

Alphas Bride 331

Chapter 331 – Alpha Of The Frostcrest Pack (2)

After finding out about his heritage, George swore that he will climb the ranks, get close to Alpha Edward, and challenge him to an official duel where he will kill him.

For a decade George studied and trained like his life depended on it.

The desire for revenge fueled him to work harder and longer than everyone else, and his Alpha genes helped him to come on top.

As his wolf started stirring, George learned to subdue his aura and not disclose that he is an Alpha. He showed just enough for everyone to know that he was strong, but not too strong because he didn't want Alpha Edward to see him as a threat.

As soon as he got a rank that allowed him a private residence, George looked for Estelle and brought her into his house to work as Omega. Estelle also identified a few other Omegas who came from the Frostcrest pack and are trustworthy, and George brought them over also. There are seven of them now who are maintaining George's villa and the surrounding area that belongs to George's property. Only Estelle knows who George really is, and other Omegas are aware that he is from the Frostcrest pack originally, so in a way, they are like a small family.

While talking with other warriors, George identified others who are sharing the same sentiments that Alpha Edward should be removed, and that the whole Redmayne family is like cancer to the society of werewolves.

Alpha Edward cares only about the ones he can use. The ones he doesn't see as worthy are treated worse than dirt.

Luna Layla doesn't care what her mate is doing, and she is not innocent either. Alpha Edward and Luna Layla don't share a bond of fated mates, and with Alpha Edward finding his release somewhere else, Luna Layla will do the same, albeit she is more discrete in doing so.

James is young and he doesn't have a desire to lead. James' results are above average in his age group, but his scores are not enviable when compared to other Alphas. Actually, James is barely holding.

As for Marcy, no one knew much other than she was in Europe. But as soon as she returned home, rumors started spreading that she is superficial and useless, just like her mother.

Every member of the Redmayne family is corrupted and only cares about themselves, and that extends to Beta Raymond and Nora. They all need to be eliminated.

Pieces were coming together and then he met Marcy.

For those few brief moments in the garden, George forgot about his revenge, and he thought that things might actually work out peacefully. Why else would the Moon Goddess pair him with the daughter of the man he was set to kill?

But then Marcy rejected him, confirming that she is shallow and corrupted just like the rest of her family.

Yes, she said that it was because her parents wouldn't approve, and it's not that George disagreed with that point, but who was Alpha Edward to challenge the will of the Moon Goddess?

If Marcy wanted to run, George would run with her (as soon as he kills Alpha Edward), but instead of coming up with ways to be together with him, Marcy's impulse was to reject him. That was something George will never be able to erase from his mind.

Rejection by a soulmate, by his other half. It took him days to process what happened and to start functioning. And it's something he will never fully recuperate from. His wolf is weakened and based on the research George did, even if he marks Marcy and she accepts him as her mate, his wolf will not heal completely. She made irreparable damage to both of them on a whim. How can he forgive that?

In stories George heard, fated mates are either together, or they die trying, yet Marcy just rejected him. He didn't see it coming.

And then he heard that Marcy will become Luna of the Dark Howlers pack and he understood everything. She rejected him because she assumed he is a lowly Omega, yet she was willing to be with Alpha Damon because he is an Alpha.

Part of him was itching to disclose his background, just to see Marcy's expression when she realizes that she rejected an Alpha, but it was not worth it. He didn't want to jeopardize a decade of hard work and meticulous planning, not now when he was so close to the goal that he can smell it.

George wanted to accept Marcy's rejection. Who would want to be tied up to a mate who doesn't want him? But then he got an idea of using that cracked bond against Marcy, even if that means it will hurt him in the process. After all, didn't he swear that he will destroy the Redmayne family? He might start from Marcy.

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Back to the present...

George miscalculated how wicked Nora was, and Marcy ended up drugged.

Why was her heart rate still slowing down?

If Alpha Edward finds out that he failed to protect Marcy, George will be penalized, no matter what he achieved so far.

George saw it happen many times before.

Promotions and rewards in the Red Moon pack are rare, while punishments come with heavy consequences for the slightest error.

He could lose his position as the commander!

Marcy getting drugged under his nose was not a small thing.

What if she doesn't wake up on time? At ten o'clock in the morning, Alpha Edward will expect a status report with confirmation that they reached the Dark Howlers pack.

Damn it!

He knew that Nora was vile, but he didn't think she was stupid! At least not to this extent. Now what?

George remembered that werewolves heal faster when they are close to their mates, and he thought of testing that.

He knew that getting into the touching distance with Marcy was a bad idea, but just staring at her and hoping she will wake up wasn't a good option either.

George sat on the edge of Marcy's bed and reached to hold her hand.

Tingles ran through his fingers when their hands connected.

He frowned at the memory of them meeting the first time. He was so lost in Marcy's presence that he forgot who he was, and they ended up kissing, and it was wonderful... until she rejected him.

When they collided in the shed, things happened quickly and he was fueled by rage, but now she was asleep, and he had time to analyze what was going on.

The sparks were much weaker than he remembered, and he knew it was due to Marcy's rejection that diminished the strength of their bond.

George sneered. She rejected him and is traveling toward her bright future with Alpha Damon. Did she really think it will be easy? Doesn't she know that this is a move by Alpha Edward to increase his strength? Did she think that George will stand on the side and let it happen? If she did, she really was stupid. No wonder Nora drugged her so easily.

Seeing that just hand-holding didn't do much as her heart rate was still unusually low, George laid on the bed next to Marcy and pulled her to lean on him in an attempt to maximize their touching surface.

He hoped that this will work because he didn't want to resort to removing clothes.

Even without the mate bond, he was a man, and Marcy was an attractive female. They were alone in the room, on the bed, and if he did something, she probably won't know.

On top of that, there were still remnants of their bond between them, and that was only adding to the difficulty for George to keep his hands (and the rest of his body) in check.

At this distance, Marcy's scent that reminded him of candy was intoxicating, and he focused on his breathing and on counting Marcy's heartbeats.

It took him a minute to relax slightly. Her heartbeats were speeding up slightly. It was working.

Chapter 332 – Total Submission [Bonus]

Marcy stirred from her sleep and took a deep breath that filled her lungs with the sweet scent of clover. It was the scent that came with longing, and at the same time, it created knots in her stomach.

Was she dreaming of George? It seems like it. And the dream was so vivid that small zaps of their bond danced over her skin because in her dream she was embracing him.

Wait! How can that be a dream if she can hear his light snores?

Marcy opened her eyes and realized that she was in a hotel room. That was the room she was supposed to share with Nora, yet George was on the bed with her.

And it's not just that he was on the bed, but he was lying on his back, her head was on his shoulder, and his arm was around her. Their position was quite intimate even though they had clothes on. What the heck?

Marcy lifted her head to confirm that he was sleeping.

She glanced on the other bed to see that it was empty, and the tidy comforter told her that no one slept there. Where did Nora go?

Marcy craned her neck to check the time. It was 2 o'clock after midnight.

She didn't remember what happened after she ate the cold and greasy burger, but for some inexplicable reason, Nora was not there, and George was.

Was this Nora's idea of a joke?

Marcy was quite confident that Nora was trying to seduce George, how did he end up in Marcy's bed? Was that only a ploy so that Marcy lowers her guard and he can sneak into her bed?

Or did Nora trick him?

Marcy dismissed that idea. George is a Commander, and he can't be manipulated. But... why would he want to be with Marcy? He was quite clear at their last meeting that he hated her.

If this was a scheme to take embarrassing pictures and blackmail her, they would definitely have less clothes on them.

Nothing made sense.

Marcy took this time to admire his exquisite profile. The Moon Goddess didn't spare effort while carving his mesmerizing features. Every curve of his face spoke about power and determination, and she really wanted to touch him.

Marcy exhaled helplessly.

That was her mate, yet she rejected him.

Did she regret that rejection? Not really. If she didn't reject him, they wouldn't have any future, and she couldn't understand, why didn't he accept the rejection?

Sure, he was angry, and he wanted to punish her, but he was punishing himself in the process also. Was he one of those self-destructive people?

Marcy rested her head back on George's shoulder and her hand started feeling out his firm pecks through the thin fabric of his t-shirt. She smiled at the feeling of the sparks. It felt good. Everything about George felt good.

Marcy acknowledged that he was much more than just a handsome man. He was powerful and smart to the point that even her father acknowledged him. The youngest Commander in the history of the Red Moon pack. That alone speaks volumes about his capabilities.

Could Marcy convince George to accept rejection? That would make things easier for both of them. After all, she is going to the Dark Howlers pack to be Alpha Damon's Luna, and he can continue being the famous Commander.

Or maybe she could use that lingering bond to make George obey her? How can she get under George's skin when he looks at her like she has poop on her face?

He was much more pleasant like this, sleeping and quiet, and not acting like she murdered his family.

What's his problem? Was he really so pissed about the rejection? People break up all the time!

Marcy eyed his body, and her eyebrows shoot up when she realized that his pants were strained in his crotch area. Was he aroused in his sleep?

The sparks tingling her palm told her that he was sleeping, but his body knew that his mate was next to him.

Marcy remembered how George kissed her roughly in the shed and then pretended like it was not a big deal. It was obvious that he wanted to humiliate her and show her that he was above her. He made himself look like a man of steel who can't be swayed by emotions. Will he be able to keep pretending with that hard-on right there?

Her stubbornness mixed with curiosity and desire to see how far she can go, and little by little, Marcy's hand moved lower.

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George jolted.

What the hell? Did he fall asleep accidentally?

Sure, he was under a lot of pressure recently and he barely slept for the last two days, but still... he was used to harsh conditions.

However, just falling asleep was not the strangest thing.

He was on the bed, surrounded by the scent of candy, and what he felt down there was definitely a female hand on his cock. He looked down to see Marcy with her hand in his pants.

"What are you doing?", George asked Marcy who was so focused on jerking him off that she didn't notice him waking up.

Marcy's head snapped up to see him and she smiled. "Don't you know what I'm doing?"

George swallowed hard. He wanted to push her away, but at the same time, he didn't want her to stop.

When was the last time he was with a woman? It felt like forever.

And no matter how many women he bedded, none came with those sparks that muddled with his brain.

But this was Marcy Redmayne. Granddaughter of the man who killed his parents and destroyed his pack. Daughter of the man he was set to kill. His mate. His mate who rejected him and he was escorting her so that she becomes the Luna of some other Alpha.

Everything about this was wrong, yet George did so many wrong things in his life that he wondered if adding one more will make a difference.

And why would it be wrong? He could say that he fucked the woman Alpha Damon was considering to be his Luna. It's not that George had anything against Alpha Damon but sleeping with Marcy will be something George could use to his advantage.

The whole Redmayne family is twisted, and Alpha Edward won't care with whom Marcy slept as long as he gets what he wanted, but Alpha has his pride and Alpha Damon won't like that his Luna spread her legs for a commander of another pack... especially not while Marcy was on her way to meet with him.

With every passing heartbeat, George came up with another reason why he shouldn't resist this. And not just resist, but he should take the lead and show Marcy what it means to be fucked by an Alpha.

His nostrils flared when he was hit with the scent of her arousal, and that did it.

"Ah!", Marcy exclaimed when George grabbed her shoulders and yanked her up.

She thought that he might fling her off the bed, but she ended up on her back with him on top of her.

"What are you doing?", Marcy asked breathily when she realized that he was pushing her skirt up.

George let out a low chuckle that was full of danger, but somehow, it made her all tingly down there.

"You started it, Marcy...", George said. "Don't pretend you don't know what I'm doing."

His hand reached the cradle of her thighs and brushed against her panties.

"Ahh...", Marcy moaned at his touch.

"Slut.", he squeezed through his teeth when he felt how soaked her panties were. "You are a horny little bitch."

Before Marcy realized what was going on, her panties were on the floor and George's hard and hot cock was gliding between her folds.

"Ah... Wait... Mmm... Ah...", she struggled to say something, but her brain refused to cooperate.

"Don't you want this, Marcy?", George asked with a devious smile on his face. "Say you want it. Say you want me to fuck you, Marcy."

George could see that her body gave in, but he wanted to break her mind also. Total submission.

Every time his tip pushed against her clit, her whole body jolted. She never felt anything like that, and she really wanted more. Any thoughts about her preserving the v-card were out of the window. Marcy was confident that if he stopped now, she would die.

"Yes... yes...", she said breathily.

"Yes, what?", he demanded, and his hips didn't stop moving.

"I want you to... fuck me..." Marcy couldn't believe that she said those words. They were not even fully undressed!

To make things worse, she was on her way to become another man's Luna, yet she was here wantonly losing herself with George.

But the arousal was overwhelming, and her wolf amplified her lust, and no matter how many guys she touched before, none felt as good as George. Everything about him felt right.

Marcy inhaled a shaky breath when she felt the pressure and the stretch, and she knew that this was happening. There was no way back. Did she want to go back from this point? Not really.

Her core was throbbing in need to be filled, and there was only one man who could fulfill that need.

Chapter 333 – Malicious Gossip (1)

~ The Dark Howlers Pack ~

It was early morning when Dawn and Zina left their apartment building with Lily and Ivy. Their destination was the packhouse.

With all the guests present (and four additional ones on their way), they had extra work related to setting up and preparing breakfast, and they didn't want to be late.

Dawn, Zina, Lily, and Ivy spent the previous evening in the Shifters nightclub, and even though neither of them left the club with a man, the four of Omegas had a lot of fun.

Lily and Ivy were surprised that several guys invited them to dance, and no one asked about their status. Everyone was friendly regardless of background, and for two Omegas from the Lightclaw pack, that was novel.

They were also surprised to hear that at the Shifters nightclub, there is a VIP booth that Alpha Damon is using. Ivy and Lily never saw their Alpha mingling with common folks.

Lily and Ivy were happy that their future Alpha (aka Tony) was associating himself with the Dark Howlers pack, and they hoped that their pack will adopt some of the liberal practices they observed so far.

The Omega duo was at the Dark Howlers pack for a full day, and they already experienced so many memorable moments. They were eager to head to the packhouse and start working because they had a feeling that this day will also be full of interesting events. Once they clean up after breakfast, important people will go about their business. Dawn and Zina promised to take Ivy and Lily during that downtime to Darkbourne to visit the town square and shops that are there. Exciting!

"Ester?", Dawn called when she saw the person in question leaning on her car. "Do you mind moving to idle on another vehicle? We are in a hurry."

"I was waiting for you.", Ester responded.

"Reeeaaaly?", Zina drawled. Last night she and Dawn were swarmed by many who wanted to know more about the group that was part of the VIP bunch at the beach that day, and they could guess Ester was here for gossip material.

Well, they were not wrong.

"Oh, come on!", Ester exclaimed when she saw that both Zina and Dawn were frowning at her. "I only wanted to ask a few questions. You can choose not to answer."

"Fine. Then we will not answer.", Dawn said stiffly. "Now, can you move? We don't want to be late."

Ester shrugged. "As you wish. Since you don't want to talk to me, I can't force you." She pushed herself away from the car. "It seems you want to hog the information about the wolf-less she-wolf who seduced our Alpha."

Both Zina and Dawn froze. The wolf-less she-wolf didn't ring a bell, but who else could be described as the one who seduced Alpha Damon if not Talia?

"What did you say?", Dawn asked.

Ester raised her palms up defensively. "Woah! Lower the hostility, ladies. I'm just saying what I heard."

Zina's face was arranged into a deep frown. "And what did you hear?"

Ester smirked. Dawn and Zina acted all high and mighty because they were among the few Omegas allowed to work in the packhouse, but now Ester got their attention. That must count for something.

Ester eyed Dawn and Zina knowingly before she spoke, "Everyone knows that Talia is following Alpha Damon since the Summer Solstice festival. He rescued her from the Red Moon pack and gave her a job in the kitchen. Alpha Damon felt sorry for her, and she took advantage of that and ended up working as his assistant in the office and in his bedroom. She is even entertaining those high-ranking guests, but people wonder how long she will continue to maintain her position, considering that Marcy from the Red Moon pack is about to arrive."

Dawn was first to recover. "Who told you that?"

"People are talking."

"People?", Zina asked, and it took her a moment to connect the dots. "You mean, Lisa."

Everyone was aware that Ester and Lisa used to hang out together. And considering that Ester knew that Talia was working in the kitchen and as Alpha Damon's assistant, and about sharing a room, it was easy to figure out who was flapping her mouth.

"Is she wrong?", Ester asked, her eyes sparkling with a hunger for gossip.

Both Zina and Dawn knew that Talia and Damon were mates and that it was not the time to make it public. But, can they just leave it like this?

"Ester, Ester...", Dawn called bitterly. "I thought you are smarter than this."

"What?", Ester became defensive. "I was only asking."

"You didn't ask anything.", Dawn said. "You just parroted words of an abandoned woman who can't accept that she is no one without her boyfriend. But let's not talk about Lisa because she is not important just how it's not important if her words were true. Use your head, Ester. Do you think that Alpha Damon is easy to swindle? Do you think that a woman like Talia can trick him into accepting something against his will? Did you ever see him allow a woman to stick around for everyone to see? She was with him for several events, you saw them in the WW Magazine, and now she is acting as a host for high-ranking members from other packs."

Ester frowned at Dawn's words. "What are you trying to say?"

"She is saying that you should stop spreading malicious gossip.", Zina responded instead of Dawn. "If Alpha Damon hears you talking like this about a woman that's dear to him, you will end up in the dungeon, just like the rest of them."

"Dungeon?", Ester asked under her breath.

"Mmm...", Dawn hummed in confirmation. "It seems that Lisa told you how Talia is a scheming wolf-less moocher, but she didn't tell you that whoever offended her didn't find a good ending. Why do you think Lisa was kicked out of the packhouse? And if not for Steph being her mother, Lisa would be in the dungeon. Keep that tongue in check or start packing."

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Dawn and Zina were unsettled after their talk with Ester.

Ester apologized and said that she will keep her mouth shut, but even if she sticks to her word, there was always a chance that Lisa spoke with more people.

With that in mind, Dawn and Zina decided to talk to Talia.

It would be all much simpler if Talia had a mind-link, but she didn't have one, so Dawn and Zina needed to be sneaky about it.

"How do you contact Talia?", Dawn asked Stephanie who was waiting for them in the packhouse.

"I reach out to Alpha Damon, and he notifies Talia. Most of the time they are together.", Stephanie responded. Everyone knew that Stephanie was one of few who could contact Alpha directly via mind-link.

"Do you want me to ask..."

"No, no.", Zina was quick to interrupt Stephanie. "It's not urgent. We can talk to Talia later."

They didn't want to alert Alpha Damon, and they didn't want Stephanie to suspect something either. After all, this was about her daughter.

Stephanie shrugged. "Suit yourself. But... if you want to contact Talia, you can talk to Rose. Since she is arranging rooms, Alpha Damon got her a cell phone, and she texts Talia..."

Chapter 334 – Malicious Gossip (2)

It didn't take long for Dawn and Zina to leave the kitchen under various excuses. Stephanie shook her head at two silly women while wondering, what's with the secrecy? It was obvious that two Omegas left the kitchen in order to talk to Talia.

Stephanie was right. Dawn and Zina went to meet with Rose, and they asked her to send a text to Talia.

"Call Talia to come here.", Dawn said. "Tell her that she needs to check something in the rooms you prepared for the guests from the Red Moon pack."

Rose shook her head in disapproval, but she still sent a text to Talia after Dawn and Zina assured her that they will take care of the rest and that Talia won't be angry about this small deception.

A few minutes later...

Rose stood like a statue and stared at the open door.

Dawn and Zina nearly had a heart attack when they saw Alpha Damon entering the room. Why was he there?

Damon wore shorts and a wrinkled t-shirt, and his hair was messy. It was obvious that he got out of the bed and put on whatever clothes he found lying around.

Damon's eyes settled on Rose. "What do you need me to check?"

Rose felt like crying. Talking with Talia was one thing, but Alpha Damon was intimidating, and it didn't seem he was in a good mood. Oh, God! She allowed those two misfortune-bringers to use her phone and she ended up waking up Alpha!

Unsure how to answer, Rose robotically pointed toward Dawn and Zina whose eyes were open so wide that they formed nearly full circles.

Damon rubbed his forehead impatiently. "Will someone tell me why I am here?"

Dawn, Zina, and Rose also wanted to know why Alpha Damon was there. Did Rose send a message to the wrong number?

"We wanted to talk to Talia.", Dawn responded in a small voice.

"She is asleep. Tell me what needs to be done.", Damon said stiffly.

While they mingled with guests, Talia was holding on, but after dinner when it was just the two of them, Talia's anxiousness was swelling with every passing minute. His kitten was nervous about Marcy coming, and they ended up talking and cuddling long into the night, and of course, they indulged in carnal pleasures a few times.

When Damon saw the text from Rose, he decided to head down and check out the situation without waking up Talia so that she can rest as much as possible. And he was in a hurry to finish whatever was needed and return to bed before Talia realizes he was gone.

Dawn and Zina exchanged concerned gazes. Their future suddenly became dark and uncertain.

'TALK TO ME!'

Dawn and Zina jolted when Damon's stern voice sounded through the mind-link for them to hear.

It's not that they had a choice. He was their Alpha. If Damon wanted to force them, he could use his Alpha command. But even without that, Talia was their friend, and his mate, and they knew that Damon would think about what was best for Talia.

Damon frowned when he saw that Dawn and Zina turned toward each other, and they did rock-paper-scissors hand movements. He couldn't believe that they just played a game to decide which one of them will answer.

Zina lost the game and she steeled herself before answering. 'It was like this, Alpha... On our way here, we bumped into Ester and...'

Damon's expression was unreadable as he listened to Zina recollecting their talk with Ester.

"Anything else?", Damon asked when Zina finished.

"No. That's it, Alpha.", Zina responded.

"Thank you for telling me this.", Damon said, and then he turned around and left.

Dawn and Zina were flabbergasted. This was the first time for them to hear Alpha Damon saying thank you. He would usually issue orders and at most hum in acknowledgment, but this... this was a real 'thank you'. They were excited.

"What did you tell him?", Rose asked in a half-whisper. She was not sure how far Damon went, or how good the Alpha's hearing is.

Dawn lifted her chin proudly. "This is something between us and Alpha Damon. Now if you excuse us, we need to prepare breakfast."

Rose frowned at Dawn and Zina. Why did they exclude her?

Without her cell phone, Alpha Damon wouldn't be here and Dawn and Zina wouldn't have this chance to boast!

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After hearing what Zina said, Damon went straight to the study.

He knew that Lisa was talking trash after she was chased out of the bar where she tried to approach Maddox, but the fact that she was saying things out of spite didn't mean those were lies. Sure, it was exaggerated and spiced up with malice, but the core information was correct.

Maya and Caden joined Damon in the study. The Beta duo assumed that this was about Marcy, and they were surprised to hear that Lisa was causing issues.

Caden pointed out the biggest issue. "How does she know that Talia is from the Red Moon pack? I didn't tell anyone."

"Me neither.", Maya chimed in, and they didn't need to check to confirm that Damon didn't talk about Talia's background. "Other than the three of us, only Talia knew the truth. Did she tell Lisa?"

Damon was not sure, but with Caden and Maya confirming that they keep their mouths shut, it was obvious that the information leaked from Talia.

Damon decided to talk about this with Talia once he figures out how to bring up this topic without freaking her out. "That's not important now."

Maya agreed. "Lisa found out from somewhere and she is flapping her mouth. We warned her to behave, but it's obvious that's not effective."

Damon rubbed his forehead with force. "If I banish Lisa or send her to the dungeon, I will alienate Steph. I can't do that to her. She has only us. And Lisa."

"But we need to do something.", Caden said sternly. "It is only a matter of time before Alpha Edward finds out that the mystery woman by your side came from his pack. He will start digging and he won't stop until he finds something. Right now, Talia is vulnerable."

Damon looked at Maya. "How soon can we arrange that party where Talia will be introduced to the Elders?" And it was not just Elders, but to everyone who was someone in the Dark Howlers pack. Once they announce Talia as Damon's fated mate, the whole pack will stand to protect her, and they need to make those steps before Alpha Edward finds out about Talia.

Maya puffed her cheeks while thinking about what all is needed for the party. "If we stick to basics, we could pull it off tomorrow evening."

"Let's do that.", Damon said. "Prepare a list of guests and get Kalina and Mindy to help." He knew that Meg and Tatiana were busy with their mates and won't be available for some time.

"You need to deal with Marcy before that.", Caden reminded Damon. "If you don't, people will assume that the party is for Marcy's sake."

Damon pinched the roof of his nose. Marcy was coming and he still didn't have a plan to deal with her. What a bother.

"What will you do with Lisa?", Maya asked.

Damon shrugged and looked at Maya and Caden helplessly. "I'm open to hearing your ideas."

Maya's face lit up as she thought of something. "We can't imprison her, but we can send her to the dungeon."

Maya's words confused both Damon and Caden, and after a few moments of silence, Damon got it.

"Maya, that's brilliant!"

"It is?", Caden asked.

"It is.", Maya said smugly. Caden wanted to know more, but Maya mysteriously said that he will see, and Damon was already mind-linking someone.

When Damon confirmed how that was all, Maya stood up with, "I will work with ladies to prepare for the party. Plan for tomorrow evening. We will let you know if we need your help..."

Maya was brimming with excitement. They will introduce Talia to the pack, and that meant Talia's Luna ceremony was just around the corner! Their pack will get a Luna. Finally!

Chapter 335 – A Different Type Of Prisoner (1)

Talia stirred from her sleep at the sound of the door closing.

She watched through her eyelashes as Damon tiptoed to the bed. He slipped under the cover carefully, and she could hear him exhale in relief because he thought that he was sneaky enough.

"Where have you been?"

Damon froze when he heard Talia's voice and he turned to her robotically.

"I just checked something."

"Is something wrong?"

"What makes you think that something is wrong?"

Talia gave him a knowing look. "I can sense your emotions, and I know you are worried."

Before Talia could ask more questions, Damon pulled her into his embrace and kissed her forehead.

He didn't want to tell her about Lisa. Talia already had a lot on her mind.

Besides, Damon handled Lisa and he assigned a few of his people to pay attention to rumors and shut up any person who is talking nonsense about Talia. It was not a foolproof plan, but it was a stopgap that will do for now. Tomorrow evening he will introduce Talia to the important members of the pack, and until then he will need to figure out the issue with Marcy.

The truth was that Damon didn't want to deal with any of it. If it was up to him, he and Talia would go to a cottage in the woods and live forever like hermits. But that was not possible because a lot of people depended on them, and Talia wouldn't approve if Damon neglected his responsibilities.

Damon could see the end of this. He will impregnate Talia, and their child will become the next Alpha of the Dark Howlers pack, and then Damon and Talia can move to that cottage, and it will be perfect. But until then... "Sleep more, kitten. There is still time until breakfast. Additional guests are about two hours away."

Talia understood that Damon's uneasiness was related to 'additional guests', aka the group from the Red Moon pack.

Talia didn't want to talk about them. They already said everything that should be said (at least twice), last night. There was no point in mulling over how to deal with Marcy. Damon and Talia were on the same page about what they wanted to accomplish: to send Marcy packing. They didn't know how they will accomplish it, but Talia was aware of Marcy's haughty attitude, and she believed they might be able to use that against Marcy. Somehow.

Damon and Talia concluded that as long as they are together, things will work out. Isn't that why the Moon Goddess paired them up?

Talia felt Damon's hand slowly caressing her back. He did that to make her relax and lull her to sleep.

She wiggled. "Don't. It's making me sleepy."

"I want you to sleep, kitten."

"How can I sleep when you are working?", Talia asked.

Damon smiled at the silly girl. "I am here now."

Talia snuggled into him. "You are here now. I'm aware that you are working even from the bed." She wished for a power to shut down his mind-link. Only then it will truly be just the two of them.

Talia's gaze moved on the bird she drew on Damon's shoulder with a sharpie on the previous day when they were at the beach.

She frowned. They were in the water for quite some time, yet the ugly thing didn't fade at all.

Damon noticed where Talia was looking. "Do you like it?"

"I like birds, but this one is not good."

"Really? I thought of getting it tattooed permanently.", he admitted.

Talia's face fell. "Please, don't."

"I thought you like tattoos."

"I do. I mean... it's not that I like them, but I find them interesting. If you want to tattoo something, I won't stop you, but please don't go with this doodle. It's horrible."

"How can you say it's horrible? It's from you. It's perfect."

Talia's lips twitched. "If I knew that you will want to make it permanent, I would never agree to draw on you."

"You don't want me to make this permanent?"

"That's right.", Talia confirmed without missing a beat.

"Convince me."

"How?"

Damon wiggled his eyebrows mischievously and Talia rolled her eyes when she realized that this was the playful Damon. He wanted sex and he was being creative about asking for it.

Talia knew that if she just called him out, he won't get the satisfaction of thinking that he tricked her, so she played along.

Talia ran her fingers over his chest while asking coyly, "I wonder... what can I do to convince my Alpha not to ruin his body?"

"What is my Luna willing to do?"

Talia bit her lower lip. "I could do... anything..."

Damon's tongue darted as he licked his lips. "Like what? I need examples, kitten."

"I can order you not to do it.", Talia deadpanned. "After all, you are mine, so your hunky body is mine also, and I won't allow you to ruin it." She paused and gave him a smile. "Or I could do something else..."

Damon's eyes widened when Talia slipped lower and disappeared under the cover.

"Ah...", a barely audible sigh escaped his lips when Talia took him into her mouth.

His kitten was getting bolder by the day, and he loved it!

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While Damon and Talia were lovey-dovey, someone was not having a good morning...

Lisa sat in the back of a jeep and looked at her surroundings nervously.

She woke up to someone incessantly ringing the doorbell of her apartment.

"Mom!", Lisa shouted, hoping that her mom will get the door.

After her plan to get close to Alpha Maddox failed, Lisa scampered back to the beach and sat with Ester and other girls.

She was watching as Tony was playing cards with guys and she wished that he noticed her presence, but that didn't happen. And then all of the guys went to the lake, and not long after that Omegas started clearing up the VIP area which was an obvious sign that Alpha Damon and his guests were not going to stay on the beach anymore.

Lisa was embarrassed and dejected, and she needed to vent her anger. However, she knew that making a scene in public will backfire.

She gathered her things and decided to head home. To her horror, Ester was sticking to her with, "I will come with you!"

Ester followed Lisa all the way to Lisa's apartment, and Lisa couldn't hold it in anymore and she started talking trash about Kalina, Talia, Maya, and Meg, and Ester soaked in all that eagerly behind a mask of a compassionate friend.

Ester didn't care much about Meg or Kalina. They were from different packs.

Maya was a well-known Beta, so Lisa didn't say anything that Ester didn't know already.

What got Ester's attention was information related to Talia. Talia was a newly established celebrity who was associated with Alpha Damon. How could Ester miss this chance to hear gossip?

But no matter how juicy those things were, Ester had a feeling that Lisa might be exaggerating, and that's how she ended up looking for Dawn and Zina which led to the situation in Lisa's apartment.

Chapter 336 – A Different Type Of Prisoner (2)

'DING-DONG!'

Lisa groaned at the sound of the doorbell and shouted, "MOM! Will you get that!?"

It took Lisa a few seconds to remember that Stephanie was probably at the packhouse to prepare breakfast for high-ranking guests; for the VIP bunch where Lisa didn't belong anymore.

With the noise from the doorbell not stopping, Lisa dragged herself to the door.

"WHAT!?", Lisa shouted as she flung the door open, and her eyes widened when she saw two warriors standing there and looking at her sternly. She cleared her throat. "Did you get the wrong place?"

One of the warriors shook his head. "We are at the right place, Lisa." He gestured at her nightgown. "Change into something appropriate and come with us."

Lisa clutched her nightgown at the chest level like they were about to undress her forcibly. "Why? Where?"

The other warrior frowned. "Alpha's orders. You have five minutes."

Lisa moved backward into the apartment, and she was horrified to see that two warriors walked in after her. She didn't have time to think about what was going on, so she dashed into her room and changed into shorts and a t-shirt.

Surely, if it's Damon's orders, it can't be bad. Right? RIGHT!?

And here she was, in a jeep, in the middle of a forest.

Lisa knew they were North from Darkbourne, but other than that, she was kind of lost.

And then they took a turn off the paved road, and the ride became bumpy.

Eventually, the vehicle stopped in front of a one-story-high gray-ish building that had moss over the roof, making it blend with the surrounding foliage. If someone was not looking for this place, they could easily miss it. The road was just two strips where tires passed repeatedly, but the dense grass everywhere was a giveaway that this road was not frequently used.

Lisa gripped the handrail of the jeep as anxiety swelled within her. Did Damon really ask her to come here with two bulky guys? What if they were lying? Ah, she should have asked for some identification!

"Where is this?", she asked.

The warrior that was driving responded, "The dungeon."

"Dun... dungeon?", Lisa stuttered, unsure if she heard him right. "Why did you bring me here?"

"Alpha's orders.", the other warrior responded.

Lisa panicked. "Damon sent me to the dungeon? Why? I don't believe this! I want to talk to him!"

Both warriors frowned when Lisa started throwing a tantrum.

"It's ALPHA Damon!", stern voice of another warrior came from the side, scaring the daylight out of Lisa. She didn't notice him before. She looked around to check if more people will pop out from nearby bushes, and he continued, "You have no right to address Alpha casually or to question his commands. Our orders are to bring you here and to give you cleaning supplies."

Lisa was sure that her ears malfunctioned. "Cleaning supplies?"

The warrior nodded in confirmation. "You have a task to clean the dungeon."

Lisa gaped at him. Cleaning the dungeon? She was not kidnapped or sent to prison, but she became a cleaner for the prisoners? Which one was worse?

The warrior shook his head in disapproval at the sight of Lisa who was non-responsive. "I never saw such a disobedient Omega before." He looked at two guys who came with Lisa. "Maybe we should lock her up, to teach her how Omegas should behave."

Lisa realized that she was in trouble. It is one thing in the town where witnesses were present, but this was in the middle of nowhere and even if these warriors snap her neck, they can hide her body, and no one will know what happened.

She quickly scampered out of the jeep. The sooner she finishes the cleaning business, the sooner she can leave. How much work can it be to clean this one-story building?

"No, no...", she said while lifting her hands defensively. "It was just unexpected. I didn't know this place existed and no one told me I will get this task. Please, show me the way."

He nodded in approval. "That's better. I'm Klark. That's Lieutenant Klark for you. Don't forget my rank. Outside it doesn't matter, but here we pay attention to those things. As a Lieutenant, when I'm on duty, I am the boss. What I say goes. Understood?"

Lisa gave him a stiff smile. Who cares about ranks? She will do this cleaning business and never see this place again.

Klark showed her the rooms on the ground floor.

Lisa observed with curiosity the control room that was buzzing with electrical equipment. She wanted to see what was on those monitors, but Klark didn't give her much time for sightseeing. He gave her a quick tour of the kitchen, dining area, the storage room that was used as a pantry, a bathroom with two of everything, and one room with bunk beds where eight people could sleep. Klark told her that other warriors stationed here are in the area standing guard and that they gather for meals.

She didn't see any dirt or mess, even the kitchen was spotless, and Lisa assumed that she will be done with work in no time.

However, Klark said that this is the dungeon. Shouldn't there be cells and prisoners and... stuff?

Her heart picked up the pace when he showed her the elevator that went down and based on the numbers above the metallic door, there were four levels underground!

Instead of taking the elevator, they took the right, toward the stairs, one level down.

Lisa scrunched her nose. The air there was a bit stale, and she wondered if things are worse on the lower levels.

"Here is the storage where you can find cleaning supplies", he said. "If you run low on anything, let me or Pete know."

"Pete?"

"He will be here for lunch.", Klark responded.

Lisa peeked inside to see a sink, cabinets with various containers, mops, brooms, and there was even a vacuum cleaner. It really was a storage for cleaning supplies.

She stiffened at Klark's next words, "This will be your room."

Lisa's eyebrows shot up and she moved quickly back into the stuffy hallway to see what he was talking about. Klark was standing next to the open door that led to a room with a dresser and two twin beds with blankets neatly folded at the ends, and... nothing else. Bare walls had no windows.

"My room?"

He nodded in confirmation. "There are two beds, but since you are the only one staying here, pick whichever you want. You will eat with us upstairs, and when you need rest, you will come here. Or would you rather share a room with us? That can be arranged." He grinned.

Lisa shook her head rapidly like a pellet drum. "This is fine, but... why would I need to rest? I can go home once I'm done, right?"

Klark looked at her like she asked something silly. "Our instructions are to bring you here and to ensure you have what's needed for you to complete your job. This level is rather decent, but lower floors might take more time to clean. The blood got between bricks, and that's difficult to reach. Rust on the chains can also be stubborn."

He didn't tell her that those cells were not cleaned in years, and his estimate was that if she can clean one cell daily, that will be considered as quick.

Klark walked out of the room and gestured down the hallway. "Start with the empty cells, they are unlocked. When you get to the ones that are occupied, let us know and we will move prisoners so you can work. We don't want you to end up attacked. Some of the guys we have here are ruthless..."

The more he spoke, the more Lisa's hair stood on ends. There are prisoners on the same floor where her room is!? They are expecting her to sleep here!? Why did she have a feeling that she will be stuck here for days... or longer?

But if she thought this was bad, it was getting worse.

"We have lunch settled, but we expect you to prepare dinner."

Lisa gaped at him like he spoke in a foreign language. "What?"

"Part of your duties will be to cook for us who are here stationed for longer periods.", Klark said. "We have warriors who patrol the area in shifts, but there is always a group that stays here for a week or longer..."

Lisa swallowed hard. What will be her punishment if they all get stomachaches due to her non-existent cooking skills?

Chapter 337 – Meg's Awakening [Bonus]

Axel reached in front of Kai's room, and he lifted his hand to knock when he heard Kai's voice through the mind-link, 'It's not locked'.

Axel understood this as an OK to get in.

He was confused as to why would Kai invite him to come into his room. Shouldn't he be enjoying his bonding time with Meg? It was not even breakfast time!

Axel's eyebrows shot up when he saw that Tyler was there in the room, squatting.

Tyler nodded at Axel in greeting and didn't move from his spot. Axel realized that Tyler was carefully collecting something from the floor.

"What's going...?", Axel's question was cut short when his gaze fell on the bed.

Kai was there holding Meg who was shivering in his arms. She was wrapped in a bedsheet and Kai was caressing her cheeks and murmuring something while looking at her with a gentle gaze full of desperation.

Axel frowned when he confirmed that Meg's body was enveloped in a thin layer of silvery light. She was glowing. Literally.

It took Axel a second to realize. "Why did you mark her?"

Kai froze and he looked at Axel apprehensively.

Kai knew that he was supposed to wait until they reached the Midnight Guardians pack and he even promised to visit Meg's family first but... "I got carried away. The emotions were too strong, and my wolf urged me to do it. The timing was right, and it happened."

Axel pinched the roof of his nose. How was this the right timing? They were in the middle of another pack!

They all had their share of warnings to not mark their mates outside of their pack's territory because it might awaken abilities in the other party, and it can get nasty until they learn to control their power.

But what was done was done and he needed to figure out how to fix this.

Axel approached the bed to see Meg up-close.

With every step Axel took, Kai's hold on Meg tightened.

Axel rolled his eyes. "I'm not going to take her away from you. Tell me what's the status."

"I marked her about two hours ago. She was fine for about half an hour, and then this. It's getting worse."

Axel was about to ask for clarification when...

'CRACK! CRASH!'

A sound of porcelain bursting was heard, and Axel realized that a decorative vase from the corner just exploded. What the hell?

"It's Meg's ability.", Kai said with a helpless expression. "She already busted all the lightbulbs in the room and now is going after larger pieces."

"I opened the windows to prevent them from breaking.", Tyler said.

Axel's gaze went back to Meg, and he saw that the silvery glow reduced significantly. "It seems she lost some of her power."

Kai shook his head. "It's building up again. I can feel it."

"What should we do?", Tyler asked. "We can say that they were wild and broke some stuff, but if this continues, someone will notice that this is odd."

Axel got his phone. "Let me check with my parents and see if they have a solution for this."

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"We should take her to our pack.", Axel gave them the short version after he ended his talk to his father. "The sooner, the better. I will talk to Alpha Damon and see if he can provide us with an exit where we won't be noticed." Alpha Isaac told Axel that Damon is good at keeping secrets.

"I will take Meg home. The two of you can stay.", Kai said. He knew that this visit was important to Axel, and he didn't want to leave him on his own.

Axel refused. "The road back home is long. You will need both me and Tyler." He wanted to get close to Talia and to talk to her, but as the future Alpha, Axel needed to prioritize tasks and it was more

important to keep their pack's secret a secret. If anyone saw Meg glowing and bursting stuff, it would be troublesome for everyone.

If they were at home, Axel would be ecstatic to find out that his future Beta got some cool ability to smash stuff without touching them, but this was no time to celebrate.

Tyler spoke to Kai. "You hold onto Meg and keep her stable through the mate bond. Stay calm and that will reflect on her. I will ask Maya to pack Meg's stuff and when I get my things ready, I will return here to help you pack."

"Thanks.", Kai said, and his focus went back to Meg.

"Kai...", she called in a shaky voice and Kai could see that her eyes flickered in silver light.

"I'm here, love. It will be OK. Whatever you are feeling, it's normal.", he murmured words of comfort. "I am right here. I won't let go..."

He regretted not explaining any of this before he marked her.

Meg was drifting in and out of consciousness, and Kai hoped that she won't be mad because she won't be able to see her parents until she learns to control her powers, and that could be weeks or months.

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Axel was waiting for Damon in the study, and he was pleased to see that Damon came with Talia.

Talia always had some calm about her, and there was a small smile at the corner of his lips. Whenever Axel saw Talia, his mood would improve. He really wished that she belongs to his pack and that he can take her home with him, and then they would have an open talk, but things were not going in that direction, and he needed to focus on the task at hand.

After exchanging greetings, Talia went to her desk to do some work. She and Damon agreed not to leave each other's visible range for the day.

"I heard you wanted to talk to me, and it can't wait for after breakfast.", Damon went right to the point as soon as he sat on his chair.

Axel confirmed. "We are facing an emergency and we need to return home as soon as possible. My father said that you can keep this under wraps. We don't want people to know about our whereabouts."

Damon didn't suspect Axel's words. Issues with packs are not uncommon, and his guess was that the Midnight Guardians pack was facing some crisis. And as a bonus, he was happy that Axel was leaving. Damon didn't like the way Axel looked at Talia.

"Will you stay for breakfast?", Damon asked.

"If you can pack some food for us, that will be appreciated. If not, we will pick up something on the way. Meg will be coming with us."

Damon confirmed that packing food for four people won't be a problem. "I assume that Tony and Kalina know about this."

"They don't. You can tell them after we leave. Give us at least one hour.", Axel said.

"Won't they be worried?", Talia asked from the side. She was trying to work, but she ended up overhearing what Damon and Axel talked about.

Meg was mated to Kai, but she still came with Tony and Kalina. With Axel saying that he needs one hour, that meant Meg won't get to say goodbye to the people with whom she arrived. Talia didn't think this was right.

"When we reach our destination, Meg will make calls and explain things but it's critical that we reach our pack as soon as possible. The smaller number of people knows about this, the better.", Axel said. This was the truth. "Until one hour expires, if anyone asks, tell them that I'm doing something with Tyler in my room, and everyone will assume that Meg and Kai are in his room."

"Alright. One hour.", Damon agreed. "It will be best if you leave during breakfast, so others don't notice you. I will give you one of my cars, and your car will wait for you at the border of my territory..."

Chapter 338 – An Unwanted Invitation (1) [Bonus]

Within a few minutes, Damon made appropriate arrangements for Axel to leave covertly with Tyler, Kai, and Meg, and Axel appreciated Damon's discretion.

"Thank you for doing this, Alpha Damon." And for not asking questions as to why we are leaving so suddenly and need secrecy.

"It's not a big deal.", Damon responded. "Is there anything else?" How Damon saw this, with Axel out of the picture, there will be one less problem to deal with.

Axel wanted to say how there was nothing else, but Talia was right there, and he only wanted a few minutes of her time, and it was important. His eyes drifted to the person in question. "I would like to speak with Miss Talia."

Damon's expression stiffened. "Speak."

"In private."

Hell no! "You can speak in front of me.", Damon said curtly.

Talia saw that Damon was irritable, and she moved to stand next to him. "I have no secrets in front of Damon."

"But I do.", Axel said without missing a beat.

"Then, there is nothing for us to talk.", Talia said, surprising both Damon and Axel. "Whatever you say to me, you can assume I will tell Damon. If he can't hear it, then I shouldn't hear it either."

Damon's lips lifted into a smile. Talia's words were backed up with immense trust and acceptance that flowed into him through the mate bond, and Damon felt his chest swelling with pride. That's his mate!

Axel was conflicted. He wanted to talk to Talia, but it seemed that Damon was part of the package.

Axel was more than 95% confident that Talia was connected to the Midnight Guardians pack, and he was at least 70% certain that she was the child from Cassandra's prophecy.

The reason for only 70% was the lack of Talia's mind-link. As a child of the Midnight Guardians pack, she should have that link upon birth, and Axel would be able to sense it. But Axel heard that something was off with Talia's wolf, so there was a chance the absence of her link was due to that.

The light in the lake was proof that Talia's powers awakened, and that wouldn't happen if she was not with her mate.

Was Damon Talia's mate? That would complicate things.

But if they were mates, how come they didn't announce it? And why was Talia not marked?

Was Talia with her mate long enough for her powers to awaken, and after that, she got together with Damon? Did Damon find out how powerful she is, and that's why he took her under his wing? Is Damon somehow forcing Talia to stay by his side?

All kinds of theories swirled in Axel's mind and he couldn't voice any of them in front of Damon.

Heck, even if Damon gave them privacy, Axel was not sure if he can say that to Talia and not sound like a madman. But there were things he could say.

"Miss Talia, I remember that you grew up with your grandparents and only recently you came to the Dark Howlers pack. Am I correct to say that you didn't join this pack officially?"

Damon felt his blood pressure rising and he took a moment to calm down his wolf before asking Axel, "What does that have to do with you?"

"I believe that at least one of Miss Talia's grandparents came from the Midnight Guardians pack."

The real version was that Axel believed Talia came from the Midnight Guardians pack, but if he said that, it would show that he doubts her background story so he went with this. Technically, it was not a lie.

"You knew my grandparents?", Talia asked. How could Axel know her non-existent grandparents that she grew up with somewhere in the mountains? They made up that story.

Axel shook his head. "I don't. But I have my reasons to believe so."

Damon's face was arranged into a frown, and his hunch was telling him how Axel's reasons were not related to Talia's grandparents, but to what happened in the lake. Caden said that they all saw the light, and assumed it was the mermaids, but if Axel was somehow aware of Talia's powers, he would know better.

Everyone knew that the Midnight Guardians are secretive, and there were all kinds of rumors about them. Some of them included silvery eyes and fantastic powers. Well, that matched Talia's description.

To Damon, it didn't matter what Axel's motives were. Axel was looking at Talia like there was something important between them, and Damon didn't like it.

"What reasons do you have?", Damon asked Axel.

"That is something I can't disclose, Alpha Damon. This is related to my pack. You know that my pack has secrets, just like any other."

"Assuming you are right. What does that mean?", Talia asked Axel.

"Come to my pack."

As soon as these words left Axel's lips, Damon bolted on his feet. His wolf was raging, and Damon didn't try to pacify him this time. What is Damon? A decoration? How dares Axel ask Talia to go with him? Actually, Axel's words sounded more like a demand than an invitation.

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"I will not harm her.", Axel said with haste. "This was just an invitation."

He regretted his choice of words, but it was already out, and he didn't have the time for a soft approach and flowery speeches because Meg's charges were increasing and they needed to leave the packhouse before Meg blows it up.

Damon's hostility was tangible and the way his eyes turned feral, it was obvious that he was on the verge of shifting into his wolf form. Every muscle in his body was tense in the desire to protect his mate.

Axel frowned when Damon's aura splashed on him full force, but he managed to stay steady even with the suppression that made it difficult to breathe.

Talia moved closer to Damon, totally unaffected by his aura. She knew that Damon will calm down with her proximity, and she was unsettled by Axel's words also.

Damon's hand snaked around her shoulders, pulling her to lean on him.

"Let's hear him out.", Talia said to Damon. It took a moment for Damon to nod and dispel his hostile aura. Only then Talia turned to Axel. "You want me to come to your pack? How much I know, you don't accept outsiders."

"If I am right, you are not an outsider.", Axel said right away.

"What if you are wrong?", Talia asked.

"It doesn't matter. You are welcome to stay with us. I will vouch for you.", Axel responded. He was confident that she belongs to his pack, regardless of if she was the child from the prophecy or not.

"What do you mean, you will vouch for her?", Damon snapped. "Speak clearly. Are you offering her to be a member of your pack? A guest? Or a prisoner?"

Axel was shocked. "A prisoner?"

"Will she be able to leave whenever she wants?"

Axel pressed his lips into a line while thinking about how to answer Damon's question.

If Axel said that she can't leave without giving them the whole story, it will only sound like he has an intention to restrict Talia's freedom, and he couldn't tell the whole story at this point. Axel was confident that after Talia understands the significance of her powers, she will choose to stay there, under the protection of the Midnight Guardians pack.

By staying in the Dark Howlers pack, Talia was in danger, and so were people who were close to her.

Axel saw the light in the lake, and others saw it to also. Axel guessed that Talia used her ability to save Tatiana, and he couldn't blame her for it. This time, mermaids came up like a good coverup, but what excuse will they use next time when someone sees strange things happening? And it will be only a matter of time until they connect mysterious events with Talia.

Axel wondered, how many people already know about Talia's abilities?

Chapter 339 – An Unwanted Invitation (2) [Bonus]

Talia was unsettled. Did Axel really think she will be fine to go with him, knowing that they won't let her leave? Who would accept such an invitation?

Axel saw Talia squeezing closer to Damon, seeking protection, and he said, "Don't be quick to refuse. I can't disclose details, but you won't lack anything if you decide to come to the Midnight Guardians pack. We will keep you safe. Think about it."

"There is nothing for me to think about.", Talia said. "Do you really expect me to follow you down a one-way path based on your hunch?"

"We can confirm if my assumption is correct.", Axel said and that got both Talia's and Damon's attention. "There is a seer in my pack, and she has her ways to identify our pack members. Aren't you curious?"

Damon wanted to tell him to scram, but he decided to tone it down a bit. "It seems to me that you are more curious than Talia. If your seer can do what you claim, you are welcome to bring her here. If it's confirmed that Talia's roots stem from your pack, then we can talk about it."

Talia disagreed. "There is nothing to talk about." It was obvious that this invitation was just for her, and she had no intention of leaving Damon.

"Let's see what he is up to.", Damon told Talia, not caring that Axel was right there and hearing Damon's mocking tone. "Just a word from a seer we never met won't be enough. I hope there will be additional

proof so we know that Axel is not trying to kidnap you because that might be interpreted as a declaration of war."

Damon had enough of tiptoeing around Axel. Midnight Guardians or not, Talia was his mate, and he wanted everyone to know that she was not an easy target.

Damon narrowed his eyes at Axel. "No one can take away what's mine. And Talia is mine."

With Damon's and Talia's attitudes worsening, Axel didn't want to push it further. He knew that he rushed with this, and he needed to accept his losses and retreat before it was too late.

"I apologize, Alpha Damon. My intention was not to reach for what is yours.", Axel said with his head lowered, hoping that he will pacify the grumpy Alpha. "My intention is to shed light on Miss Talia's background. There is a reason why we are not openly embracing outsiders, and if I am right, Miss Talia's presence here will bring danger to her and to others. I hope that you will allow me to bring my seer."

The truth was that Axel was not sure if Cassandra will be willing to leave the Midnight Guardians pack. Stories of what happens to them when captured outside are too scary, and they keep everyone on their toes. Unless there is an important reason, no one leaves the safety their territory provides.

Damon didn't want to deny this to Axel. After all, they were curious for answers also. Damon was mostly curious to find out why Axel was so stuck on Talia. In Damon's opinion, just saying that Talia was from the Midnight Guardians pack was not a good enough reason for Axel go to out of his way this much.

After confirming a few details about his departure, Axel left the study.

Talia sat on Damon's lap and thought about Axel's words. "Do you think I'm from the Midnight Guardians pack?"

"Axel seems to think so."

"And you?"

"What I care about is that you are my mate, my other half, and that makes you the Luna of the Dark Howlers pack.", Damon responded without missing a beat, and Talia knew that he meant it.

"What about you, kitten? Do you want to know about your background?"

"We already know that the Red Moon pack has no information about me.", Talia reminded Damon.
"What can Axel provide? Pictures of babies? The whole story about my grandparents is bogus."

"What if he brings that seer and you find out that you belong to them? Will you accept his offer and go there?", Damon asked with difficulty.

Talia shook her head. "No."

"Not even to see what they are about?"

"No.", Talia said. "For years I was alone." Scared, hungry, and hurt. "Where were they? It was you who found me, and you gave me a home."

Talia hugged Damon tightly and rubbed her cheek on his chest. "This is my home, and that won't change no matter where I was born."

Damon hummed in approval. He liked her response, but... "What if you have a family? Parents? Grandparents? Siblings?"

Talia knew that Damon was asking because he lost his parents and he was missing them immensely. But for Talia, it was different.

"Let's not worry about Axel. He wants me to go there only because he doesn't know we are mates. Regardless of how I ended up in the Red Moon pack, it's been two decades. It's too late to fix anything. You are my family now. I only hope that the part of bringing you danger won't come true."

Damon's heart swelled at Talia's words. "And you are my family, kitten. My only family. I will do everything in my power to keep you safe."

Talia thought that she will melt from warm and fuzzy feelings.

She buried her face in the crook of Damon's neck and took a deep breath of his intoxicating scent. She didn't want to leave the study because that meant facing whatever was on the other side of that door, and here it was just the two of them, and it was perfect.

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Damon and Talia were heading for breakfast, and Talia knew that it was time for Axel and his group to make their exit. They will take the side door so that no one notices them, and Talia was getting restless.

"I want to check on Meg.", Talia said. This whole secretive leaving was fine for Axel, Kai, and Tyler, but Talia wanted to ensure that Meg was not being forced. After her talk to Axel, anything was possible.

"Axel said that no one should be alerted.", Damon reminded Talia.

Talia halted her steps. "We already know what they are up to." She turned on her heel and started walking away from the dining room.

Damon shook his head helplessly and followed after Talia. He was aware that when his kitten was up to something, nothing can stop her and he wouldn't want it any other way.

Damon and Talia stepped out to see a scene of Tyler keeping suitcases in the trunk of an SUV, and Axel's body was blocking the open back door of the car. Just as Axel requested, no one else was present.

When Axel noticed Damon and Talia, he was quick to close the door. Tinted windows prevented the newcomers to see what was going on inside, but they had a guess that Kai and Meg were there.

"Did you come to see us off?", Axel asked.

"Yes.", Talia responded. "And I would like to have a word with Meg."

Axel pressed his lips into a line. How was he supposed to wiggle out of this one?

"Can't I see her?", Talia asked. "It won't take more than a minute."

Axel didn't want anyone to see Meg's state, but at the same time, he thought that this might be an icebreaker. If Talia sees Meg, she will realize that they are the same, and then he might convince her to come with them.

"Meg is in the back with Kai.", Axel said and turned to Damon. "Please, wait here."

Axel's eyes lost focus for a moment as he told Kai and Tyler that Talia will come to see Meg.

Kai and Tyler didn't get it, but they didn't object. Axel was their future Alpha and surely he knew what he was doing.

Chapter 340 – An Unwanted Invitation (3)

Talia stood in front of the door, thinking that Kai will lower the window, and she was surprised when the door opened.

"Come in.", Kai called.

Talia glanced toward Damon to see him standing on the side with Axel and then she got into the car.

Meg was in Kai's lap, limply lying on him, and her chest moved rapidly as she struggled with her shallow breaths. Meg was wearing a short-sleeved, peach-colored dress and her whole body was glowing in an eerie silvery light.

"Meg?", Talia called, unable to hide her surprise. When Meg didn't respond, she asked Kai. "What's going on with her?"

Kai licked his lips nervously, unsure how to respond. He still didn't know why Axel allowed Talia to come and see Meg like this. Isn't this violation of the main rule they follow? Should he just say that he marked Meg and his DNA caused changes in her body that granted her the ability that can crack and smash things? Can he say that to an outsider?

Talia couldn't stop staring at Meg. Kai's mark on Meg's neck was visible, and it resembled two stars next to a moon. His mark and the rest of Meg's body were pulsating in silvery light, every pulse was warm and welcoming, almost like it called to Talia, urging her to get closer.

For some inexplicable reason, Talia knew that whatever was happening to Meg, was because of Kai, and Talia had a feeling that she can help Meg.

Talia raised her hand to touch Meg's bare shoulder.

"Don't...", Kai wanted to say that Talia shouldn't touch Meg. He was safe because they were mates, but there was no way to predict what would happen if someone else touched Meg when she was in this state.

Meg's newly awakened ability was unstable and driven by emotions, and right now, Meg was scared and confused, and that was not good.

Kai found himself unable to speak because he ended up gaping at Talia's eyes that were flickering with silvery light. He knew very well what that light meant, but he had no idea how Talia got it. Was she one of them? Is that why Axel allowed her to come here? But if she was one of them, why was she not in the Midnight Guardians pack?

His eyes moved to Talia's hand that was resting on Meg's shoulder and he could see the light from Meg's body seeping into Talia's palm. What the...?

Talia smiled at the sensation of the rejuvenating energy spreading through her body. It was better than a popsicle on a hot afternoon, and more soothing than chocolate pudding after a savory meal.

At the same exact moment, Talia and Meg inhaled deeply, and a second later they exhaled together.

Talia released Meg's shoulder and her eyes were completely silver now, giving her an otherworldly appearance.

Kai could feel that Meg was stable. She was still leaning on him, but the glow was gone, and she was definitely sleeping peacefully.

Kai wanted to thank Talia, and to ask her many things, but he found himself tongue-tied.

"She will be fine for about two hours. I suggest you wear sunglasses until you learn to control that.", Talia said to Kai whose eyes were also silver.

Talia smiled at Kai's flabbergasted expression, and her eyes flickered back to her usual honeyed color.

Talia had no idea how she did this, she was moving on an instinct. Was her wolf guiding her subconsciously? That was a possibility. In any case, Talia knew that she helped Meg, and she also got answers to some of her questions.

"Just how you have your secrets, I have mine. What happened here, I hope we can keep it between us."

"Of course", Kai responded. He was grateful for whatever Talia did, and if she was right about two hours of Meg being stable, that will give them enough time to be far away from here.

Kai cradled Meg in his arms and watched as Talia walked out of the car. This was unexpected.

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"Miss Talia...", Axel called when she closed the door behind her. The fact that Talia was not freaking out only confirmed his assumptions, and now he was 100% confident that Talia was one of them. "What you saw in there... will that make you reconsider to come with us?"

"No.", Talia responded.

Axel frowned when he saw that Talia walked to Damon and they embraced each other.

"Alpha Damon can't keep you safe.", Axel said stubbornly. "You are putting him in danger by being here."

Damon growled lowly and Talia gave his hand a squeeze, indicating that she will take care of this. "I appreciate your concern, Axel, but my place is next to Damon."

"No.", Axel said. "You are important, and your place is in..."

"No?", Talia interrupted him, and her face darkened. "Who are you to tell me where I belong? How can you claim that I'm important when you don't know anything about me? I endured years of hunger and abuse with no one to help me. Why didn't you find me then to tell me that I'm important? Why didn't you come to tell them to stop?"

Axel was utterly confused. "Abused?"

Damon's heart ached at the grief that poured into him from Talia. She was usually a happy person, easily satisfied, but she held a big sorrow deep inside her, and now she allowed it to resurface.

How can he tolerate for Talia to bear it alone? Damon tightened his hold on Talia, hoping that his presence will soothe her, at least a little bit.

"That's enough.", Damon said. "She is not coming with you. Not now, and not ever. Give up on that because Talia is my fated mate." They agreed to keep this only to their closest friends until the big reveal, but Damon saw that Axel was persistent to the point of upsetting Talia. With Axel knowing they are fated mates, he should give up or he will end up going against Damon.

Axel closed his eyes and exhaled helplessly. He hoped that this was not the case. With Damon and Talia being mates, they won't separate willingly, and even if Damon can come to the Midnight Guardians pack, he won't because he is the Alpha of the Dark Howlers pack. This was too much to entangle and they needed to go.

Axel looked at Damon and Talia, and gave them a stiff smile. "Congratulations on finding your Luna, Alpha Damon. Thank you for accommodating our sudden request to leave. Once we deal with our emergency and I discuss this with my seer, I will be in touch, so we can make appropriate arrangements for you to meet." His eyes landed on Talia's clear neck. "Before you proceed with marking, make sure you have at least a few days of privacy in order to get accustomed to changes. It could end badly if outsiders find out that you are one of us."

And with that, Axel turned toward the car, and he went to sit on the front passenger's seat.

Tyler started the engine, and after a quick wave from Tyler and Axel (they couldn't see the back row), the car moved down the driveway and it disappeared among the trees.

"What happened in the car?", Damon asked Talia in a whisper. He was itchy to find out what happened.

"I confirmed that I'm from the Midnight Guardians pack.", Talia responded.

Damon cocked an eyebrow. It was obvious that Axel knew this but... "If that's settled, why is Axel still set for you to meet that seer?"

Talia shrugged. "Who knows? There is probably more to the whole story."

She wanted to know, but she also didn't. Will she ever find out the truth about how she ended up in the Red Moon pack? Or will they only feed her lies? Was there any type of scenario that won't make her angry or sad? It was probably better not to know.

"Let's go and have breakfast.", Talia said. "Our other guests will be here soon, and if we delay any further I might get indigestion."

Chapter 341 – Marcy Is Here (1)

The car was moving slowly through Darkbourne with four people in it that didn't speak.

The atmosphere was tense.

George was driving with James in the front passenger's seat, and Marcy and Nora were in the back.

James was looking out the window with great interest.

It was the first time for James to leave the territory of the Red Moon pack, so for him, this was something like a vacation. Everything was fascinating and if not for George's stern expression, James would ask if they can stop and walk through the town a bit. James hoped he will get a chance to go sightseeing later, ideally, when George is not around.

Nora was quiet since that morning. She spent the night in the back seat of this same car, alone, and she was not in a good mood, but George was there and she didn't dare say anything. George rejected her advances and kicked her out of the room on the previous night, so they were officially hostile. Nora was not sure if George told Marcy that she drugged her, so Nora was not her usual chatty self. Since they left the motel, Nora was looking out the window while hoping that no one will talk to her and she wondered if coming here was a good idea.

Marcy was staring outside absentmindedly while trying to make sense of the mess she found herself in.

Last night, she woke up with George in bed, one thing led to another, and they ended up having sex.

It's not that Marcy was inexperienced, but she never went all the way before, at least not vaginally. She never imagined that it could be so... fulfilling. Was it because it was with George? He was not gentle or caring, but she still had a mind-altering orgasm and she enjoyed it very much.

But then they finished, and her body still twitched as she was coming down from her high when George got out of the bed and left the room without a word.

Marcy made up her mind that what happened between her and George will be kept as a memory. A one-time thing that will never happen again. Did she have any regrets? Not really. It was good and she liked it. And what's the point in regretting anyway? What was done, was done.

What puzzled Marcy was that George avoided eye contact and practically ignored her, and the frown on his face told her that he was pissed.

What was his problem? It's not like she forced him into anything.

She didn't expect him to be lovey-dovey, or friendly, but he could tone down the hostility a bit.

Marcy told herself to focus. With every passing mile, she should think about what's coming.

She was about to meet Alpha Damon again, and she will become his Luna and that's that.

Yes, Marcy lost her v-card, but she didn't think that was a big deal.

It's not like Alpha Damon is a virgin and if he takes that against her, he is an asshole. As much as Damon knows, Marcy could have slept with a throng of guys already, and she would probably still have fewer partners compared to him.

Out of all that, Marcy identified one real problem. Before she becomes Damon's Luna, she will need to make George accept her rejection. What if Damon can't mark her and it all falls apart because of that little technicality? But how can she make George do anything if he won't talk to her?

As for George, he was gripping the steering wheel while his mind replayed scenes from the previous night.

He was irked when he woke up with Marcy's hand in his pants. Where did she get that courage? Did she think of him like some boy-toy that she can play with when she has an itch?

His control snapped and he ended up fucking her.

It was a one-time thing, done in the spur of the moment, and he shouldn't think about it, however... it was her first time.

She was not the first girl he deflowered, but Marcy is not just any girl.

Until last night, George was confident that Marcy is a wanton slut, just like the rest of her family, and if he imagined that obstruction while entering her, he definitely didn't imagine the scent of blood. It was her first time, and she gave it to him. That meant something.

George tried to make sense of the mess in his mind. What was he doing?

Yes, Marcy rejected him, but she was still his mate, and he was driving to deliver her to another man.

George was confident that he can go through with this, and that he can turn this to his advantage in his quest to eliminate the Redmayne family, but after last night, he was not so sure.

Can he be ruthless toward a woman, his mate, who gave him her first time?

The sparks on his cock were out of this world as he was inside her, and George gritted his teeth at the thought of how all that would be so much better if Marcy didn't reject him and cracked the bond between them.

He was not sure if this situation was an opportunity for him and Marcy to try to fix things, or if this was the time to accept her rejection and end this charade for good.

George glanced in the rearview mirror and he saw Marcy sitting in the back seat. Her expression was unreadable, but the fact was that she was going to deliver herself to Alpha Damon.

George didn't get it. Was it possible that Marcy didn't care about George? If not, why didn't she stop him last night? She made the first move, and when George took initiative, she welcomed him with her arms and legs open.

Fuck! Nothing made sense!

He decided not to talk to Marcy until he figures out this mess he created.

Why didn't he push Marcy away last night? If he did, he would still think about her as a cheap superficial slut from the Redmayne family, and he wouldn't have these conflicting thoughts that are jeopardizing plans he worked on for nearly a decade.

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Zina and Dawn lined up in front of the main door to welcome guests.

"What's taking them so long?", Zina asked while fidgeting.

"They will be here in a moment.", Talia's voice came from behind.

"How come you are here?", Dawn asked with a small frown on her face. Both Zina and Dawn knew why Marcy was coming, and they wouldn't think much about it if not for the little detail of Talia being Damon's mate.

"Why shouldn't I be here?", Talia asked. "They are guests of the Dark Howlers pack, and I am the host. Will you respect me if I hide in my room until the bad woman goes away?"

Zina gave Talia a thumbs up. "I admire your spirit." If that was her, Zina was not sure if she would avoid Marcy completely or if she would yank her hair off. One of those two. But Talia was here, calm and composed like she was above everything. "No wonder you are the future Luna."

Chapter 342 – Marcy Is Here (2) [Bonus]

Talia stood next to Zina and Dawn while waiting for the group from the Red Moon pack to arrive.

The truth was that Talia was a nervous wreck. She didn't want to be anywhere near Marcy, and this was much more than just facing a woman who was coveting her mate. Marcy was Talia's personal bully and Talia hoped that she will be able to keep it together.

Talia chanted internally that she needed to do this, for herself. Talia didn't want to shrink in the corner anymore and pretend to be invisible because she was not invisible, and people will come at her, and she needed to build up her courage in order to face them with confidence. How else will she be worthy of standing by Damon's side?

After breakfast, Caden went to attend training with Tony, Paul, Nate, and Greg. After yesterday's bad first session, their morale improved as they bonded with others on the beach.

Damon wanted to be with Talia, but she asked him to let her handle this on her own. He agreed, but under the condition that he stays nearby, so instead of going to train with the guys, Damon was in the study, catching up on work and watching over Talia through the security feed. Since the incident with Lisa and Talia, Damon requested for the equipment to be updated, and now they had HD cameras with sound included, so Damon knew exactly what was going on outside and on the whole main floor of the packhouse.

Kalina, Mindy, and Maya were in the garden, chatting over freshly made cookies and tea, and they also told Talia to give them a holler if she needs help (aka taking care of Marcy's and Nora's bodies). Kalina, Mindy, and Maya were planning for the party on the next day, the party to introduce Talia to important members of the Dark Howlers pack, the party Talia was not aware of (yet).

Maya told Kalina and Mindy that the three of them will start planning, and inform Talia about it when they come up with something solid.

Maddox and Tatiana didn't exit Tatiana's room since they returned from the pack hospital on the previous day, and that was not unusual. The only sign that those two were alive was that the cart with food disappeared shortly after Mindy mind-linked her brother with the information that sustenance was left in front of the door of Tatiana's room.

With everyone doing their thing, Talia was determined to do her part. She will be the best host ever and Damon will be proud of her.

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"Here they come.", Zina said in a soft voice and Talia's eyes snapped at the driveway to see a dark blue car approaching.

"Wow...", Dawn said under her breath. "The driver is hot."

"That would be Commander George.", Talia said. "The teenager on the front passenger's seat is James, the future Alpha of the Red Moon pack. In the back should be Marcy and Nora. Nora is Beta's daughter and Marcy... well, we know who she is." Talia did her homework.

Dawn's eyes didn't leave George as the car pulled into a stop. Even before he came out, Dawn knew that George was one of the best male specimens she has ever seen. Unfortunately, his status was a problem. If he was just a driver, it would be easier to approach him. Commander comes with an influence of a high-ranking member and that also meant he was not easy to get close to.

George was the first to exit the car. He looked at three young women at the door and gave them a nod before he bent to speak with the others in the car. They could hear George giving warnings that

everyone should behave because this was not the Red Moon pack. He seemed to be the responsible one in the group.

"Do you feel anything?", Zina asked Dawn in a whisper.

"No. You?"

Zina clicked her tongue. "Nothing. Pity."

Talia was not sure if she should laugh or cry. She knew that her two friends were eager to find their mates and whenever a new face came for a visit, Dawn and Zina were expectantly waiting for their wolf will stir and notify them that THE ONE arrived.

Dawn bobbed her head. "I wish I can eat him up."

Zina elbowed Dawn. "They will be here for a few days. You can get your chance." Zina moved closer and spoke in a hushed voice, "Unless I get my hands on him first."

Dawn groaned. "I saw him first. You can take the little one."

Zina made a face. "I'm looking for a man, not a babysitting job."

"Shush...", Dawn said to Zina. "They can hear you."

"Don't you shush me. The rules of the game are not changing just because you saw someone first.", Zina said quickly and puffed up her chest to push her breasts out.

Dawn rolled her eyes. "You did that on purpose."

"There is nothing wrong in using your assets, dear.", Zina said teasingly. "You would know if you had any."

Dawn was speechless. Sure, Zina was more curvaceous compared to Dawn, but Dawn was not a stick figure either!

Talia was happy that Dawn and Zina were there with her. Those two were good friends and their goofing around always took the edge off any situation.

By this time, George ended his instructions and James came out of the car; he was looking around curiously.

The back door of the car opened, and Nora's figure appeared. Nora squinted at the sunlight and then eyed the packhouse and the landscape around it.

Talia felt knots forming in her stomach as she remembered Nora trying to get into Damon's room at the Lightclaw pack. What was that about? Nora and Marcy also approached Talia in front of the restroom, and Talia never understood what they were trying to achieve because Kalina and Mindy had Talia's back.

The knots in Talia's stomach tightened when Marcy showed up. It was happening. She was here.

Talia wondered if Nora and Marcy will recognize her. She was not the shabby girl from the attic, nor the posh one they saw at the Lightclaw pack (and in the WW Magazine). This was Talia. No makeup, sharp shirt and a pencil skirt, hair lifted into a messy bun... just Talia.

Based on their blank expressions, Talia guessed that Nora and Marcy didn't realize who she is. For now.

To Talia, Marcy was a bigger problem compared to Cassie or a bunch of nobodies who were throwing themselves at Damon. Marcy came with the backing of the Red Moon pack, and everyone was talking about Marcy as one of the prominent bachelorettes, while Damon was the most eligible bachelor.

Both Marcy and Damon were beautiful and powerful and... Weren't they a good couple?

Talia swallowed her insecurities while reminding herself that the only thing that matters was that Damon was her mate. He was hers and she won't just sit and let Marcy have him.

Of course, Talia's expectations were that Damon will not give Marcy any chances to get close, but at the same time, Talia didn't want to be the one shrinking either. She can do this.

"Is Alpha Damon here?", James was the one to speak first.

James, Nora, and Marcy were standing next to the car and looking at Dawn, Zina, and Talia, while George went to the trunk to get their suitcases.

"You must be James, the future Alpha of the Red Moon pack", Talia said while taking a step forward. "Alpha Damon is dealing with some important matters, and he will see you shortly. I am Talia, your host, and these are Dawn and Zina. We will help you get settled into your rooms."

Talia glanced at Dawn and Zina. "Go help with their things."

Dawn and Zina bolted toward the car, with wind under their feet. To anyone watching, they looked like dedicated Omegas, eager to fulfill their duty, but Talia knew that those two goofballs were racing to reach George first.

Talia had difficulty keeping a straight face.

Chapter 343 – Marcy Is Here (3)

While Talia was walking down the hallway with guests from the Red Moon pack behind her, and Dawn and Zina trailing them with a suitcase each, Talia was gesturing toward the points of interest while talking, "That way is the garden... that's the living room... dining room..."

Talia didn't meet George while staying at the Red Moon pack, but she was familiar with the other three. Being now in the company of James, Nora, and Marcy was unsettling and Talia was grateful that they didn't recognize her as the girl from the attic.

Well, in just a few short weeks, Talia gained some weight. She was not wearing shabby oversized clothes, and her skin and hair were shiny and healthy. It was a big change.

Once they reached the hallway where rooms were, Talia halted her steps.

"The next four rooms on the right are yours. You are welcome to rest and freshen up. Bathrooms are the last door to the left." Talia opened the first door and gestured toward the gadget that was attached to the wall. "Each room has an intercom that connects to the kitchen. Someone will be there from six o'clock in the morning until midnight, and you can use the intercom to ask if you need something. You will find the wi-fi password, schedule for meals, and other basic information in the top drawer of the desk."

"I would like to see Alpha Damon.", Marcy said.

"Alpha Damon is aware of your arrival, and he will let you know when he is available.", Talia responded.

Marcy nodded stiffly and took the suitcase out of Zina's hand before making her way into the last room out of four.

George needed to contact Alpha Edward first, and he told Talia, "Let me know when Alpha Damon is available. Until we decide on the security detail, I will be escorting Miss Marcy." With that, George moved to stand in front of the door of the room that was next to Marcy's.

James was eager to sightsee Darkbourne, but he kept that to himself because George was right there, and James didn't want George to report to Alpha Edward how James was slacking.

"I will freshen up and then I would like to look around. When will the food be served?", James ended with a question.

"We have refreshments set up in the garden. If that doesn't work, you can ask the kitchen to prepare something for you. Lunch will be ready at noon.", Talia responded. She remembered that James came here to train, so she added, "Beta Caden is currently training with future Alpha Anthony and his group. They will be at the training grounds until lunchtime. If you wish to join them, we will get someone to escort you there."

James thought for a moment before responding, "I will go to the garden first." He had no intention of going to train if he could wiggle out of it. With that, James went to the first room while pulling his suitcase behind him.

Nora was standing at the open door of her room and looking inside with a frown. It was a room with one bed, a dresser, an armoire, a sofa, a desk, and a chair. It was all clean and smelled fresh, but...

"The bathroom is down the hallway?", Nora asked with disapproval obvious in her voice.

"Yes.", Talia responded. "You will find toiletries, towels, and bathrobes. If you need anything else, let us know."

Nora was not happy that she needed to share a bathroom. And there was another problem. "Why are our rooms on the first floor?"

Everyone knew that in the society of werewolves, the higher one's ranking is, the higher up the building they get to stay. Yes, their accommodation was in the packhouse, but why on the first floor? Wasn't Marcy set to be the Luna? Maybe they couldn't stay on the third floor, but the second floor was definitely appropriate.

"We have other guests staying currently with us.", Talia said. "The request from Alpha Edward was to keep you close, and this was the only area where we could accommodate you in adjacent rooms. I assure you that you won't lack anything."

Nora was about to argue, when George spoke, "Thank you for making these arrangements, Miss Talia. We appreciate it."

Nora frowned at George. Why was he still lingering? And why did he butt in? Didn't he realize that them being on the first floor was a sign of disrespect?

Talia thought that George is a nice person. James seemed absentminded, Marcy and Nora were definitely on Talia's list of unpleasant people, so George was the best of the four. She liked him already.

"If there is nothing else, I will leave you to your business. You are free to join us in the garden when you are done or to roam the area. Just let us know if you are planning to leave the packhouse so that we can alert the security and find someone to escort you if needed.", Talia said and turned to George. "I will tell Alpha Damon that you and Miss Marcy want to meet with him before lunch."

"What about me?", Nora blurted out.

"You will see him during lunch. Probably.", Talia responded robotically. Why did Nora think she was invited?

George thanked Talia, and Talia walked away with Dawn and Zina in tow.

When they turned the corner, Talia released the breath she was holding, and she looked up into a corner where a small camera was standing. She knew that Damon was watching, and she hoped that he approved of her performance.

Dawn and Zina were chirping how handsome Commander George is, and they went to the kitchen to join Ivy, Lily, and Stephanie. They had a lot of preparations for lunch, and they wanted to be available in case Commander George uses the intercom to ask for something. Anything.

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In the study...

Damon was proud to see how Talia handled the situation. In his opinion, those four characters from the Red Moon pack were not worthy of Talia being their host.

Damon really wished that Talia walked out there and introduced herself as his Luna and he would stand by her side with his chin lifted high, but that will need to wait a bit. If all goes well, in a few days, they can do that.

Damon cringed while thinking that Marcy wanted to meet with him. He knew it was coming, but now that it was here, Damon wished to lock himself into the study and not come out until Marcy leaves. Maybe Talia can tell them that he is sick with something highly contagious, and he can't see them... forever.

'Coward', Damon's wolf spoke into his head.

Damon rolled his eyes. 'How come you speak only when you get to pour salt on my wounds?'

'I am here to remind you how an Alpha should behave. Avoiding responsibility is not a trait of an Alpha.'

Damon knew that his wolf was right, but he also knew that neither of them had an idea how to deal with Marcy.

Damon's wolf grumbled, 'She wants to be your Luna, and you don't. Why are you complicating things?'

'I can't just chase her away.', Damon responded.

'You were supposed to think about that before you started your womanizing. To you, it was a game of slapping their faces, and look who is getting slapped now! You are a prisoner in your own house, unable to be with your mate...'

'ENOUGH!', Damon snapped.

'Don't show that attitude toward me, boy.', Damon's wolf said condescendingly. 'You know I am right. I told you that you were playing with fire, but you wouldn't listen.'

'I am aware of the mistakes I made and rubbing it in is not helping. I would appreciate your advice on how to tackle the current issues and if you don't have any, then don't make it worse.', Damon grumbled. 'Stop acting like this doesn't involve you because if Talia's wolf gets angered, both of us will suffer. And no matter how we handle this situation with Marcy, as soon as Alpha Edward finds out that his plan didn't work, he will be angered. We need to find a way to minimize damage. I don't want Talia to be in the middle of this. She already has a lot of issues to deal with.'

Chapter 344 – Marcy Is Here (4)

Damon knew very well that his wolf was out of ideas. Actually, the best option was to introduce Talia as Damon's mate, but with Talia's wolf making that not an option, Damon's hands were tied, and he needed to look for alternative solutions.

The door of the study opened, and Talia made her way inside.

"Commander George and Miss Marcy want to meet with you. Soon."

"I heard that.", Damon said sourly. "I will meet with them in the study." He thought that this location will make it more official and not cozy. He didn't want to give any cozy ideas to Marcy.

"Do you want me to be here when they come?", Talia asked.

"Yes.", Damon said without missing a beat and he waved with his hand, indicating to Talia to come and sit on his lap. He needed her proximity.

The moment Talia's bottom touched Damon's thighs, his arms snaked around Talia's waist, and he buried his face in her neck that was completely exposed because her hair was lifted into a messy bun.

He kissed the base of her neck and Talia let out a small sigh. That was such a sensitive spot.

Damon smiled a little when he picked up the scent of Talia's arousal. He loved how her body responded to his touch.

"Do you want to be here when Marcy comes to talk to me?", Damon asked.

"No. However, I will be."

"Kiss me, kitten.", Damon whined. "I am unwell and only your proximity will make it better."

Talia stifled a giggle at the sight of Damon who had his lips puckered. How was that an image of a scary Alpha?

But she knew that he was anxious, just as she was. This was the biggest trial the two of them got to face together.

Yes, they jumped into the waterfall and faced rogues and Elders, but all that was unplanned and in the spur of the moment. Marcy's visit was hovering above them for some time, and it grew into a monster that neither of them knew how to face.

If they handle it wrongly, it can reveal Talia's identity as the person who lived in the attic of the Red Moon pack, and that could lead to war.

And they were also under stress due to Axel wanting to take Talia with him. Both Talia and Damon knew that Axel will be back, but they didn't know if he will return alone, with a backup, or with some sneaky plan to get his hands on Talia.

Talia had a feeling that Axel is a good guy, but she couldn't understand his obsession for her to go with him. Axel suggested that the first time during Summer Solstice, and he still didn't give up on it.

Talia needed Damon's proximity just how much he needed hers and she indulged the silly Alpha by giving him all the kisses he wanted, and he wanted many.

"You are mine, kitten... say that you are mine...", Damon demanded between kisses.

"I am yours, Damon.", she spoke into his mouth and when his hand snaked under her skirt, she parted her legs to give him easy access.

Damon growled lowly when he felt how wet Talia was.

His hands landed on her hips, and he lifted her with ease to sit on his desk.

Talia gasped when he tore her panties in one swift move. She will never get used to him tearing her clothes, but she was turned on by the fact that he wanted her so badly that he didn't have the patience to undress her properly.

Damon thought that Talia will remind him that the door was not locked, or that Marcy will be there later, and that she could smell the scent of their bodily fluids, but Talia's hands moved with haste to unbutton his pants, and he wouldn't want it any other way.

Talia was hoping that remnants of their lovemaking will linger in the air for Marcy to pick up. In that way, Marcy will know that she is not special to Damon and that Damon has someone else by his side.

They were both eager to lose themselves in each other, and to find peace in their lovey-dovey bubble, even if it's just temporary.

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Marcy looked through the open window of her room into the garden. She could pick up some voices and laughter and she wished to have someone who would be her eyes and ears.

Marcy regretted leaving Anna (aka one of Talia's bullies) behind in the packhouse of the Red Moon pack. Anna was useful, but Marcy couldn't take her with her.

Alpha Edward was unyielding when he said that only four of them will come. "When you become Alpha Damon's Luna, you can do as you wish. Until then, be humble and do what's needed to please the man..."

Marcy promised Anna that she will send for her as soon as she gains some foothold in this place, and Anna said that she will follow Marcy gladly, but Marcy was not so sure about it.

Since Marcy vouched for Anna, the Omega got promoted and was doing better than before. Will she be willing to leave that comfort? Anna also promised Marcy to keep her informed about anything important in the packhouse, but Marcy was doubtful if Anna will do so.

Anna was doing favors for Marcy in order to get benefits, and now that Marcy was not there, Anna probably found another thigh to hug. Heck, with Nora gone, Anna might be the one serving Alpha Edward.

Marcy grimaced as bile rose up to her throat. She was still unable to adjust to the idea of her father and Nora...

'KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK'

Marcy moved to open the door. "Nora?"

"Can I come in?", Nora asked impatiently when she saw that Marcy was blocking the door.

No. "Sure."

"Are you OK with this?", Nora asked as soon as the door closed behind her.

"OK, with what?"

"This! Alpha Damon making us stay on the first floor.", Nora explained.

Marcy had a feeling that Nora was provoking her in order for Marcy to make a scene. Did she really think that Marcy was stupid and easy to manipulate?

"It's not a big deal."

Nora's eyes flashed in anger. "Not a big deal!?"

Marcy shrugged. "A few days here won't make me lose hair. Once things between me and Alpha Damon are settled, I will move to the third floor, and you will get to pick your room on the second one. How about that? Until then, try not to cause trouble. If my father hears that you are the reason why my marriage with Damon fell through, he won't be happy."

Nora didn't like Marcy's condescending tone.

"What happened to you?"

Marcy didn't get it. "What do you mean?"

"Just last night we were fine and now...", Nora didn't finish. It was her way of trying to figure out if George told Marcy about Nora drugging her.

Nora thought about it and she concluded that if George spilled the beans, Marcy would be livid, but if he didn't, Marcy would be friendly with Nora. Since none of those was the case, Nora needed to investigate.

Chapter 345 – Marcy Is Here (5)

"Were we fine last night?", Marcy repeated Nora's words robotically in the form of a question and she thought how Nora's choice of words seemed off.

Were the two of them ever fine? No, not after Marcy found out that Nora slept with Alpha Damon and definitely not after Marcy found out that Nora slept with her father, but Marcy couldn't voice those thoughts. Not yet, at least.

"I guess we were fine but when I woke up, you were gone, and Commander George was in our room. Tell me, Nora, what happened? Why was he there?" In my bed. On top of me. Inside me. "Where did you go?"

A wild thought flashed in Marcy's mind, did Nora go to seduce her brother last night? Is that why George ended up in Marcy's bed?

From a middle-aged guy like Alpha Edward to a teenager like James. Yuck!

Nora realized that Marcy doesn't know about the whole drugging business. Good! As long as Marcy didn't know about that, it will all be fine.

Nora didn't understand one thing, why didn't George tell Marcy? It was obvious that he was not friendly toward Nora. Did he keep that information to blackmail her later? Or maybe he didn't want drama.

Ah! What if he tells Alpha Edward! That will be bad.

Nora came to the Dark Howlers pack with the pretense of keeping an eye on Marcy to ensure that Alpha Damon accepts her, and if Alpha Edward finds out that Nora drugged Marcy... Nora decided to think about it later.

Unless Alpha Edward brings up the drugging incident, Nora will pretend it didn't happen. Actually, even if George rats on her and Alpha Edward demands an explanation, there is no evidence. She will tell Alpha Edward that George was hitting on her, and when she rejected him, he came up with that malicious lie. Yes, that will work. With this thought, Nora relaxed.

Nora puffed her cheeks dramatically. "Didn't Commander George tell you? He showed up out of nowhere and told me to scram. I waited outside for some time, but when it got late, I went to sleep in the car. I didn't dare get back into the room while he was there." This was the truth with the middle part omitted.

Nora had a feeling that if she can't have a proper conversation with George, Marcy can't have it either. Besides, Marcy barely spoke a few words with the man since they left the Red Moon pack, so Marcy going to George to ask for an explanation would be highly unlikely.

Marcy didn't respond, confirming Nora's suspicion that Marcy was ignorant about what Nora did.

Nora decided to make her exit. "I need to change and shower." She didn't freshen up in the morning because she was stuck in the car until breakfast time. "I will hold you to your word that you will let me pick my room on the second floor. I want a good view."

With that, Nora headed for the door.

"Ah!", Nora exclaimed the moment she stepped into the hallway.

Marcy craned her neck to see that Nora bumped into George. Why was he standing there?

George's eyes darted from Nora to Marcy. "Is everything alright?"

"Of course, it is.", Nora said stiffly. "We were just talking." She side-stepped him and disappeared into her room. After the previous night, Nora didn't want to deal with George. The man was unstable and violent.

Marcy stared at George who was looking to his right until the door of Nora's room closed behind her, and then he turned to look at Marcy.

"What did she want?"

Marcy swallowed hard. "Nothing."

George's anger swelled. What did she mean by, nothing? George gave his report to Alpha Edward and he heard every word that was said between Marcy and Nora. Didn't she realize that her window was open? If they wanted to make it private, they should have used the mind-link.

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Marcy stepped back on instinct when she saw George making his way into her room. Why did he close the door behind him?

She continued moving backward until her back hit the wall.

George didn't stop approaching Marcy until he nearly pressed her against the wall with his body.

He was irked that they had sex the previous night, and it was her first time, yet she was acting like everything was normal.

Part of him hoped that Marcy was silent in the car because she was reconsidering the arrangement of being Alpha Damon's Luna, and he thought that she will ask George to stop the car and turn around. Surely, after experiencing intimacy with a mate, she should know that no other man can make her feel that way. However, after overhearing the conversation between Marcy and Nora, George realized that he was wrong.

Marcy was still going through with it like last night didn't happen. Was she only toying with him? This thought enraged him. No one gets to toy with an Alpha. NO ONE!

He grabbed her chin roughly and lifted her head. "What did you talk about with Nora?"

"Nothing.", Marcy repeated. When George narrowed his eyes at her, she asked, "What do you want?"

"I want things that belong to me."

George had no idea why he said this, but his wolf was pushing him to get closer, much closer to Marcy.

He had an urge to remind Marcy that she belongs to him.

George cursed internally. Stupid bond! It was cracked, but it still influenced him in ways he didn't want.

Didn't he decide not to talk to Marcy until he figures out what to do with her? Her scent of candy tempted him to stop resisting and his cock throbbed painfully in the desire to sink into her tender flesh.

This was the problem with Alphas. Their wolves were much stronger compared to others and they provided an advantage in strength, speed, and aura, but all that came with ridiculously powerful animalistic urges to possess things that belong to them, and George's wolf saw Marcy as his.

It was easier to stay away from Marcy when others were around. George used all his willpower to suppress his wolf because he needed to pay attention to his image and not get in trouble, but now it was just the two of them, and George lowered his guard which allowed his wolf to take over.

Marcy's eyes widened as she understood George's words. Did he want her? She pressed her legs together as graphic images from the previous night flashed in her mind.

"This... is not right.", Marcy said breathily. "Don't make things more difficult than they already are. I am here for Alpha Damon. You should accept my rejection and we should move on."

George's nostrils flared in anger, and he pinched her chin harshly. "You want me to step back so that you can move on? Do you think it will be that easy?"

Chapter 346 – Marcy Is Here (6)

George towered above Marcy, and she could feel his heat splashing on her body.

Marcy's system was getting overloaded with George's sweet scent of clover and her wolf urged her to close that minuscule distance between them.

Marcy cursed herself internally. Why did she want to wrap her arms around George? She was here for Alpha Damon!

Marcy's thoughts were obvious as her face got flushed and George could smell her arousal. But why was she glued with her back to the wall? Her hands were balled into fists. Did Marcy think that she can resist this pull between them that was still there despite Marcy damaging it with her rejection?

George was determined to break her will and to show her that she belongs to him.

His free hand snaked to reach low on Marcy's back and her heart skipped a beat when he undid the button at the back of her skirt. In the next moment, the zipper came open, and her skirt slid down her legs and fell on the floor.

Marcy's wolf howled in pleasure when George's hand moved under her shirt and pushed her bra up so that he can palm her breast.

Marcy moaned when he twisted her nipple.

"Who do you belong to, Marcy?", George asked in a dangerously low voice.

"I... I...", she struggled to speak. She knew that this was not right and she should push him away, but her wolf said otherwise, and Marcy released a shaky breath while acknowledging fervent pulses of need that were converging at her core.

"Say it!", George growled.

Marcy felt his hand moving away and she stuck her chest out to fill his palm again with her tender flesh.

"Yours. Yours!", Marcy said with haste. She would say anything, just to make him do what he was doing, and she wanted more.

He sneered and Marcy took that as approval.

Her hands moved reluctantly to the buttons of his pants, and when he didn't stop her, she undid the buttons quickly.

"On your knees, Marcy.", George ordered, and she obeyed.

He pressed his palms on the wall behind Marcy to steady himself as she took him into her mouth. She knew what she was doing.

George loved and hated every moment of Marcy sucking him off and he despised himself for being weak.

'Just once. Just this once...!', he told himself and he fisted a handful of Marcy's hair while thrusting into her mouth, allowing himself to get lost in the heat and softness that came with the sparks of confirmation she was made for him.

A deep growl ripped from George's chest as he shot his hot seed at the back of her mouth, and he yanked her head away when she licked him clean.

"What are you doing?", Marcy blurted out when she realized that he was buttoning up his pants.

George paused. "Did you say something?"

She got up and wiped the saliva from her chin with the back of her palm.

"Are you leaving?"

George's lips lifted into a smirk. "Don't you want me to leave?"

'What kind of a question was that?', Marcy thought while frowning. They both knew what she wanted, but George wanted her to say it.

"Don't leave. Not before..." She swallowed hard. "You fuck me."

George's eyes flashed in surprise. He really didn't think she will say it outright. "Is that what you want, Marcy?"

"Yes."

He inched closer and his breath splashed on her face. "Tell me what you want. In details, Marcy."

She blinked rapidly. "I want your cock in my pussy." Seeing that he didn't move a muscle, Marcy exhaled in frustration. "Didn't I give you a blowjob just now? You could at least... AH!" She shrieked when he grabbed her neck and pushed her toward the bed.

Marcy fell on the mattress, face down, and she jolted when she felt George pushing her panties to the side.

She stuck her ass up in the air and fisted the cover while waiting to see what he will do.

There was the pressure and stretch and then George gripped Marcy's hips and started pounding himself into her, pushing her closer to rapture with his every thrust, and she muffled her cries into the pillow.

George was lost in the sensation of Marcy's tender flesh gripping his cock flawlessly and he was glad that he took her from the back because she didn't get to see his blissful expression.

Her hips were rocking to meet his, making his brutal assault even more violent.

"Fuck!", he cursed.

She loved it rough, and George didn't hold back.

With a muffled groan, George released his load deep inside Marcy and her body twitched in the orgasm that wrecked her insides.

He pulled out and when he released her hips, Marcy plopped sideways on the bed while gasping for air.

She watched him as he buttoned up his pants, and he left her room without a word. Again.

Marcy didn't know how to process what happened. Her insides throbbed as she was coming down from her high, and her wolf urged her to go after George and ask for more, but Marcy laid on the bed and stared blankly at the closed door.

After an unknown measure of time, Marcy released a shaky breath. She was about to meet Alpha Damon and she needed to tidy up before that.

What happened with George was a confirmation that she needed to convince him to accept her rejection because this... it can't happen again. No matter how good it felt.

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George slammed the door of his room behind him, and he jabbed his hand into his hair.

What the fuck was that?

His mind was a mess and he wanted to shift into his wolf form and go for a run, but he feared that his wolf will just run to Marcy. Stupid animal!

Did his wolf really expect that George will forget who he is, and what Marcy did, because sex is good?

George took a mental note not to allow his wolf to resurface again. This was dangerous. Luckily, no one saw or heard them, but next time they won't be so lucky.

What next time?

The smartest thing would be to accept Marcy's rejection. But he won't do it before he gains something out of it. Surely, he didn't suffer last few weeks for naught.

Marcy might say that she wants to be with Alpha Damon, but her body was saying otherwise.

Can he take advantage of that?

He felt like slapping himself. Why was he thinking about sex with Marcy again?

George went to his suitcase and got a change of clothes. He needed to shower before Alpha Damon summons him into the study, and George didn't want Marcy's scent on him when he goes there. Surely, as an Alpha, Damon will be able to pick up that detail, and then everything will be ruined.

Chapter 347 – Wanton Scent (1) [Bonus]

Talia walked in front while guiding Marcy and George to Damon's office.

Talia was nervous knowing that this will be it. The first meeting of Marcy and Damon. Will it be their last one? Talia hoped so, but realistically... probably not.

She could feel Damon's anxiousness increasing with every step she took. He was watching them through the security feed, and he knew they were coming. Somehow, knowing that Damon was a nervous wreck, made Talia feel a bit better.

Talia did her best to compose herself.

What's the worst that can happen?

Based on what Mindy said, things could escalate, and in that case, Maya, Kalina, and Mindy will help her hide the body.

Maya's estimate was that they will have at least one week until people notice that Marcy was missing, and by then they will figure out how to deal with the aftermath.

One thing confused Talia. She was walking in front because she was leading the way. But what about George and Marcy?

Marcy was the main guest and George was her guard. Why was he walking in front of Marcy?

Based on the hierarchy werewolves respected, Marcy should walk in front.

Something didn't seem right, but Talia couldn't put her finger on it. She hoped that Damon will be able to figure it out.

George had his signature unreadable expression, but his insides were twisting into knots as he fought his internal battle.

His wolf wanted to turn around, grab Marcy, and run away with her to a place where no one will find them. On the other hand, George didn't want anything to do with Marcy.

George knew that this was the bond. Will one bond make him abandon everything he worked so hard for?

He finally got close to Alpha Edward and is able to pry into the secrets of the Red Moon pack. He is only a step away from avenging his parents and his pack.

If Alpha Edward finds out that George and Marcy are mates, all that will collapse. And if Marcy and George were not mates, George would be able to dismiss Marcy easily, just like any other woman.

George couldn't deny that every time he and Marcy touched, it felt heavenly. His anger swelled again. It would feel much better if she didn't ruin the bond between them!

And why did she do that? So that she obeys her father? So that she becomes Alpha Damon's Luna?

George wondered, should he tell Marcy that he is an Alpha? No. For Marcy, that won't change anything because other than his Alpha bloodline, George didn't have anything else going for him.

George was aware of the possibility that if Marcy found out about his true background, she will tell Alpha Edward, and then years of his hard work will be for naught.

Marcy rejected George when she thought he was an Omega, and she was not willing to accept him as Commander George either, and all that was only so that she can give herself to an Alpha who was not her mate!

He couldn't believe that less than an hour ago she was moaning his name, yet now she was going to become another man's woman. Power-hungry bitch!

Marcy walked behind George while clutching the hem of her blouse.

She knew that this was it. She was about to meet with Alpha Damon. She needed to leave a good impression. But, why was her mind all over the place?

It was all George's fault! If he accepted her rejection right away, none of this would be a problem!

And if George didn't come to her hotel room last night, she wouldn't know about the ecstasy of having him inside her. And if he didn't come to her room just an hour ago, she wouldn't have these doubts if going along with her father's arrangements was a good idea.

Marcy told herself to drop any thoughts about resisting her father's wishes. He took her passport, and his men are everywhere. Only by becoming Alpha Damon's Luna, Marcy will get her chance to do what she wants. What did she want? Marcy was not sure, but once she gets the power, she will figure it out.

She looked at the broad back in front of her. George was not romantic, gentle, or caring. He was nothing like the prince charming she imagined many times, but everything about him was right... everything was right except that he was not Alpha Damon.

Marcy took a deep breath to compose herself, but the sweet scent of clover made it all worse. Damn it!

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The door of the study cracked open, and Damon watched as Talia walked in first, and he knew that she didn't look at him because her composure might crack. It was better this way. He will handle Marcy, and Talia will get to see him clear the path for them. As a man, he should do this.

Once Marcy is out of the picture, Talia's wolf will be pacified, and Damon will get to mark Talia and they will be official! Yes, yes. He will focus on the end goal and that will be his drive to go through whatever is coming.

Damon blinked to see Marcy and George standing in front of his desk. It seems that he spaced out a bit.

Damon stood up and gestured toward the chairs on the opposite side of his desk. "Have a seat. I hope your trip was pleasant."

Marcy frowned at this stony welcome. Sure, she didn't expect hugs and kisses right away, but this was too detached. Is this how a man welcomes his future wife?

"It was. Thank you, Alpha Damon."

It was George who responded, and he took a seat on one of the two chairs.

Marcy sat on the chair next to George and glanced around.

With her every next inhale, Marcy detected something she could describe as a wanton scent and she wondered what exactly Alpha Damon was doing in his study. The window was open, and the intensity of the scent told Marcy that whatever thing Damon did, it was recent.

Marcy's eyebrows shot up when she saw that Talia was still in the study, and she also had her own desk and everything.

Marcy concluded that Talia was much more than just a host.

Wait! Didn't her father tell her that Alpha Damon had an assistant?

With the lustful scent lingering in the air, Marcy had a hunch that Talia is assisting Damon with more than just checking his emails and answering phone calls.

Damon's attention was on George. "I heard you wanted to meet with me."

"Yes.", George responded. "Alpha Edward wanted me to ensure that future Alpha James is getting the most out of this visit by attending training. If he can learn with the group from the Lightclaw pack, that would be for the best."

Damon expected this. "We can arrange that. Do you have any specific requirements we should be aware of? I won't make guarantees, but if possible, we will accommodate them..."

George and Damon started talking about training-related issues and Marcy pressed her lips into a line.

Marcy felt like an extra. Shouldn't she be the main person?

Chapter 348 – Wanton Scent (2)

'Patience, patience...', Marcy chanted internally while Damon and George talked about James' training nonsense.

She was confident that once they finish talking serious business, Alpha Damon will focus on her.

After all, she is his future Luna. He won't ignore her.

Eventually, Damon and George ended the talk about James' training with the agreement that James will join in the afternoon session. With that, George went to his next topic.

"Alpha Edward instructed me to escort Miss Marcy everywhere until we establish security protocols."

Marcy frowned at this. Didn't her father say that George's task is to ensure Marcy reaches the Dark Howlers pack safely? What was that nonsense about escorting her?

Damon thought for a moment before responding, "We have patrols in the area. Due to security reasons, we don't share that information with the outsiders, but I can assure you that the packhouse and vicinity are safe. As you can see, none of us has additional security. However, I have no objections to you escorting Miss Marcy until you are satisfied."

Marcy had a bad feeling about this. Was George going to stick to her forever?

But before she could say anything, Damon was talking to her.

"Miss Marcy, do you foresee occasions where you will stray away from the group? Do you plan to go somewhere on your own?"

Marcy was not sure how to respond to this. "Other than spending time with you, Alpha Damon, I don't have other plans."

Damon was about to say something, when his wolf exclaimed in his head, 'Wait!'

'What?', Damon grumbled back.

'I know you want to diss her, but don't.'

Damon was confused. 'Didn't we agree to set the mood from the start that will send a clear message about how Marcy is not important? I remember clearly that the motive was to get Marcy pissed so that she makes a scene and I kick her out.'

'Trust me. Just continue talking to the non-mate like you are interested and let me observe. There is something strange going on with the Commander.'

Damon gritted his teeth in annoyance. Who cares about Commander George?

Damn it! Damon had a good point to make, but with his wolf interrupting, he lost his train of thoughts.

What did Marcy say? Oh, yes... something about spending time with him. How can he respond like he was interested without taking it too far and without making Talia misunderstand? Talia was working on her computer, but Damon felt Talia's anxiety bubbling.

Damon plastered a smile on his face and prayed that this will work.

"As much as I would love to spend time with you, Miss Marcy, you should be aware that we are currently hosting guests from other packs, so we can't ignore them."

For Damon, the WE was for him and Talia, but for Marcy that WE was for Damon and Marcy.

Marcy's lips lifted into a smile. "I understand. Should I entertain the guests?"

Damon released a sharp breath because he felt Talia's hostility rising by the second. He really wanted to tell Marcy to scram, but his wolf was urging him to add more fuel to the fire.

Damon wondered, what exactly was his wolf planning to accomplish? To get rejected not only by Talia's wolf but by Talia herself? He didn't want to sleep on the sofa!

However, his wolf got him out of the pickle many times, so Damon decided to trust the old guy. He needed to act swiftly before Talia blows up.

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"If you could entertain them, that would be splendid.", Damon said to Marcy, and when Talia's anger hit him full force, Damon added. "Keep in mind that Talia already has a schedule for the next couple of days. You can coordinate with her to see where you can participate and if you have ideas on how to improve it, I'm confident that Talia will consider your inputs."

Marcy smiled brightly. "I will be happy to help. I don't know what Miss Talia planned, but I assure you that I know how to organize age-appropriate entertainment."

Alpha Edward told Marcy to jump into the whole future Luna role as soon as possible. She thought it will be difficult, but it was easier than expected. However, she was not pleased with just entertaining guests. "I hope that we can set aside some time for the two of us. Maybe after guests retreat for the night."

This time, even Damon felt hostility sizzling from George. It was a bit exaggerated for a guard, but Damon didn't have time to think about it because Talia was listening, and any misstep could put him in big trouble.

'Any more, and we will be in trouble with Talia.', Damon growled at his wolf.

'OK. You can back off now.', Damon's wolf responded, and Damon took this as his cue to get things to a closure.

Damon stood up from his chair.

"It will depend on my schedule, Miss Marcy. I'm sure you know that Alpha's duties don't end with entertaining guests. I will let you know when my calendar clears up. In the meantime, feel free to explore the area, participate in activities, and make yourself at home."

By this time, Damon was next to the door, holding them open in a sign that George and Marcy should leave.

Marcy frowned. She just got here and was supposed to leave? She turned to Talia. "Miss Talia, when can you show me the schedule?"

"I have a few important things to deal with here.", Talia said while gesturing toward her computer. "I will find you when I finish."

George was first to get up. He nodded at Talia and extended his hand for a handshake toward Damon. "Thank you, Alpha Damon. We will see you for lunch."

Damon shook George's hand and then robotically extended his hand toward Marcy.

'Smell her!', Damon's wolf exclaimed in Damon's head and the moment Marcy's hand landed in Damon's. Damon tugged Marcy toward her, and he leaned closer while inhaling discretely.

Talia narrowed her eyes at Damon who was getting too close to Marcy. What the hell was he doing? Did he just sniff her? But Talia didn't move from her spot because, officially, she was Damon's assistant.

Talia waited patiently for Damon to close the door behind George and Marcy, before asking irritably, "Does she smell good?"

Damon turned to Talia robotically. "George."

"What?"

"There is something going on between Marcy and George.", Damon said. When he saw that Talia was frowning, he explained, "While I was talking to Marcy, George was getting hostile. And now... I picked up a hint of George's scent mixed in with Marcy's. It was arousal with something else. Like when I enter a room that was recently used for carnal pleasures. Definitely wanton."

Talia blinked. "Wanton?"

"My wolf agrees."

"What does that mean?"

"I'm not sure.", Damon admitted. "But it's something we should explore. Let's find out what's going on."

Chapter 349 – Wanton Scent (3)

Seeing Talia's grumpy expression, Damon sashayed toward her.

"Is my mate jealous?", he asked in a singing voice.

He wrapped his arms around her and nuzzled her neck with his nose. "Are you, kitten?"

Talia regretted that Damon can feel her emotions. But even with that, she had no intention of admitting it. "Hmph! Who will be jealous of you?"

Damon chuckled. "As much as I enjoy that you are so possessive of me, there is no need. When I spoke with Marcy like she was welcome here, it was because my wolf urged me."

'Traitor!', Damon's wolf shouted in Damon's head and Damon ignored him. It's not like he was lying.

"Kitten, you need to believe me. No woman compares to you."

Talia could feel the sincerity behind his words and her fighting spirit diminished. She punched his chest weakly. "If you get close to Marcy again like that, I might break every part of your body that came in contact with her."

Damon swallowed hard. Somehow, he knew that Talia was not issuing empty threats. "It was for the purpose of smelling her. With George and Marcy next to each other, it was the only way to confirm that his scent was coming from her as well."

Talia knew he was right, but... "I didn't like it. Next time, find another way to confirm stuff. Maybe I should start sniffing guys to prove..."

"No, no!", Damon interrupted her. "Message received. Loud and clear."

Talia stifled a laugh. When will he understand that she wants to be his equal in everything? And that means that if she can't sniff men, he definitely can't sniff other women! But this was no time for petty bickering.

While thinking about their situation, Talia thought of something. "If Commander George is upset at the idea of Marcy being with you, will she be jealous if he is with another woman?"

Damon shrugged. "We won't know until we try."

Damon's face lit up as an idea popped into his mind. "We don't necessarily need Marcy to slip so that we can send her packing. If Commander George loses his cool, we can shift the blame on Marcy and wrap it up as disrespect. And if we confirm that George and Marcy are doing something fishy, that will be the nail in the coffin."

Damon looked at Talia expectantly. "Kitten, are you with me in this?"

Talia smiled at the silly Alpha. "I am with you in anything."

She buried her face in his chest and took a deep breath. Forest and dark chocolate. Her favorites.

"Damon?"

"Hmm?"

"Do you think that Marcy and George could smell what we did before they came here?"

Damon chuckled lowly. "Absolutely. It was fresh, so they definitely picked it up. I saw Marcy's nose scrunching more than once."

She thought of something else. "Was George's scent on Marcy fresh?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, they came here two hours ago, and before that, they spent a few hours in the car. If his scent was fresh, doesn't that mean they did it here?"

Damon thought how that makes sense. "Let's check the security footage."

"We have cameras in the rooms?"

"No. Not in rooms.", Damon responded. "But hallways and common areas are covered, as well as the perimeter around the packhouse. We can see where they went and if they were on their own..."

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A bit later, in the garden...

Talia smiled while approaching her girlfriends. It was good to see Mindy, Maya, and Kalina.

Before leaving the study, Damon and Talia looked at the video surveillance and saw that George and Marcy were in Marcy's room for some time. It was definitely an opportunity for them to get frisky.

They also confirmed that their four new guests were in their rooms, and that's why Talia decided to have a quick chat with Mindy, Maya, and Kalina, before going to Marcy to discuss the so-called schedule where she can participate.

Talia plopped on the chair and let out a long breath.

"That bad. Eh?", Kalina asked. They knew that Talia was away to welcome the group from the Red Moon pack.

"Here is the thing...", Talia quickly shared how she and Damon suspect that something is going on between Marcy and George.

"Are you expecting us to be friendly with Marcy?", Maya asked with a frown.

Talia shrugged. "I'm not sure. I guess you can do whatever you want, as for me, I will be Damon's assistant. We should pretend to have girly time with Marcy and see if we can push George's buttons. Ideally, he will make a scene and we will blame Marcy for it, and Damon can use that to kick them out."

"If we need a scene, let's go to Darkbourne.", Kalina suggested. "Witnesses could be helpful."

Maya agreed. "Let's have lunch out. Just us, girls. Since George is acting as Marcy's bodyguard and we are going out, he will tag along, and we can talk about things like hooking up with guys and stuff."

Kalina thought of something. "Isn't that Nora here also? Considering what I've seen in my pack, she has a short fuse and a few loose screws in her head."

Mindy leaned over the table and spoke in a whisper, "The rumor is that Nora will sleep with anyone, as long as he is a high-ranking member. Watch your mates, ladies."

Maya frowned like she tasted something sour. "I heard about her. If we need someone from the Red Moon pack to cause a scandal, Nora would be my first pick."

Mindy thought of something. "Maya, can you ask a few good-looking warriors to be around? Maybe we can use them."

"You wanted to say how YOU can use them...", Kalina said through giggles.

Mindy shrugged. "There is nothing wrong with mixing work and pleasure. You have your mates, but I don't." She turned to Maya. "Emphasis on good looking."

Maya stifled a laugh, but she knew that Mindy's suggestion had a point. The warriors could be used to keep Nora busy, and also to provoke George.

Talia was surprised to see that her girlfriends came up with plans on the spot. She was really glad to have them on her side.

While Maya, Mindy, and Kalina chatted, Talia's eyes fell on the scattered papers on the table among the plates with snacks and cups with tea.

"What is that?", Talia asked.

Maya responded. "We are planning a party for you."

"For me?"

"It seems Damon didn't tell you.", Maya said. "Damon wants you to meet with the Elders as soon as possible."

Talia knew that a party was coming eventually. She had one question. "When is the party?"

"Tomorrow evening.", Maya responded.

Talia thought that she heard it wrongly. Tomorrow? She was not ready!

Axel just left, Marcy was here, and a party was coming?

Talia was not sure how much stress she can handle before falling apart.

Seeing that Talia's expression was not good, Mindy put her hand over Talia's and gave her a squeeze.

"Don't worry Lia. We are here to help you out."

"I know. Thank you...", Talia responded weakly.

She took a mental note to ask Damon why were they pushing a party among all this mess? Don't they have enough going on?

Chapter 350 – Lunch With The Next Luna Of The Dark Howlers Pack (1)

Lunchtime...

Damon sat at the head of the dining table in the packhouse and looked at the people who were seated there.

Caden, Tony, Paul, Nate, Greg, James.

The seat on his left was empty. That's where Talia was supposed to be. He would hold her hand, cut the food for her, and feed her, but she was not there, and he missed her immensely.

Nothing made sense without Talia. The food didn't taste good, and the colors of the world faded.

Only with Talia's absence, Damon understood how much he was attached to her. In a few short weeks, Talia became an integral part of Damon's life and without her, Damon felt empty.

Yes, Talia told him that she is going to Darkbourne for lunch with girls as part of the plan to isolate Marcy and to make her slip, but Damon was uneasy to have Talia out of his visual range. Doesn't she know that she always gets into trouble and some random guys stick to her?

Damon didn't like it.

"How can George go, and I can't?", Damon grumbled while squeezing Talia against his body in a hug that nearly made her unable to breathe.

"He is going as Marcy's bodyguard."

"I want to guard your body.", Damon said without missing a beat.

Talia shook her head at the clingy Alpha. She was not sure if he was talking about attending lunch, or naughty stuff, but she didn't want to ask for clarification because it was probably both.

"If you are there, Marcy will be at her best behavior. It's just this once. Maya told me that we will make Marcy feel important and if all goes well, we will have lunch tomorrow without Marcy, and we won't need to worry about her ever again."

Seeing that Damon's expression softened a bit, Talia added, "I'm not a pushover. Did you forget that your mate is awesome?"

Damon was not amused by her cheeky tone. He was genuinely worried. "Don't use your power, kitten."

"I won't. Maya, Kalina, and Mindy will be there. Who can bully me with them around?"

And here was Damon, in the packhouse, stuck to have lunch with six guys.

Sausage fest.

Caden was talking about training, and Damon remembered, "James will join you for the training, starting this afternoon."

The teenager in question nearly dropped the fork from his hand. He was eating without a care in the world and scrolling through human entertainment news on his phone with his right hand when Damon dropped this bomb. "I will?"

Damon nodded in confirmation. "I discussed it with Commander George. He will focus on guarding Miss Marcy, so Caden will be in charge of your training going forward. You will start with evaluation, and take it from there..."

This was the only good thing that came from Damon meeting with Marcy and George earlier that day.

Damon liked the idea of George shadowing Marcy everywhere. Like that, there will be no chances for Marcy to catch Damon on his own, and he won't end up in a tricky situation like Marcy falling into his lap accidentally.

And Damon was back to thinking about Talia.

How was she doing?

He could feel some discomfort coming through the mate bond, and he would be surprised if Talia was happy to have lunch with Marcy.

Damon decided to do something that will lift Talia's spirits. He wanted her to know that he was thinking about her.

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In a restaurant in Darkbourne...

Maya made a reservation for a table for six, and that table was currently occupied by Talia, Maya, Kalina, Mindy, Marcy, and Nora.

The table next to them had George and five ranked soldiers. Maya called them there on a pretense of securing they are not disturbed, but the truth was that she wanted George to be at the different table. Like that, Marcy will be able to relax more, and hopefully fall into a trap.

The restaurant was full of patrons. It was the peak lunch hours.

Talia was not sure what Maya, Kalina, and Mindy were planning. Before lunch, Talia needed to talk to Damon and to fetch Marcy, so the three girlfriends told Talia that they will come up with a few ploys to trap Marcy and Nora, and that Talia just needs to play along. The only hint Talia got was that they will make Marcy feel special because only an overconfident she-wolf will show her true colors. Unfortunately, Talia had no idea what that meant.

Talia looked at Nora and Marcy and she was not sure what to think about them.

Marcy was Talia's bully, so Talia had to force herself not to show displeasure, but Nora was not giving off better vibes either.

It was obvious that Nora suffered from a case of inflated importance. Her chin was always lifted up, and she spoke loudly, like she wanted to attract attention.

Nora was in her element. After a not-so-stellar welcome, she was having lunch with high-profile individuals, and that was more in line with what she was expecting from this visit.

Nora had a permanent smile on her face because she hoped that other patrons will take photos of them and post them on social media for the world to see.

The only downside was that Nora thought she will have lunch with Alpha Damon, but she couldn't come up with an excuse to bail from this all-girl event. Nora comforted herself with the thought that they will be at the Dark Howlers pack for a while, and she will have plenty of opportunities to see the man in charge of this place. She will probably see him for dinner, or maybe breakfast tomorrow. The man has to eat, and she will be around.

Compared to Nora, Marcy was a mystery. She was smiling stiffly and not talking much.

Of course, Marcy received education on etiquette, and she knew what was appropriate for various settings. She also had a circle of friends and attended many social events and parties.

The current situation kept Marcy on her toes and she repeatedly reminded herself to listen more and talk less.

One of the main obstacles for Marcy to loosen up was George. He was looking at her intently, and she was afraid that if she provokes him, he will catch her on her own again. Will she be able to resist the urge to have sex with him?

Marcy had to acknowledge the attraction that was tangible. She was confused, why couldn't she snap out of it? Didn't she reject George? Sure, he was handsome, but she met many handsome guys and other than Alpha Damon, Marcy didn't find herself wishing to submit to any other man. Except for George.

Another thorn in Marcy's side had Nora's name written on it.

Nora was Marcy's so-called best friend who had no problems spreading her legs for Marcy's future husband and for Marcy's father, and maybe even for her teenage brother, and Marcy was confident that Nora will backstab her without a second thought.