



Awkward Date With A Wicked Orc (Sweet Monster Treats)

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Category: Fantasy

Description: My screwball younger sister sets me up on an epic blind date with a dirty talking orc. Wherein everything goes wrong that could possibly go wrong and I suffer through a series of humiliations and yet, this guy...

fanning myself

I'm blushing.

In the end I admit it might've been the best date of my life. But should a single mom with two rowdy, school age children and a busy, small-town bakery spend her valuable time dating a hot-as-sin, wicked orc?

Maybe.

Maybe not?

When I finally return for a second date Urdan Overthrow slams the door shut in my face. Apparently, orcs claim their brides during the dark of winter, therefore he wants nothing to do with me until he can remain civil again.

Maybe civility is the last thing I want from this orc.

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Page 1

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 1

Lila

O kay, this is difficult.

“Is this where I’m supposed to meet Urdan Overthrow, or am I lost?”

I drum my fingers on the steering wheel, bite my lip and peer through the windows of the minivan, then glance down again at the clock. The sun dips low on the horizon, leaving streaks of pink and orange. It’s a gorgeous summer evening and this is my first blind date, ever, and I’m nervous as hell.

The GPS says this is the right location, except I can't decide if it’s correct.

Darn it.

I’ve never been to Orc Brews, which is famous for its locally sourced orc ale and a place where orcs from across the state congregate peacefully and humans are welcomed too. I’ve wanted to visit but haven’t had the time or reason, until now.

I glance around again, trying to decide my next steps.

I’m parked in front of a building that could be Orc Brews, or not. The problem is both sides of the street have establishments that equally look like they could be this mysterious brewery and neither have visible signage. I was born and raised in this area, so this road isn’t new to me, but I rarely drive this way. I’m forced to rely upon

the GPS in this instance, which said to turn left into this parking lot, but I don't see a single orc anywhere.

Should I get back onto the road and pull into the parking lot across the street?

My cell phone rings and I glance at the screen. It's my meddlesome sister, Sadie. The person who set me up on this anxiety-inducing blind date. I tap and accept the call.

"Are you there yet?" she demands.

I take a sip of water. "I think so, but I can't figure out if this is the right place."

"What do you mean?"

"The GPS says I'm here, but I can't see any signs to figure out if this is Orc Brews or not... And why are you even calling me?"

"Because I thought you might chicken out at the last second and need a pep talk."

"Oh please," I snort. "Yes, this is my first date since my divorce finalized four years ago. It took that long, after lots of therapy, to get over what happened and feel like I could possibly move on with a new relationship. But I'm not afraid. I can do this."

"Well, then woman up and go in there."

I flick down the mirror and reapply my lipstick. "I don't know where to go," I repeat.

"What do you mean, you don't know where to go? Aren't you parked in the parking lot for Orc Brews?"

"I don't know." I pull my cross-body purse over my head, drape it across my chest,

open the car door and step out. “I’m scouting the area for more clues.”

A warm, light breeze blows my brown hair off my shoulders and kisses my bare legs. My boho white linen sundress ends above my knees, showing off my long legs. I styled my hair, which, as everyone knows, is completely unusual since I normally let my curls air dry, and I’m even wearing makeup and a bit of jewelry.

A smile spreads across my face, because I don’t get out much, except for work and to take my school-age kids to appointments and play dates, so this adults-only outing feels extremely indulgent and, in fact, naughty. “There isn’t good signage anywhere and I don’t know if I’m parked at the brewery or in front of some kind of bar. So now I’m walking around to find out what this place is called.”

“Oh,” Sadie laughs. “I see what you’re saying. You’re talking about that new place, Bikers and Drinks, which opened recently. You want to be in the Orcs Brews parking lot across the street.”

“Maybe I’m in front of Orc Brews. How do I know which is which?”

“Do you see any orcs?”

“No.”

“Do you see motorcycles out front?”

“Yes.”

“You’re in the wrong parking lot.”

“Good point.” My high-heeled golden sandals crunch unsteadily on the gravel and finally, the temporary banner over the door comes into view. “Oh, there’s the sign.

Duh. Yeah, I'm in the wrong place. Thanks. I'll get back in the van and drive across the street. The good thing is that I made sure to arrive early because this area is unfamiliar, so I'm not late." I march back toward the car. "And Sadie, don't tell Bowen that this happened. I'd die of embarrassment if he knew. He's always lecturing about..."

"Ooops, too late."

"I'm on speaker phone?"

"Yeah."

"Local first responders and the postal service know all the streets," a deep voice confirms, "because you can't rely upon GPS. You must memorize all the streets, like we do, so that way you'll never get lost."

"Yes, sir," I mutter.

"I'm telling Urdan that you accidentally parked across the street," Bowen says. "He needs to know."

I roll my eyes. "Sadie, you suck."

Ever since my sister fell in love with and married our town's new orc sheriff, she's wanted me to find love too. Preferably with another orc who also has a similar preternatural awareness of maps and never gets lost.

"But you love me," she answers cheerfully. "And also, you're the one who essentially set me up with Bowen, so this is only fair."

"If this blind date turns into crap I'm going to kick your ass."

“It’ll be good, I promise. You’re gonna be fine. I love your sundress and your hair is perfect. Both of your kids are happily watching a PG-rated movie and eating too much pizza. Get out there and kill it, Lila. He’s lucky to be set up with someone as fabulous as you.”

“Have fun, Mom,” my kids shout in unison through the phone.

Warmth spreads across my chest. They’re both so cute I can’t handle the cuteness. I love my son and daughter so much sometimes it hurts. “Okay,” I laugh. “I’m getting off. Bye.”

I shove my phone into a pocket and reach out to open the car door.

“Lila.”

I tense, look over my shoulder and inwardly groan. Heavy boots crunch across the gravel. Oh hell. Jude Jones, a guy I’ve disliked since the dawn of time, strides toward me. How is this even possible? Why is life playing such a cruel joke on me?

“Lila? Is it you?”

“Jude.” I fake smile. “Yes, it’s me.”

We unfortunately went to the same schools together from kindergarten through high school, and sometime in fifth or sixth grade Jude started bullying me. Eventually, by high school it got so bad my quarterback boyfriend and a group of his friends had to corner Jude off campus and threaten to kick his ass if he ever bothered me again. After that everything stopped. And I moved away for college and haven’t thought of Jude Jones since high school graduation and was hoping to never see him ever again.

Except we’ve both moved back to our small hometown, so I suppose this was going

to happen, eventually.

He gives a lecherous look from my chest down to my toes and back to my chest again. “You look just as good as you did in high school.”

Time has not been kind to Jude. We're both thirty years old, but he looks at least ten years older than me. Missing teeth, long, thin blond hair that doesn't look very clean and a mean expression settles on his face. Uh oh. I'd heard he'd moved back to town after finishing a stint in prison for theft and is living with his mom.

I try to paste on a smile of greeting. It's been a long time. High school was over a decade ago and Jude has served his time for the crime he committed. This could be a man who wants to make amends and start over. I decide to remain optimistic, toss my hair over my shoulder and take a few steps forward. Then I notice two other rough-looking men get off their motorcycles and join him. They are laughing and joking and pointing at me. This does not bode well. A girl who looks like she needs a fake ID strides up next to Jude, with a look of possession. Great. Now there are four of them. A sour feeling settles in my stomach.

I edge toward my minivan and put my hand in my pocket, holding onto my cell phone.

“Where are you going?” Jude questions. “Don't you want to say hi to your old friend?”

I clench my jaw. “I wasn't sure we were friends. I thought you hated me.”

“No, I've never hated you.”

I crook an eyebrow.

“Why would I hate the prom queen? Why would I hate the head of the cheerleading squad?”

“Jude, what are we doing here?” the girl whines. “Let's go inside.” She puts an arm through his and leans into his side. I glance over at her because I'm wondering what she sees in this guy.

“I heard you're divorced,” Jude sneers with a nasty smirk on his face. “That rich lawyer left you and moved to Florida, started a whole new family with someone ten years younger than you.”

I lift my chin, trying to not let the town gossip hurt me further. Jude used to get away with bullying me when we were young because I was shy and didn't know my own strength. But I'm an adult now and I don't let men treat me like crap anymore. “And I heard you're out of prison and still living in your mom's basement and don't have a job yet.”

He growls and takes a menacing step towards me.

“Lila,” a deep, melodious voice calls out, basically, the best sound I've ever heard. An extremely large, green-skinned orc steps onto the curb. Not as tall as Bowen—a little shorter, but wider, thicker and even more muscular than my brother-in-law, if that's possible. This orc's black horns look sharper, his white tusks more visible and he's dressed entirely different than I've ever seen Bowen dress. Black jeans, an unbuttoned black shirt and heavy black boots, which look good against his green skin, black horns and dark, flashing eyes.

The wicked-looking orc stops right next to me and my mouth drops open. “Urdan?”

His chest rumbles in agreement.

My mouth remains open because I can't believe this sexy male is my blind date. How did I get so lucky?

"Who is this?" Jude snarls.

"He's an orc," one of the other men says, "and he's got to go. Stay on your side of the street."

My fists clench. "Why would you say that?"

"Orcs are medieval."

"You're the one acting medieval. This is modern times and modern orcs don't hurt anyone."

"We hate orcs."

"Everyone in that bar hates orcs too?"

Jude shifts on his feet. "Not everyone, but the four of us standing here do not put up with orcs."

I glance over at Urdan, who is remaining surprisingly quiet during this repulsive dialogue. His restraint is impressive. "He's a citizen and he can go wherever he wants."

"I don't care if things have changed," the taller guy next to Jude says. "I still remember the past like it was yesterday. My great-grandmother was kidnapped by an orc. We never saw her ever again."

My shoulders soften. "I'm so sorry that happened to your family."

“I am also sorry that happened,” Urdan agrees. “We don’t kidnap anymore, and all females are safe around orcs. But we used to do that in ancient times and it was wrong.”

“I heard the government is trying to fix that and make it better,” I say. “You have the right to track down and find out what happened to your great-grandmother and maybe even get reparations.” I look over at Urdan, worried that I overstepped. “Sorry.”

“No, it's true,” he says. “We are trying to make up for the past. All humans who have a valid claim of kidnapping are allowed financial compensation and the ability to track down in our database the whereabouts of their lost family members.”

“Money?”

“Yeah, you can Google it,” I say. “Look up ‘orc reparations’—R-E-P-A-R-A-T-I-O-N-S.”

The man pulls out his phone and starts tapping.

“What the hell,” Jude snarls.

“Hey, if I can find out what happened and maybe get some money, I'm all in,” his friend replies. “Maybe orcs aren’t as bad as I thought.”

“This is ridiculous. You’re not going anywhere with this goddamn orc. You’re coming inside the bar with me.” Jude growls, steps forward and reaches out as if he’s going to grab my arm.

“What the hell are you doing?” the girl demands. “What do you need with her?”

Urdan moves between all of us and towers over the other three men and the girl.

“This female,” he thunders, “is under my protection and isn’t going anywhere with you.” He points across the street. “Lila is here to meet me for a date, and we’re going to go into the orc brewery. She accidentally parked in the wrong parking lot, and I am here to retrieve her and make sure she gets safely to her destination.” He leans forward, exposing tusk and muscle. “If any of you have a problem with that, you can track me down at the sheriff’s department. I start my new job as deputy sheriff on Monday.”

“Uh, oh.”

The other men put their hands up and back away.

Jude looks pissed but gives a curt nod. Soon the small group walks briskly inside of the bar. The door slams closed behind them and we’re alone.

“Whew.” I let out a sigh of relief. “Thank you. That could’ve gone bad.”

Urdan grins. “You’re welcome.”

I glance over and meet his molten gaze. I’m standing in front of a towering orc with green skin, green ears and two black horns. It’s strange how comfortable I feel around him, considering he’s my blind date and we’ve never actually met.

He puts out a huge, rough hand, directing me which direction to walk. “Ready?”

“Yes,” I agree with a wide smile. “Let’s get this date started.”

I take a few steps in the gravel, hit a large stone and start to teeter on my high heels. Dammit. Why did I wear these sandals? They are cute, but entirely impractical. I cry out in alarm because I’m falling fast. Luckily, I tumble right into a curve of grass landscaping and not into the dirt and sharp stones. Soon I’m braced on all fours and

my ass is in the air. There's a distinct breeze on my ass cheeks because of course I'm wearing thong underwear. I look over my shoulder and see Urdan gazing at my rear end and then forcing himself to look away.

Dammit. This is turning into the most embarrassing date of my life. He had to rescue me when I arrived at the wrong location and now I've fallen in a compromising position.

He moves forward. "Are you hurt?"

I bounce up fast onto my feet. "No," I groan, smoothing my dress down. "Just embarrassed."

Urdan glances around and seems to come to a new decision. "I'm going to carry you over to the brewery because it'll be quicker and safer."

"What? No, you don't need to," I protest.

"Is your car locked?"

"Y...yes."

"Do you have everything you need?"

"Yes."

"Let's go."

He scoops me into his arms as if I'm light as air. No one—no man—has ever held me in his arms like this and I can't believe how quickly we are moving. Urdan stomps across the rest of the parking lot. Next thing I know, we're crossing the street and

we're already in the next parking lot.

Metal gates open and we move into a gorgeous courtyard that wasn't visible from the street.

Page 2

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 2

Urdan

“Are you carrying me inside?” Lila giggles.

“No,” I answer. Although I wouldn’t mind continuing to carry this female. Lila Powell feels perfect. Her arms are around my neck and her face is close to mine. I’ve never been this close to a human female before, never touched one beyond my own mother skin to skin. Her scent is close. Too close. And intoxicating.

I think I deserve a medal for not reverting into a wild orc from times of old. She fell to her hands and knees with that gorgeous ass exposed. No one else could see this but me. Was she offering herself to me? Because this is summer and not winter, therefore, I managed to remain sane and behave like a modern orc.

I’ve brought her to the place where we are supposed to partake in this odd human dating custom. I set the gorgeous female on her feet at the entrance to the brewery and step back, giving her space. Pride warms my chest at the idea of entering this establishment with Lila by my side. Bowen suggested I go out with this female, and I said yes as a favor to my cousin. But I was nervous at the thought of spending time alone with a female who might or might not find me attractive.

I’ve only been out of the orc commune in Maine and living amongst humans for two months and I’ve already found a job and have a date with a human female. My new life is moving fast. And I’ve met many pleasant females since I left the commune and made new friends amongst them. Many were mated, but many were also young and

unmated, but none of them were compatible.

Lila's luscious scent is already enflaming my body.

Why didn't I leave the commune sooner?

Did I catch a waft of arousal from her, toward me? It was so light as to be a dream. Maybe I didn't scent the arousal. Or it is intermittent? And possibly females expose their asses all the time? I have no idea. The good news is that I know this female is at least open to the idea of being with an orc. She stood up for my kind with the humans at the bar. And she's here to meet me on something called a blind date, which amongst humans means a possible mating.

I take deep breaths, calming the anger that heats inside. Those humans across the street surrounded Lila and meant to treat her poorly. Human males hoard all the women of mating age, not realizing how lucky they are to have an abundance of women in their midst. Many treat their females poorly, and then protest loudly when women leave and choose orcs instead? During my recent police training in the big city much of our time was spent protecting women from the abuse of men. It's nonsensical. The solution is simple. Treat women poorly and they leave. Treat women with love and respect and they will stay.

How is this difficult?

Lila brushes bits of grass and leaves off the front of her short dress and adjusts her purse. Her eyes scan the courtyard. "I'm a little embarrassed that I mistook this place for that small bar across the street."

I lead her past a bubbling water feature and the slabs of carved orc wood made into benches. We pause at the heavy wood and iron front door. "This is a quiet respite from the busy road," I agree.

“Do you do this often?” she questions.

I force my eyes off her shapely legs and the curve of her breasts under that easy-to-lift dress and meet her sparkling gaze. “Do what often?”

“Bring dates with you to this brewery? Am I the last in a long line of women who have come with you here?”

I blink, slightly confused by this question. “I’ve only recently moved to this town. This is my second time entering this brewery. And I’ve never been on a date with a human female in my life. Orcs don’t date.”

“Oh...but this is a date, isn’t it?”

“Yes, I’m trying to learn how to date like a human. Ready?”

She brushes her hair back from her soft face. “Yes.”

I push open the door and we walk in together. The heavy sound of orc laughter fills the air. Large groups congregate at several tables. The huge fireplace in the middle of the room crackles and music thumps in the background.

Heads turn because most of the other orcs in the room quickly notice that a new, unmated female has entered the building. A growl rumbles in my chest, and I begin to wonder if this was wrong to bring her here. Too much competition.

“Oh wow,” she whispers.

“Are you alright?”

“I’ve never been amongst such a large group of orcs. I have to admit so many orcs in

one location is a little intimidating.” She leans in and whispers, “Are they staring at me?”

“They are. There are many unmated orcs here who can scent that you are an unmated female of value. They want you as their own ‘date.’ When they realize that you are here with me and only have eyes for me, they will give up and allow us time to bond.”

She steps closer and puts her small hand on my arm. “Understood.”

The warmth of her touch causes my shaft to thicken in my pants. Nasty words of sexual possession rush through my mind. A growl rumbles in my chest.

“Are you okay?”

My chest expands. “Yes.” But my mind knows this means trouble. I’ve never felt this way for a female before. What if she decides that she does not want me? Lila is only here to meet and decide if she thinks we might possibly be compatible. I cannot leap five steps forward and try to mount her in my car.

That would be disastrous.

I must remain civil and modern towards this female if I want her to remain at my side. This is the first time in my life that I have ever spent alone with a compatible female that I find sexually attractive. Usually, I am like the other males, looking longingly on the outside as other males find their bride. But this time, I might be that lucky male. I must not do anything to ruin this time alone with Lila.

“Do we need to wait to be seated?”

“No, we can find our own table.”

I guide Lila over to the best open table, pull out a heavy chair and seat her near the window, as far from the others as possible, allowing a bit of privacy for us to talk.

There is a look of surprise on her beautiful face. “There are quite a few humans here, both men and women. It doesn't look like what I had been imagining.”

“What were you thinking of this place ahead of time?”

She looks up at the beams in the ceiling and then gestures at the stone fireplace. “Well, I didn't think it would be so rustically elegant.”

“I'm happy you view it that way.”

“And I admit I thought maybe this was just a place for orcs to pick up women.”

I chuckle. “It could be considered that, but only in that it is comfortable here and we can talk easily without worrying about anyone screaming in fear because there is an orc in their midst.”

“Yes,” she laughs. “It's sad but true. I could see that happening.”

The human waitress arrives to take our orders. She smiles wide at me, hands us the menus, two glasses of water and promises to bring back a mug of ale for each of us.

“I'm surprised that humans work here too.”

“She's the mate of the owner,” I explain.

“Ah.”

We're both quiet for a moment.

“You’re the new deputy sheriff?” she questions, then takes a sip of water.

“Yes, as I said earlier, I start on Monday.”

“Have you known Bowen a long time?”

“He’s my cousin.”

“Oh, I didn’t know that. That’s nice. So that’s why you decided to take a job here, because you already knew Bowen?”

“Yes. Bowen’s experience as the first orc sheriff helped me to understand that an orc could have a regular job and life among humans. I had stayed at our commune my whole life and thought to stay there forever, but after everything changed, I began to think that there might be something more, that maybe a life amongst humans was possible. I used to think that it was not.”

“I understand that. You know, I never met an orc until Bowen came here. I’d never met one in real life. I’d only seen them on TV.”

“And I’d never met that many humans, beyond the ones I’d known from the small town near our commune.”

“Can I ask you a question?”

“Of course.”

She bites her lip. “Are you just doing this because Bowen pressured you? Did he ask you to do this date as a favor and to be nice to me?”

I lean forward. “And are you here because you were pressured?”

“A little bit, but I really do want to start dating. I’m ready.”

“I did agree to this because Bowen is my cousin, but mainly I’m here because he thought that our personalities might click.”

Her eyes drifts to my bare chest and then back up to meet my gaze. “I’m not necessarily only looking for an orc as my new husband, but I’m open to the idea that if I did find someone else, it doesn’t have to be someone who’s strictly human. Now that Sadie and Bowen are together, I can see clearly how an orc-human relationship can work.”

“This is good to hear. Also, I said yes because it’s summer. The good thing about summer is that, unlike the dark of winter, I can still behave reasonably. Orcs have historically taken their brides during the dark of winter, which is why we are meeting right now, in the summer.”

Her eyes widen. “Is this date going to be a problem?”

“No, this is why I told you.” I smile. “You are safe with me.”

Two pints of dark orc ale clink on the table. The efficient waitress is gone in a moment.

“Ooh, this is dark.”

“It’s the best,” I rumble. I lift the heavy tankard and take a deep gulp of my favorite drink. “This might be better than our home brews back home.”

Lila uses both hands to lift her tankard and takes a small drink. “Oh, it’s good.”

“The good news is that these are bottomless mugs. Once we get low, they just

automatically bring us more.”

“That sounds good, but also dangerous.”

I lift my chin. “There’s...” I gesture toward her mouth. “You’ve got...”

She touches her lips. “Oh, how funny. There’s a lot of foam on the top of that ale, isn’t there?” Soon she’s licked and wiped off her foam, leaving her lovely, kissable lips clean. Lila leans in, both elbows on the table. “And how do you feel so far about living in this town, with so many humans about?”

“I’d originally vowed that I was going to live out my life on the commune in Maine, but I’ve learned that life amongst so many humans is not as difficult as I’d assumed. I am pleased to be able to see more of this country and have new experiences.”

“Did you move because you wanted to meet a woman to mate?”

“No, I wanted to get out and meet more orcs.”

She raises an eyebrow.

I throw back another swig of ale and use the back of my hand to wipe the froth from my lips. “Maybe I thought it might be possible to find a mate. But I knew that it could still not happen. I’ve seen nothing but heartache for orcs. My own mother disowned me and my father. But in the last decade I’ve seen a positive change between humans and orcs.”

“And the laws changed.”

“Yes. And seeing an orc accepted and allowed to work in the same line of work that I did on the commune, I decided to try and work in the human world.”

“Because you’re a legal citizen now.”

“I am.” I grin, because it’s true I like that designation. “Although not all humans I meet are delighted in this change.”

“Well, I am happy for the change. I have an orc brother-in-law and a nephew. And I agreed to go out on this date.”

“I was surprised you agreed.”

“I’m surprised you agreed.”

I let out a chuckle. “Why would I say no?”

“Have you met my sister, Sadie, Bowen’s wife?”

“No.”

“That explains it.”

I grin and look away.

“Oh shoot, I dropped my purse under that chair. Just a sec.” Lila stands to move the chair back and accidentally bumps into a waitress who was moving past, holding a massive tray, heavy with a delivery of ale for the next table.

Two pints of ale spill all over the front of Lila’s white dress.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 3

Lila

I hide in the women's bathroom at the brewery and call my sister.

"Sadie," I cry into the speaker phone. "I bumped into a waitress and two pints of ale fell all over the front of my dress. I'm a complete mess."

She lets out a snort of derision. "Does this mean you're leaving? Are you wimping out and running out on this date?"

I lean over the sink, turn on the water and use a damp paper towel to try and sop up some of the beer on my white dress. "Shouldn't I? My dress is damp and I think everyone can see through the front. I've done so much wrong, Urdan probably wants me to leave. I parked in front of the wrong bar and he had to come and rescue me from a group of bully bikers. Then I tripped on the curb and fell on my hands and knees in the grass with my skirt up and my bare ass in the air. He carried me across the street like roadkill. And now I'm a smelly mess. He must think I'm a bungling fool."

"Bully bikers? Who are you even talking about?"

"I'll tell you the story later. The point is I look like hell because I'm so nervous in front of him that I can't even move right. I've got two different grass stains on the hem of my white dress and ale all down the front."

“I told you not to wear white. I also told you those designer sandals would break your ankles.”

I look down at my feet and examine the delicate heels. “Yeah. Yeah. But they look so good.”

“Whatever. Look, I’ve got important news. Urdan really likes you.”

“He does? Despite everything I’ve done? How do you know this?”

“He just texted Bowen, thanking him for setting up this date. He claims it’s going well. What color are your bra and panties?”

“Nude. He thinks it’s going well?”

“Yes. And you’re fine, no one will see much of anything through that dress, and I bet it’s already drying.”

I pluck at the front, trying to give it more air. “True, but I smell like beer.”

“You’re at a brewery. This will only make you more attractive.”

I laugh out loud. “Good point.”

“Get out there, girl, and kill it.”

“Okay, okay. Thanks, Sadie. See ya later.” I end the call, take a deep breath and wash my hands. Apply another layer of lipstick. Then I open the door to the restroom and stride back out. It’s weird, but I swear all eyes are on me as I walk. I do my best not to imagine these orcs seeing right through my dress.

As I make my way back to our table, I see the waitress leaning in close and chatting with Urdan before she moves on to help another group. The broken glass and spilled ale are all cleaned, and fresh pints are on the table. I can't help but frown as I approach. The waitress is very attractive and I have a feeling she likes my date a little too much.

Urdan stands and hands me a black leather jacket. "I went to my car while you were in the bathroom and got this for you. I thought you might want to use this to cover up your wet dress."

Warmth blossoms in my chest at this unexpected kindness. I reach out and accept the jacket. "Oh, thank you. That is exactly what I need right now." I gratefully slide it on and it smells so good. Like leather, soil and sunshine. The jacket is very large and covers all the parts I need covered. Plus, it's a damn cool leather jacket. This orc has style.

Soon we are both seated again, sipping at our ale.

Urdan leans back in his chair, that hard green, muscular chest still visible between the gap of his unbuttoned black shirt. I'm doing my best to not stare at the enticing spot where his bare stomach meets his silver belt buckle. "Are you okay? Do you still want to stay?" he questions.

"I'm fine," I answer with all honesty. "Yes, lots of crazy things have happened to me in the last hour, but I'd love to stay and still have dinner, if that's alright with you."

He grins, exposing more white tusk. "It's exactly what I was hoping you'd say."

The waitress returns, and I use the menu to order a creamy beef and mushroom soup that looks amazing. Urdan orders steak and potato. Then she's gone and I'm wondering if I can trust this orc to ignore the flirting of other women and remain

concentrated on the one he's with; he seems to be focused on me right now but...

"Lila?"

I blink out of my reverie. Shoot, I must be fretting over what I can objectively tell is nothing. "I'm sorry. It's just...well, maybe I should go ahead and tell you this up front. My ex cheated on me, many, many times. And I have to admit there are still layers of trauma I'm still working through. It makes me more sensitive than someone else to the idea of being with someone who won't be focused on our relationship."

"Did something happen tonight to make you concerned?"

I shake my head. "It was nothing. I know it's nothing. It's just being out like this brings up old thoughts and makes me think it's a good time to tell you up front that since I have that in my past, it's super important to me that I'm with someone I can trust. In my next relationship I'm looking for a man who is as serious about monogamy as I am. If I can't have trust and monogamy, then I'd rather be alone."

He nods. "Understood."

"Does that bother you?"

He shrugs and gulps down more ale. "It makes sense. You had a male who was not a committed mate. And now you want a committed mate."

"Yes."

"This is good news because orcs cannot physically cheat."

"I've heard this."

He grins over his tankard. “It’s true.”

I chuckle, feeling much more relaxed.

“And since orcs need monogamy, I’m pleased to hear that you would be a human who wants that too.”

I give him a big smile. “You will certainly never hear me asking for an open relationship. That’s not gonna occur.”

He chuckles.

I lean back in my seat and cross one leg over the other. “I would love to learn more about you, Urdan. Tell me, what did you do at the compound? I mean, what was your job?”

“I was head of security.”

“Oh, that’s why you are now a deputy sheriff. That makes sense.”

“And what do you do in the human world, Lila?”

“You don’t know?”

“No.”

“I work at the bakery with Sadie, Bowen’s wife. We are co-owners of One Big Bite.”

“Oh, that’s good. You make food for other humans?”

I take another deep gulp of the ale, finishing my first pint. It really is terrific. It’s dark

but doesn't taste bitter. I can find notes of fruitiness that are pleasant. And I'm already a little tipsy, which is loosening my tongue. "I make desserts. Treats," I tell him. "And we often decorate fancy custom cakes for different occasions. Sadie is my sister and Bowen is my brother-in-law."

"You said that earlier. I didn't know this until tonight."

I shift in my seat, realizing the area between my thighs is hot and ready for business. This is the horniest I've felt my entire life. Not even my cheating ex, who I'd previously thought I'd married because he was the hottest man I'd ever encountered, did this for me. My nipples are peaked under my bra and begging to be sucked and pinched, possibly at the same time.

"Tell me more about yourself, Lila."

"Well...I majored in sociology in college."

"What is that?"

"A degree that I enjoyed but you can't do much with all by itself. I was going to move on and go to law school, but..."

"But?"

"I supported my husband while he was in law school and then I was going to go next, but...it didn't happen."

"Do you regret not becoming a lawyer?"

"Actually, I don't. And now I co-own that local bakery with my sister and we're doing really well. I've discovered I like owning my own business. It's funny how in

life you can end up taking a path you never thought you'd take."

"I agree." Then he asks another question. "Are you certain you want to start a relationship with an orc deputy sheriff?"

"Well, like I said before, I went through a bad divorce. But that was a few years ago. I really didn't mind being single, but I do think I'm ready to start dating again."

"This is your first date since the divorce?"

"Yes," I answer, continuing to love the sound of his deep voice. "I want you to know, getting divorced wasn't an easy decision for me. I took my vows very seriously. My ex cheated on me and begged me to take him back. We'd gone to therapy, and I'd really thought we had worked past the cheating. I'd even gotten to a place where I felt I could trust him again. Then the pandemic happens and I find out through clues that he's having an affair with his secretary. I didn't even realize he had a new secretary. I was devastated. This time, he didn't even bother to hide it. Everybody had to be isolated with their family units, and I got scared for a second, thinking he was going to insist on trying to make it work with me, which would have been a hell no. Instead, he isolated with her during the pandemic, which worked out fine. In the end, I got divorced and he remarried. Don't cry for me, I did well financially. But the good news is, all of that is starting to feel like a long time ago. I think it helps that he remarried so fast, because it caused me to let go quicker. And..." I take another gulp of ale. "And I'm really happy we're on this date."

"I am too. Bowen and Sadie worked together to set us up on this date?"

"Yes, my sister talked me into this, and Bowen was your contact. They must've tag-teamed this. I had to say yes because I basically did the same for her. I'm the one who got her together with Bowen. I could tell that she had something for him, and she wasn't doing anything about it, and neither was he. And then there was a spring

fundraiser for the county food bank where she would be fake arrested by the sheriff. I thought that would be perfect, because he would end up arresting her. I was right, and in the end, he moved quick, and they're married and even have a baby now.”

I pause in my story because the food arrives. It looks delicious and smells terrific. “Thank you,” I say with all seriousness to the waitress. “And I’m sorry again for running into you like that earlier and spilling all that ale on the floor. Thank you for cleaning it up after I ran crying to the bathroom.”

“It’s alright.” She laughs, then leans in and whispers. “I remember what it was like when I first met my husband too. It does a job on your hormones. Sends you all out of whack. You’ll get your equilibrium back soon enough.”

“But he’s not...”

She pats my shoulder and she’s gone, helping another table.

My face heats up as I meet Urdan’s molten gaze. I swear he heard everything. He looks comfortable and in charge of his surroundings. He even looks good, eating huge bites of steak. I like the shine of his black horns and my mind flashes to the idea of holding onto those horns as he licks me to orgasm. Oh jeez. I need to concentrate on my meal and not on the sexy, hot-as-sin orc across the table. I look down and spoon a bite of tender beef. “This soup is amazing.”

“Orc food is always fresh food. We do freeze some food and dry others, but mainly we like whole food.”

“You never eat human food?”

“Oh, I also like human food. I particularly enjoy pizza. And chocolate.”

We end up finishing our meals and even enjoy a small chocolate desert that we share. Time flies because we talk so much. He tells me stories of what it was like, growing up on the commune, and I tell him a lot about the small lake town he's just moved to and is still learning about. We laugh a lot and share jokes and I'm having a terrific time.

The check arrives and Urdan insists on paying for everything. "Are you ready?" he questions.

"Yes," I answer, a bit sad that our time is ending. If my kids weren't returning to my house soon, I'd probably ask him over to my place.

We get to the front courtyard again and it's pitch-black outside.

"Do you feel sober enough to drive?" he questions.

"Yes. I only had the one tankard of ale. I stopped after that on purpose because I knew I'd eventually have to drive. Then I switched to water. I'm ready."

"Good." Urdan opens the metal gate. "I'm walking you to your car."

"No, you don't have to, you could just watch me from here..."

A growl rumbles in his chest. "I'm walking you to your car."

I look across the street and see how dark it is and how the whole area is teeming with people. It looks like they're having some sort of biker meetup. It's very busy. My car, even though it was parked on the side and was by itself originally, is now in the thick of things. "Okay, I have to admit I would appreciate that," I tell him.

Urdan takes my hand in his, and we look both ways before striding across the street. I

love the feel of my hand in his and the warmth of his big body at my side. I literally feel a sense of pride, walking with him, letting people see that I'm holding his hand and wearing his jacket. And I enjoy our budding friendship, as well as my over-the-top attraction that hasn't stopped, and only increased.

He looks good as he walks, his stride is long and the swing of his muscular arms is powerful. I feel safe next to this orc.

I can't help but wonder if this might be the start of something serious. But I thought I had something before. I thought my boyfriend from high school was serious and that went nowhere. He cheated on me too. I thought my husband was, of course, serious and he lied and cheated on me. How good is my judgment? It's not only me I have to think of anymore, it's my kids. Justin and Lacy need a good dad in their lives. They need a man who will love them too.

Being with an orc means I'll get pregnant instantly with an orc son. That's just how it is when you marry an orc. There are no orc females and they impregnate human women with orc sons. That's how they continue their species. Saying yes to this date meant I was open-minded with the idea of becoming a mother again and having orc children. But I would say the most important thing is, how would he treat my two human kids? Would he favor his orc son over mine, the same way Robert is doing with his new family? Would my kids be left as second-class citizens again, with no father? I'd rather be alone than put my kids through that again.

We reach the parking lot for the biker bar and the mood seems jovial. I was concerned that, considering the first bikers that we'd met—Jude and his group—all the bikers maybe felt animosity towards orcs. But Urdan is immediately noticed and greeted. He lifts his chin, holds up his hand a few times. One of the bikers even comes up and gives Urdan a quick man hug and they chat for a moment, and then we keep walking. Next thing you know, we're at the van.

I smile up at him. “Well, that was a completely different reception than our first encounter with this place.”

“Yes, the biker bar and the orc brewery have a good rapport. They visit us. We visit them. The group you first met is highly unusual.”

“Well, good. That makes me believe in the kindness of strangers a little bit more.”

“Yes,” he says. “I’d viewed humans a certain way, mainly from all the stories I had heard, not because I had lived amongst them enough, and now that I am out here...” He looks at me. “I can see that it is much different than I’d thought. I’m happy you’re here. And I am hoping that we can meet again.”

“I would like that,” I tell him with all honesty. “I’d love to go out on another date.”

We exchange cell numbers, and I get in my car and try to turn it on. This is when I discover that my battery is dead.

Page 4

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 4

Urdan

“I cannot believe my bad luck,” Lila cries.

I can’t help but laugh.

“How can you be laughing? This is terrible. My car is dead.”

“It’s amazing to me how many things can go wrong for you in the space of one evening.”

“Right?”

“Leave it,” I tell her. “I’ll take care of this for you tomorrow morning. Your car will be safe here overnight. Right now, I’m taking you back to my SUV and driving you home.”

“Oh, you don’t need to. I can get a...”

“I will drive you home.”

“Are you sober enough to drive?”

“I only had three tankards of ale and then stopped after that and switched to water because I knew I’d have to drive.”

She laughs at my comeback.

I take her hand in mine, deciding I will send a tow truck over in the morning to check on her car and change her battery if necessary. A breeze blows her long hair back from her beautiful face. Lila still wears my black jacket as we walk through the crowd and cross the street to return to the brewery's parking lot.

This female is indeed my mate. Her scent stays strong in my lungs, heating up my entire body. And her reciprocal arousal for me wafts in the air, a constant drumbeat fueling my desire. If this were winter, or ancient times, I could lose my mind and carry her away to my cave and keep her there. I begin to understand how kidnappings were common amongst desperate orcs. But again, it's the summer and these are modern times. We do not kidnap. And even though I scent Lila's arousal, I do not feel that she is fully committed to the idea of a relationship with me. Humans cannot scent their mates. She needs time spent with me in a variety of situations to fully understand that we would be right for each other. I will give her this time even though images of her swollen with my orc sons already fill my mind.

I put her in my black SUV and start the car so I can drive to her house in the hills. The terrain of this small town on the shores of Lake Michigan is different from Maine, where I was born and raised, but is still green, wooded and very beautiful. The temperature, even in summer remains relatively cool, which is perfect for orcs, considering we run warm. I can see myself settling well in this location.

"Do you need directions?" she asks as I pull out of the parking lot and turn the correct direction to begin the drive.

"No."

"Oh my gosh. Do you already have every street in Silver Lake memorized?"

“Yes.”

“But you haven’t even been here that long. You don't ever need to use a GPS?”

“Maybe, if I'm somewhere brand new, but after the first time I'm there, then I have it memorized.”

“That’s amazing.”

“All orcs have a good sense of direction.”

Lila tells a few comical stories of how she got lost when she was first learning to drive as a teenager, which I enjoy. Soon I turn on her street and park in the driveway in front of her garage. Her house is unusually large for a human domicile. It must be true that her business is doing well.

“Thank you. I want you to know I’ve really enjoyed this evening and I’m happy to spend time with you.”

“I’m happy to be with you too.”

Lila turns toward me. “I can’t ask you inside and I wish I could.”

“Because...?”

She leans forward; her voice deepens, “I’d be hoping for, at the very least, a first kiss on the doorstep.”

Lila’s arousal is thick in the air of the enclosed space of my SUV. She bites her lip and shifts in her seat. I want to be the male that satisfies her every time. “I want more than just a kiss.”

She licks her lips. "More?"

"I want to mount you here, in my car," I admit.

Her mouth drops open. "You do?"

"But I cannot because it is too soon.

"Why is it too soon?"

"I will impregnate you and you are not ready for that type of commitment."

She sighs. "You're right."

I reach out and hold her hand in mine. "But we can start slow."

"Slow," she agrees and unclicks her seat belt.

I do the same, pull her close and cup her face. "You've never had an orc. I must warn you that I am larger than a human male. But this does not mean that we won't work together. I will suck on your nipples and finger your pussy until you are so wet that I will slide in easily and fill you so full you will orgasm several times and scream with pleasure."

"Can I kiss you?" she asks.

"Please."

"What about the tusks?"

"It will work. You will love the feel of my hard tusks near your mouth and also when

I lick your pussy and ingest all your juices.”

Her lips press against mine and I am delighted with the taste and feel of Lila’s mouth. She tastes wonderful. I wrap my arms around her and deepen the kiss. My tusks are just wide enough apart to not interfere.

Finally, she breaks off the kiss and takes a deep breath. “Wow.”

“That was my first kiss,” I admit.

“Are you a virgin?”

“Yes, but I have studied how to pleasure a female.”

She puts a warm hand on my chest. “I have also studied how to pleasure a man.”

A growl rumbles in my chest. “The sight of your ass and the crack underneath made me hard. I leak for you. Come here and sit on my lap.”

“I love your dirty talk.” In a moment she’s on my lap, facing me. Her legs straddle either side of my hips.

I breathe against her ear. “My hard cock is trapped in my pants directly underneath your clit.”

“I know,” she sighs with delight, moving her hips so she can create friction.

“My hands are under your dress, cupping your bare ass.”

“I love it.”

“Do you want me to touch you and bring you release?”

“Please touch me. I need you.”

“What exactly do you need? Tell me.”

“I need you to touch me...down there and...”

“Finger your clit?”

“Oh, yes.”

I capture her lips and kiss her again as I pull aside her tiny underwear and move my fingers to the inside of her channel. “You are sopping wet. Do you hear that? That’s the sound of your juices.”

“For you. You do this to me.”

I growl again and kiss Lila while I find her nub. For the first time in my life, I apply the techniques I learned about to a female I want to pleasure. “Is this how you want to be touched? Do you want me to work faster or slower? Should I move my finger to a different location?”

“That is perfect. But faster is good.”

“I want to put my thick finger inside of you and pound you as if it were riding my big green cock. I want you to imagine it’s me fucking you hard as if we were on my bed and you were on top of me with your breasts bare.”

“Yes, slide it inside of me.”

My single digit finds her opening and moves in, slowly at first. She sighs with delight. Soon I've filled her all up. "I'm inserting a second finger because I want you to truly feel how large I will be when I fuck you and fill you with my seed."

"Oh, Urdan, I'm so close. Don't stop."

"I'm going to fill you with so much seed it will run down the side of your thighs."

I continue to finger her clit and use my fingers as if they were my cock, fucking her hard. Soon she is screaming out her release.

She kisses me deep, then rests her chin on my shoulder. "I love, love your nasty talk," she repeats.

I lick my fingers. "And I love the taste of your wet release."

She leans back, her small hand resting on the bulge under my zippered pants. "What about you? Can I show you what I know about pleasuring you?"

I'm about to answer in the affirmative when a large car pulls up behind us, blaring loud music and the headlights are blinding.

"Oh shit." Lila leaps off me and sits back in her seat, working fast to cover herself again.

I hand her the jacket. "You look fine," I soothe.

"Sorry, they weren't supposed to be here yet. They're early."

"Who is early?"

“Mom,” a young voice shouts.

Lila opens her door and in moments we’re both out of the car and in the midst of a group of humans in the driveway.

Bowen marches up with a grin and shakes my hand. “I think I caught a glimpse of something I shouldn’t. Sorry we arrived at the wrong time. Pure accident.”

I grunt with acknowledgement but remain puzzled by the two youngsters who are buzzing around Lila.

And then my cell phone rings in my pocket. I pull it out and recognize this is an emergency alert call from Thorn, the second in command at the commune. He is also now head of security since I left. I step away from the commotion in the driveway to take the call. “Yes?”

“Urdan, I’m calling to inform you that your father is very ill. We’re all very concerned about him.”

“My father? I spoke to him yesterday. I thought he only had the flu.”

“I’m sorry to have to tell you this but the healer says Edmurk has taken a turn for the worse. She has learned that his sickness is now terminal and your father only has a few days left of life. As his son, he needs your nearness to heal, if not, he will pass away.”

“I understand. I am on my way. I will leave immediately.”

“We will care for him well until you arrive.”

“Thank you.”

I tap on the screen and turn toward my cousin. “I must go,” I tell Bowen. “My father is sick. He is dying. I am his only son and have to get to him immediately to perform the rituals.”

“I understand. I’ll pull out right now to give you room to leave. Let me know if there’s anything I can do.”

I head back toward the SUV, my throat clogged with emotions too difficult to handle. And then I look up and see two small human children hugging Lila and calling her “mother.” Lila stares at me with a troubled look on her face.

I instantly understand.

The female I went on a blind date with has human children from her previous marriage. Did she hide this from me? And do I care if she has human offspring? I don’t think I do. Normally, this wouldn’t matter in the least and I’d say something to her to ease the tension. But right now, every minute matters. What if I’m too late and when I arrive my father has already passed? I need to be there to perform the rituals that fathers pass on to sons and sons perform for their valued fathers. This will literally save his life and there’s only a small window of time to perform the ritual for it to take effect.

“Urdan?” Lila questions.

“My father is sick,” I choke out. “That was a call letting me know that he might die if I can’t return to the commune in time. I must leave immediately.”

“I’m so sorry,” she says.

And then I stomp away and start the car. Bowen pulls out and gives me room. I back out and leave immediately. The drive will be long, but if I hurry, I can be in northern

Maine by tomorrow morning.

Page 5

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 5

Lila

Monday morning arrives quicker than usual and I make a point to show up at the bakery. It's a three-day weekend and my kids spent the night at their grandparents' house so I could work on a special cake decoration last night in my own kitchen without distraction. It's a special color combo I've been trying out for a new type of custom work I'd like to start using on a larger scale. I think with this iteration, I've finally hit it out of the park. I truly believe our customers will love it.

Basically, I worked furiously on the cake to keep my mind off Urdan. I was fretting and worried about how our date had ended and what was going on with him and his father, but I felt I couldn't call him to put my mind at ease. This wasn't a good situation.

Sadie likes to arrive early, especially on Mondays, before anyone else. She always did this before she got married and started a family, but she does it less now. Bowen doesn't work on Mondays and stays with their baby so she can come in.

I arrive with my cake in a box. Sadie doesn't hear me enter. I put the box in the fridge then walk over and turn off my sister's Bluetooth speaker, which was blaring the latest Taylor Swift song. "I need to talk to you," I announce, "in person and not on the phone."

She shrieks with fright, truly surprised to see me, then she pouts, "That was the new song that dropped this week."

“I know, sorry, but this is important.”

Sadie washes her hands. “Is this about poor Urdan and his dad? That was terrible for him, finding out that his father was so ill he could be dying. I did hear from Bowen that Urdan did arrive in time and that his father is now stabilized, so that’s good news. Oh, are you going to finally tell me the details of that epic date?”

“Yes.”

“You’re right, that’s more important.” She puts a finger up. “Okay, just a sec. Help me with this will you? Then we can talk.”

Soon we’ve got two different mixes churning and we’re both standing in front of platters of cupcakes to decorate, applying daubs of perfect color. Sadie’s getting better at decorating, which is wonderful, it takes some of the pressure away from me, being the only one who can do the custom decorations. Our business has grown so much we’ve also hired two more full-time staff and we’re about to grow into a second location in the next town over.

In fact, staff should start arriving in about thirty minutes, so I’ve got to start talking.

My career and my children are fine and doing well. This part of my life is good, but my love life is still in flux and I’m not sure what to do. “I’m sad about Urdan’s dad too,” I start. “And I think him suddenly finding out his dad was so sick that he had to leave immediately must’ve been awful for him. I feel bad because I’m worried talking about my worries about the date last night, and not just talking about his dad makes me sound uncaring, like it’s no big deal to me that Urdan’s father was on death’s door. Of course, I’m worried about him and his father, even if we’ve never met. I already feel close to Urdan and if he’s in pain then I’m in pain. Whoever is important to him is important to me too. If either you or I had found out suddenly that either of our parents was in the hospital we would’ve dropped everything and left too.

But I'm in this weird place where my mind is also filled with what we shared last night."

I glance over at Sadie for confirmation.

"You're not a bad person for also wanting to talk about the actual date and how it ended."

I blow out a breath. "Thank you. He left so fast, I feel like I don't know what's going on between the two of us. Am I his actual girlfriend where I should be supporting this man whose father is sick? Or am I just some itch he was scratching? Did we have a hookup and that was it? Is he going to ghost me now that he's got family issues? Do I need to give him space and let it go, or should I message him?"

"Wait. The two of you haven't talked at all since he left on Saturday night?"

"No."

"Oh, I think you should message him. Just a quick text to ask how his father is doing."

"Sadie, I can't let my pussy rule my decisions. I've done that before and it didn't turn out well. I'm not doing it this time."

"I understand what you're saying. You know I always hated your ex, but you loved him in the beginning and I did my best to take that asshole in stride and remain pleasant and cheerful at all the family gatherings. I was a bridesmaid at your wedding, smiling like that would last forever, which it didn't."

"He cheated on me during our honeymoon."

“Oh dear god. Are you sure?”

“Yep, he threw that in my face on the last day I saw him, when I was being a bitch about him coming back with her at his side to get his stuff.”

“Rob shouldn’t have brought the girl he was cheating on you with to pick up his shit. He could’ve gotten it a dozen different ways, all of which didn’t involve bringing along his young supermodel to show off.”

“It kills me that he never sees our kids. It’s like he’s moved on and forgotten they even exist and only the new family is real. I feel like a single mom. Yes, I moved back to Michigan to raise the kids in my hometown, but originally we lived in Detroit, so me moving here wasn’t a big deal. Then he moved to Miami and started a brand new family and uses that distance as an excuse to never see or talk to his kids.”

Sadie leans against the counter and gives me a sad smile. She’s heard me complain about all of this before and I appreciate her letting me hash it out again and again.

“At times like these I remember that in fact my kids and I have lives that are complete and full of joy and we’re lucky. We have a nice house and I have a good job and money to pay all our bills and live comfortably. Life is good.”

“That’s true, it could be a lot worse. A lot.”

I wipe off some stray frosting. “Did you see how surprised Urdan was to learn that I have two kids?”

“I thought he knew. I thought Bowen had told him about Justin and Lacy. Didn’t you bring them up during the date?”

“I thought I had...but maybe I thought he already knew...I can’t believe I didn’t

mention my kids during our first date. Who does that? I guess there was so much other stuff to talk about... He probably doesn't want to be with me anyways now that he knows. Maybe he thinks I was tricking him and not being honest about how I had kids."

Sadie puts her hands on her hips. "Lila, I could see that the two of you had been making out in the car before we accidentally arrived early and at the wrong moment. It was obvious. Believe me, that orc still wants you. They don't just randomly make out with anyone. If he'd gotten that far with you, he considers you a female he'd like to mate with."

"But he didn't know all about me at that moment. Urdan didn't know about my kids. Maybe he's right now trying to deny his instincts."

"Maybe...? But sounds highly unlikely."

"I can't be with a man who doesn't want my kids."

"You don't know that he feels that way."

"Maybe he only wants to have orc sons and not human sons."

"How about you call him and ask?"

"No, he might just lie and manipulate me."

"Lila, that's not fair. Urdan is nothing like Rob."

My jaw clenches.

"Urdan left you his jacket. That orc didn't ask for it back before he left. I think that

means he thinks he's seeing you again. In fact, leaving you wearing that jacket was him leaving his mark on you."

"He just forgot about the jacket because he was in a hurry."

"No, I disagree. I looked up the brand. That's an \$800 leather jacket. A man, even an orc, doesn't accidentally forget something like that."

I bite at my lip.

"You should call him," Sadie repeats.

"He hasn't called or messaged me either."

"Maybe he's busy but would love to hear from you."

"No," I shake my head. "I feel like it's not right for me to call or message, but... we can send treats."

"Oh, that's a great idea. We could send his dad our biggest Get Well package and stuff it with custom creations. You could hand sign the card and leave a nice message for Urdan. I'm certain he will call you to say thank you and then you two can talk."

"That sounds perfect."

And then Sheri, who works in the front of the store, walks in and greets us with a wave and a smile. We wave back and chat about the weather. The workday has begun.

"Can I turn the music back on now?" Sadie asks.

“Yes,” I laugh, because I feel better already at the thought of sending the gift basket to Urdan. This solves my problem of wanting to communicate, but not directly, and also wanting to let him know I want the best outcomes for him and his father. And that I’m thinking of him.

“Oh,” Sadie says, grabbing my hand before I can leave for the walk-in fridge. “I need to tell you some bad news. I saw Jude Jones sniffing around here yesterday when I went for a drive with mom and dad. He was walking down the street and came much too close to our parking lot.”

“Oh hell.”

“I know. Don’t worry, I told Bowen. He’ll take care of it.”

Page 6

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 6

Urdan

I am losing my mind.

I haven't seen Lila in five months. I touched her, had her lips on mine and my fingers in her wet channel. I felt her release in my arms. I told her all the things I want to do to her while I fuck her blind on my bed.

And then I learned that she has offspring she hid from me.

I left to tend to my father because his life was in jeopardy.

My cell phone broke the moment I arrived. I meant, many times, to leave and purchase a new one in the next town over, but my father required constant attention. At first, I was concerned that he would pass away in the night. He refused, "to go to a damn human hospital. They don't know how to take care of orcs." My father only uses the ancient rituals from Rika, the orc healer. It's true that these remedies are powerful and work well on orcs. But I often wonder if he could, instead, be entirely cured by human medicine.

"We need a modern orc hospital that specializes in orc medicine," I told Thorn.

"True. Maybe you can make that happen."

"What do I know about that?" I growled. "I'm not a doctor, I'm a deputy sheriff who

can't even start his new job. I'm lucky that Bowen is my boss and understands why I can't leave."

Two nights after I arrived, Rika started the ritual. It was long and involved. I had to be by my father's side, holding his hand, or at least near enough so my scent entered his lungs. I had to be there for the healing ritual between me, the orc healer and my father. I had always thought I didn't really believe any of that ancient orc healing stuff. Why weren't we using the regular medicines and treatments like they use in the human hospitals? But I was told in order for an orc to receive proper treatment, they need ancient medicines created from special orc plants that are grown by hand in the healer's garden. And not only that, but my father needs the skin on skin contact from a son an orc has raised with love. I don't consider this magic, but I think it's something the ancients understood as the best treatment for orcs. The healing cycle was not complete without my presence.

My father was lucky. Not all orcs at his age have sons. Not all orcs have sons who were raised and live so close that it didn't take long to return home. What if I had moved to another country? There was only a window of opportunity where the healing had to start for it to be effective.

Not all communes have a healer with the same level of expertise as ours. Maybe I'm biased. I've known Rika my entire life and he comes from a long line of healers dating back to ancient times. Rika has three sons and all of them are being trained as healers.

Lila didn't contact me the whole time. I didn't receive a personal message or call from her before my phone broke. But I finally got a new phone and there were never any messages sent from Lila. It's true that I'm not on any social media and didn't give her my email or the direct phone number to the commune, but all she has to do is ask. She could ask Bowen.

Lila could drive here to the commune and visit me.

I'm disappointed that she hasn't tried to visit and meet with my father. I still have to remain at the commune because my father is still weak and his lungs are not fully recovered.

Months pass and still not a single message from the female I thought was going to be my mate. My future bride. The female who would birth my future orc sons and want to remain by my side to raise them in love together.

Was I wrong?

Bowen calls often to find out the status of his Uncle. He talks to my father on the phone and talks to me again, and occasionally discusses his wife Sadie and keeps me updated on issues in Silver Lake, but does not bring up Lila and neither do I. I assume she does not want to hear from me.

The one consolation is that her bakery, One Big Bite, has sent monthly care packages. They are a huge hit with my father and most of the other orcs in the vicinity. They descend on them like locusts. I only find them later, torn open and already eaten, a tattered mess of crumbs, shredded basket and bits of paper. Sadly, there never seems to be a card or letter.

I do still feel that Lila is my mate, but what if my body is choosing wrong? Lila was highly attracted to me and seemed ready to take on a relationship. But I could be mistaken. Maybe she has changed her mind. This often happens to orcs. We feel that rush of desire and mate with the female that our body tells us is the one, only for that female to leave us high and dry. Females are notorious for wanting the rush of pleasure with an orc mating, then are horrified to find themselves pregnant with an orc son they are disgusted with. In fact, that's what happened with my own mother, whom I've never met.

Finally, my father fully recovers.

For five long months I remained with Edmurk Overthrow in his small but cozy home, the same home where I was raised, in the commune. I moved back into my old childhood bedroom but often slept in a chair in his room. I stayed at my father's side until he grew healthier and healthier until finally, the treatment was over and he was back to normal, as healthy and as strong as ever.

The idea of Lila's offspring entered my mind often while I was in the commune watching my dad. We had lots of time to talk. I told him everything about Lila, and how she wasn't contacting me. He didn't seem to be too concerned, but I am. I asked his opinion about how he'd feel about having two human grandchildren, one male and one female. He sounded delighted.

This is good and in fact surprised me. I didn't expect him to say that. My father had been so anti human the whole time I was growing up. "Times have changed," he said. "I've done my best to change along with them. It's never good to remain the same, holding on to old ideas from thirty years ago. Humans are trying to bring us together and orcs must meet them halfway. Then we can grow close, which helps the both of us. Instead of us fighting each other, if we continue to come together, we're stronger."

"Against other nations?" I questioned.

"Well, yes, because there could be other nations that don't have orcs because it's too hot for us and that leaves them without powerful orcs at their side. So there's that. And also," he leans forward and points up at the sky. "You know, one day, aliens could come down, and humans will be happy to have orcs at their side to fight."

I laugh. My dad has always believed in Ancient Aliens. It's kind of funny.

One morning Edmurk woke up and looked at me and announced, "You need to leave.

I love you son, but I need my home back to myself again.”

I laughed and told the healer what he’d said. Rika confirmed. “Yes, Edmurk is well. You can leave.”

“Go back to your job with the humans,” my father said. “And tell that female of yours to continue to send packages from that bakery.”

“Those were from Sadie, Bowen’s bride,” I corrected.

He shook his head. “I thought the cards had a different name.”

“What cards?”

“I don’t know. Didn’t really get a chance to read much before everything was shredded by those damn orcs. Tell them to start sending a double shipment. Maybe that way I’ll get more.”

I’m now back in Silver Lake, to continue my job.

But I’m determined to stay away from Lila Powell because it’s the dark of winter and I cannot remain sane in her presence. I left in July and now return in January. The streets are covered in snow and the lake is already frozen. She may or may not want me, either way I need to keep my distance.

I return and find out two things immediately: Lila is still single and she is not dating another human. This could mean that she is waiting for me, but I’m unsure.

At first, I request to be sent a field more, but that doesn’t help. Then I request to be given an assignment that is in the business district. I make sure I’m distant enough, so she does not know that I am nearby. I want her to be safe, even from me.

Bowen lets me know that Jude Jones has been walking in the business district, canvassing the location of Lila's bakery.

Jude knows that if he does anything that breaks his probation, he's back in prison. He always keeps his legal distance, as if he had a restraining order. He wasn't technically doing anything illegal, but he did always make Lila and Bowen's wife feel uncomfortable with his mere presence on the streets nearby. He never came into the bakery, but he was always across the street, just far enough away, where he could be seen.

Bowen assured me that he's been watching and keeping our females safe. He is grateful for my return, because now he has more backup to help keep both these females safe from this tricky human male. I'm an orc who has bonded with Lila and I'll go that extra mile. I promise that even though it's the dark of winter, I will make sure that all my dealings with Lila include full consent. I won't behave inappropriately or do anything to embarrass him or our species in general. We shook on it.

I have to keep my distance, but I do follow Jude Jones. I know all his movements. I know who he hangs out with. I know what he's doing before he does it. This is a vacation town where literally the only possible criminal in our midst is Jude Jones, because he returned recently. The crimes he originally committed weren't even in our town. He is here because he grew up here and has moved back to live with his mother. I keep an eye out on him.

You'd think the winter has slowed down the tourist traffic in our town, but it's almost busier than ever, because the downtown area is well known as being a charming Christmas market in the winter. And then they morph into a charming Valentine market.

The K-8 school in our town is within my patrol.

I go by the school because I want to double check that Jude wasn't trying to get to Lila through her children. So, I need to check on them too. Not that Bowen hadn't been doing that already. This is his niece and nephew. He didn't want to give this patrol to a human, because he knows how far I will go to protect Lila, Sadie and the children. I don't just consider this a job. I would violently give my life for theirs, in an instant.

The human children and their teachers like seeing me and beg for me to get out of the patrol car and come in and meet with them. I show up often during first break. Both of Lila's children attend this school and introduce themselves to me, which makes it easier for me to keep them safe now that I know the location of their school, the hours and their teachers. I sometimes fall into easy conversation with them, because I explain that not only am I the new Deputy but their Uncle Bowen is also my cousin.

"But don't tell your mom that we've become friends," I tell them. "I want to surprise her later that I've returned and we know each other already." I feel odd saying this to them, convincing them to keep something from their mother, but since I am protecting their mother with my words I allow this bit of subterfuge.

"Mom loves surprises."

"I went on that one date with your mother, which I enjoyed, and then I had to leave because my father was sick and I had to help him recover. But it took so long for me to return, it's now the dark of winter, which is a dangerous time for orcs."

"Dangerous?" Lacy gasps.

"Yes," I laugh. "All that that means is that I want to be able to go out on a date with your mom again and behave as civilly and respectful as I did the first time that I met her. I'm afraid during winter I'll act..." and I point at my tusks, which are bigger than they used to be. "I'm afraid I'll act too primitive for her, and I'll scare her away."

“Oooh.”

“Can you help me out?” I tell them. “Help me to not tell her that I'm here just yet, and how we've become friends, because I want to wait until the spring to let her know that I'm here and ask her out on a date again.”

“Yes, we can do that.”

I always got along well with the orc children in the commune, including my young cousins. I'd never gotten to know human children until, literally now, and they're not that much different.

Weeks go by and it's now February, and close to Valentine's Day. I have to admit, I'm sad that I don't get to share this time with Lila, if she wants me.

I would think that she'd heard by now that I'm back. I told her kids not to say anything, but obviously, this is a small town. She knows I'm back. She must be asking Sadie. I have no idea what Sadie is saying to her. And Lila hasn't tried to approach me, not that she really can. I can sense her presence from a distance, therefore I keep myself scarce. There's really no opportunity for her to approach me. I make sure we're never in the same place at the same time.

But I continue to watch Jude. And I feel that Jude is beginning to watch me in return.

Page 7

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 7

Lila

Urdan left at the end of July and life fell into the same routine as always.

August arrived and I was busy figuring out the new school year. Justin and Lacy were each in a new grade with new teachers. I can't believe how old they both are now. I have a child in fifth grade and another in third grade. How did this happen and how did they get this old? They needed school supplies and new clothes. The new school year started and I was super busy at work and getting the kids settled.

Of course, I thought of Urdan each day.

And at night I still masturbate to images of him touching me and imagine I'm holding onto those horns while I orgasm. And I pretend he's doing that amazing dirty talk in my ear. But it's never the same as his actual touch or the sound of this deep voice.

I sent the get well gift baskets to his father each month and in each one I tucked inside a card specifically addressed to Urdan with a hand written message that I hoped let him know that I wanted to hear from him and how much I cared. I always left my cell number again and even my email.

But he's still gone. And he hasn't messaged me, not once.

I remain committed to not being the first one to message or call. That's my hard line.

September merged into October and the weather got cooler and I remained busy at work and both kids were in sports and had extra activities.

Urdan had to leave because his father was very, very sick and he remains because he needs special care, which is a real reason. In fact, I admire the fact that Urdan dropped everything instantly in order to be there for his dad. But his lack of communication with me solidifies that he changed his mind about us after he found out that I already had two human children.

I assume he's at the commune and can't imagine how my two original children, from a prior marriage, would fit into his life. I have both a son and a daughter and maybe Urdan's father hates the idea of fully human grandchildren. Maybe they wouldn't even be allowed in the commune?

Finally, the fall merges into winter. The holidays are over and it's January. The dark of winter.

And this is when I hear that Urdan is back in town.

I secretly shed tears because he's here and hasn't approached me, even once. Not a message, not a visit, nothing. Our town is not that big and he's a deputy sheriff, so I assume I'd at least run into him, but there's not even that.

I think he's in fact avoiding me, which hurts.

I do my best to carry on with life and mourn the loss of what I thought would be a great relationship. It wasn't meant to be. But it hurts twice as bad, knowing that yet again here is a man I wanted who wasn't willing to bond and love my two kids as much as I do. I cry at night, trying to fall asleep and smile in the morning like I'm perfectly fine. But I'm not.

I think I was quickly falling in love with Urdan Overthrow and he never felt the same.

His body was in lust with an available human female and when he discovered I was in fact inappropriate, the distance between us cooled his pheromones and he was able to walk away as if we never happened.

Must be nice. It's not the same for me, at all.

And now it's Valentine's Day and I'm alone yet again.

But it's not as bad as it sounds. This is a day where we celebrate love in all its forms. Love between friends. Between siblings, parents and family. A day to show how we care about others in our lives. And it's also the busiest day of the year for our bakery.

Which is why I arrive earlier today than usual. My parents are taking care of the kids and getting them to school so I can be here.

I park and show up at the back door to the bakery before dawn. As I unlock the door a shockingly familiar voice calls out my name.

My whole body locks up with instant fear.

Page 8

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

Chapter 8

Urdan

I 've been following Jude Jones closer than ever before because he's acting differently. I suspect he's planning something, because it's almost Valentine's Day.

Jude had a girlfriend when he first arrived in Silver Lake. She recently broke up with him. His two friends have chosen not to hang out with him anymore for reasons. And then on top of that, he still has no job. Human laws make it difficult for convicts to restart their lives. It is hard to find an apartment or retain a decent job with a felony on their record. I understand he's working against the tide, but it can be done. Jobs are routinely offered to humans in his situation. But I would say his best bet is to move to a different part of the country. His life restart isn't going to happen as easily in this tiny vacation town with few resources. But this is where his mother lives, and it's the only place he can live for free and have her financial support. His personality doesn't help matters. This human had bad blood in his veins since he was a youth, and the bad blood doesn't seem to be leaving him.

Two days prior to Valentine's, I see him parked in a parking lot, and it's obvious he's been sleeping in his car. This is when I discover his mother kicked him out of her home because he was stealing from her. He bit the hand that fed him. Now he's got nothing, not even the one person in the world who was helping him. This makes him more desperate. Where is he going to stay? And how will this affect his mindset? Will he remember the fact that he needs to tread carefully because he's on parole? Or will his rage at his illogical target, Lila, get the best of him?

Twelve hours ago, I lost sight of Jude Jones. No one in the department has caught sight of him. He could've moved away. Or he is planning something and knew I was following him. My number one priority is the safety of Lila and her offspring. I won't let anything happen to them.

Valentine's Day arrives and Bowen and I are tag teaming this now. He's on one end of the street. I'm on the other.

I show up earlier, just before Bowen and watch from my own parked vehicle as Lila pulls into the back parking lot of the bakery. This is the first time I've seen her this close since that night when I left. Warmth rushes through my chest. She looks the same, but her hair is longer, and she's dressed very warm. My female is just as sexy as I remember.

A part of me wants to toss open the car door and rush down the street to kidnap her myself and take her to a cave in the hills. But I refrain. The ancient orc within me remains contained and the modern orc will keep her safe from the human.

Lila crunches through the snow to reach the back of the store. I'm not even wearing a coat, but my shirt is buttoned and I wear heavy boots for the snow. I don't need gloves or a hat like these humans do. I love this type of weather. Winter is my favorite time of year. My deputy sheriff uniform is all that I need. Bowen likes to wear his sheriff's hat, but I'd rather have my head bare.

I'm armed, but amongst orcs, if you've had to use a gun, your instincts and strength weren't enough, which is an embarrassment. At some point I'll need it, but not yet. Even when I was hunting, I never used a gun. I did go through training, and I am an excellent shot, but again, I try not to use it.

My windows are down and I hear a faint noise and my senses are on full alert. I exit the vehicle and move closer. I see Bowen step out too. We nod at each other.

There should be no one out and about on these streets at this time, except for Lila. None of the other businesses are open yet and none of the public services have started. The sun hasn't even risen and it's dark outside. The outline of the moon remains faint in the sky.

The other full time bakery staff will be here in moments, so she's only going to be alone for a moment. Lila's at the back door, unlocking it. The light is on. She's underneath it.

She pauses and turns around.

Did someone call out her name?

And then I see a shadow move. I see the rush from the corner of my eye, and I'm moving faster than I have in my life. That's one thing about orcs, we're huge, but we're still fast. This is why humans never let us into their sports. I had been parked far enough away and was in the dark, it's possible that he thought we weren't here.

He's so very close to my female. Lila screams and tries to dart away. The male's long blond hair is tied back and there's a snarl on his manic face. He's holding a knife in his hands and screaming obscenities at Lila as he moves to block her.

I race towards him and tackle him to the ground. Bowen is next and the two of us have Jude easily pinned and his knife knocked away. In moments the male is handcuffed and his rights read to him.

"Goddamn, fucking orcs," the male screams.

I punch him in the face to knock him out cold.

Bowen chuckles and calls for backup. He reaches out and shakes my hand. "Our

females and offspring are safe.”

“Safe,” I confirm.

“Urdan,” Lila cries out. I turn as she comes jogging towards me, a look of relief and delight on her face.

“No,” I thunder. “Stay away.”

She skids to a stop and her mouth drops open.

“It is the dark of winter,” I hiss. “I cannot talk to you or remain in your presence. You must wait for me until spring.”

“What?” she looks over at Bowen. “What is he talking about?”

Another deputy car pulls up and an ambulance wails in the distance. Bowen has the phone to his ear and shrugs, I’m sure wanting to stay out of this.

“Are you alright?” I question.

“Yes, because you saved me from that asshole with a knife in his hands.”

“Good. And now I’m going back to work. I will see you in the spring.” I manage to ignore the rush of hot, primitive blood rushing through my veins and the sudden thickness in my shaft. I return to my vehicle and begin my morning patrol of the neighborhood, my hands tight on the steering wheel.

The next evening...

There’s a knock on my door and I find Lila on the doorstep of my small rental.

She wears a thick coat and snow boots. “Urdan, I want you, even in the dark of winter. I missed you. It’d been so long. Can’t we at least talk?”

Wind blows the scent of her arousal straight into my lungs. “No fucking way,” I snarl, already on the edge of control. “I can’t promise to value consent until the spring. Run away from me now.”

I shut the door in her surprised face. Then I lock it for good measure. I turn off my cell phone. And shut the curtains closed tight.

Two days later...

That evening, after a long day’s work, there’s another knock on my front door. Lila is back. My resolve is weakening. She’s obviously had more time to think this through because her approach this time is more difficult to rebuff.

This time she wears more form fitting clothes.

And she holds a plate of treats as well as warm meat and potatoes. And on the ground beside her are several large bottles of orc ale.

“Lila,” I growl. “You are not thinking this through clearly.”

“I actually am.”

“I have already told you that I cannot promise to value consent. What if I accidentally do something to you that you did not consent to?”

“I am telling you right now that I want to be with you and I will not be running away, trying to spark your kidnapping instincts. I am here to stay and I’ve brought food with me.”

I glance at the platter and sniff. “Did you make that by hand?”

“It is all handmade by me, except for the ale. And I plan on feeding it to you with my hands.”

I groan and open the door. She walks past me inside. I pick up the ale and take it in too.

She puts down the platter at the kitchen table. I use my hands to open the top of two bottles of ale.

“You said you were doing this...”

“I am doing this,” she agrees.

I light the fireplace and turn up the heater extremely high because my female needs it much warmer than I do. And then I strip off my shirt and walk around barefoot. In moments Lila has her outer layers off and we are soon sitting in chairs facing each other.

“My cock is already thick and leaking.”

“That’s good to hear.”

“I will want a blow job.”

“I want to give you a blow job.”

“I need fast sex with you several times to get the wildness out of my blood and empty my hot seed. We will still need to continue to have lots of sex after that, for most of the winter. But I will remain more sane if I know that you’ll always be by my side

and I won't have to chase you."

She picks up a cupcake and hand feeds me a bite. I instantly calm down. "I love your treats."

"Thank you. I baked this one myself and decorated too, of course."

We spend much time at the table. It indeed is very calming to simply have her near, inhaling her scent and knowing she will not run. She feeds me beef and potatoes, my favorite. In between I finish a whole bottle of ale.

Lila sips and finishes half a bottle, which I can tell is already making her tipsy.

"This is working," I say. "My cock is hard and my pants are tented but at the same time I feel calm, without the need to throw you in my car and take you to my cave."

She grins.

"But now I need more." I lurch to my feet and close the blinds. Then I sit back down on my chair and reach forward and pull her chair close to mine.

"I need inside of you," I tell her. "My seed is boiling and needs release inside of you."

She reaches down to take off her clothes. I sit in my chair again and help Lila remove her pants and her underwear and then my female is naked from the bottom, down. Then she stands in front of me and removes her shirt and her bra and now she is entirely naked and her breasts swing free.

I growl, pull her close between my thighs and spend time holding each perfect breast in my hands and sucking and pinching on her nipples. Finally, I reach down and

finger her wet channel between her thighs. “You are ready?”

“Please.”

She watches with wide eyes as I open my buckle, unzip my pants and allow my thick, green, leaking shaft to spring free.

“Oh wow.”

I hold onto her hips and waist and help her to climb up onto my lap with her legs splayed on either side of my hips.

“Grab my shoulders. I’ll hold you.”

I reach underneath and position my cock at her entrance. Then I start to lower her, slowly. She squeaks and sighs as I begin to fill her up. I start to thrust my hips up, giving her small thrusts. Soon my shaft fills her up all the way.

Then her arms are around my neck and she’s kissing me hard. I sneak my hand between where our bodies meet and find her clit and start strumming her nub.

I break off the kiss. “I need to fuck you hard.”

“Yes, please.”

I place my hand on her hip and start lifting my own hips. I’m able to slam into her while keeping my finger moving right where she needs it. In moments I can feel the pulse of her channel as it tightens during her release. She cries out as her orgasm shakes her entire body.

I throw back my head and roar out my own release. I pull her down as fill her as deep

as I can because this is the special moment when I will impregnate my female. My seed shoots inside of her again and again and again. The rush is so hard black spots form in my eyes.

I wrap my arms around Lila and hold her tight and take her down to the ground with me and in moments we are on the rug, in front of the crackling fireplace.

Soon we fall asleep in each other's arms.

"Can we go to my house?"

Lila asks this after we've taken a shower and are both drying off, because my jizz was so copious that it was running down the inside of her thighs and I assumed we smelled like a sex house.

I gaze into her beautiful eyes, trying to understand why she wants us to leave suddenly. And then I say, "I want to formally meet your offspring."

"Oh please, I know you already know them. Lacy told me recently all you've been doing for them since you came back. Justin said you've been secretly hanging out with them a school breaks, talking with them and bringing them snacks. You were their Secret Santas."

"I like them."

Her eyes water. "I know...I know. My two kids are wonderful. They're at prime cuteness. They are the loves of my life. Were you hoping for a mate who didn't have children yet?"

"I did not care one way or the other. Will your children accept orc siblings?"

“Yes. They have orc cousins already.”

“Your parents can accept orc grandchildren?”

“They already have orc grandchildren and as far as I can tell love them at the same level as they love the other human grandchildren.”

“This is good to know.”

“Will your father accept human grandchildren?”

“Yes. I already asked him this and he was happy with the idea.”

“Urdan, my kids need love and attention and a dad, and I thought that I was giving them that when I married their father originally, and now it's as if they don't even have a dad. I moved back to the small town where I was born and raised because my whole family is still here, and they're literally going to the schools that I went to. It's a great environment for them. But if I were to remarry, that man would need to...”

“Become their father?”

“Basically. And they can't be treated as second best because they aren't orcs.”

I pull her close because I already want to sink inside of her again. “All of our offspring will be treated with equal amounts of love and attention.”

She hugs me tight. “We'll arrive at an empty house. But they'll be back in the morning with my parents.”

“That sounds good.”

“Are you sure?”

“I love the idea of arriving at an empty house so we can fuck again on your bed with you on top. Then afterwards, I will fuck you from behind and over fill you again with my seed.”

She laughs. “I love you.”

Soon we are both dressed and Lila follows me in her car while I drive my SUV and park in her driveway. We barely make into the house with the door closed behind us before I sink inside of her again with her back against the wall in the entryway.

Her screams of release soon ring out through the house.

Page 9

Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 9:31 am

The next morning I wake up with a naked orc in my bed, which isn't so bad. I met him originally at his place and talked him into coming to my house and late last night I asked him to move in with me. This is better because he's only renting an apartment that's technically a vacation rental. It's a nice place, but if we're going to be together he needs to literally move in with me.

These whole last six months I've been imagining this day. I've gotten used to the idea of living with a man again.

I roll over on my side and stare longingly at the profile of the snoring orc in my bed. His fierce features, those black horns and white tusks look nothing but sexy. I start to slide close, ready to wake him up for another round of hot morning sex.

And then there's a knock on the front door.

"Oh hell," I whisper. "My parents."

Urdan instantly snorts awake and sits up heavily. "What was that?"

I put a hand on his huge forearm. "Don't worry."

The doorbell rings.

Urdan looks out the window at the sunrise. "Who is here this early?"

I sigh with resignation. "My family. Sometimes I forget how freakishly early they can arrive when they really, really want to intrude. Can you handle all of this? I come

from a big family.”

He pulls me into his arms. “You are already pregnant with our first son. This is happening. Of course I can handle your family. Remember, your family already includes Bowen and their orc son. This is already a mixed species family. It will go well. I will bring you, Justin and Lacy to meet my father and visit the commune. We will all get along.”

“I love how optimistic you are Urdan Overthrow. Will you marry me and become my husband?”

“And I love your loyalty, Lila Overthrow. And yes, I would be honored to become your husband and the father of your children.” He kisses me with those amazing lips, between two extra thick tusks and all I want is to stay in bed, but the damn doorbell rings again.

“I’ll get it,” he says. “You take a shower.”

“Thank you.”

“You owe me a blow job later tonight.”

I slap his perfect, naked ass. “No problem sexy orc.”

I hope you enjoyed Lila and Urdan’s HEA!