acknowledged that under that unreadable expression, Damon was relaxed. Whatever tension was in the garden, he left it there, and her uneasiness disappeared as well.

Talia leaned on Damon completely and enjoyed the carrying service he provided.

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Damon closed the door of their bedroom behind them before keeping Talia to stand on the ground.

"Why are we here?", Talia voiced her thoughts. It was getting late, but it was still lively outside without signs that the party was going to end anytime soon. Was he tired? He didn't look like it.

Damon narrowed his eyes at Talia and stalked toward her.

Talia gulped a mouthful of air while retreating and she jolted when her back hit the door. There was nowhere to go.

Damon put his hands against the door, trapping Talia between his arms.

"You disobeyed me, kitten.", he said grimly.

Talia's breath hitched. "What?"

"I told you not to wander alone, yet you did. And what did I find? You and two guys.", Damon reminded her. "How should I punish you?"

Talia's eyes widened to the point of hurting and she felt heat creeping up her neck at the thought of the last punishment Damon gave her... in the study... with his head between her legs... Why was the room running out of oxygen?

Damon cocked an eyebrow at Talia and a sly smirk appeared at the corner of his lips.

"It's not a punishment if you are looking forward to it.", he drawled.

Talia closed her eyes and cursed internally. He just smelled her arousal. Why was she thinking that the punishment will be the same? What if he puts her over his knee and spanks her? Wait! Somehow, that was arousing as well. Damn it!

Talia collected her courage and looked him in the eyes. "I'm sorry, Damon..."

"A-a-a...", Damon interrupted her. "I told you that I don't want to hear your apologies."

"But you should hear my explanation!", Talia snapped. Why was he so unreasonable?

Damon was amused by Talia's spunk. She was talking back again, acting like his Luna, without realizing it.

He already planned to get the security footage and find out what exactly happened to make Talia stray on her own in the garden instead of coming to him, but he was curious to hear her version.

Damon took half a step back, to give her more space, making sure that his palms were still touching the door, keeping her trapped between his arms.

Talia understood more space as an OK to talk.

"I was waiting for Lina and Mindy to come out of the restroom, how we agreed previously. They were stopped by some women, and it took a while. Before I knew it, Marcy and Nora were in front of me. Marcy didn't say much. Nora did most of the talking."

Damon hid his anxiety behind a frown. "What did she say?"

"Uhm..." Talia hesitated for an endless second. "She said that Marcy will be your Luna."

"She won't..."

"I know", Talia interrupted him. "You told me that and I believe you. Actually, when I brought up that Nora came to our room, Nora shrunk, and based on Marcy's expression, I could guess that Marcy didn't know about it. They didn't recognize me, so that was good, but somehow... I was uneasy. I was anxious and angry, and I couldn't shake off. I wanted to calm down before joining you. I didn't think that those two men will come that way."

"You were angry?" Damon imagined his adorable kitten with her claws out. The mental image was super cute.

"There was no reason for my anger, but it was there. I felt the same with Cassie. She was talking and something came over me and the next thing I knew, I slapped her." Talia looked at Damon apprehensively. "That's not like me. I'm not a violent person."

An invisible lightbulb lit up above Damon's head.

Was that her wolf stirring?

Or what if she was channeling his emotions?

With Cassie, Damon controlled his urge to punch her into tomorrow, and while Talia was in the ladies' room with Kalina and Mindy, Damon was at the bar with Elder Parker. The timings match. When he was raging on the inside, Talia was feeling anger she couldn't describe.

Doesn't that mean she can sense their bond?

Of course, that could also be interpreted as Talia claiming Damon as hers. Whichever it is, Damon will take it.

Talia saw Damon's lips stretching in a smile and she exhaled in relief. Her explanation pacified him.

"You did good, kitten.", Damon murmured, and Talia smiled brightly.

Her smile froze when he spoke again.

"But that doesn't change the fact that you disobeyed me."

Damon's hands that were resting on the door, on each side of Talia, moved in slow motion.

Talia inhaled sharply when she felt his hot palms high on her back, at the edge of her golden sequined bodice.

'RIIIIPPPP!'

The breeze caressed Talia's back and thighs and she couldn't believe that he tore the dress. Just like that.

What was left of Talia's dress slid down her body and she gaped at the bunch of material around her ankles. It was the most beautiful dress Talia ever saw.

Well, now it was certain that she was not going back to the party.

She felt like crying. Didn't Lily and Ivy say how that's an expensive designer dress?

Talia was not sure if she needed to return the dress after the party, but if she could keep it, she wanted to preserve and cherish it forever. It was a couple's outfit and he ruined it!

Talia wanted to rip his shirt as payback, but somehow she knew that he would like it, and if she retaliates in the same way, he will only continue with his outrageous behavior until both of them end up completely naked.

That reminded her... she was left only in her underwear.

In her panic, Talia clumsily tried to cover up her breasts and crotch area with her hands. Those undergarments didn't provide much coverage.

A slow chuckle escaped Damon's lips. It was a low sound, sexy, and full of danger, and Talia pressed her legs together in response. This was NOT a good time to get aroused!

"Is this my punishment?", Talia asked dejectedly.

"What do you think?", Damon asked teasingly.

Damon touched Talia's chin, making her look up at him.

"Why are you hiding? You are beautiful."

He leaned closer and his breath caressed Talia's ear while he murmured, "The whole evening, I'm looking forward to this part... the two of us... alone... What about you, kitten? Don't you feel the same?"

Talia held her breath. How does she feel? Does she want to be with Damon?

Her arms fell slack next to her body, and her head moved a bit as she rubbed her cheek against his.

Damon was overjoyed at this small intimacy. Her every gesture was formidable, capable of moving his heart, and making him crave for more.

He inched away and observed her flushed face. She was shy and adorable, and he wanted to gobble her up.

Damon took her hands into his and placed them on his chest.

"Now it's time for your punishment, kitten... undress me."

Chapter 172 - Talia's Punishment (cont.)

Talia stared at Damon. "What?"

"You heard me.", Damon said. "Undress me."

Talia's eyes moved from his shirt to his pants and then she met his gaze. He is not expecting that she will undress him fully. Right? RIGHT?

But then... Damon made a point (more than once) that he was not wearing underwear, and that means other than his shirt and pants, there are not many things to remove, so she had to ask, "Just the shirt, right?"

Damon cocked an eyebrow. "Are you negotiating with me, Mrs. Blake?"

Talia pressed her lips into a line and looked at the buttons of his shirt like they are her mortal enemies.

Talia chanted internally that this is not a big deal. She saw him topless many times before and she even held onto him while sleeping. She can do this.

After one deep breath, Talia's shaky fingers started moving to undo buttons of Damon's shirt, and he watched her in silence.

She loved and hated the smirk of amusement on his handsome face.

Each button undone revealed a bit more of Damon's glorious landscape and even though Damon being topless is not an unusual sight because the man would often walk around with his impeccable physique exposed, this had a different air about it.

Talia's breathing picked up, following her raging heartbeat and she felt lightheaded. Is she going to faint?

The last button came undone, and Talia met Damon's eyes apprehensively.

"Remove it.", Damon ordered, and her hands traveled slowly up his pecks to push the shirt from his shoulders.

Seeing that he didn't move even after the shirt was on the floor, Talia frowned at his crotch area.

Does he want her to remove his pants also?

"I can stand here all night, kitten.", Damon said, and Talia gulped softly.

Yup. Pants also.

She didn't want to think about what lays beneath that fine black fabric.

Talia steeled her resolve and reached for the belt.

Her hands were clumsy, and she struggled to unfasten the buckle. Eventually, she tugged on it. Once, twice...

"Easy, kitten. Take your time", Damon chuckled. "Whatever is under it, won't go anywhere."

Talia gritted her teeth and wondered, why the blasted buckle won't open?

She got on her knees to observe what's going on there.

Damon was staring at her without blinking, and he forgot how to breathe.

The scene of Talia kneeling in front of him made him imagine all kinds of scenarios. Mostly scenes of Talia with his cock in her mouth.

If there was a possibility of Damon losing his mind due to extreme arousal, this would be it.

Talia was completely focused on the buckle of Damon's belt, and it took her a few exceedingly long seconds to notice that there is a latch on the side of the buckle.

Talia cursed Damon silently. Why didn't he say there is a mechanism? Was he enjoying her struggle? Probably.

Fueled by her indignation, Talia opened the belt and undid buttons of his pants and when the last button gave in and she got a peek of the dark blue fabric under the pants, Talia paused with a frown on her face.

Underwear.

Didn't Damon say he is not wearing underwear? It's not that Talia was hoping he will be naked under the pants, but... Was he teasing her about it so far?

"Why did you stop?", Damon asked.

"You are wearing underwear.", Talia blurted out.

"Are you disappointed?"

Excessive heat invaded Talia's face. Why did she point out his underwear? It sounded like she wanted him naked!

Damon was thoroughly entertained by the variety of her expressions.

The truth is that Damon rarely wears underwear, but now he put the briefs on because they were attending an event, and the dress pants were not firm enough to contain his erection that was inevitable with Talia around.

"Don't worry, kitten.", Damon said. "We will get there. Take your time. I know you are enjoying revealing my body one part at a time."

Talia exhaled a shaky breath, and her hands clutched the waistband of his pants.

She didn't dare to look up while pulling his pants down because her face was on fire and Damon would definitely see through her that she noticed a massive bulge in his crotch area. It was impossible to miss.

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"Oh, yeah, kitten... circular movements are the best... press harder... mmm... yeah...", Damon moaned, and Talia wished for him to pipe it down.

Where were they?

In the bathroom.

Damon was relaxing in the tub and Talia was squatting on the side and washing his back.

How did she end up giving him a bath?

After undressing him (down to his underwear), Damon gave her a choice. To remove his briefs or to prepare a bubble bath.

Of course, Talia chose the latter.

Damon didn't mind whichever she chooses because how he saw it, both choices will lead to the same outcome. But Talia didn't know that.

The tub was nearly full when Damon strutted in the bathroom with, "I believe there is a sponge under the sink..."

Talia peeled her eyes from his firm ass that was covered with dark blue briefs, and she ducked in the storage, under the sink.

There was no sponge in there, and by the time she looked up, Damon was in the tub with a sponge in his hand, and his briefs were on the floor.

"Wash me...", he commanded, and she did her best not to imagine what's hiding under that layer of bubbles.

And here is Talia... wearing only tiny panties and a bra, rubbing Damon's back and if not for his ambiguous sounds, she would be able to fully enjoy the magnificent visual of his back.

Eventually, Talia stood up. "Done."

"Front also.", Damon said like it's a totally normal thing.

She started with his shoulders and moved to his pecs. Everything was firm and perfect, and Talia fought against her urge to look into his eyes or down to his crotch area that was still covered in bubbles, but it seemed that the bubbles were thinning out. If she doesn't hurry, there will be no bubbles left. Then what?

"You like this, don't you, kitten?", Damon asked her.

"No.", she lied. "Why would I like serving you?"

"Serving me?", Damon asked in a fake surprise, and his voice dipped dangerously low as he continued, "This is your punishment, not a job. If you see it as a job, I should increase the difficulty..."

Damon grabbed her arm and before Talia could react, she found herself inside the tub.

Talia feared that the moody Alpha will submerge her in the water completely and she fought mightily to hold onto the edge of the tub and not drown.

How can her feeble strength compare to Damon's?

She inhaled a few times, to confirm that her head was above water, and he had no intention of drowning her.

Talia chided herself internally. Why did she think that he will drown her? Of course, he wouldn't hurt her, but what's with this ridiculous situation?

Why did she end up sitting on Damon's thighs, facing him?

She looked down on herself and felt like crying. "My bra..."

Her panties were still on her and wet, but the bra was a problem. It was a pushup bra, and the paddings were soaked, heavy, and uncomfortable.

"No, no! That's not... what I... meant", Talia stuttered, but by the time she finished speaking, her bra was on the floor, next to Damon's briefs.

How can a man move so quickly?

When a breeze hit her now exposed chest, Talia quickly covered her girls with her hands.

"Will you wash me, or...?", Damon's voice trailed, and Talia immediately grabbed the sponge that was floating nearby and started scrubbing his pecs.

Damon was reclined backward which was perfect for Talia to stretch toward him and dip herself until the bubbles provided coverage for her breasts.

"How is it, kitten?", Damon asked. "Still a job, or does it feel like a punishment now?"

"Punishment. Punishment.", Talia said with a pitiful expression. If she is not convincing enough, who knows what else he will come up with?

If not for his super cheat of being able to sense Talia's emotions, Damon would believe her. Maybe. But now he was confident that the only things preventing her from jumping on him were her shyness and inexperience, and he loved both of those.

Damon narrowed his eyes at Talia and pushed himself to sit straight.

Talia stiffened when she felt his palm at her lower back. The water was warm, but his palm was hot, and Talia was sure that it will leave a mark behind.

"I think you are lying, kitten", Damon murmured, and Talia's heart thundered against her chest. "Look at me."

They were close. Too close. And the sweet scent of roses from the bubbles was completely overpowered by the scent of the forest and the dark chocolate.

Their position was scandalous, and Talia wanted to look away, but it was impossible to break that intense eye contact and her body refused to move away from Damon.

"Tell me. How does this feel like?", Damon asked, and Talia shivered when his finger started moving along the groove of her spine.

"Tingly...", Talia responded breathily. "It feels like I'm going to fall apart."

Damon applied pressure on Talia's back, pulling her closer to him.

"I will not allow you to fall apart, kitten.", his breath splashed against her lips. "Do you trust me?"

"Ye..."

Damon swallowed the last sound from her mouth with a fiery kiss that took her breath away.

Talia's arms moved around him, and the sponge from her hand plopped into the water behind Damon a second before her fingers laced into his hair.

Chapter 173 - Becoming One [Bonus]

'BAM!'

A loud explosion shook windows violently and Talia jerked into reality, breaking out of her kissing daze.

On a reflex, she stuck close to Damon and held onto him tightly while hiding her face in the crook of his neck.

Damon was not happy that Talia broke the kiss, but his displeasure vanished at the moment he felt sparks of the bond prickling his skin wherever Talia's body touched his. To add to this marvelous sensation, Talia's lips were right at the spot where she should mark him, the moment her wolf awakens. Thrilling!

After the second explosion, Talia realized that Damon was not moving, and she sheepishly looked through the window to see the night sky lit up with fireworks.

A second later, another explosion was heard, and the next one, and another one, and Talia remembered that fireworks were included in Kalina's celebration as the next Luna of the Lightclaw pack.

"During fireworks for Summer Solstice, I watched your face reflecting the colors from the sky, just like now, and I wanted to kiss you.", Damon spoke close to her ear and Talia smiled.

She remembered those fireworks also. How could she forget?

"I was hoping you will kiss me", she admitted shyly.

Talia's eyes widened in shock when she realized their current situation.

She was in the tub, wearing only panties, glued to Damon who was naked, she was sitting on his thighs, and the electrifying pressure at her core was definitely coming from him.

Talia wanted to move away, but Damon held her in place.

"This is me, kitten.", Damon spoke in a strained voice. Talia's wiggling only made his arousal worse.

It took her a few seconds to calm down and stop moving.

Damon let out a shaky breath before continuing, "I want you more than I wanted any woman in my life. I promised you that I won't do anything against your will, and I will stick to my word. I am yours. Do with me whatever you want but... don't push me away."

Talia's heart swelled with an unknown mix of emotions.

Yearning. Desire. Arousal. Restraint. Possession. Anticipation. Love. Belonging. And there was some curiosity as well.

Can one feel all this at the same time?

What surprised Talia was that there was no reluctance, no fear, there was nothing that would tell her how their current situation was wrong and that she should increase the distance between her and the moody Alpha who captured her heart.

Their position was intimate and somehow... it felt right.

Talia stared into Damon's icy-blue eyes that were deep and unfathomable, and she was not sure if she had enough love for herself to accept his words as the truth or maybe all this was a figment of her imagination... but she knew that unless this was a dream, she was in a tub with the handsome Devil, and he looked vulnerable while saying that he is hers and that she can do whatever she wants with him... and she wanted to kiss him. And she did.

A low growl formed in the back of Damon's throat as he fisted Talia's hair and her flavors seeped inside his system, amplifying the delightful sparks of their bond that danced over his skin, urging him to get more, much more of Talia.

Damon's hands landed on Talia's buttocks, and he stood up from the tub with her in his arms, without breaking the kiss.

Talia's legs wrapped around Damon's waist as she gripped his shoulders to stabilize herself.

The movement lodged his hard cock between her folds, and she let out a whimper but didn't try to avoid him.

Damon smiled into the kiss while walking out of the bathroom, not caring about the trail of water they left behind.

The moment Talia's back touched the mattress, Damon's hands started exploring her body that was slick from water and bubbles. The faint scent of roses mixed with Talia's citrusy sweet scent of freesia, and Damon kissed her greedily like there is no tomorrow.

He loved how she responded to his every touch, and her hands held onto his back firmly, like they belong there.

Damon moved to kiss Talia's jaw, neck, collarbones... his kisses became impatiently sloppy, and he was aware that no girl ever excited him to the point of trembling just because she was in his embrace.

Talia. His Talia. His kitten. His mate. His everything.

Talia was overwhelmed by Damon's emotions that mixed with hers, and she squirmed under his palms that left invisible scorching imprints on her skin.

She felt Damon kissing her abdomen, his teeth grazing the skin just above her navel and his hands gripped edges of her panties when he stilled.

"Kitten...", he breathed. "Can I?"

Talia looked down at Damon and met his endlessly icy-blue eyes directed at her questionably.

Did he ask her something? Whatever it was, the answer was... "Yes."

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Damon got on his knees, between Talia's legs and in slow motion pulled her panties down.

Her legs came up together in front of Damon, connecting at the ankles as he drew the damp fabric off her legs and his eyes flashed with lust at the sight of her bare ass exposed for him to see, and a peek of her flower that was untouched by a man... not for long.

Damon flicked the panties on the side haphazardly before grabbing Talia's ankles, spreading her legs in slow motion around him. He enjoyed profusely the visual treat of her sweet pussy opening up for him, inviting him silently to explore her depths. Soon.

A fleeting thought hit Talia that she was naked on the bed for Damon to see, but he was looking at her with a fiery gaze that could swallow her whole and she felt how it wouldn't be so bad to disappear in that fire which called for her in silent whispers that were impossible to resist.

Talia thought that Damon will keep her legs down, but he ended up holding her left foot in front of his face.

Damon didn't break eye contact when he put her toe into his mouth and started sucking.

A soft moan escaped Talia's lips at the electrifying sensation that traveled from the tip of her left leg to the rest of her body every time his coarse tongue moved over the pad of her toe. It was just a toe, yet his lustful expression was scandalous, and Talia was not sure where to look.

Damon kissed Talia's ankle and arranged kisses and licks in an invisible pattern toward her knee, going up and grazing her skin with his teeth occasionally, spreading her legs further apart with every next kiss until he reached the cradle of her thighs.

"I want to kiss and lick every inch of you", Damon spoke in a sexy low voice. "But I want to kiss you here the most..."

And then his tongue moved over her clit in one mighty long stroke.

"Ah!" Talia's body arched and Damon held her hips in place for him to feast upon her flesh.

Talia was not sure if the fireworks outside were over, but the explosion of lights definitely happened in front of her closed eyes.

Damon groaned as her wetness mixed with his saliva, and he buried his face deeper while greedily lapping at the juices her body released.

"Mine... mine...", he mumbled, gripping Talia's hips and restricting her movements.

Damon showed no mercy, and Talia fisted the bedsheets while struggling to breathe.

Damon was lost in a daze of his own. Kissing, sucking, licking her love nectar, and his fangs came out, but he forced them back.

Damon was fighting against his urge to devour her violently, but it was difficult because he could feel that she wanted him with equal fervor, and every time she moaned his name, he was thrown back into his own madness.

Talia was dizzy. The whole world was reduced to two bodies and the sensation of Damon's tongue moving between her folds, his low hums and growls vibrated against her clit, and she could feel the pressure building dangerously high. And then it happened... Talia's body tensed for an endless second and then she trembled while screaming Damon's name for the Heavens to hear as she dissolved in pure ecstasy.

Damon could feel the rush of Talia's orgasm washing over him, wrecking his system, and amplifying his arousal.

Damon held Talia in place as he kept devouring her, knowing that his every move is prolonging her rapture and not allowing her to come down from her high.

"Da... Damon... Oh, Damon...", she chanted wantonly.

Her every moan and gasp was music to his ears, and he wanted to listen to those sounds forever.

Many women called his name, but only Talia's voice touched his soul.

Eventually, Damon unlatched himself from Talia and crawled on top of her.

"Kitten..."

She heard him call through her lustful haze as her pussy throbbed in numb aftershocks of Damon's ministrations.

"You are fantastic."

Damon kissed Talia's neck and her arms snapped to hold onto his back while he sucked her there harshly, right where his mark should come, making Talia's body hum in response.

Talia gasped when she felt a flood of heat at the cradle of her thighs. Is it possible that she was still getting aroused?

Until two weeks ago she was ignorant about pleasures of the flesh, but now she couldn't get enough of it. Even clinging onto Damon, completely naked, felt good. That was so out of her character!

What did this irresistible Devil do to her?

Chapter 174 - Becoming One (cont.)

"You are mine...", Damon murmured. "Say it, kitten. Say that you are mine."

Talia blinked herself into reality and she met his icy-blue eyes that were anything other than icy.

"I am yours.", Talia breathed.

"Do you mean it?"

Talia didn't understand why he asked that, but she confirmed. "Yours to touch, yours to kiss, yours to hold."

Damon smiled. Those were his words and she remembered them.

Damon hummed in agreement and added, "Mine to love."

Talia's heart skipped a beat. And she was not sure if it was because of his words, or because of his breathtaking smile that reached his eyes, or because he was grinding at the cradle of her thighs, spreading her juices over his hot and hard shaft.

"Let me love you, kitten... I want to love you in every way possible..."

How could she say no to that?

Talia sucked in a breath when she felt his erection prodding at her entrance.

"This might hurt at first. I will be gentle..." he said, and she bit her lower lip in anticipation of what's coming.

There was pressure and a stretch, and she couldn't break eye contact.

Damon stared into her honeyed eyes that were getting teary and a vein popped on his forehead how much he controlled himself not to give in to his urge to plunder her insides.

Damon could feel the resistance as he reached the obstacle just behind her tight entrance and Talia closed her eyes.

The sparks of the bond were driving him mad, and he exhaled sharply.

"Look at me, kitten.", Damon demanded, and when she opened her eyes, he continued moving again. "Breathe... relax... look at me..." He really wanted her to keep staring at him with those honeyed eyes. He wanted her to know that he is the one entering her, merging with her, becoming one. It was important.

Talia dug her fingers into Damon's back and hissed at the sharp pain that radiated through her body in a series of throbs, setting her insides on fire.

Damon groaned as he made his way inside her slowly, and he thought that he might lose his mind from the ecstatic sensation of sinking into her tender flesh that gripped his shaft perfectly.

He stopped only when he was sheathed fully, reaching deeply into the uncharted area of her body.

Talia was hot and tight and wet and his, and he never knew that being inside a woman can be so engrossing... satisfying and maddening at the same time.

Damon wiped the tears from the corners of her eyes with his palms.

"You did good, kitten..." he murmured. "It will get better in no time. You feel wonderful."

Talia was not sure what was more embarrassing. The fact that he was inside her, or that he was staring at her, or his words. She was relieved when he kissed her because it gave her an excuse to close her eyes.

"I am sorry", he said, and her eyes snapped open to see him look at her with an expression full of emotions as he continued, "I'm sorry I didn't save myself for you, but I promise that you will be my last. No one will come after you."

Talia's ears were buzzing, and she was not sure if she heard him right.

Damon kissed her lips once, twice... and only after she responded to his kisses, Damon's hips moved a bit, making them both gasp at the otherworldly friction that tugged on their nerve endings fiercely.

Talia couldn't believe that this was happening. She was with Damon in bed, he was inside her, they were one. He was intense, gentle, powerful, caring, and the visual of his lustful gaze directed at her made her breathless.

She never thought that a man could look at her like that, yet here was Damon... a perfect male specimen, looking at her like she was the most alluring woman in the world, making her feel beautiful and desired.

The painful sensation was morphing into pleasure with his every next thrust.

He was big and hot and hard, and as the pain subsided, Talia realized that she craved for more of that otherworldly friction.

Little by little, her hips moved to meet his, with less reservation as she got used to the addictive feeling of him filling her up.

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"Fuck! You are perfect!", Damon growled and picked up the pace.

Damon pushed himself a bit higher on his arms and grinned at the sight of Talia bouncing under him. He imagined this moment many times, and this was so much better than anything his mind came up with.

He glanced at the point where their bodies connected, to see his shaft disappearing into her flesh.

The whole scene was erotic beyond belief.

"Oh, Damon...", Talia moaned, and Damon's cock lurched in response.

Damon couldn't believe this. He was already inside her, yet she still managed to arouse him further. Seductress.

He held onto her waist and changed the angle of his thrusts slightly.

Talia's eyes rolled at the back of her head as she gasped for air.

Oh, yes. She was getting there.

Another change in the angle made her moan loudly, and Damon continued thrusting into her with renewed vigor.

His hand snaked between them, and his thumb stroked her clit for added stimulation.

Talia was confident that the room was spinning, and she gripped his shoulders tightly. The pressure in her core was increasing exponentially, his every thrust was adding to it, making her feel like she was about to explode.

Talia's mind was a mess. Her body was acting on its own. She was making some embarrassing noise that was mixing with the sound of Damon's flesh slapping against hers... it was outrageous, but she craved for more.

"Harder...", she breathed, and Damon was delighted to respond to her demand. It was a sign that his kitten was coming out of her shell.

"Ah... Oh... Mmm...", she mumbled unintelligibly, and then she held her breath for a moment before her body arched and she burst into a mind-shattering orgasm.

The intensity of Talia's orgasm caught Damon off-guard and when her insides coiled around his shaft in rhythmic pulses, Damon's ass buckled and he groaned while releasing his hot load inside her.

Damon continued thrusting in jerky movements and he couldn't believe the bliss caused by Talia's tight pussy milking his cock to the last drop he had to offer.

One orgasm amplified another and both Talia and Damon moaned and gasped while clinging onto each other.

Damon bedded numerous women, and he had even more orgasms, but none was able to shake his soul euphorically... until now.

He knew that it was over, as both of them climaxed, but his cock was still hard and ready, and he couldn't stop those small movements of his hips.

"Fuck!", Damon cursed under his breath.

She-wolves don't get pregnant unless they are in heat, so the unexpected pregnancy was not a concern, however, he never came inside a woman before.

He didn't mind, but he hoped that Talia was not upset about this.

Seeing her unfocused gaze and goofy smile, Damon guessed that she was fine with what happened, and based on her emotions, she was definitely more than fine.

Damon leaned over Talia, his chest pressed against hers lightly while he supported his weight on his elbows, and he kissed her on the lips. It was a long and slow kiss, and he swallowed every sigh that escaped her.

"How are you feeling, kitten?", Damon murmured into her lips.

"OK", she said in a small voice. Her crotch area was blissfully numb and her whole body was humming.

She glanced down when she realized... "Uhm... you are still... inside..."

Damon grinned. "If it's up to me. I will stay inside you forever. I like it there."

Talia was speechless. He must be joking, right?

Damon was wondering if he should pull out, but she said that she was OK, so maybe they could go for another round. Definitely.

For two endless weeks, Damon waited to taste Talia. For an Alpha who gets whatever he wants immediately, those two weeks were two eternities! And now she was below him, gorgeous, wet, tight, his... and he couldn't wait to make her scream his name again.

Damon kissed Talia's neck, sucking slightly. "You know, kitten, you are made for me."

His lips latched on her neck again, and he jabbed himself inside her in one swift movement.

Talia gasped when she felt the friction. Her insides were sensitive from what they did, and his every move was electrifying.

She feared that any more of it and she will lose her mind. Literally. But it was addictive, and she couldn't stop the movements of her hips to meet Damon's.

"Say you are mine...", Damon demanded with a growl.

"I am yours.", she said.

"Who are you?"

"Talia...", she responded, and when she saw him narrowing his eyes at her, she added, "Talia Blake."

Damon hummed in approval. "Good girl."

For Talia, what happened after that, was a mix of blurry images.

Damon's magnificent body arching above her... his muscles rippling as he thrust inside her repeatedly... the friction... kisses... caresses... the intense orgasm as she clung to Damon for her dear life and all the sweet words he whispered into her ear.

Her core throbbed with a hint of pain, and she hoped that it will never stop because it was proof that this night happened.

Talia faintly remembered Damon wiping her limp body with a towel, and cradling her into his arms, small and gentle kisses all over her face, and then she allowed the darkness to consume her as she sunk into much-needed sleep that came with her favorite scent of the forest and the dark chocolate.

Chapter 175 - The Morning After

As dawn lit up the cloudless sky, orange hues spread from the East to swallow the stars and announce another bright summer day in Colorado, yet Damon couldn't care about anything beyond that bed and the girl who was sleeping soundly next to him.

Other than a few short naps, Damon couldn't sleep due to the excitement of merging with Talia. His heart was fluttering more than after his first time.

No other woman made him feel this way, and he knew that none ever will. It was only Talia. His mate.

Damon marveled the newly found intimacy, the pleasure of Talia's bare body resting against his, and delightful sparks that danced over his skin wherever they touched.

From the waist down, they were covered with a blanket that concealed their intertwined legs. Damon was on his back, cradling in his arms Talia who was facing him, her head was on his shoulder, and her palm rested on his chest.

The scene was simple, innocent, yet it was complex and there was nothing innocent about it. It was absolutely contradictory, but it was real, just how thrusting inside Talia made him feel sated and craving for more at the same time.

Everything about her was perfect, made for him.

The only thing lacking was her wolf, but Damon had a feeling her wolf will show up soon and Talia will confirm without a doubt that they are mates, and Damon will mark her, and the two of them will face whatever is coming together. Until that happens, he will protect her from anything and anyone who dares to jeopardize this piece of Heaven they created for themselves.

Damon tried to think about what makes Talia so different compared to other women who passed through his arms, yet he couldn't remember any of them. He knew that there were many, but they all faded into an indistinct blur, leaving only Talia to shine brightly in his mind and heart.

Damon was completely and absolutely smitten with the girl who was snoring softly, her warm breath fanned his chest, arousing him beyond belief. Everything she did was arousing.

He never released his load into a woman before, and he didn't really think of doing it with Talia either, but the orgasm blindsided him, and the second (and the third) time he was craving for that euphoric sensation of throbbing inside Talia and filling her up with his seed.

Why he didn't do this before? Damon was aware that a she-wolf can't get pregnant unless she is in heat, but he feared that the women he bedded might scheme to trap him. Yes, there is a paternity test, but what if the woman in question somehow collects his sample and uses it later when the heat strikes? Anything is possible. That's why he would always either release outside and wipe it clean or come inside a condom that he discarded personally.

However, with Talia, it was different. He wouldn't mind if she traps him. Actually, he was eagerly waiting for the moment when she will openly claim him as hers, forever.

Damon told Talia that he is hers, but she didn't really acknowledge that.

He thought how it's ironic, the only girl he belongs to, refuses to claim him, and any other woman would do that without missing a beat. Maybe that's what makes her stand out among all others.

Talia doesn't have a background or power of her own, yet she doesn't want to use his no matter what hardships she is facing. Damon sees that as a true strength of character. He admires Talia's determination and the fact that the bad experiences she went through didn't diminish her brilliance.

Damon glanced through the window, and he acknowledged that this was another first for him. Damon never waited for the morning with a woman he bedded, and he didn't want to wait for another morning without Talia in his arms.

He kissed the top of her head while tightening his hold on her slightly, careful not to wake her up.

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Talia stirred out of her sleep with a muffled groan.

"Good morning, kitten", Damon greeted her with a smile.

"Good morning", she responded lazily.

Talia glanced around the room and frowned in confusion at the sight of wood-covered walls and ceiling. It took her a moment to remember that they are in Colorado, Lightclaw pack... ceremony to announce Kalina as the next Luna.

Talia's cheeks heated at the mental images from the previous night. She was in the tub with Damon and then they moved to the bed and then... oh, my! Was she dreaming about it?

She moved a little and hissed at the ache between her legs. Yup. It was real. It happened. And they were both completely naked!

Damon examined Talia's face carefully when he saw her frowning in discomfort.

"What's wrong?", he asked, and she exploded in a fierce blush.

There was no way she will admit that she is sore from last night's lovemaking.

It didn't take a rocket scientist to connect the clues, especially because Damon could feel her emotions.

"I'm sorry kitten...", Damon said. "I got carried away. You were amazing and it felt so good inside you, and I had to get just a bit more of you. I promise to be more careful next time."

Talia paused. Next time? She didn't want to talk about it.

"I will be fine in a day or two.", she said shyly, desperate to change the topic. "Is it time for breakfast?"

Damon ignored Talia's question as he was horrified by her first statement.

Did she say, a day or two!?

Does that mean he will need to wait a day or TWO until he gets to venture into Talia's treasure cove again!?

"Does it hurt a lot?", he asked, and Talia had no idea how to answer that question.

Damon pressed his lips into a line. Damn it! If her wolf is awake, she would heal in no time and...

Damon got an idea.

He gently pushed her to lay on her back. "Let me see."

Talia's eyes opened wide to the point of hurting. If she was drowsy so far, it was all gone, and she was wide awake now.

"No need."

Damon cocked an eyebrow at her. "What do you mean, no need? I hurt you. I want to check the state and determine the best treatment. Or would you rather that someone else looks at my sweet pussy?"

Talia stared at him in disbelief. He said so many things, but one stood out. "That's not yours." She couldn't say the word 'pussy', it was too scandalous. "It's mine."

Damon nodded in agreement. "True. But you are mine, and that makes every part of you mine also. Pussy included."

By the time he ended talking, Damon already pushed the blanket away, scooted down, and was spreading her legs.

"Relax, kitten... let me see..."

Talia wondered, what can he see? The throbbing is on the inside!

But the stubborn Alpha was already there, and she knew that he won't give up just like that, so she let him have it.

Damon hummed ambiguously and she twitched when he spread her folds with his fingers. Was there a need to blow? And he did it a few times!

Talia gasped when he licked her down there and she jerked upward. "Hey! You said you will only look!"

"I did", Damon agreed immediately, and his hands grabbed her hips, pulling her lower into her original position. "I looked, and I determined that I can make my pussy better."

"How is that going to make anything better?", Talia asked breathily. And that was HER pussy, damn it!

Talia cursed internally when she remembered some racy scenes from the previous night. And Damon was now between her legs, his hair was ruffled, and he looked very sexy.

"Did you forget that my saliva has analeptic properties?" Damon asked and his nostrils flared when he inhaled the scent of her arousal. His lips lifted into a devious smirk. "You will love this medical treatment."

"I'm not sure that classifies as medical treatment. And I didn't shower! Ahhh!" She ended with a lustful shriek because he licked her again.

Damon was amused by her resistance that was contradicting her emotions which he could clearly feel. The fierce blush on her adorable cheeks only made her more alluring.

Yes, she was shy and unspoiled, and he was eager to corrupt her in every way possible.

"Let Dr. Blake tend to your injuries, Mrs. Blake. I'm the only one who can do this. This is mine. All mine...", Damon murmured before burying his face into her, and Talia's head plopped back in the pillow.

She was absolutely defenseless against his attack on her pleasure centers.

Damon started slowly and then he increased the pressure and pace expertly, and within minutes, Talia cried his name while shivering in ecstasy.

Satisfied with the outcome, Damon gave one last quick kiss at the center of Talia's flower, giving her one last shudder before moving up to rest his head on the pillow.

He pulled Talia into his embrace and rubbed her back gently.

Damon was aroused to the point of madness, but he reminded himself that Talia was achy from the previous night and that he should give her time to recuperate. He can hold it in until tonight. Tomorrow morning, at most.

Talia was not sure if it was due to his saliva or her orgasm, but her insides now throbbed in a different rhythm, one that reminded her that there is a void at her core.

Talia remembered the sensation of Damon inside her and a rush of heat washed over her, converging at the cradle of her thighs.

Damon inhaled sharply and cocked an eyebrow at her.

He could smell her and feel her emotions and he was not sure if that was her need or his.

"Kitten...", Damon called while touching her chin and making her look at him with her unfocused honeyed eyes. "Does this mean that the treatment was effective, and you want to feel me again?"

Talia nodded faintly and he wondered if he imagined it.

"Say it.", Damon demanded. "I need to hear you say it."

"I want... you..."

Her voice was just a whisper, but he heard her clearly.

Damon's lips landed on Talia's with urgency, letting her taste herself on him and he couldn't believe how those few words pushed him into overdrive.

She said that she wants him.

That's all he needed to let go of the brakes and enjoy the morning fully, with his mate.

Chapter 176 - Aftercare

Talia sat on the chair with a mirror in front of her and she closed her eyes while enjoying the hair-combing service Damon provided. The light tugging on her scalp as the comb made its way through her hair, made her all tingly.

She blushed at the memory of their steamy morning.

The daylight was illuminating them completely, allowing her to see every drop of sweat forming on his outrageously attractive body as he focused intensely on pleasuring her.

Talia was confident that she will never forget the way Damon caressed her body and kissed her everywhere, gently and lustfully... how every cell in her body sang in the rhythm of the friction his thrusts provided until she fell apart in a mess of cries and gasps... Damon's deep growl and the grimace veiled with bliss when she felt him throb while shooting his hot load deep inside her... and when everything calmed down into her new normal, there were bits of Damon embedded into her soul.

It was a life-altering experience that was further enhanced by Damon's aftercare when he carried her into a tub full of warm water they shared. Damon washed her in slow, deliberate movements like she was the most delicate flower, and he was caressing her petals.

Damon helped her dress up, and he dried the edges of her hair that got wet in the tub, and then he took the comb and told her to relax, and... here she is. Relaxing.

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"If you sleep now, we will miss breakfast, kitten...", Damon's husky voice sounded close to her ear, pulling her into reality, and Talia smiled at her perfectly combed hair.

"You are good at this.", she complimented.

Damon cockily flipped the comb in the air and caught the handle with a flick of his wrist. "I am natural."

Talia enjoyed his cheeky response. This was playful Damon, and she liked his company.

"For the first time handling woman's hair, not bad.", she teased.

"This is not my first time.", he responded right away.

"Oh...", a sound escaped Talia's lips and she lowered her gaze quickly.

She chided herself for rashly assuming that this was his first time to comb someone else's hair.

Was she his first in anything? Probably not.

Talia wanted to ask how many girls got this treatment from him, but she swallowed those words back. She didn't want to know. Just the thought of some other woman being cared for by Damon made Talia feel knots in her stomach.

Since they came to the Lightclaw pack, Damon was totally focused on her, and she basked in his attention that made her feel special.

Talia reminded herself not to be greedy. This outing will be preserved as a loving one in a corner of her memory, and she will revisit it whenever she feels down. There was no more to it.

Yes, they entangled their bodies more than once, and Damon said many sweet things, but that was probably in the heat of the moment, to make her let go of inhibitions, and... it worked. Under his guidance, Talia was able to forget who she is and to enjoy it fully.

However, everything comes to an end, eventually.

Talia was painfully aware of Damon's identity. He definitely attended numerous parties, and this wasn't a big deal for him, but for her, every moment with Damon was extraordinary, and she wanted to believe that she was important to him, even if it's just a lie that will evaporate the moment they go back home.

"I used to comb my mother's hair."

Talia's eyes snapped up and she met his gaze in the mirror as he continued.

"On weekdays I had school and training from early morning, but on weekends when my father went to attend his rounds, my mother would demand that I come to her room and comb her hair." Damon paused before adding, "You are the second woman whose hair I combed."

Talia stared at his amused expression, and she realized that he saw through her. She was jealous and he noticed. Talia didn't know where to look.

But it was not just jealousy, it was the feeling of not being worthy, and that was something she couldn't shake off.

Damon's presence had the power to make Talia believe that anything is possible, but there were times when the magic would stop, and she saw herself for who she really is. A nobody.

The more brilliant he was, the more her heart would tighten because she really wished that he is less outstanding. If he was not a mighty Alpha, maybe she would dare to dream about the future with him, but no matter how much her heart ached for Damon's affection, and no matter how much her body craved for his touch, Talia's mind was reminding her of reality.

Damon squatted next to Talia and rotated the chair so that she was facing him.

"Talk to me, kitten. Tell me what's on your mind."

Talia's smile didn't reach her eyes. "I was just thinking how all this is wonderful. Thank you for combing my hair. Can we go for breakfast now?"

There was no way she would tell him and spoil the moment that was already spoiled by her overthinking it. Didn't she tell herself to enjoy while they were here? Why did she allow her mind to stray toward unnecessary things?

Damon didn't know what was on Talia's mind, but he could feel that her mood dropped significantly. There was sadness and dejection, and he had an urge to fix it.

Damon lifted Talia off the chair and sat on it with her on his lap.

"Do you like it here?", he asked, and she nodded in response while sinking into him.

Damon assumed that she was sad because they are set to leave shortly after breakfast. "Do you want us to stay here longer?"

Yes. "No. Let's stick to the plan." She couldn't be selfish. As his assistant, Talia knew very well how much work he left behind. Instead of asking to stay longer, he should be urging her to leave as soon as possible.

Damon thought for a moment. "How about, when we get back home, we plan for a vacation?"

"A vacation?", Talia repeated robotically.

"A vacation.", Damon confirmed. "Just the two of us. Pick wherever you want to go. It can be anywhere."

Talia thought how that sounded wonderful, but... "I can't do that. I wouldn't even know what place to pick."

Damon exhaled helplessly. "We will talk about this again after we return home. In the meantime, I want you to think about our first vacation together. Mountain? Sea? I know you love the forest. We can rent a cabin in the forest. Or do you want us to go to a city? We can stay in a five-star hotel in a penthouse suite... Or we can rent a yacht..."

Talia listened to his blabber and smiled. He remembered that she loves the forest. The truth was that she would go anywhere, as long as it's with Damon.

"Instead of a flashy vacation, how about we go for breakfast?", Talia asked. "I am hungry."

"Yes, yes.", he agreed immediately. "We will go in a minute, but first... How are you feeling?"

Talia didn't understand his question until she saw him glancing down at her crotch area.

She pressed her legs together. "I'm fine."

Damon cocked his eyebrow suspiciously. "If you say so. Let me know if it gets worse and I will give you another..." He licked his lips. "...treatment."

Damon saw Talia's face exploding in a fierce blush and he chuckled.

Talia couldn't believe how outrageous he was, and he was still not done talking!

"My services are available anytime, kitten. Only for you."

This time, Talia's smile reached her eyes.

His words managed to dispel the dark clouds that were gathering in her mind, and she was back to wishing to stick to him forever.

Talia's happiness washed over Damon, and he gleefully cradled her in his arms.

Damon knew that Talia gets consumed by insecurities sometimes. A girl like Talia tends to overthink things. Damon didn't understand that, but he read how that's normal for girls who are smart. He wished that Talia was simpler and that she can just relax and enjoy the flow, but he also knew that she was perfect, his other half, and he wouldn't want her any other way.

Damon was known for not bothering with things he deemed not important, he would push those issues on the side and forget about them. Maybe that's why Talia thinks about every little thing, to compensate where he is lacking.

Damon was carried away with the sensation of Talia relaxing on him and he didn't notice his wolf scratching to come out until he was almost at the surface.

The old beast was getting crafty in sneaking up on Damon, eager to spend some time with Talia and claim her as his.

Damon didn't want to allow his wolf to act on an instinct. If Talia had her wolf, she would understand what's going on, and she would feel that primal pull as well, but like this, it would be the same as Damon forcing the bond on her, and he didn't want to risk Talia hating him for that.

Chapter 177 - Talk About Talking Wolves

Damon groaned softly while pushing his wolf at the back of his mind and when he opened his eyes, he met Talia's concerned gaze directed his way.

"Is something wrong?", she asked.

He didn't want to lie to her. "My wolf wants to meet you."

Talia's heart fluttered. She saw werewolves in their wolf form from the distance and she really wanted to see Damon's wolf. "I would like to meet him also. Can I?"

Damon took a moment to organize his thoughts before responding. "He is very eager to spend time with you, but I am afraid that he might do something... unexpected." Like jumping on you and marking you.

"Do you think he will harm me?", Talia guessed.

"Not on purpose.", Damon said right away. "Wolves follow their instincts and give in to their urges even when they know that what they are about to do is wrong. When I confirm that he is calm, I will let you meet him. I don't want to take any risks with you, kitten."

Talia didn't understand but she knew that Damon must have his reasons for giving her such a vague response. She decided to shift the topic a bit.

"It must be nice to have someone in your head to talk to."

Damon assumed that she was talking about the mind-link. "Yeah. The whole pack. It can be noisy at times."

"No, I meant, your wolf."

Damon paused. How does she know that he can talk to his wolf? But she spoke about it like it's common. "Do you think it's normal for wolves to talk?"

"Isn't it?", Talia asked innocently. When she saw Damon's confused expression, she explained, "I remember that before my wolf left me, she told me that I am too weak to shift and..."

"She told you?", Damon interrupted Talia impatiently.

"Yes.", Talia confirmed earnestly.

Damon was staring at her, and Talia got uncomfortable.

"Is that wrong?"

It took Damon a few endless seconds to respond. "No, kitten. That's not wrong. However, not every wolf can talk."

"What kind of wolves can talk?"

"I know of only one. Mine.", Damon responded. His brows came together to form a serious expression. "Who all knows that your wolf can talk?"

Talia shook her head. "I didn't tell anyone. Only you."

It's not like she had a bunch of people to talk to, and even if she had company, she wouldn't talk about her wolf because it reminded her that was a wolf-less she-wolf.

"Good.", Damon said firmly. "Let's keep it at that."

Talia nodded in agreement, and then she asked apprehensively, "How many people know that your wolf can talk to you?"

Damon smiled. "Now, it's two."

Talia's eyes widened. "I won't tell anyone."

"I know you won't. I trust you."

A wave of heat invaded her cheeks. Damon told her a secret, and it seems it's a big one.

"Do you think that if my wolf is here, she would be able to talk to your wolf?", Talia asked.

Damon shrugged. "We will find out soon."

Talia paused. "How?"

Damon looked into her eyes deeply. "I believe that your wolf is not gone, but only weakened. There is a chance that by taking care of your body, she will find the strength to come back."

Talia blinked once, twice, and then things fell into place. "Is that why you want me to eat well, exercise, and see Doctor Travis regularly?"

Damon cocked an eyebrow at her. "I want you to do those things because it's good for you. If your wolf awakens, that will be a bonus."

Talia's heart swelled. No one ever cared about her so much. And now it seemed that she and Damon had something in common.

"Both of our wolves can talk", she voiced her thoughts. "Do you think that means something?"

Damon smiled. "It means that your wolf is special. It means that us meeting each other wasn't an accident." The Moon Goddess arranged for us to meet.

Damon tightened his hold on Talia and murmured against her ear, "It means we are meant to be together..."

Talia's breath hitched. Are they really meant to be together?

Regardless if that was true or not, Talia chose to believe in it, at least until they go back home.

She wrapped her arms around Damon's neck and kissed him while her soul hummed in pleasure, in harmony with Damon's.

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The event hall was cleaned up overnight and tables were arranged for breakfast.

The dining room could easily accommodate thirty people, but with guests present, that wasn't enough.

Not everyone stayed overnight, but there was still a significant number of mouths to feed for breakfast.

Several long tables stood next to the wall with their offerings of fresh buns, sweet and savory pastries, fruits, scrambled eggs, sausages, ham, and hot and cold beverages. It was a buffet-style breakfast.

Omeegas were moving swiftly, ensuring that there are enough clean plates and utensils for everyone and that no food is lacking.

The breakfast itself didn't last long. However, the majority of guests had plans to leave before lunchtime, so they were not in a hurry. They lingered at the tables with beverages of their choice, snacking something slowly and chatting leisurely. The atmosphere was cheerful with chatter and an occasional burst of laughter.

Some people took a stroll in the garden, taking advantage of the pleasant morning before the rising sun heated the air to unpleasant levels.

Marcy was in the event hall, at one of the tables with her mother, Luna Layla, with a mission to approach Kalina and befriend her.

Marcy was not in a good mood.

Last night, other than a disastrous encounter with Kalina in front of the ladies' room, several misses actually approached her and asked if she is really Alpha Damon's future Luna with mocking smirks, obviously insinuating that Alpha Damon was busy with another woman right under Marcy's nose.

Marcy was never so embarrassed in her life.

Then, Alpha Edward scolded her for failing to talk to Kalina, so Marcy spilled the beans about how she and Nora met Kalina in front of the restroom and how it didn't go well.

Of course, Marcy had no intention to take the burn of her father's rage, so she ratted on Nora, revealing that the latter went to Alpha Damon's room on her own, disturbed Damon's date (aka Lia), and that was the reason for Kalina dismissing them like nobodies.

Alpha Edward was furious, and he was shouting how all of them are incompetent.

When he said that they are leaving right away, Marcy assumed how that included her as well. She didn't want to spend more time at the Lightclaw pack, surrounded by gut-wrenching whispers about Alpha Damon and his date.

Everyone was discussing the incident of Alpha Damon sending Cassie to the dungeon, and how he was uncharacteristically lovey-dovey, and that he left the party early with his date in his arms. Marcy saw that those gossipers were eyeing her while talking about how lucky Alpha Damon's date is.

Marcy didn't want to stay at the Lightclaw pack a minute longer than necessary. She wanted to lock herself into her room and to stay there forever, or at least until everyone forgets who she is.

The shame was unbearable, and Marcy would probably blow up in a fit of rage, but her wolf was not there; she was still sulking because Marcy rejected George and since then, Marcy was unable to shift into her wolf form, and she was feeling weak and tired most of the time.

To Marcy's surprise, Alpha Edward told Nora to pack her things, leaving Marcy and Luna Layla behind with instructions to approach Kalina and make use of this opportunity.

Marcy had no idea how her father would punish Nora, and she didn't care.

Marcy was dejected that she was still stuck in the same unfavorable position where she needed to befriend Kalina. Unless Kalina had memory problems, she would definitely remember the incident from the previous day. How can Marcy approach her like everything is fine?

Marcy was hoping that her mother will talk some sense into her father. Unfortunately, Alpha Edward was specific about Marcy's task and Luna Layla was always submissive in front of Alpha Edward.

Marcy spent a decade away from home, but the last few weeks were enough for her to confirm how Luna Layla would never object to whatever Alpha Edward would say.

Back to the present...

Marcy was pushing a few grapes on her plate while her eyes rested at the table where Kalina and Tony were sitting for more than an hour.

People would come to the table where Kalina and Tony were, stay for some time before moving on, and then the next group would approach them, and Marcy knew that her time was running out. If she delays this further, she was risking that Kalina will leave, and she will totally blow her chance.

Marcy knew that she needed to move, but she was not willing.

First, her yesterday's meeting with Kalina was a total flop, and second, she was dejected to see how everyone was sucking up to Kalina as the future Luna, while Marcy was being ridiculed.

Isn't she the future Luna of the Dark Howlers pack? Even without that, she was the princess of the Red Moon pack, the second largest pack in North America, and everyone should come to befriend her yet... it didn't happen. Instead of that, Marcy was the one who needed to approach some nobody who was just lucky to be the mate of the future Alpha.

To add salt to the wound, Tony was hovering around Kalina like she is the center of everything, yet Alpha Damon didn't even check on Marcy and she was confident that he knew she was in attendance.

How can Marcy not have grievances?

Chapter 178 - Breakfast At The Lightclaw Pack [Bonus]

Marcy observed three women at the table with Kalina, and she guessed based on their body language that they were about to leave.

She took that as her cue to act.

"I'm going to greet the future Luna of this pack.", Marcy told her mother in a low voice and started moving toward her destination.

Just as Marcy guessed, the three women stood up in slow motion and they were smiling and bobbing their heads and Marcy extended her steps so that someone else doesn't snatch her opening.

Marcy knew that her first impression was not positive, but Kalina was the new face in the Lightclaw pack and she definitely needs to create good connections as the future Luna, so Marcy was confident that Kalina won't do anything drastic and embarrass her.

Besides, Marcy didn't see Kalina as a best friend material. As two future Lunas, Kalina and Marcy will need to interact, but that will be politics and not friendship.

Right now, Marcy is the princess of the Red Moon pack, while Kalina is just Tony's mate, and considering the power of the Red Moon pack, Kalina will need to show respect. It's that simple.

With those thoughts, Marcy lifted her chin and strode confidently toward the table where Kalina was sitting with Tony.

Kalina was tired from fake pleasantries and her facial muscles were cramped in a smiling grimace.

If not for Tony sitting next to her through this socializing hell, Kalina would scream in mental agony half an hour ago.

'How much more of this torture?', Kalina wondered, and her eyes moved randomly to see Marcy walking that way.

It took Kalina a moment to connect from where Marcy looked familiar, as Talia's bully from the previous day. OK. Nora was doing most of the talking, but it was obvious that Nora and Marcy were together. Kalina wondered, where did the other one (aka Nora) go?

Kalina's insides tightened when she realized that Marcy was approaching her. Will she need to be polite to this woman also?

"Lia!", an excited shout came from the other side of the hall and Kalina spotted Mindy waving enthusiastically toward the main entrance.

Kalina's smile became genuine when she saw Talia and Damon entering the hall with Damon's arm around Talia's waist, holding her close to him possessively.

Talia's face lit up when she spotted Mindy and she glanced at Damon questionably to what Damon responded with a nod immediately and the duo moved toward the table where Mindy was sitting with Alpha Maddox.

Of course, Marcy also noticed this not-so-discreet appearance of Damon and Talia, and Marcy groaned internally at the thought that there will be another wave of talks about Alpha Damon and his date, and how Marcy's virtual hat was getting greener (if that's possible).

Marcy's neatly trimmed eyebrows came together in a frown when she realized that Kalina and Tony were on their feet, walking in the same direction as Talia and Damon.

"Excuse me!", Marcy called after Kalina. "I was hoping to get a chance to talk to you."

Kalina had difficulty peeling her eyes from the table where Mindy was sitting. Talia and Damon approached the table, and they were exchanging greetings with Mindy and Maddox, and then Damon pulled a chair for Talia to sit.

Kalina really wanted to go there, and she knew that Tony wanted that also.

Kalina took a moment to come up with a response for Mindy. "I apologize, but we need to take care of something important now. In one hour, I will be in the garden, available for anyone who wants to approach me. We can talk then..."

And with that, Kalina and Tony left without waiting for Marcy to respond.

Marcy's mood turned completely sour when she saw that Mindy, Talia, and Kalina hugged each other in greeting before they sat at the table, occupying all six available spots, and starting a lively chatter.

Damon, Maddox, and Tony went to get food, leaving three young women at the table.

It was obvious that Kalina, Talia, and Mindy were close as their interaction went beyond just exchanging pleasantries. Also, for the last hour, Kalina was sitting at the table, yet now she actually moved to another table in order to socialize.

Marcy gritted her teeth. How was that 'something important'!

Kalina just ditched her, in front of everyone!

Marcy spent a decade away from the Red Moon pack, so she didn't get a lot of princess treatment like some other Alpha daughters, but she still had her pride, and she was never this humiliated!

To add salt to an open wound, Marcy was left standing like an idiot only a few steps from what used to be Kalina's table.

Now what?

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Mindy glanced at Marcy and spoke to Kalina, "Are you sure your greeting session is over for the morning?"

Kalina let out a low groan, "If you ask me, it was over a long time ago, but others didn't get the memo." She narrowed her eyes at Mindy. "Lia has an excuse for not coming to our table because they just arrived, but I saw you coming here half an hour ago and ignoring me."

"You were obviously busy. If I went there to join you, I would be forced to listen to all those people sucking up to you. I chose to enjoy my breakfast. I like you, Lina, but not that much to spoil my meal."

Kalina was shocked by Mindy's response, but she didn't dislike it. "Brutally honest."

Mindy smirked. "If honesty is not to your liking, you are welcome to return to your previous table. I have no need to lie to you or anyone else."

"And that's why I came here.", Kalina said right away. She really didn't want to go back to that table.

Talia enjoyed this exchange between Mindy and Kalina. Both of them have spunk and some wild energy around them, and Talia found them refreshing.

"I am sorry you are leaving so soon." Kalina said to Mindy and glanced at Talia. "Both of you. Can you stay longer?"

They met only yesterday, but Kalina preferred chatting with Mindy and Talia over anyone else. Sure, there was Tony, but he had his things to take care of, leaving Kalina on her own with some random people.

Mindy rejected Kalina. "I have my schedule."

Kalina looked expectantly at Talia who shook her head with, "Sorry, Damon has a lot of work."

Kalina pursed her lips. "But you can stay, right? You can be my exclusive guest. Please?"

"No.", Damon grumbled from the side while approaching the table with two plates full of food. One for him and the other one for Talia.

An Omega was right behind Damon, carrying one orange juice for Talia and a coffee for Damon. Tony and Maddox were behind them with plates full of food in their hands.

Damon took a seat on his chair and scooted closer to Talia until their chairs touched.

He put his arm on the backrest of Talia's chair so that his hand rests on Talia's shoulder.

Damon didn't care a diddly-squat about hurting Kalina's feelings, but he could sense that Talia was not pleased with his response, so he spoke to Kalina.

"Don't try to separate me from Talia. Check with Tony when he will come to our pack for training. You are welcome to accompany him and then you can spend time with Talia." Damon noticed Talia's surprised expression, so he added. "Talia will be a wonderful host."

Talia liked this. A host. Kalina will come for a visit and Talia will be the host.

"Depending on when you visit Lia, maybe I make some space in my schedule, and the three of us can meet.", Mindy chimed in and continued with sparkles in her eyes, "Darkbourne has quite a number of places where we can hang out and there is a big human city nearby..."

Talia smiled brightly and said softly to Damon, "Thank you."

Damon could feel Talia's emotions and he was elated that Talia can be happy with so little. He knew that she didn't have friends so far and seeing her with Mindy and Kalina was much better than Talia mingling with a bunch of guys.

"So, when are we going to the Dark Howlers pack?", Kalina asked Tony excitedly.

Tony shrugged. "This will settle in a day or two and then we can see when Alpha Damon is available."

"Give me a call and we can come up with something.", Damon responded. "If you have someone close who is also interested, feel free to bring them along. Just tell us the numbers in advance so that Talia makes sure everyone is taken care of."

Tony nodded gratefully. He knew that Damon was talking about potential Beta and Gamma of the Lightclaw pack. Damon advised Tony to pick his helpers early and to establish good relationships before he becomes an Alpha at the head of the pack.

It took a moment for Talia to absorb Damon's words.

Damon wanted her to take care of the guests? That's a big deal!

Isn't that Stephanie's department? Will Stephanie be upset that she lost this important function?

But Damon said it in front of everyone, so it must be true.

Talia's heart fluttered from excitement.

Chapter 179 - Breakfast At The Lightclaw Pack (cont.)

Talia had a hundred butterflies rampaging in her stomach, making her elated and anxious, and a bit nauseous.

Damon said that she will have responsibilities in the packhouse, and that means he won't send her away. Not soon, at least.

Sure, Damon insinuated (more than once) how Talia should stay in the packhouse long term, but this time he said in front of people that Talia will take care of guests, making it kind of official that she has legitimate duties in the packhouse.

Ah, she will take care of the guests!? What if she messes up?

Amused by the variety of Talia's emotions, Damon gave her shoulder a light squeeze. He knew that she will be amazing.

Talia will be the Luna of the Dark Howlers pack, and the comfort of their guests will be Talia's responsibility, so having a group of friends visit them will be an excellent practice for Talia.

"Everyone is invited except for me", Maddox grumbled.

Talia was surprised that Maddox was looking at her. She glanced nervously at Damon who was busy cutting a sausage, pretending that he didn't hear Maddox, but Talia couldn't ignore him. Maddox was big and scary and staring at her, and based on Damon's lack of interest, Talia assumed that her role as a host started already.

"You are welcome to come, Alpha Maddox.", Talia said. "Would you like me to tell you when Lina and Tony will visit so that you can coordinate?"

Maddox's eyebrows came together into a frown. "Why are you addressing everyone casually and using a title for me? My friends call me Max. I want to hear you say it."

Talia felt a rush of heat invading her cheeks and she inhaled forcibly. Maddox is a big scary Alpha, and he said they are friends.

This was a different level of familiarity compared to last night when he said that she can call him by his name. This was a nickname. It was a big deal. Refusing would be rude.

"OK. Ma..." The last sound was muffled because Damon stuffed a piece of sausage into her mouth.

"Let Lia say my name!", Maddox protested.

"Who allowed you to be so friendly with my woman?", Damon said condescendingly and turned to Talia to put another piece of sausage in her mouth.

Talia looked like a chipmunk with both of her cheeks full.

Maddox was surprised by Damon calling Talia 'my woman' openly. It only reinforced Maddox's hunch that Talia is Damon's mate.

But if they are mates, why didn't Damon announce it?

Maddox remembered his visit at the Dark Howlers pack and how Damon spent most of the day during the festival away from Talia. Mates stick close to each other, especially Alphas.

On the other hand, Maddox never saw Damon being this possessive. He didn't even allow Talia to call him by a nickname!

Maddox decided to push Damon's buttons. "Why can't we be friendly to each other? Lia and I exchanged phone numbers, Lia is calling me by my nickname, and she saw me naked. It doesn't get friendlier than that."

The temperature at the table fell noticeably and Talia panicked. It's not that Maddox lied, but why did he remind Damon of that butt-naked incident?

"I didn't see anything!", Talia mumbled with haste, her mouth still full of sausage, and she snuggled closer to Damon in an attempt to pacify her Devil.

Mindy stifled a laugh at Talia who was chewing so quickly that it looked like a video on fast forward.

"Of course, you didn't see much, Lia. There was nothing to see."

"Hey!", Maddox exclaimed in outrage.

"How can you say that this is nothing?" Maddox gestured toward himself, and Mindy waved at him dismissively.

Maybe Maddox is tall and muscular now, but for Mindy, he will always be her short and skinny ten-years old brother. Maddox had several growth spurts during his teens, and after that, he bulked up. Maddox is only three years older than Mindy, and Mindy got to watch him grow up.

Talia swallowed food from her mouth before cautiously glancing at Damon to see if he forgot about her seeing Maddox naked, and she met his intense stare directed at her face.

Sausage juice was dripping from her lips how she spoke with her full mouth, and Damon's hand landed at the back of Talia's head a second before Damon leaned toward her and licked her clean.

Damon's movements were slow as he meticulously licked every spot, and Talia released a shaky breath as the scent of the forest and the dark chocolate invaded her system and she remembered the magic that tongue can do all over her body, especially between her legs.

Talia couldn't believe this! She was getting aroused right there in front of everyone!

"Damon! People are watching!", Talia whispered with urgency.

Damon smacked his lips like he tasted the best delicacy ever.

"You had something there.", Damon said coolly.

He knew very well that Talia struggled to suppress the desire for her tongue to meet his. And she wanted more than just the tongue. She wanted him. All of him.

Damon was counting minutes until they head home. He will clear his calendar for the afternoon and take his time sampling Talia. He shifted a bit to adjust his hard-on.

Talia's stomach sunk when she realized that the banter between Mindy and Maddox subsided and even though no one was looking their way, she could guess that everyone saw Damon licking her.

And it was not just four people at their table, many others saw that, Marcy included. After all, their table hosted prominent figures and the main person of the event (aka Kalina), and it was expected that most of the people would keep their eyes on them.

Talia glanced at Damon, and she couldn't believe that he continued eating like nothing happened. Shameless.

Damon put his hand over Talia's and gave her a squeeze, and then he offered a forkful of scrambled eggs which she readily accepted.

Under Damon's cool facade, Talia could see a glint of mischief in his eyes, and she didn't dislike it. She was happy. Just how he was.

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Damon fed Talia and himself, emptying his plate first, and then Talia's.

There were only a few bites left when someone cleared his throat from the side to get their attention.

"Alpha Damon...", Alpha Richard called. "I was wondering if you can spare some time."

Damon cocked an eyebrow. "For?" He was obviously not willing.

"Cassie. You said that you will talk with Alpha Magnus about the duration of her stay here."

Damon paused. Does Alpha Richard want to talk about Cassie? Why should Damon discuss the duration of her stay at the Lightclaw pack?

It took Damon a few exceedingly long seconds to remember that he slapped Cassie before sending her to the dungeon.

He forgot about her.

"Is this about Cassie attacking you last night?", Mindy asked to Alpha Richard's obvious displeasure.

Even if people knew about the incident, Alpha Richard was hoping that they won't talk about it. At least not in front of him.

Damon frowned while wondering why was Mindy so nosy, but he still answered. "Yes."

"How are you going to punish her?"

"Punish her?", Damon repeated questionably. Cassie was in the dungeon, everyone knew that, but it was obvious that Mindy had something else on her mind.

Mindy glanced at Talia and then returned her gaze to Damon. "Don't tell me that you will just let her go after one night in the dungeon. You know Cassie's temper. What would happen to Lia if you didn't intervene?"

Damon didn't want to deal with Cassie now, or ever. But Mindy had a point.

He turned to Talia. "You were the target of Cassie's attack. You decide on her punishment."

Talia was not sure how this ended up with everyone looking at her, but here she was... with all eyes on her and she needed to make an important decision.

How should Cassie be punished?

For Talia, this was not just a small incident in the hallway from last night.

Cassie was the person who immediately assumed that a girl in the kitchen was stealing food, and that a girl with a cell phone stole it, and that a girl deserves slapping if she didn't admit a crime she never committed. Cassie was bossy with Omegas while claiming the position of the future Luna that never belonged to her, and Talia was confident that there was much more.

It's not that Talia wanted to avenge everyone who got bullied by Cassie, but Cassie showed narcissistic behavior that can't be cured no matter what punishment is delivered.

However, it wouldn't be fine just to let her go either.

In Talia's opinion, people will not understand others unless they walk in someone else's shoes. Talia couldn't make Cassie wear shabby clothes and be abused by random people, but she wanted Cassie to feel the burn of her actions if she was on the receiving end.

"I want to know what she would do to me if you didn't stop her.", Talia said to Damon.

Damon's brows came together in a deep frown. He obviously disapproved of this idea.

Talia gave him a reassuring smile. "I won't do anything recklessly. Will you help me?"

How can Damon say no to that?

Chapter 180 - The Best Luna

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The dungeon of the Lightclaw pack is close to the packhouse. It's underground with its entrance hidden between several tall rocks and medium-sized bushes.

The entrance is hidden, but the nearby terrain is fairly open, making it impossible for anyone to come or go without being noticed.

Talia made her way into the dungeon down long winding stairs, following one warrior from the Lightclaw pack who was on duty as a guard.

In the absence of a recording device, Talia called Damon's phone and left the call on with the phone in her pocket and volume set to a minimum.

At the entrance to the dungeon, Damon had the call on speaker with Maddox, Mindy, Kalina, Tony, Alpha Magnus, and Alpha Richard gathered around him.

No one knew exactly what Talia had on her mind, so they waited in anticipation to hear how this will unfold.

Alpha Richard had a bad feeling about this. He wanted to warn Cassie to keep her mouth shut, but Damon and Maddox didn't let him out of their sight and he couldn't do anything, so now he was sweating bullets while silently cursing Cassie and her temper.

Alpha Richard already decided to cut off his willful daughter financially and geographically. He will either marry her off or send her far away on her own, but that will need to wait until they leave this place. Until then, he prayed silently that Cassie doesn't drag him down with her.

Talia walked after the guard and observed the hallway that was wide for four people to walk side-by-side comfortably. There were doors made out of thick iron bars, leading to small cells that each had a bed, sink, and toilet. The walls were in orange hues, like clay, and decently illuminated. The air was fresh with just a hint of staleness which told her that this is an old structure, but well maintained.

Talia's guide stopped in front of one door and spoke in a stern tone, "Cassie Baines, you have a visitor."

"Dad!?", Cassie shrieked and dashed toward the door, grabbing two bars with her hands.

Ever since warriors dragged her from the packhouse of the Lightclaw pack on the previous night, Cassie was stuck in that cell.

They brought her food twice, but other than that no one said anything, and her father didn't come to see her.

Cassie assumed that her father might be also in one of the cells, so she called his name, but there was no response.

To say that Cassie was agitated would be an understatement.

Cassie frowned at the sight of Talia, and she looked left and right, how much the bars allowed it.

"Where is my father?", Cassie asked the guard who didn't respond. They are trained not to respond to prisoners' inquiries unless instructed otherwise.

"You can leave us.", Talia told the guard and he nodded before walking away.

Talia waited a bit for the guard to leave the hallway before turning to Cassie who was still standing at the door and looking at Talia questionably.

Talia observed Cassie's swollen cheek. One night of Cassie's werewolf healing wasn't enough to erase traces of Damon's slap.

"Your father won't come.", Talia said.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean what I said. He won't come."

"Why are you here?"

"I came to see how you are doing.", Talia said while glancing into the cell behind Cassie. "It seems you had a good treatment. The bed looks cozy."

"Cozy?", Cassie repeated with disgust. That thin mattress is a lot of things, but cozy is not one of them. She grew up as the princess of the Steelbite pack in luxury and this was not her idea of a good treatment.

"Considering that you wanted to attack me last night, this is a light punishment. I wonder if you learned your lesson."

Cassie's eyebrows shot up. "And what lesson should I learn?"

Talia smirked. "That you are replaceable."

Cassie's nostrils were flaring in anger. "Wait until I come out! You bitch!"

"But you can't come out, and your words can't harm me. I know that you are a sad girl who enjoys the privilege of having Alpha as a father. Remove your father and you are nothing."

"And you think you are something because Damon decided to play with you?"

"Not just play with me, but also bring me as his date. To how many events Damon took you with him?", Talia asked and continued quickly before Cassie could say anything, "The party was a blast. If you were there you would see that Damon is an amazing dancer. He couldn't keep his hands off me. Is that how he treated you? Of course, he didn't. Your so-called relationship meant that you stay in his packhouse until he notices you. Did he ever touch you or was that just your imagination? As a stark contrast from how he treated you, last night, a reporter from WW Magazine took our photo. He said that Damon and I look good together. It seems that was the first time Damon allowed his photo to be taken with a woman by his side. It will be in the next edition..."

"You wench!" Cassie was livid. Every Talia's word hit a nerve. "Once I'm done with you, Damon won't recognize you!"

"Oh, and what will you do?"

"I will return that slap of yours a hundred times and then I will scratch your face and yank all your hair out." Cassie's eyes stirred with madness. "Yes... with all those scars, Damon won't think that you are pretty and then he will come back to me."

Talia released a long breath. Mission accomplished. But she didn't feel happy about it. Talia truly pitied Cassie who was lost in her delusion of grandeur that took deep roots, probably because no one took the effort to discipline Cassie when she was a child, and now it was too late.

"It's sad that under that pretty face is an ugly person. That's why Damon will never look at you.", Talia said before walking away.

"Hey! Where are you going!? What's your name!? Tell my father that I want to see him! You can't keep me here forever! Hey! HEY! Guards! GUARDS!..."

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Talia exited the dungeon and saw seven people standing with solemn expressions.

Talia walked straight into Damon's embrace, and she took a deep breath, allowing her favorite scent of the forest and the dark chocolate to enter her system and calm her down.

"What about Cassie?", Alpha Richard broke the silence.

Talia turned to face Alpha Richard, with Damon's hand resting on her shoulder, silently reminding her that he is right there, supporting her.

"Alpha Richard", Talia spoke in an official tone that surprised everyone other than Damon. He heard her talk like that with Mr. Martinez, in front of the human hospital.

"Your daughter wanted me to get one hundred slaps, to scratch my face until it's full of scars, and to yank my hair out."

"She said that in anger.", Alpha Richard was quick to say.

Talia's expression hardened. "And I am confident that she would do all those things in anger. You can't expect her to be a good person if you are always finding excuses for her mistakes. She is not a child. There are very few people who will put up with her willful behavior and not punish her."

Alpha Richard lowered his head. He was out of arguments.

Talia lifted her chin. "I believe that everyone deserves a chance for redemption. Even Cassie. I won't demand that Cassie endures everything she was planning for me."

Alpha Richard looked at Talia hopefully and his expression froze when Talia continued.

"Instead of one hundred slaps, Cassie will get fifty. I don't want her face to be ruined, but her hair will go. I will be magnanimous and instead of yanking it out, she will be shaved clean. If Cassie tries to attack me again or retaliates in any way, she will get the remaining punishment, with interest. As a reminder of this incident for her and you, the Steelbite pack will make an annual tribute to the Dark Howlers pack. You will discuss details of the tribute with Alpha Damon. If you can't come to an agreement, Cassie will get the remainder of her punishment. Is that acceptable?"

Alpha Richard wanted to say how that's preposterous, but he ended up staring into Talia's honeyed eyes that were full of determination, and he nodded in agreement.

Talia turned to Alpha Magnus. "As soon as punishments are administered, Cassie is free to leave. Fifty slaps by a warrior, and then her head needs to be shaved clean. I expect that you record everything and send us a copy when it's over."

Alpha Magnus agreed immediately. He couldn't wait to be done with this and for the troublesome girl to leave.

Talia saw that Tony, Kalina, Mindy, and Maddox looked at her in awe, and then she turned to Damon to meet his proud smile.

"Can we go home now?", she asked in a small voice.

Damon leaned his forehead on Talia's.

Did she know that right now she was the best Luna ever? More than a Luna, Talia was like a Goddess, compelling everyone to worship her.

Instead of lashing out or shrinking, she used her head and recorded Cassie, for everyone to hear. In addition to witnesses from last night, she ensured that several other people hear Cassie threatening her again. Even if Cassie complains about injustice, it will be for naught because four Alphas heard every word between Cassie and Talia.

Damon wondered, did Talia notice that Alpha Richard was bowing to her in submission? Probably not. Talia doesn't care about those things and she wouldn't pay attention.

Talia notices injustice and even when she has the complete advantage over people who wronged her, she won't go overboard. Selfless. She is the embodiment of selflessness.

Just now, Talia was in the position to ask for anything, yet she asked for things that will benefit the Dark Howlers pack. She secured an annual tribute from the Steelbite pack, and she left him to negotiate terms. A true Luna. His Luna.

Damon wanted to pick Talia up and twirl her and kiss her senselessly and then to have his way with her right there on the ground, but he pushed all those desires for later when they reach home, and responded, "Yes. Let's go home." He couldn't wait to get home.