

The Seventh Realm: Volume Three

By Mantrid Brizon

Episode 34: Negligent Discharge

Yasmin opens her eyes, her body still weary even though she has slept through the night. Ever since swapping her old grass mattress for one taken from the Malevolence, she has had trouble getting out of bed, though she wouldn't consider this a serious problem. Sitting up, she yawns and stretches, glancing over to Rico who sleeps peacefully beside her. Footsteps pass by their door, the clicking of claws accompanying the softer footfalls. Cy and Zakera climb down the stairs to eat breakfast before starting another day.

"You do not need to do that, Cy." Zakera remarks.

"Yes, I do!" He chirps as he helps her into her chair.

A full month has passed since the first of several visits to the Malevolence, stripping it of all but the most important components. Johnny and Minoma are already awake and sitting together in the dining hall. Both of them watch the couple with amused grins as they eat their breakfast. At just over two months pregnant, Zakera now shows her condition; Cy treats her like a delicate flower, doting on her and refusing to allow her to do any physical labor of any kind. Though the attention often embarrasses the girl, Zakera enjoys the affection of her mate. Cy fetches their food and places it neatly before Zakera, kissing her lovingly on the lips and stroking her snout. He takes a seat beside her and her tail hooks his side. Glancing back, he looks to Johnny.

“Oh, before I forget, there’s something we need to talk about later. Bring Minoma too.”

“Alright. When’s later?” Johnny asks.

“I don’t know.” Cy shrugs.

“So helpful.” Johnny subtly chuckles.

Finishing their breakfast, Johnny and Minoma stand up to leave. As they head for the archway leading into the main hallway, Katero, Gabriella, Amanda and Daniel enter the room.

“Now’s a good time to talk.”

Directing the juveniles toward the main, crescent shaped table at the innermost wall, a table which wraps around one of the three primary tree trunks that give the tribe its name, the adults sit around them.

“So... What’s this all about?” Johnny asks.

“We have been thinking about all of your past deeds; you have done far more than can be asked of most juveniles.” Katero begins.

“I guess...” Johnny murmurs.

“Minoma is also seventeen cycles old. That’s old enough.” Amanda adds.

Minoma’s face lights up, her red eyes growing wide and her lips curling up around the corners of her gaping maw.

“Old enough for what?” Johnny raises a brow.

“You didn’t think you could stay young forever, did you?” Cy quips.

"I figured I'd give it a shot." Johnny smirks.

"There's a ceremony of adulthood for the juveniles of the village. It will take place in a few days." Daniel says.

"We wish for both of you to take part in it." Zakera says.

Minoma squeals with delight, to the amusement of Johnny and several others. The Ketlan all desire this moment in their lives; with adulthood comes responsibility, the pledge and children, but also respect, personal freedom and property rights, not including other cultural benefits. Though they both except the honor and agree to partake, Minoma is visibly excited while Johnny is less enthusiastic.

"Now that you'll be an adult, you're allowed to pledge and everything. Maybe even move out into your own brick house... Then I could walk around in my underwear again." Cy teases.

"Ha-ha..." Johnny grumbles.

"Is this not wonderful, Johnny?!" Minoma happily exclaims.

"Yeah..."

Patting him on the shoulder, Daniel and Katero congratulate the boy. Amanda and Zakera embrace Minoma, and Cy does the same for Johnny, who is like a younger brother to him, or perhaps even a son. Continuing about their day, Minoma has a spring in her step, but Johnny is aloof. He glances to Minoma, who radiates joy; she doesn't even notice his melancholy. They have been close friends almost since the moment she spoke to him, as he sat crying beneath the torlan tree. However, for the first time he feels as though he cannot speak his peace, though he desires nothing else. They have had all of this time to experience each other, as juveniles are permitted, but simply have not. Johnny has never asked, for fear of ruining their friendship, nor has Minoma pushed him.

Back inside the fortress, Cy and Zakera watch as Johnny and Minoma walk down the brick street and toward the ever-growing city, which is being constructed day and night by multiple shifts of diligent workers.

“They grow up so fast.” Cy feigns tears in jest.

Chris trots down the stairs, humming what sounds suspiciously like Beethoven.

“Oh, hello Cyrus! Zakera!”

“Hey.” They say in unison.

“Ready for that meeting with Mirkon and Zia?” Chris asks excitedly.

“That was today?!” Cy replies in disappointment.

“Yes... I told you yesterday... Three times.” Chris explains.

“He knows. He was just hoping that with your age you would have forgotten.” Zakera giggles.

“I’m not *that* old. My mind will be the last organ to fail me.” Chris smirks.

“Alright... Fine... Let’s go introduce money to our people.” Cy grumbles.

Cy slips an arm around his mate and leads her carefully outside. Normally she wouldn’t go, but she has insisted on some fresh air and demanded more time with her mate. Though worried for her health and that of their child, Cy was not going to deny Zakera her wish. As they take their leave and are followed by Chris, Daniel and a portion of the fortress guards, Gabriella watches from the top of the staircase, on the third floor. Peering over the side, she had been spying on them since Chris’ feet touched the second-floor landing. With the two other

Ketlan residents now gone and no one to disturb them, she continues down the hall and toward Katero's room.

It's her intent to spend quality time with the Ketlan male, who she finds herself infatuated with. Rushing up to his room, which is beside Johnny's, one away from Cy and Zakera's, and two from Yasmin and Rico's, she coils her fingers and raises her hand. Before she can knock softly upon the door, he opens it. His lips curl into a pleased grin and he steps into the hallway, closing the door behind him, wearing only his black cloth trousers.

"Hello, Gabby. It is very good to see you today." He begins.

"You too, Katero. D-did you want to spend some time with me?" She sheepishly asks.

"Of course!" He chirps.

She grins from cheek to cheek. Without dressing further, the athletic warrior walks down the hall as he follows Gabriella toward the staircase. His toe-claws click on the wooden floor as they walk in an awkward silence.

"Did you want to catalog flora again?" He finally asks her.

"Yeah. That would be a nice walk... Oh! I need Donald's book from the library!" She exclaims.

They race down the stairs and toward the second floor, heading for the library. As they reach the landing, however, Katero suddenly stops. He turns away from the hall and clears his throat. Gabriella stops and looks back to him.

"What's wrong?"

"Perhaps we can go without the book." He suggests.

"I won't know what I'm looking for if I don't have that." She giggles.

"Gabby, wait!"

She runs down the hall and Katero gives chase. Before he can catch her, she hears it. Now only feet from the door, the thick wooden walls and barrier muffle sounds from inside. She can very faintly hear what sounds like Samantha moaning and Jack grunting. Her face flushes as she realizes why Katero was acting so strangely; the pair had just begun having sex in the library and his superior hearing detected it. Gabby turns to Katero and opens her mouth to speak, but no words come to her. His head tilts downward as though ashamed for failing to save her from the embarrassment. Turning his golden eyes toward her, they stare at each other for a moment, listening only to the sounds of Jack and Samantha's lovemaking.

They look to each other as if to ask what they would rather do instead, but neither speaks. Gabriella notices that Katero's breathing hastens, a hand balls into a fist and he suddenly turns away. Stepping up to him, Katero now appears more embarrassed than she is. Forcing herself in front of him, she stands with her back mere inches from the wall. As she opens her mouth to speak, she glances over Katero who attempts to turn away again. That's when she notices what is bothering him. Katero spins around to hide his growing erection from her, a side effect of being unable to tune out the passionate exclamations that come from the room just behind them.

Her eyes lock on the bulge, which arouses her even more than Jack and Samantha's vocalizations. With her loins burning and her body trembling, Gabriella steps before Katero again, trying to gain his attention. She attempts to maintain her composure, but as he looks to her with obvious desire, she does something that she did not anticipate. Without thought, her hand reaches out, but not for his face. As if powered by an unseen force, her palm rests over the

considerable girth within his black trousers, her fingers coiling and giving the warm member within a gentle squeeze. Reacting to her touch, Katero spins around to face her.

Placing his hands on her upper arms and leaning in, he kisses her roughly and presses himself up against her, her plump breasts smooshing against his chest. As Samantha squeals in the library, Gabriella melts in Katero's arms in the hallway before the door. Jack grunts as he works his female companion with what sounds like considerable vigor; Katero matches him as his hands explore Gabriella's clothed body, their tongues entwining. She taps him on the arm repeatedly to gain his attention. Pulling back, the golden furred feline Ketlan with black spots looks down at her.

"My room." She whispers.

Taking his hand, they race upstairs, unnoticed by anyone else within, though at this point the fortress is nearly deserted. Gabriella's room is on the third floor and on the furthest side. She does not share it with her sister Isabella. The room is away from both the stairs and those occupied by their companions. No sooner do they enter her room does the door slam and Gabriella finds herself pinned against it. With his hands on the door and above her shoulders, Katero kisses, neck and even licks her in ways that she has never experienced. He is almost animalistic in his enthusiasm, and in many ways she appreciates it.

She kicks off her shoes before pushing down her pants and panties with one motion. Katero kneels down. As her arms reach above her head to remove her top, she is startled by Katero's touch, which is soon followed by his tongue. He presses his snout between her legs as she stands with her back to the door, licking her loins. The human girl has never felt a sensation quite like this, and her body quivers. Taking the lead, Katero rises to his feet and drops his trousers before taking Gabriella's bra in his claws and simply pulling

it over her head; he does not bother attempting to find the clasps, if he even knew they were there to begin with.

Looking down, Gabriella gasps at the sight before her eyes. His member, a glossy charcoal black, is quite thick and with considerable length. Though fully erect, it appears to be rather heavy and looms over the golden fur of his scrotum like a rounded, obsidian obelisk. She impulsively takes hold of the organ, feeling the heat radiating off of the taut flesh. He is just over three of her fingers in width and his length runs from her fingertips to nearly two-inches beyond her wrist. Katero sees her expression and is quite pleased by her reaction. With his ego bolstered, he leans in and licks the brown flesh of the girl's nipples, teasing her bare breasts.

Gabriella wraps her arms around her male companion, who promptly grabs hold of her firm buttocks with both hands. Her leg lifts, the bottom of her foot stroking the soft fur of his calf muscle. With an opportunity presented, he shifts, bending his knees. After a few rather clumsy attempts, he presses the head against her flesh before carefully driving it in. The hot and drenched vagina is more than willing to accept him. Gasping, she grips him tightly, her loins stretching to fit the first phallus that she has experienced in at least seven months. He grunts as he drives himself deeper, sheathing himself inside of Gabriella's aching flesh. It has been even longer for him, as he has been an adult for over a cycle and has never pledged.

"Beh... Bed..." Gabriella gasps.

"Alright." He nods, his breathing labored.

Holding her with his hands, which grip her butt firmly, she wraps her legs around his waist and keeps her arms over his shoulders. With careful steps, he takes her to the grass mattress; Gabriella had chosen to keep the firm bed as opposed to trading it for one from the Malevolence. He kneels down carefully before leaning forward and plopping his lover down atop the bed of tied and woven sheaves,

resting his hands over her shoulders and taking a comfortable position. He licks her neck as he pumps into her tight hole, enjoying every ridge and curve within her as he stretches her to fit. She struggles to keep from squealing, instead moaning into his shoulders. Lying back, she enjoys every thrust from her male, wondering why she hadn't done this with him sooner.

Downstairs, Yasmin and Rico clean and examine the arsenal of weapons in the armory. It is one of the few tasks that they perform together, though Rico is not very experienced with firearms, only ever using them on a handful of occasions. Setting the last SKS rifle onto the custom carved, wooden rack made by Michael Judge, they sit back and relax.

"This is nice." Rico comments.

"Yeah? You like this?" Yasmin raises a brow.

"The quality time. I sometimes wish we spent more of it together." He adds.

"Rico, you romantic sap." She chuckles.

"What?" He grins.

Yasmin takes out her Bersa Thunder 9 Pro pistol and checks the magazine and chamber. Rico, perhaps in an effort to impress her, or out of genuine curiosity, takes out his Colt Detective Special from his pocket. The pistol he took from Juan after his suicide, he carries it primarily as a tribute to his fallen friend, who had never seen this world the way that he has. He opens the cylinder, which contains six live rounds of .38 Special ammunition. Rico always leaves the weapon loaded. He swings the cylinder closed, as he has seen in the movies.

"Don't do that." Yasmin sternly scolds.

"Do what?" He asks.

“That. Closing the cylinder like that is bad for the crane and the locking mechanism, especially on an old gun like your Colt.” She explains.

“Sorry.”

“And get your finger out of the trigger guard!” She adds.

Rising from their seats, a sudden loud bang on the door startles the pair. Rico visibly jumps, his finger jerking. The revolver fires, startling him further. He drops the gun to the floor in shock.

“What the fuck?!” He exclaims.

The door swings open and Richard pops in. Yasmin slumps back and slowly sits down.

“I’m sorry, I stepped on my bootlace and fell against the door!” Richard explains.

“Rico... I’m going to fucking kill you...” Yasmin says rather calmly.

Turning to her, they see her gripping her left thigh tightly. Blood oozes from between her fingers as she applies pressure to an entry wound.

“Oh, God!” Rico cries out.

Each man takes one of the Columbian woman’s arms, holding her up and taking her outside. The armory, which sits on the ground floor, is near the rear of the hexagonal fortress. As blood runs down her leg and Yasmin grunts in obvious pain, Rico soon stops their walk. Swinging an arm beneath her legs while keeping one behind her upper

back, he swoops her off of her feet and carries her like a bride. Dashing outside, several startled guards open the gate and escort them to Lara's medical clinic on the first block of the budding city.

"You're going to be okay, babe! I am so sorry!" Rico exclaims as they dash down the street.

"You're not going to be." She growls.

Upstairs and in Gabriella's room, Katero rolls his lover over. Having brought her to climax surprisingly quickly, he places her on her hands and knees. Weak from the orgasm, she rests her upper half on her pillow, drooling on the animal hide case and groaning. It takes all of her energy to make a single request.

"Please... Nng. Don't... Hhf, don't cum in me, ahh."

"Nng, what?"

Forgetting that Katero, as a Ketlan native to Monala, does not understand some of her 21st century Earth phraseology, reiterates the request.

"Hhf... Spill your, nng, seed, hhf, outside of me, nngaahhh."

"Nng, alright." He nods.

With his clawed hands gripping her glistening, sweat drenched flesh, he pumps harder and faster into her loins. It does not take long before Gabriella is squealing into her pillow from a second orgasm. Katero grunts louder as he draws near his own end, the peak of his pleasure swiftly approaching. His furry scrotum slaps her clitoris as he works harder and faster, now focusing on himself, though he keeps her words in the back of his mind.

"I am, nng, about, hhf, to finish, nng!" He warns.

With the end only seconds away, he prepares to withdraw himself and release his load onto Gabriella's back, thinking that she might enjoy that. Suddenly, a loud bang startles the Ketlan as he is in the midst of a final thrust. Gabriella turns to look as well. She closes her eyes tightly, squealing and cumming for a third time as Katero, who remains fully sheathed within her loins, blasts jet after powerful jet inside of her body. He roars and leans forward, his eyes closed tightly as he instinctively pushes in even harder. The charcoal colored penis fills the taut pink flesh of her body with a copious amount of his fertile, white seed, which races to complete a very specific quest.

"Ahh, oh God... Hhf, shit..." Gabriella gasps for breath.

"NNNGGHHF! ... Oh Gabby... You are so tight and warm. I have never mated so well." Katero says through labored breaths.

"You are great at mating, Katero." She giggles. "Oh wait... No!"

She looks down and between her legs to see Katero's golden fur covered scrotum pressed firmly against her groin. Pulled tightly toward his body, the empty testicles seem to taunt her. Gabriella then looks over her shoulder as Katero pulls out. He withdraws his member from her body, which springs up, still fully erect and as hard as a rock. A minute amount of cum leaks from the tip and covers the black flesh of the head and upper shaft. Looking back between her legs, she leans back as she sits on her calves. With a hand placed beneath her, she catches a massive flood of semen that nearly fills her entire palm, and she is certain that she can feel more, deep inside of her body.

"I am sorry! I heard that noise and it distracted me!" He apologizes.

“Yeah... It distracted me too. I could have pulled away.” She sighs.

Though she won’t admit it, she is quite pleased that she felt her lover’s flood, but now she must deal with the aftereffects.

“Well... There is ‘the tea’.” He says.

“That works on humans?”

“I do not know. You would have to ask a female Ketlan or Zelkona. Only they know the recipe and dosage.” He explains.

The couple quickly dress themselves as Gabriella prepares to head out for the city below. With Zia in a meeting with Cy and Zakera, among others, and Minoma almost certain to share her and Katero’s business with Johnny, she can think of only one other person to call upon. Hopefully she is trustworthy enough to ask. She leaves the fortress, passing a startled looking Jack and Samantha, who are now also fully dressed and looking at a small trail of blood that leads out of the fortress.

“What happened?” Samantha asks.

“Who was shot?” Jack interjects.

“I don’t know. I’ll go find out. Be right back!”

Inside of Lara’s medical clinic, Rico paces back and forth as a drugged Yasmin lies back on a table. Lara digs a slug from her leg, checking to make sure that no arteries were damaged before sewing her wound closed.

"You were lucky. Missed pretty much everything, and that is rare. Leg wounds are often fatal without immediate treatment. I didn't even need to amputate!" She chirps.

"Hooray..." Yasmin grumbles.

"I am so sorry, babe. I just... I..."

"Stop apologizing for being a fucking idiot..." Yasmin mumbles.

"Are you mad at me?" Rico whimpers.

"Furious..." She sighs.

"Now Yasmin, remember our sessions. Remember what I told you." Lara cryptically states.

"Okay, Doc." Yasmin weakly nods.

"Well, at least she's going to be alright. I should find Cy and tell him about this." Richard remarks.

"I just want you to know that it was an accident though. I didn't know that would happen." Rico continues.

"Shut up, Rico... I'm too busy being high to listen to you right now..." She says.

"Okay..." He squeaks.

Walking past the clinic, Gabriella wishes that she could go inside and find out what happened, but she needs to take care of something first. Though the city is still under constant construction, the first of a dozen planned blocks are finished. In four rows of three blocks, the first row is entirely industrial. With the exception of the militia's armory and active-duty barracks, Lara's clinic and the schoolhouse, the rest are set aside for craftsmen such as blacksmiths, carpenters, and brick masons. These buildings all face the outer street, which serves as a main road and heads directly for the Sa'kesh fortress. The second, inner half of the first row and the first half of the second row are designated solely for merchants and tradesmen. Jewelers, tailors, potters, food markets, etc.

All of the remaining rows will be brick houses and apartments. The first row of houses has been completed, as have all of the industrial and market buildings. Heading directly for the first street of houses, Gabriella hopes that Kanafa is home and not on-duty. She is one of the only Zelkona whom she knows by name, and who knows her in kind. Knocking on the front door of her home, the door swings open and a blonde-haired human male answers.

“Oh... Is this Kanafa’s house?” She asks.

“Gabriella?” Kanafa says as she steps up to the door.

“Hi... Can I talk to you for a moment?”

“Of course!” Kanafa ushers her inside.

Once within the building, Gabriella finally recognizes the man. He is a human militia whom she has seen several times before. Though she doesn’t know his name, she recognizes him as part of Kanafa’s squad and her second-in-command.

“So... You two are friends?” Gabriella asks.

“Something like that.” Kanafa replies.

“I see...”

“Please do not tell anyone yet, but he has asked me to pledge to him and I have accepted.” Kanafa confides.

“Well, in that case, I need to ask you for a favor.” Gabriella says.

“Yes?”

“Can you show me how to make ‘the tea’?”

“Tea?” Kanafa reiterates, raising a brow.

“You know which one I mean...”

Kanafa nods and heads for a wooden cupboard. Taking out a small satchel of strange beans, she dumps them into a little pile atop a waist-high wooden counter with more storage space. Reaching back into the cupboard, she takes out a much larger sack and scoops out several handfuls of teal colored powder. The blue raptor female pours the teal powder from the bottom of her clawed hand like sand until the small satchel is filled. Returning the large sack to the cupboard she approaches Gabriella, holding out the satchel for her.

“Mix with hot water until it becomes as colorful as the powder. It should take three or four fingers of powder. Take it immediately and then again before bed tonight.” Kanafa explains.

“Thank you. I’m sorry to ask, but are you sure this will work on humans?” Gabriella nervously asks.

“I have heard of humans using it, but for some reason it makes them quite ill. Ketlan and Zelkona, however, are unaffected in that way. I am sorry.” Kanafa replies.

“It’s alright. I won’t tell anyone about you two either; you can when you’re ready.”

“Thank you.” Kanafa bows her head.

Leaving the home as quickly as she came, she waves goodbye to Kanafa before heading back for the fortress. As Kanafa lives at the end of the first row of homes, she simply follows the end road until she reaches the main street. Walking along that street, she nears the clinic when Richard suddenly steps outside.

“Oh, hey Gabby!” Richard exclaims.

“Hi, Richard. What are you doing out here?”

“Oh, we just had to take Yasmin to Lara’s office.” He replies.

“What happened to Yasmin?”

“Rico shot her.”

“... Why?” Gabriella raises a brow.

“Because I tripped on my bootlace.” He answers.

“... Oh... Well I’d better be going. See you later!”

“Hey, what is that?” He asks, pointing at the satchel in her hand.

“Oh, it’s tea!” She inadvertently answers honestly.

“I love tea! Can I have some?”

“It’s uh... Medicinal. For... Cramps.” She explains, lying on the spot.

“Oh... Sorry to hear that. I hope you feel better. Take care, Gabby.”

“You too, Richard.”

With the conflict averted, she walks swiftly home while Richard diverts and heads directly for Mirkon’s home. Zia, who lives next door, will be there with Cy, Zakera, Chris and Daniel as they prepare to introduce their new Sa’kesh currency. Chris and Daniel jokingly refer to it as ‘the cyrian’ knowing that it flusters Cyrus, who hates being treated like royalty. Cy had nicknamed it a ‘zakerian’. As he heads for the row of homes, he races past Johnny and Minoma as they walk slowly back toward the fortress.

“Well, he’s in a hurry.” Johnny remarks.

“Johnny... Are you mad at me?” She asks.

“What?! No!” He exclaims.

“You have not been acting yourself since our breakfast this morning.”

“I’m sorry.” He murmurs.

“Please, tell me what is troubling you.” She stops and turns to him.

Perhaps from embarrassment or for a desire for privacy, he takes her by the hand and walks her away from the road. Marching directly toward the fortress, they head through a grassy area that has been set aside for domesticated animals who have yet to be caught. Cutting through the grass, they reach the main road and return to the fortress. Johnny doesn't utter a word during this time, though he appears to be ready to speak at any moment. The guards open the gate for the juveniles and they head for the fortress. Johnny looks around in the lab, then the dinning hall across the way, before taking Minoma inside.

"I'm sorry I haven't been myself, I've just been thinking a lot." He finally begins.

"About what?"

"Life, I guess. Life as an adult." He sighs.

"Are you not excited?" She tilts her head in confusion.

"Not really. I'm scared." He quietly admits.

"Whatever for?" Minoma slides closer.

"Things will be different."

"We will have more responsibilities, but those are not bad." She says.

"That's not what I meant. I meant it will be different between us..."

"How so?" She sounds genuinely perplexed.

"We'll be able to pledge, and..."

Minoma's brow softens, her eyes turning downward. Her tall, rabbit-like ears begin to sag forward. She reaches a clawed and across her chest and grabs hold of her white fur, her claws running repeatedly along her cherry red stripes. It's a nervous tick she often employs for comfort.

"Is that why we have never mated? Because you do not desire me?" She asks.

"What?! No, I... We..." Johnny stammers.

He reaches out and takes her in his arms, holding the young Ketlan girl. She reaches up and rests her hands on his shoulder blades, burying her face in his chest for a moment before turning her head and glancing up to him with her piercing red eyes. Reaching out a hand, Johnny gently brushes her wavy red hair from her face, softly tapping her black nose with his fingertip. Minoma grins, as she always does when he binks her nose.

"We never mated because I was scared of ruining what we had." He begins.

"Really?" She sheepishly asks.

"I have never shared so much with anyone before. The only reason my sisters and Cy know as much as you do is because they were there for most of it. I trust you with so much, and I thought that if I complicated it with sex, we might not be good friends anymore. This friendship is very important to me and I just don't know what I'd do without you. It's not that I never wanted to mate with you, because I do." He continues.

"I did not want to pressure you. I thought that if I simply waited until you were ready, you would ask me, but after so long without doing so and us about to become adults, I worried that you simply did not see me that way." She speaks softly.

"I'm sorry. That wasn't what I wanted. I didn't know how to say it until now, because in a few days I might not be able to. I just don't want you to have never heard me say how I fe-"

Minoma interrupts him with a tender kiss upon his lips, holding her position for a moment. After pulling away, she gazes up at her companion, who looks down at the girl, easily six-inches taller than her.

"Ask me, Johnny." She coos.

"Do you want to mate?" He nervously asks.

"Yes."

Taking him by the hand, she leads him up the stairs and toward her bedroom. It is the first time that either juvenile has experienced the other. Minoma leads Johnny to her room on the second floor, passing by Lara's old lab where a nervous Katero watches as Gabriella mixes the tea. The pair do not even notice the juveniles, nor do the juveniles notice the adults inside the room.

"Now remember, you're covering for me. I just caught food poisoning." She reminds him.

"I will not forget. I am very sorry about this." He whimpers.

She looks to him and subtly chuckles, her lips curling into a little grin as she stirs the tea. Using an old-fashioned burner, part of Lara's rather primitive laboratory setup, she'd quickly brought the water to a boil.

"It's alright, Katero. I liked it. It was nice."

"... Really?!" He asks with a subdued grin.

"Yeah. This won't be though..."

After waiting for it to cool and drinking the tea, which has a surprisingly pleasant citrus flavor, she retires to her room where she awaits the painful symptoms known to befall the humans who consume it. Sitting with her in her room, Katero pets her head and the pair share idle banter. He struggles to tune out Johnny and Minoma, but promptly warns Gabriella, just in case. Having already released,

however, he is better able to ignore the juveniles downstairs, sounds that his sensitive hearing is unfortunate enough to pick up. Within the hour, Cy returns home with his entourage and immediately calls a meeting in the dinning hall. By then, Johnny and Minoma have since finished.

“So, it’s come to my attention that someone, Rico, did something really stupid with a loaded gun... From now on, anyone who wants to carry a firearm has to be properly trained in the safe handling of firearms, and certified by both myself *and* Yasmin... Once she’s healed of course.” Cy begins.

“Fucking stupid...” Yasmin grumbles as she sits in a chair with a bandaged leg.

“Until then, keep your weapons handy but be careful! Fingers *off* of the triggers until you are ready to fire! We don’t want anything going off by accident again.” Cy continues.

Gabriella and Katero both share quick glances.

“When Yasmin’s ready, we’ll find a new area to target practice, since the city is so close to the fortress. Actually, I think we’ll train selected militia to use rifles and pistols too, since we have the ammo for it.” Cy adds.

“Now that would be cool to see; a Zelkona with an AR-15 or an SKS rifle.” Johnny remarks.

“Alright. Everyone but Zakera go away; I’m sick of looking at you.” Cy jokes.