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WARNING: May contain coarse language, violence, gore or sexual content. Reader discretion is advised.

Chapter 11. "You Can't Train At Life"

"HEt-CHoo!" Shari sneezed.

Vilkas looked over at her. "You okay?" He asked.

"I may have blasted out some brain matter but," Shari said and sniffed, "I think I'll be okay."

Vilkas placed the dried noodles into a long, cylindrical jar and replaced the cloth top. "Anything else?" He asked and looked around.

"I think that's all. I'm going to get dinner started," Shari said as she started the stove fire.

"Now?" He asked as the small flame caught the tinder.

"Yeah," she said and pulled out the salt jar. "This will slow cook for hours. Just rub the spices into the meat and place it in a shallow pan with a bit of water on the bottom. Cover the top with fat slices and cook at a low heat for hours. I'll turn it about halfway to thoroughly cook it."

"I see," he said and sat at the table. "This is easier to get on and off, but it's itchy," he said as he began to dismantle the sling.

He took off the hat last and placed it on top of the pile. He took the items and placed it on the counter in his room. He returned to the dining table with his back to the door closest to the stove and watched Shari prepare the meat roast.

"As I was saying before, in a few days I'll be heading to Orinon for a day. I'll do the same for Lyneda, Kilon Nauri and Namal Lu. Basically I'll be busy all week. I have a

few days to get you to behave on your own so I can work. I've been away from the cities for too long."

Shari finished seasoning the meat and layered the fat on top.

"So, I can't help," he stated and looked at the table.

"No. I have to earn some money. I can't make money here now that everyone is patched up and the funds are going to the rebuild. I just go to the clinics and help the doctors there. There's always work with the vast difference in population." Shari placed the pan in the bottom of the stove and poured a few cups of water into the bottom.

"I understand."

"In the meantime, you can help with the cleanup crews. If you get hungry you'll have to make nice with the neighbors and eat with them. Before I leave I'll let father know to feed you breakfast and I'll pay him back when I get home." Shari washed her hands and grabbed a couple of cups from the cupboard.

"I'm sure that will go well," he thought.

"Well," she said and poured some water into the cups. "Let's get you informed on some people skills." She placed a cup in front of him and sat across from him. She took a sip of the water. "You seem to have figured out 'thank you' and the timing of it. You're getting better with 'you're welcome'. Let's do some role-play to practice."

He looked at her and his ear twitched.

"Vilkas, would you like some food?"

He narrowed his eyes. "No. I'm okay," he replied honestly.

"Say 'please' or 'yes, please'."

"Please or yes, please."

Shari snorted and giggled. "No-no. If someone asks you that and you're hungry, you would say one or the other."

"So, I'm hungry," he said and tilted his head to the left. He thought for a moment. "If I were hungry and someone offered food, I would say 'one or the other'?"

"Correct. So...Vilkas, would you like some food?"

"One or the other," he said and straightened his head.

Shari chuckled. "You meathead," she said and smiled. "One more time. Vilkas, would you like some food?"

He slowly tilted his head as he thought about her intent. He placed her words into possible responses. "I have to assume one of the half phrases are correct. It's either: 'please', 'yes, please', 'one or' or 'the other'," he thought.

Shari sat patiently. She dipped her muzzle a few times very quickly as if to nod. Like she were encouraging him...or mocking him.

He narrowed his eyes and bit at the inside of his lower lip. He sighed lightly as he straightened his head and said, "Please."

Shari's smile lit up the room. "Yes. That's good," she said and wiped her nose with her handkerchief. "I know you aren't stupid. I could see you were analyzing the words I was saying and running through the conversation from start to finish in your head."

"Yeah," he said and felt a warm feeling in his chest. He placed his hand on his shirt over his heart. "Shari..."

"You feel satisfied because you accomplished something. It's your body's way of rewarding you for a job well done. I presented a question and you provided the correct answer. Your brain releases a signal for you to feel something like pleasure. We aren't entirely sure what causes it but we know the gist of it."

He looked down at his hand as the warm feeling left his chest. He grabbed his cup and took a drink.

"Now," Shari said and adjusted in her seat. "If someone says 'good morning' or something like it, you say...?"

He thought about his usual response. He narrowed his eyes as he looked over at her. She was still smiling that kind smile that made his heart beat quicker. He thought about how she responded to the greeting earlier.

"Good...morning," he finally said.

He felt his heart pound and his eyes widened as she gave him a full smile with her eyes closed. All of her teeth were showing. He placed his hand back on his chest. He could feel his torso throbbing with each beat.

"Her teeth look so pristine. Her mouth is so clean," he thought. "Every tooth was placed in that specific spot for a reason. The way she smiles is so...so..." "Beautiful," he whispered.

Shari's smile faded. She looked out of sorts. She slapped the table lightly with her right hand. "Focus," she scolded. She lifted her hand and pointed her first finger at him. "Although I'm flattered," she said, her voice cracking with the word. "As friends and as doctor and patient, I can't have you saying those words to me," she continued scolding. "You are prohibited from saying I'm 'beautiful' or 'pretty' or anything like that until you move out of this house, understand?"

"I do understand, but I don't know how those words keep escaping my thoughts," he said in earnest. His heart began to settle, but he could feel the familiar feeling of 'shame' replace the throbbing in his chest and he could feel his ears getting warmer.

Shari took a sip of her water. "Look, I know you typically say what's on your mind. I lo-...like that about you. It makes it easier to talk to you, but your lack of filter can sometimes cause others to feel things you may not intend them to feel. I'm getting better at letting some of your honeyed words pass as you just being you. But, sometimes it comes out of nowhere and hits me right in the heart."

"I don't understand." He felt more shame fill his chest. He could feel his face reflect the pain he was feeling.

"I know you don't and I'm doing a terrible job of pointing it out to you," she said and looked down into her cup as she twisted it between her palms. "For now stick to not saying those two things to me and I'll try and point out other things when you say them. I can't really go over all situations so it's more something you'll have to experience and piece together on your own."

"I don't understand," he repeated. He felt himself becoming angry. He wasn't sure if it was at himself or at her. "I just know that ever since I've met you, I've been learning all sorts of new things." He looked at her and their eyes met. "I've learned that I'm safe in your house. I'm learning that I don't have to attack when I'm woken up by someone. I'm learning to look at people's faces and eyes and get to know them instead

of blurring them out. I'm learning that I shouldn't be in the bathroom with you and that seeing you naked isn't right. I'm learning that not everyone is against me. I'm learning that I shouldn't kill anyone that irritates me and that killing isn't always right. I'm learning how to cook better foods. You've taught me so many feelings like shame, lust and love."

"Sweetie, please calm down," Shari said quietly. "Put your fangs away."

He began to breathe through his mouth as he looked at her expression change. She looked like she was scared. He looked down at the table as he continued to breathe.

"I know you won't be able to understand everything and I can't teach you everything I know," she said calmly. "This is harder than learning how to wield a sword. It will probably take a few months to learn how to swing and defend and move your feet and you learn that all at once and then you slowly learn more as you experience more battles." Shari paused and took a breath. He looked up at her as she continued. "Life isn't like that. You learn a little bit of everything as you grow to be an adult, but you never stop learning at that same, slow pace. It's harder not having a parent there to teach you those bits until you're an adult and I can't say I can put myself in your fur and that I understand how you feel right now."

He fought back the anger as she explained everything to him.

She breathed through her nose as she pressed her lips together. "I'll try and sum up what I'm trying to say." She breathed through her nose again as it appeared she was calming herself down. She appeared to think for a moment. "You can train with a sword...you can't train at life."

He continued to look at her and let her words sink in. He tried to put those last words into context as he looked at the table.

"Just calm down and let's continue talking like friends, okay?"

He felt his muscles relax. He took a deep breath and let it out. He looked back up at her. She wore an uneasy smile.

"Shari...why are you shaking?"

Shari's face contorted and a tear fell from her left eye when she finally looked up at him. She was clutching her cup so tight he could see her knuckles and forearm muscles through her fur.

"Because I'm scared," she said quietly as her jaw quivered. "You scare me when you get worked up like that." More tears fell from her eyes. He could see her nose was about to drip as well. Her cup lightly rattled against the wood of the table.

"Do I get up and hug her like she does me?" He thought.

"I don't do well in situations like this. I feel anxious and I want to run and hide when things go from good to overly serious." More tears fell from her eyes. Drops of moisture fell from her nose and it started to pool up again. "But I'm so afraid of you and the sudden change in your demeanor that I can't move right now."

He slowly got up from the table.

"NO!" She shouted, her eyes growing wide with fear as she watched him move. "Don't touch me right now," she said a bit calmer. "Just...leave me alone right now. Please go in the other room for a bit."

He felt his chest tighten. He unconsciously groaned and clenched his fur over his heart. He felt like his face was matching her pained expression from a second ago. He looked away from her and slowly made his way to the room. He quietly opened the door enough to walk through and slowly shuffled to the cot. He climbed on it and laid down on his left side. He brought his knees close to his chest.

"It hurts when I see her like that," he thought as he envisioned that terrified look. It made him think back to her expressions during that first night she had him tied up. "I deserve to be tied up," he quietly strained from his lips. He fought with everything he had to keep his eyes dry and to ease the pain in his chest.

He lost his fight as he heard Shari quietly sobbing in the dining room. She blew her nose and continued sobbing for some time. He squeezed his eyes shut. He felt the pillow start to become wet. A tear moved from his eye and over the bridge of his muzzle. He heard the soft 'pat' against the pillow as it landed next to his face.

He wasn't sure how long it had been. It didn't matter. He kept cycling through those pained and fearful expressions she had shown him during their time together. Each expression he envisioned caused more shame and more pain to fill his chest.

"I need to leave here," he thought. "I cause her too much pain. She's afraid of me. I don't deserve her kindness. I don't deserve to see her smile. I don't deserve to be

here. I need to leave here and never return. She will never speak to me again. I will never learn how to live. I will never heal my heart."

He began to repeat those phrases along with the visions of her. He realized he wasn't angry at her. He was angry at himself.

"She is a good person. But I try to be good to her. But then she won't let me," he began to think. He sat up and looked at the doorway. He could still hear her quietly sobbing. It sounded like she was mumbling to herself. "I want to leave," he thought and looked over at the shuttered window. "But I don't...I have nowhere to go." He looked over at the cap and sling. "I want to be outside."

He reached over and put the cap on his head. It took some wiggling but he pulled on the sleeve and grabbed the sling. He stood and carefully opened one of the shutters. He looked out of the window in every direction and slowly opened the other shutter and the window panes. He pushed with his feet and pulled on the window frame with his hands. He vaulted himself out of the window and quickly pulled his feet under him as he landed. He turned and shut the windows.

He turned and looked towards the field in front of him. A breeze brought with it various smells. He took a deep breath and could feel himself relax. The sun started to warm his fur. He sat next to the house and leaned against it. He pulled his feet in and crossed his legs in front of him. He lay his right arm in the sling and used his teeth and left hand to tie the ends over his shoulder. He sighed as he placed his forearm across his thigh.

"I do miss this," he thought and pulled the cap down over his eyes. He sighed again and felt himself fully relax into sleep.

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I walked from under the trees and out into a field of grass and various flowers.

"Don't go too far, Darijus."

"I won't, mamma."

I laughed as I ran out - feeling the grass tap against my shins. I stopped and picked a flower. I ran back and held it up for mother.

"For me?" She asked as she knelt down and took it.

"M-hmm," I nodded and gave her a big, toothy smile.

She held it up to her nose. "It smells lovely. Thank you."

"It smells like Shari!"

"Like Shari?"

"Uh-huh. It smells pretty."

"Prettier than me?" She asked playfully.

I put a finger to my lips and swayed at my hips. "Mmm...nu-uh."

"It's pretty and it smells very pleasant. She's pretty and you picked her because you like her, don't you? You better treat her good. If not, mamma will be upset."

I looked down at the grass that was now up to my ankles. "I'm trying, mother. But I don't understand how. It scares me when she's upset. Being with her scares me and I'm afraid I'll hurt her... like so many other people."

"Smile more."

I looked up at mother. Shari was standing in front of her with the flower in her hair. Mother had her hands on Shari's shoulders. I clenched my right forearm in my left hand. "I don't know how."

I looked up. Mother smiled warmly. Shari smiled that toothy smile that makes my heart beat faster.

"Do as we are right now. Smile when you feel happy. And sometimes, even when you're not. And try your hardest not to make her cry. Sometimes those two things are all you really can do."

It took a moment, but I stretched my lips into a smile.

"I'll try, mother."

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He awoke to something touching his shoulder.

"Mmm," he heard to his right.

He steeled himself from acting before looking. He felt warm. A slight breeze brought in the scents from earlier, but also the smell of Shari. He reached up and pulled back the cap from his eyes. He looked over and saw Shari's head against his right shoulder. She was sitting with her legs folded like his with the bottom of her dress pulled over them, her glasses on top. Her arms were folded across her stomach.

He smiled. He'd done it before, but, for some reason, this was different. He felt calmer than he had in a long time. This new feeling...was very...pleasant. He felt inside what his nose was taking in from the air. The faint smell of the river water, the faint smell of the trees, the smell of the field, the smell of the grass and the smell of the person beside him. All of those smells came together to mimic how he felt in his head and in his chest.

"Mmt-hmm," she groaned.

He watched her adjust her head against his arm. It was followed by the sound of her breathing. Slowly breathing in. Quickly breathing out. Her eyes were moving under her eyelids. He sat there with that smile on his face as he watched her sleep. He sighed and looked ahead at the field. There were some workers in the far end tending to the corn.

"Vilkas," he heard Shari meekly say.

He looked over at her.

She moved her left hand between them and gently pushed her head from his shoulder. She slowly turned her head and partially opened her eyes. She seemed to look around and then over and up at him.

"Vil-as. Mm-sorry. Doan-...doan be mad-mme. 'Kay?" She hovered there as if waiting for an answer. Her eyes very slowly closed and reopened.

He smiled. "Okay."

"Kay," she whispered and leaned back against his shoulder. "Good," she said and placed her hand gently on his thigh. "Hmmmmm," she hum\sang and was quiet.

She began breathing again but was humming or groaning when she exhaled. He wasn't sure if it was one or both. Either way, he continued smiling as he let her rest.

He wasn't sure how long he watched her sleep. But it didn't take long for his face to hurt while exercising these new muscles.

"I don't just *like* her, mother," he thought and looked out at the field. "I *love* her. I don't want to hurt her. I want to protect her from everything. I want her to hold me when I feel angry. I want her to hold my hand and tell me 'it's okay' when I have dreams of battle. I want to help her make dinner and then do the dishes for her afterward. I want to travel with her when she goes off to work." He felt the heat rising in his head. "I want her to help me whenever my penis hurts and I want to help her control her own frustrations." His heart began beating hard as he felt warmth in his chest. His stomach felt strange. "I love her," he thought and smiled harder as he closed his eyes.

"Hmm-rmm-mmm," Shari groaned as she stirred. She smacked her lips several times.

He looked over at her. He couldn't stop his smile from peeking his teeth out.

The fur on her left cheek was matted down up towards her eye. Her hair clung to the cloth of his sleeve and fell as she pulled away from him. She propped up on her left hand.

"Mmm," she groaned as she blinked several times. "How long was I," she said and looked down at her right hand. "SORRY!" She exclaimed and quickly lifted her hand. "I didn't mean," she said and looked up at him. She squinted her eyes as she stared at him. "Are you...smiling?" She asked as she leaned in closer.

His face began to really hurt as she fumbled for her glasses. His lip closed over his teeth. She rubbed her eyes with the back of her hand and placed the glasses on her nose. She squinted and leaned in a bit.

"You're smiling," she said flatly. "Why are you smiling? Your eyes show you're in pain."

He brought his hand up and rubbed his cheeks. "It does hurt. And I can't stop."

She sat upright and inhaled as she stretched. She huffed out her breath. "I didn't mean to fall asleep. I guess I was tired from earlier." She looked over at him and gave a partial smile. "You were dreaming about your mother, weren't you?"

He continued to rub his cheeks as he glanced out to the field. He nodded and looked back at her. "Yeah."

She smiled a bit wider and warmer. "Thought so," she said and looked out to the field. "I calmed myself and went to," she said and looked at her lap where she began fiddling with her fingers. "I saw the shutters open and panicked." She lifted and squeezed her left thumb. "No. I was angry." She let go of her thumb as she slapped her hands in her lap. "So I went to the window and opened it to look out...see if I could find you."

He massages his cheeks harder, hoping it would relieve some of the pain. Smiling was beginning to make his head ache.

She smirked with a chuckle. "You...snore," she said and looked over at him with kinder eyes. "So loud," she said and giggled. "I don't know how you don't wake yourself up," she said and chuckled. "It sounds like you're choking on your tongue," she said and laughed.

He glanced away as his face became warm. She laughed down to a chuckle, then giggled a couple more times. He looked back at her.

"But when I came outside to chew you out for leaving the house without me was when I heard you call out to her," she said and looked down between them. "Then you said my name." She went quiet for a moment. "Then you smiled," she said and looked up. "I couldn't wake you up so I sat next to you." She looked ahead at the field. "I guess that's when I fell asleep, too." She looked down as she picked at one of her claws. "I didn't mean to tip over and sleep on you, though. I'm sorry."

"No," he said and looked out at the field. "It's okay. You looked so peaceful I couldn't move you."

"Still," she said and sighed. She looked over at him. "Did I...say anything to you?" She gave him a bit of a pained expression when he looked over at her.

"You said you were 'sorry' and 'don't be mad at' you."

Shari winced and looked to her right. She made fists with her hands and tapped them in her lap. She loosened her fists and lay her hands in her lap as she looked over at him.

"I am sorry," she said and glanced at the ground. "I don't like it when I feel like you're mad at me. It scares me. I was able to handle it before, but, for some reason, the words you were saying kind of hurt...so I thought it was my fault you were mad."

He felt his smile fade as she spoke. He looked down at his lap and processed her words with how she looked before he left the table.

"I'm sorry, Shari. I wasn't mad at you. I was mad at myself. The only way I know how to deal with it is to attack. But, with your help, I'm learning that there is much I don't know about this world. And, as you said, I didn't have a parent to teach me as I grew and 'life' *is* learned slowly. It makes my head hurt and go fuzzy. I don't want you to be afraid of me anymore." He looked over at her. She was fiddling with her fingers while looking at them in her lap. "I don't want to make you cry. I won't make you cry again because I..."

"You can't promise that," she said and looked at him. "You may not intend to, but I'm sure you'll make me cry again someday. You might not intend to, but I know I will." She smiled and rested her head against the house causing her ears to fold over. "Look, we're still figuring each other out. It *is* hard for me with how direct, blunt, intense and naive you can be. And it's hard for you because I'm new, civilized, emotional...*female*," she said and glanced to her right. "But," she said, looking back at him. "We also don't know a lot about each other. So for tonight - instead of having you talk - I want to tell you about myself. How does that sound?"

He smiled and looked over at her. "I think that sounds good."

She smiled back at him. "I don't know if I can get used to seeing you smile," she said and giggled.

His smile slowly faded.

"No-no, sweetie," she said and sat up while placing her right hand on his right arm. "I was kidding. It's just that you don't smile so it's refreshing when you do."

He narrowed his eyes as she spoke. "So it's just strange, but not bad?"

"Yes," she said and smiled. "I think it's a good thing that you can smile now."

He glanced down at her hand and back at her. He felt those pleasant things build within him. He smiled. "Okay. I understand."

She tapped his shoulder. "Let's get inside. I'll check and see how much longer dinner will be."

"Okay," he said and smiled wider.

They both looked down at their legs and slowly stretched them out.

"Ah-howwie," she cried at the same time he winced from the pain in his legs. "My legs and butt are asleep. I think my tail is asleep, too."

His knees popped as he fully straightened his legs and stretched. He groaned as he rubbed his left thigh. "I agree."

Shari laughed and glanced over at him.

"Do as we are," he remembered his mother saying.

He lost his smile as he watched her. He studied how she was making that sound and trying to recall ever doing it.

"You're trying to figure out how to laugh, aren't you?" She said as she looked at him while rubbing her legs. Her dress was pulled up to her upper thighs and her legs were together.

He glanced at and quickly looked away from her exposed legs. "I think I have before, but not with the same...feelings behind it."

She narrowed her eyes and pressed her lips together. She glanced at her legs and back at him. She raised her left eyebrow and slowly lowered her skirt. She lowered her eyebrow and smiled. "I think I've heard you laugh before. If not, I'm sure you had to have before."

He remembered the first part of his dream. "I think I laughed as a child," he said and looked out at the field. "If that's 'laughing' with pleasant feelings, I don't believe I've done that since then. But I have before...with angry feelings."

"It's hard to explain," she said as he looked at her. "It's just like some of the other feelings you've recently experienced. When they become too much, your body naturally tries to free those feelings. Anger leads to rage - which means you growl or shout and attack. When you're horny..." She cleared her throat as she glanced at the field. She looked back at him. "When you're happy, your lips pull back and you smile. "When you

are really happy or you find something that's funny, you giggle, chuckle or laugh. Sometimes it can be contagious. Like a yawn. When you see someone else do it and your body feels the same, you do it yourself."

He processed what she was saying and thought back to any times he may have done those things with a pleasant or happy feeling.

"If you don't laugh at this," she said as she rolled to her right and made it to her knees.

She winced as she used the house to support her. Her legs shook as she slowly walked her hands up the side of the house and made it to her feet. She laughed, but she didn't look like she was happy.

"Ow-ow-ow-ow," she cried as she held her left hand on the house. She stretched her right leg out, then her left. She looked at him with an expression mixed with pain and happiness. "Ah-how," she said as she used her hands to wipe the back of her dress. She chuckled as she rubbed her hands on her butt. "It hurts so ba-had," she said and continued to chuckle.

"That doesn't look funny," he said frankly.

She smiled at him. "I thought you, of all people, would find pleasure in other people's pain."

He looked at her quizzically. "Not yours."

"You are a strange one," she said and giggled. "Your turn."

He watched as she used her hand to brush out her tail. "Pre-," he began and caught himself as he looked up at her eyes.

She smirked - her eyes still on him as she turned her muzzle slightly to her right with her neck forward a bit. He looked away and felt heat rise in his ears.

"I didn't peg you for a tail fetish," she said and giggled.

"I don't know what that means," he said honestly, but still felt his ears burning.

She giggled again. "Well, when people look at a potential lover, they focus on certain areas they find strengthens their attraction to them. Eyes, teeth or smile,

personality, intelligence, overall body, face, muscles on men or breasts, hips or butt on females. Then there are those that take that to another level when it comes to feeling intense pleasure. For some it's feet. Some it's giving or receiving pain. Some role-play or like to be tied up in bondage like a hostage. I'm sure there's other cases."

He looked over at her. "But I find everything about you b-..." He caught himself again and looked away. He chewed at the inside of his lips as he felt the heat rise in his whole face. He glanced over at her. Her head and expression was in that same position they were before when he almost called her tail 'pretty'.

"Come on, silver tongue. Let's get washed up."

He nodded and moved his legs under him to make it to his knees. He pushed up and found his legs wobble as he stood. Shari burst into laughter. He looked over at her. She was pointing behind him. She doubled over and put her left hand on her knee.

He looked behind him as best he could. His tail was almost split in half on the underside with the fur sticking out on each side. He looked over at her again. He watched her and felt something in his stomach. He looked from her to his tail and back several times. The feeling intensified as he listened and watched her laughing.

"Hmm-hmm," he chuckled. He could still feel his stomach quiver. It kept building as Shari began to wipe tears from her eyes. "Ha ha ha," he loosed from his open mouth.

"Hhhuuh," Shari gasped as she stood upright and brought her hands to her mouth. She lowered her hands and hobbled over to him with that big, toothy smile. "Sweetie! You did it!" She cried out as she wrapped her arms around his waist with her head against his chest.

He groaned as his eyes widened and felt his face and chest explode with heat.

[Shari](#) belongs to [Celeste](#)