

ELEVEN-C: The Assimilation

After so much deliberation on the stairs, Lukan has decided what to do about Klaus cheating on him. Lukan hated the idea so much that it burned him up that he would have to resort to such a proposition. But if he knew anything about how he felt at that moment, he hated the feeling of heartbreak a million times more. To avoid unnecessary heartbreak, Lukan discerned it for the best that he, Klaus, and that black cat to engage in a three-way polygamous relationship. The real conundrum would be whether Klaus and the cat would be accepting of that idea. Surely Klaus would; since they met and before they started moving away, Klaus thought nothing more than Lukan and his well-being. But the cat... Lukan sighed as he got up from the stairs. He couldn't help but feel that cat will play way too big a role in the demise of Lukan's love life. As if the cat will be the reason it will fall apart, even though it already had, but Lukan's thoughts digressed. Well, there was only one way to find out for sure. As much as Lukan hated it so much, he had to acknowledge that plus sides were there. He supposed it was time to figure out if they were worth it or not.

He got up and strode to the door, feeling seldom confident. He still had to let his mom know that he found no trace of Klaus even if it was a direct lie. Still, she shan't know anything about this situation just yet. It could throw everything he needed to deal with this out of balance.

Lukan opened the door quickly, as if to rip a bandage off a wound. Inside, his mother was watching TV, and she turned to look at him with apprehension.

"Lukas! Y-you're back! ...No luck finding Klaus?" she asked, tilting her head in further apprehension.

Lukan figured there was no time to explain what was going on. Not that he wanted her to know anything, but he really did not feel up to giving any sort of explanation at this point. His heart was just too battered to give a damn any longer... "No, mom," he said a little too bluntly. "And besides, he'll be fine," he added. Yeah, fine in a different sense than what his mother probably thought right then.

"Um... okay...?" his mother said raising an eye. Lukan could tell his lack of tact informed his mother that something was wrong. He refused to indulge. "How would you know that? He's in an unfamiliar town in the middle of night!"

Lukan let out an exasperated sigh. "I promise you, he'll be fine," he insisted as he flopped on the bed, feeling tears well up in his eyes. No. Don't cry. Not here. Not now. Not EVER!

"You're not the one who needs to promise me that..." she tilted her head. "Lukan, is something wrong? You're acting strange."

Having your heart torn to shreds would do that to anyone. Not that she needed to know that right now.

"You can tell me anything that's on your mind, you know." Lukan lost count on how many times she's said this to him, and yet every time he does indulge in his problems, she always responds with a curt "I don't know what to tell you". It pisses Lukan the hell off. So no thanks.

"The only thing on my mind right now is that Klaus better find his way back here soon. I have so much that I need to tell him... and besides," he added. "What use is there in us going to look for him, only to get lost as well?" he prompted. That and could Klaus actually be lost? Clearly he knew where to go when Lukan caught him kissing another guy behind his back. It's as if Klaus had planned this all along... Lukan felt a twang hit his heart again. No... it couldn't be? Could it? Lukan refused to believe it. But he had to acknowledge its validity as a possibility.

"Hm..." Lukan's mother's eyes narrowed. "I suppose so. Still. I should go ask somebody to keep an eye out for him too..."

Lukan only gave a brief nod before he turned his attention to the TV. His mother was watching the weather. The temperatures were already at least thirty degrees warmer than they were in Lilac Grove... And yet. Lukan could feel the presence of an eternal winter looming over him... somehow he knew that he was not going to escape it forever...

Lukan had a turbulent dream that night, reflecting his mind, heart, and soul simultaneously. He was surrounded by darkness. A void where his heart should be. The despair was finally setting in... Klaus really thought it a valid option to cheat on him... It just couldn't be true. And yet... Lukan could hear the otter's voice right now... and it is

*s a boyfriend, being wanted to make
you were such a fucking prude... I*

That statement... Lukan could hear it echoing in his mind as long as he slept. He saw an image of the otter's face. It wasn't happy. It wasn't sad. It was angry, defiant, and apathetic towards Lukan's thoughts and feelings. Could Lukan really manage to engage him and the cat in a threesome? Especially if the otter no longer loved him? Lukan knew the answer. And there was only one way to know for sure...

A loud opening door is what jolted Lukan awake that morning. From the sound of it, it came from Lukan's immediate left. That meant that it was the door to the hotel room. He thought it was his mother getting stuff from the car, but he smelled otter. And traces of cat on whomever entered. Instantly he knew it was his faithless boyfriend. He did not open his eyes as he heard the otter angrily cursing. Likely

because he made a loud reentry that Lukan and his mother would obviously notice. Although Lukan's mother was not anywhere in the room. She was likely showering. Still, even in there she may have noticed. He heard Klaus let out another sigh and sit down on his mother's bed. Staying up all night committing infidelity must have drained his energy beyond what could be considered healthy, that's for sure. Lukan refused to think of what the otter must have done that night... But... Now is a good time as ever to confront the otter... He sat up.

"Klaus." he stated plainly.

"L-Lukan!" Klaus exclaimed. "Did I wake you? Sorry about running last night... I know I fucked up right? But you did too..."

Lukan shook his head. "I'm not going to go there again, Klaus. This time I will do as you wish... I won't lose you to that cat I saw you with last night." Lukan felt a glare forming on his mask as he watched the color drain from Klaus' face. "Yeah that's right," he said coolly. "I saw you two when I went out to look for you. You didn't think that cheating on me so close to our hotel was a good idea did you?"

"I-I..." Klaus choked out. Lukan held up a paw.

"I understand why. It's because I was too much of a prude to help you with your sexual anxiety and frustrations, isn't it?"

"Lukan..." Klaus whispered breathlessly.

"So what say you Klaus? Which one of us do you actually want to be with?" Lukan spat harshly.

Klaus sighed. "Both of you... I'll be honest with you..." he said as he looked down on the bed. "The problem is... I will never find the perfect guy who will have everything I need or want... Which is why I feel I need two. I'm sorry..." he said.

"There is no excuses!" Lukan exclaimed, on the verge of tears again. "You ripped my heart to shreds! How could I possibly forgive you for that!? Do you remember what I said that night you drove me home from the college? The promise I made if I were ever betrayed again?"

Klaus gasped, emerald eyes flashing alarms. "Oh shit! I-I forgot about that! No, Lukan! Please! Please don't! Don't do it!" he squealed. There. Right what Lukan wanted him to feel...

"I will not, Klaus..." Lukan said in a defeated voice. "If you promise me something that we can do to fix this mess we're in?" he prompted.

Klaus nodded his head quickly. "Yes! Lukan I will do anything! Even break up with the cat... Your life is more important than my sanity..."

"No Klaus. I hold you back sexually, but... if we could do this... nobody has to deal with any sort of heartbreak... So what do you say, Klaus? How about all three of us unite in one large relationship? A threesome as you might call it?" he asked hopefully,

wondering how Klaus would possibly react to that proposition. He hoped it wouldn't be too terrible...

Klaus stared at him with an unreadable expression. He stared with such blank eyes, Lukan had to wonder if he gave him a heart attack or something. It was clear to him though, that the otter had no idea how to respond to what he just proposed. After far too long, Klaus finally responded. "Y-you're willing to do that for me...?"

Lukan swallowed as he felt heat rising in his fur. "It's not doing anything for you that put us in this mess to begin with. I don't know the extent of mental torture your sexual anxiety inflicts on you... but it has to be really bad for you to resort to this..."

Klaus shook his head. "It's the worst pain imaginable. And that's coming from a guy who's lost all his family at this point. Father dead. Sister separated. Mother arrested. All gone... And yet... this hurts so much more for some reason..."

"I-I see now... Klaus, I'm so sorry..." Lukan said sadly.

Klaus placed a paw on his shoulder. "No, I'm sorry. I just lost control. I did not want to hurt anybody, but... it seemed that no matter the choices I was going to make, somebody was going to hurt in the end..."

Lukan's eyes widened as they looked into Klaus's green pools of regret. This is the exact thought Lukan had... but was this choice going to change that? He really hoped so... "So let's fix this then. Together. All three of us..." he gave the otter a hug.

Klaus took the hug and embraced the raccoon tightly, just about sobbing down his back. "L-Lukan. I-I. No. We will try. I just hope the cat will be willing to try with us..."

Lukan's mother understandably flipped out when she saw Klaus in the hotel room when she emerged from the shower. She was mildly upset that he left so abruptly and wandered aimlessly through an unfamiliar town, but she quickly let it go. There were other matters that needed to be addressed immediately. Their next order of business was to find a place to live in Salamanda. How they were going to do that, they had no idea.

"It's as we feared," Lukan's mother grunted. "One of us needs a job in order to find a place to live. But we need a place to live if we want a job..."

"So how the hell are we going to resolve this one?" Klaus asked.

"No idea," she replied. "We have the money to pay for a deposit, but without a source of income we will definitely be denied every time."

Lukan slammed a fist on the table. "Damn! And we had come so far!" he muttered.

"We'll have to ask around town and see if anybody knows if we can get one without the other somewhere in town," she explained. "In the meantime, we might want to pay for more nights at this hotel... There is no telling how long we'll be stuck here for."

"That means we have no time to lose at all," Klaus said.

The mother coon nodded. "Right. Shall we start by asking around the major stores around town?"

The rest of the day was spent on the three of them gathering information around town about potential jobs and housing, as well as taking a side goal to look around the place. What seemed to really work for Salamanda was that all the major stores and restaurants were all in close proximity to each other. Oh good... no crossing the entire city for one or two stores constantly... that'll be nice. But one thing that Lukan noticed, that his mom was quickly taking irritation towards was that a lot of turns from businesses and such were right turns only. They always popped up when they needed to head left. Just as well... Lukan would not expect any other way.

The information they gathered was nothing of value. It was just the same things they have already known about before. No job, no house. No house, no job. But no information on how to break that paradoxical loop. It did not help that they could find hardly any places hiring for work. Plenty of housing sure, but work? It was quickly becoming apparent that there was not very much at all. They returned to the hotel, annoyed and worried.

"Damn it..." Lukan muttered as he flopped onto the freshly made bed. Housekeeping must have come while they were away.

"So what happens now?" Klaus prompted as he flopped next to Lukan.

The mother scowled deeply and muttered. "Just gotta keep trying I suppose. But I know that we have to find something and fast."

"Do you think we will?" Asked Lukan.

"We have to..." was all she said before she walked into the bathroom.

Lukan and Klaus lied on the bed next to each other for several seconds, taking in the silence that then filled the room. Well, silence meaning no other sounds besides the bathroom fan. There was so much going on that Lukan couldn't process it all and could never begin to focus on them either. Klaus's infidelity and the cat, as well as the prospect of becoming polyamorous with them, on top of getting a new place to live, the unfamiliar city, and jobs too. That's all pretty important... So basically every aspect of his future turned up to eleven. Thousand.

"I will take you to meet Nathias, tonight by the way," Klaus said suddenly. "You know... the cat... He was actually supposed to be named Mathias, but there was a typo that nobody really wanted to change... so everybody either calls him Matt, or Nate. So he has so many names it seems, which is cool..."

Lukan, for some reason felt a throbbing in his chest so heavy it almost made him vomit. Something about those names mixed with the fact that it was a black cat struck

him as forebodingly familiar. He suddenly wanted to back out. But there was no turning back from something like this. Still... Lukan felt that a grave error was made...

That night, Klaus had taken him out of the hotel room and down the street where Lukan followed to initially find Klaus. Lukan already knew where they were going; that gas station where Lukan caught them in the act. It was probably the only place in town they both knew about and could get to easily after all... Sure enough, when they reached the stoplight, Lukan saw the slender black figure leaning on the wall of the station diagonally to them, tail swishing softly. Lukan's heart pounded as they got closer and closer. He couldn't tell why, but there was an oppressive aura about him, one he didn't notice the previous night. It choked him, kept him from breathing.

"Hey Nathias!" Klaus called to the black cat lounging just yards ahead. "I brought someone along!"

The cat moved from the wall and looked at Klaus with beaming eyes. "Well if it isn't Klaus? Who's your friend there?" he asked with a slight smirk on his face.

"My boyfriend, Lukan," Klaus confirmed.

"So it's him..." Nathias' eyes narrowed. "I see... and so he knows as well..."

"Yeah... but he doesn't want to break up or anything like that. He wants to be a part of a trinity of love between us three. I-if that is okay with you of course," Klaus stammered, clearly as nervous as Lukan was when he first divulged the idea to him.

The cat's eyes widened in pure surprise. "What!? A threesome between us!? Now this is something I didn't expect to happen..." he said, seemingly to himself. "Oh sure, why not? We all need to try something new, am I right?" he shrugged.

Klaus instantly pulled both Nathias and Lukan into a tight hug and squealed in delight. "Oh my God, thank you so much! I-I feel so much less alone already, I can say I feel so much better now that I know that I can keep both of you by my side forever!"

Still, there was something odd about the cat... Lukan knew something about him... something he did not like. Was it just how he was the one Klaus cheated on him with? No it couldn't be...

It could not be.

"Nathias...?" Lukan asked nervously. "What is your last name...?" he gulped, fearing the worst.

"Huh? My name is Nathias Love, why?"

Lukan felt his body beginning to go limp in Klaus's arms. There was no mistaking it. Son of the Loveless. This was the same creature who betrayed him all those years ago in Bright. The one who tried to kill him. The one who broke him in every sense of the word. The tyrant of his cubhood has returned....

