

Chapter 29

I waited for Hades to come home for a while, thinking that he would arrive some time after I finished preparing the food. But, by the time I had also made coconut rice to pair with it all he was still nowhere to be found. I wanted to wait to eat with him, knowing that it would mean a lot, but the food was getting colder by the minute.

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While I waited I poked through his cabinets and was surprised to find an assortment of hard liquors stashed above the microwave. I had to stretch up onto my toes to grab the bottles. Turns out that he had enough variety that I could make a Manhattan on the spot.

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I hadn't drank in a long time. I enjoyed it occasionally, but it had never become my thing. Maybe it was the fact that I never had enough friends to go out to parties with or maybe it was my timid nature that made me anxious when I felt like I was out of control. Either way, I wasn't sure if now was the best time to start. I had never seen Hades drink; he could disapprove of it heavily with those serious eyes and his somber expression. Then again, who had such an extensive range of alcohol if he never drank.

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I mixed myself a cocktail and when I still didn't see him coming up the driveway I decided I wasn't going to waste my warm food. After I loaded up a plate with rice and meat I wandered through the house, drink in hand, searching for a comfortable place to sit that wasn't the formal dining room or at the kitchen counter. After a few minutes I was about to find a small sitting room with a large TV and a single sectional that took up most of the space. It seemed to be the one room in the house that totally boycotted following the antique feeling. I vaguely wondered what Ethel had said about the whole space.

I set my food down on the coffee table and perused the extensive movie collection that lined one of the walls. For someone as serious and as dark as Hades I expected a lot of action movies, maybe war films with lots of blood and gore. And there were a few of those, but mostly classics like Schindler's List that told intense stories instead of blood and body parts. Aside from that it was mostly Sci-Fi and action movies. I suppose he had enough darkness and drama in his life, he didn't need anymore.

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I settled back on the couch with a cult classic that I had never seen. As the intro for Jurassic Park played I chewed on my food. It wasn't my best work and I wasn't sure if I would use the recipe again, but it certainly sated the growling in my stomach. Besides, I was thoroughly distracted by the fascinating film playing out.

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When the movie was over I was thoroughly impressed with the feature, but missed that Hades hadn't come home yet.

I decided to go hunt for some more food before I put the sequel in and maybe another drink or two. When I sauntered back into the kitchen I found Hades dipping his finger into the pan, sampling the sauce for himself.

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And I froze. I know that I had been waiting for him to come home, but now I felt like I couldn't handle being around him. As much as I hated it my eyes scanned him over, looking for blood on his khakis and polo shirt. He was perfectly clean, but I wasn't sure if that was valid enough proof that he hadn't hurt anyone. The thought made my stomach churn and I shut my eyes for a second. He was a good man. I knew that now.

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"Char," he murmured, his eyes meeting mine. Then they drifted down to the empty glass in my hands and the bottles on the island in front of him. It only made my anxiety increase.

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"I didn't hear you come home," I blurted. Which was fair considering I had just been listening to dinosaurs roar for the past hour and some through incredible surround sound.

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"Sorry," he replied, focusing very intently on his plate all of the sudden. "I thought you would be in bed by now. I just wanted to have some supper before I went to bed, but I'm not sure what this is. Ethel has never made me this before."

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"I made it."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I should've asked first, but I didn't think that you..." He trailed off, glaring down at his plate like it had wronged him.

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Christ, this was going the opposite way that I wanted it to. "I made it for you," I admitted. "Keiko took me out grocery shopping and I just thought that you might like it. Ethel told me that you don't really cook."

His amber eyes snapped up, as wide and as innocent looking as I had ever seen them. For someone so big and tough he looked almost cute.

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"You made this for me?" he repeated.

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"Of course," I murmured. "I was waiting for you to come home so we could eat together, but I didn't realize that you would be out so late."

Hades looked like he didn't know how to respond for a moment. His gaze fell back to his plate, but the way his mouth turned up at the corners was undeniable. However, he still refused to be completely taken with the excitement. Not that I could blame him. The air was clearer between us, but there was still a fog hanging around both of us. Neither one of us was ready to jump in with both feet just yet.

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And Hades did his part by receding. "Well, thank you for dinner and I'm sorry that you had to stay up so late."

But I refused to be dismissed so easily. No, I couldn't undo everything that had happened between us in a matter of seconds, but I could certainly find some middle ground that would allow us to progress. I couldn't spend the rest of my life hiding from the one man who was supposed to be my everything.

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"You know, I just actually finished watching the first Jurassic Park movie. I hadn't seen any of them and I thought doing a marathon might be the way to get through them. I actually just came out to make myself another drink," I said, trying my best to keep my eyes on his handsome form, even when blush took over my cheeks.

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"You've never seen them?" he whispered, also finding the strength to look me in the eye.

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"Nope. The first one was really good though. But, I wouldn't mind some company."

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"Yeah?"

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"Sure, it's getting a little lonely. I could make you a drink, if you wanted. I'm not much of a mixologist, but I can certainly try."

"I would really like that."

"Perfect. What do you drink?"

"I really like Sidecars. They are one of my favorites."

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"No idea what that is," I admitted.

"How about I toss this in the microwave and show you?" he suggested, the smile on his lips coming a little easier now.

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So as his food warmed up he pulled out even more bottles of alcohol and showed me how to make a sidecar which was a nice blend of cognac and orange, tasting wonderful on my lips. I ended up opting out of my Manhattan in favor of his blend then we set off to the sitting room.

There was a brief moment of hesitation after he put the second disc in the player. I saw the way his eyes moved, glancing at the open side of the sectional and the vacant cushion beside me. What would happen if he sat beside me? Would we touch? Would I curl myself against him? Or would the unanswered questions weigh too heavily between us?

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We wouldn't find out because he settled himself on the far side and I felt my shoulder relax in relief despite the mild disappointment I felt. As much as the mate pull was affecting me I had to be realistic about our situation. There was too much between us. Neither one of us could jump head first into this.

Still, even with the distance, there was some action. When I jerked in surprise at a jump scare I would see Hades watching me out of the corner of my eye, a smile on his lips. Every now and then he would get up and over to get me another drink which I always accepted. By the end of the second movie I was five drinks in and I had started to sprawl out on the cushions, no longer so rigid.

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"Are you ready for bed?" Hades asked from the other side of the sectional.

"Are you kidding? There's still a whole other movie to go," I protested, then was overtaken by a yawn.

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"You're tired, you've had a long day with the queen," he insisted.

"Please?" I whined, "I promise I'll stay awake if you make me another drink."

The corner of his mouth turned upwards into a small smile and he rose to collect my empty glass.

I fell asleep before he returned.

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~~~Distraction Section~~~

The season is finally coming through and I'm melting because of it! I love oil and water relationships where people don't get along at first, if you hadn't noticed lol. Hades for me, is the epitome of this for me right now.

Question of the Day: Describe yourself in three KIND words.

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I find this particularly hard. I'm not a super positive person, especially not towards myself, but I would have to say that I'm empathetic, witty, and driven.

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