

Chapter 4 - Dish-soap

The rest of the meal is spent talking about activities due for this weekend and what all their expected duties are, excluding Ember for the time being. It's decided that he will be given his own jobs to do come Monday, but until then he'll be assisting the others with their tasks. Everyone clears their plate, some twice over, one thrice, and the master bids adieu. The wolves stand in respect as he leaves and begin clearing away the plates.

"Another killer meal, thank you" Cal says kindly to a proud Hess. "I think just a small lunch today though."

"Yeah, I figured we'd need extra this morning considering how early we were all up. Didn't think I'd see someone eat as much as me though. Man after my own heart, this one." Hess cackles as he starts stacking the empty platters.

"It was just really good" Ember says sheepishly, realising now how much he'd had by the bulge at his belly.

"Hey I take it as a complim-ENT" Hess yips and jolts stiffly against the table, having to support his upper body as though it's about to crumple. Voigt had taken the opportunity to come up beside him and start squeezing one of his butt cheeks, and, judging by the sounds Hess is making, he isn't being gentle.

"Can you two carry on with the dishes? I'm in a mood and I need to take it out on something I know can handle it" Voigt says in such a gruff voice it causes Ember's fur to prick. Cal seems amused by the display and looks at his watch.

"I have half an hour before my meeting with the entertainment company. So don't be too long or our new guy will be left alone in the kitchen." Cal explains plainly, stacking the plates on the trolley he'd brought back into the hall.

"Fine by me, I don't bother much with foreplay anyway." Voigt mutters wetly, his muzzle close to Hess's neck and hand still exploring his famous behind.

Hess moans and whimpers deliriously, arms quivering as he struggles to support himself. His face showing a deep desire Ember's only seen a fraction of, tongue lolled and panting as the older wolf gropes him and breathes vocally against his neck fur. Voigt grabs the ring on his collar and near drags him out of the room through the double doors. Ember, stunned by the display, looks nervously over to Cal who laughs at the sight.

"Oh sweetie, you're so cute. Come on, help me with this lot, we've got a lot to clean up in 25 minutes."

Ember gulps and tries to shake himself back to reality, and realises he'd grown a decent chub from seeing Hess being so quickly put in his place by the grey wolf. His mind injects himself into each position in that scenario and both being very hot. A sharp clatter of plates in the kitchen allows him to bring his focus back and he starts piling up all the used drinking glasses on a serving tray to take through.

"Does Voigt get like that often?" Ember asks later, polishing a bowl with a tea towel.

"Sometimes. He's got a bit of a thing for chubbier guys, so watch you don't get yourself too big unless you want him hounding you like that." Cal says, half-jokingly.

"He seems like such a straight and narrow kind of guy though."

"Not sure what you mean by that, but we all give in to our urges from time to time. Voigt has his kinks, Hess has his and ... well ..." Cal coughs awkwardly as he trails off, giving Ember the impression he doesn't like to talk about his private interests so freely.

Ember dips his head a little, focusing on drying the dishes handed to him and putting them neatly in respective piles, not knowing where they should go.

"But what about the collars?"

"What about them?" Cal turns his head with a raised eyebrow.

"Well they can't cum, can they? Won't they just get more frustrated?"

"Oh, ha ha. Yes, but it's still tiring. There's no release, but after half an hour of an orgasm-less fuck session, both parties are going to be worn out, so it's still satisfying in a way."

Ember harrumphs, "I never really got the hang of edging. And not being able to have my morning fap has made me more irritable than usual."

"I understand. It's always a challenge on the first day. But hey, at least you don't need to worry about accidentally going over, with that collar on you can edge all you like." The white wolf smiles cheekily.

"Don't remind me." Comes the response with a grumble. "And what's all this him wanting our cum about? Is that what the sessions are?"

"You catch on quick. Yeah, sort of. But I can't really talk about it, so I'd rather not if it's alright with you?"

Ember reluctantly nods and drops the subject. As he wipes away the suds from a glass he attempts to pull away from the awkward silence and plucks one of the many questions he has queued in his brain.

"So, you were the first one here, right?"

"Yeah, nearly two years ago now I'd say. I was the master's first attempt at wolf wrangling" Cal chuckles.

"Do you like it here?"

Cal looks at him and sighs with a patient smile. He stops washing and dries his hands gesturing towards a small prep table with two chairs. "Come sit down with me for a sec."

Ember puts down the glass he was working on with the towel and joins the white wolf. Cal seems to be the most sensitive of the trio and Ember was worried he'd upset him with the same line of questioning that killed the mood in the bathroom. Both seated, Cal relaxes back against the back of the chair and looks over the table at him.

"I don't like to talk about it, but I like you. I see a lot of myself in you Ember and I want to share something very personal with you that I hope will make you feel a bit better." Ember sits quietly, internally shaking at what he could be about to hear. Possibly of all the true horrors that could be going on here that await him in the master's office. Cal leans on the table and let's his eyes relax down.

"I was orphaned at a very late age, around 14 years old. I can't imagine what it's like to lose one's parents, but I can tell you it's probably not much worse than *being* lost by them. They just didn't want me anymore, so I was sent away. I became a very troubled child, drifting between a couple of families that would attempt take me until I was 18 and was allowed to find my own place. The orphanage got me a job cleaning a hotel; disgusting job but it paid well for someone with no experience and I turned out to be pretty good at it. They also helped me find accommodation, but it was just this awful box of a room in a house share, but I suppose as far as they were concerned, they'd done their part and it was up to me. I was pressured into doing drugs by the other tenants, but thankfully, seeing them waste all their money and fight all the time reminded me

too much of my parents and allowed me to see some sense. I sobered up quietly and would often pretend to participate, disposing of the pills when they weren't looking. It was a pretty horrible time in my life that didn't really seem to have an end. I was too uneducated for good jobs, and barely earned enough to build any kind of savings. Eventually I met this girl who joined the hotel staff and really hit it off. We worked on saving up together and year later and we moved in to our own rented apartment.

"Now, I don't know if she was one beforehand, or if she was bitten or whatever, but she was a werewolf. She was able to resist the transformation to keep it a secret from me, but once we'd finally settled in, she decided in her wisdom that I should be one too. I couldn't believe it and wanted nothing to do with it, so, she pinned me down and changed me by force. And that's where my life truly fell apart. I hated her for what she did; more than I hated my parents. I packed up the next day and left the flat, the job, and moved away as far as I could afford. Now I don't know if you're a purebred or a changed human, but the next few months we're agonising. It was like werewolf puberty. I'd change randomly, feel angry all the time, go out hunting and even hurt a few people. I had to keep moving around because I couldn't control it and end up being spotted. I hated living and found every opportunity I had to just distance myself from people. I'd start spending more time in beast form over the next few years, slowly leaving everything that tied me to my humanity until all I had was a backpack with bare essentials. I would find less and less reason to shift back because the human world angered me so. Every time I had to return to my furless self I'd think of her and want to hurt people around; teach them for ruining my life as though they were all to blame.

"When I was on my own one night, out in the woods, there was this timid human, wandering around, carrying a thick leather strap. Having denied my bloodlust for a week or so before, I advanced on him, jumped and tumbled with him under me. In the tussle, he'd managed to lock the strap around my neck and I could no longer hurt him. Oh the rage I felt. I slashed and bit and roared, attacking anything I could see. He'd try and talk to me but I was in no mood for it. I thought that, finally, I'd been caught up to and was going to be put down. One final victory for the humans by ridding me from their world. When the human realised talking to me was getting nowhere, he just started walking, and the collar forced me along all the way to the mansion. I was led into the dungeon, tied up in the same way as yourself and left to rest.

"Over the following three weeks, Alek brought down food, drink, books, and would see me as often as he could to just sit with me and talk. I told him about my life, but in much more detail, and for the first time in my life, I felt like someone actually cared about me. I hated him at first for what he'd done, ridding me of my freedom, but ultimately, I'm grateful for the new life he gave me. On the fourth week, he brought me out of the dungeon, into a proper bedroom to call my own and gave me real, fulfilling work to do. My life started again that day, Ember. So when you ask me if I like it here, it's unfair of me to just say 'yes', because it would belittle the admiration I feel for what Alek has done for me."

Ember stays still for a moment, processing all he'd heard with sore eyes from seeing Cal get so worked up from telling his story. All he could do was smile weakly in understanding, having been shown a side to this place that he wasn't expecting to see.

"You know, I fell in love with Alek, not long after he let me out of the basement. It was a silly thing to do, but I couldn't help it." Cal smiles to himself, looking off in the distance. "He was so sweet about it too, and I was such a hopeless romantic. We tried it for a bit, but it didn't really work, we weren't really compatible for that kind of relationship. But I'm sure you've picked up already that I don't really have the same kind of 'yes sir, no sir, three bags full' mentality that Voigt does. He's only been with us about four months now, so I expect that will diminish over time."

"Yeah ... I guess I have." Ember says, softly. "Listen, I'm -"

"Don't worry about it." Cal interrupts, holding a hand up. "Look, you have your reasons to love or hate this place, even the master. But me, Hess and Voigt ... we found our home here. Call it Stockholm syndrome if you want, but all of our lives are so much better since the master took us in."

“I’m sorry Cal, I shouldn’t have ... y’no-“

“It’s alright, dear. Really.” Cal sighs and looks down at the floor before looking around, his hands firmly clasped together. He settles his eyes back on Ember, leans closer and continues with a quieter tone. “Look, I’m not allowed to tell you this, but ...” he sighs, clearly waging a war in his head. “You get a choice. And I mean a real choice, not just stay here or be hunted kind of choice. After two months, you get to leave.”

Ember’s ears shoot up and his eyes widen.

“If you really push for it,” Cal continues, “you can be released today, it’d just be very unsafe for you out there. But after two months, you earn a proper freedom where you can be safe from Hunters. So if you really have your heart set on escaping, maybe that will give you something to look forward too.”

“Really?” Comes the surprised reply. The white wolf nods slowly and stands up in front of Ember.

“I have a meeting I need to get to, but let me leave you with this. Was your life that much better out there?” He says softly and runs his hand gently through the thick, black fur on the wolf’s head, cupping the jawline and stroking the cheek with a thumb. He half-smiles and walks out, leaving Ember alone with his thoughts, and a warmth lingering on his face.