



Trapped by the Cartel (Nightshade Wolves #10)

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Category: Fantasy

Description: Elliot never expected to be claimed by a dangerous alpha.

Elliot Hayes spent his life trying to outrun the ghosts of his past, only to find himself trapped in the relentless grip of Damon Vexley—the enigmatic, ruthless leader of the Nightshade Wolves. As a vulnerable omega with secrets too heavy to bear, Elliot’s escape turns into a nightmare when Damon, whose icy dominance hides a burning, possessive desire, makes it clear: in his world, no one leaves without being marked. Whenever Damon appears, his distinctive cologne and commanding presence stir emotions in Elliot that he has struggled for years to suppress.

Damon isn’t used to being defied... until Elliot.

A man of power and cold calculation, Damon has built his cartel empire on fear and uncompromising control. But when Elliot’s fierce defiance clashes with an undeniable chemistry that sizzles with tension, Damon’s world starts to crumble. The more Elliot resists, the stronger Damon’s need becomes to mark him. Their forbidden scent-marking and fleeting skin contact ignites both territorial fury and mating urgency, binding their souls forever.

Join Elliot and Damon in this gripping Omegaverse cartel romance. Age gap, captive omega, and fated mates are just some of the themes sprinkled into the narrative. If you like your omegas defiant and your alphas dangerously obsessive, you’re going to love this one!

Total Pages (Source): 21

Page 1

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Elliot

The forest floor blurred beneath my boots, a chaotic mess of roots and fallen leaves. Each breath hitched in my throat, tasting like pine needles and raw fear. More fear than pine needles, to be honest

It was a sound that rattled my bones, a guttural growl that vibrated through the very earth beneath me. It wasn't just a sound; it was a promise of pain, of oblivion. It was something I thought I would never hear in my life.

I risked a glance over my shoulder, and my blood turned to ice. Big mistake, I immediately thought. Should not have done that.

That thing was colossal. Unfathomably huge. Bigger than any wolf I'd ever read about in the dusty tomes back at the Archive.

This creature was a nightmare-made flesh, its fur the color of storm clouds, rippling with muscle as it moved. It wasn't running; it was charging, each stride covering an impossible distance, tearing through undergrowth as if it weren't even there. I never thought I would see something like that in my life.

Trees, ancient oaks older than my entire lineage, shuddered and fell under the force of its passage, splintering with horrifying ease. The air itself seemed to warp around it, a distortion of reality as it pursued me.

The most terrifying thing was that it was pursuing me. I hadn't done anything wrong and it was still coming after me.

My legs burned, screaming in protest, but I couldn't stop. Couldn't dare slow down. Doing that would be a mistake, more so than glancing over my shoulder. Much, much more so.

The scent, thick and musky, clung to the back of my throat, a suffocating wave of predatory intent. I pumped my arms, pushing harder, desperate to put more distance between myself and that... thing.

I'd been foolish. So terribly, foolishly foolish. Thinking I could just slip away, shed the shadows of my past, find a quiet life in the city. Why did I ever think that was going to work, anyway? I was so stupid.

Now, the repercussions of my hasty departure were chasing me through the woods, teeth bared and fury radiating like heat.

My father had always warned me about straying too far, about invoking the attention of things best left undisturbed. I never listened much to what he had to say, and that was a mistake.

He'd lectured endlessly about the ancient pacts, the responsibilities tied to our bloodline. I hadn't listened. I'd been young, arrogant, and hungry for freedom. Too hungry for the latter, I thought.

A branch snapped behind me, the sound amplified in the desperate silence between my ragged breaths. It was closer now. Too close.

I risked another glance. Its eyes, twin pools of burning gold, locked onto mine. The sheer intensity of its gaze stole the air from my lungs. It wasn't just hunting me; it was enjoying the chase. And that was why it was smiling, too.

Panic threatened to overwhelm me, a suffocating tide. I felt as though my chest was

going to explode. It was the beginning of an anxiety attack.

I swerved sharply, dodging a fallen log, the bark scraping against my arm. A searing pain shot through my flesh, but I ignored it. Anything to keep moving. Had to keep moving. I had no idea how I was still ahead of that thing, but I knew I couldn't lose my advantage.

The ground dipped suddenly, throwing me forward. I landed hard, a jolt of pain erupting in my shoulder. Scrambling to my feet, I saw it. A ravine. Deep, shrouded in shadow, with jagged rocks jutting out like skeletal fingers. My heart hammered against my ribs. It was a dead end.

Oh fuck, oh fuck. What was I going to do? I had no idea. Panic made my heart gallop even harder than it was before.

I looked back. The wolf was almost upon me. Its massive jaws were open, revealing rows of teeth like daggers, and the air ripped with its echoing roar. This was it. The end of Elliot Hayes.

Then, a different sound cut through the chaos—a guttural shout, followed by the crackle of something heavy impacting the forest floor. I risked another glance, and this time, I didn't see the wolf.

However, deep inside, I knew that something was wrong with my initial assessment.

My vision had narrowed to the immediate danger, the jagged rocks and the yawning darkness. The roaring had faded slightly, replaced by the frantic pounding of my own heart. I was so focused on not falling that I hadn't noticed the subtle shift in the forest's rhythm.

Something was still definitely close by.

Then, a twig snapped behind me, almost swallowed by the rushing of blood in my ears. This time, the sound wasn't magnified by panic. It was... casual. Too casual for a creature that had just been trying to tear me apart. I whipped around, a choked gasp escaping my lips.

It was there. Just meters away.

The initial shout—that guttural roar—had distracted me, masked the wolf's maneuver. It hadn't stopped its pursuit. Instead, it had taken a wider arc, circling around the ravine, a predator exploiting a vulnerability. I should have thought that. The thought should have crossed my mind. Why didn't it?

My stomach plummeted. I'd been so busy looking down that I'd failed to notice it was coming around from the side.

It wasn't running now. It wasn't even moving particularly fast. It just... was. A hulking mass of muscle and fury, its golden eyes fixed on mine with an unnerving stillness. It was a tableau of contained power, a coiled spring ready to unleash.

The distance, which I'd foolishly believed I'd gained, had evaporated. The scent, previously a wave, now pressed against me like a physical barrier, suffocating and burning my lungs. It wasn't panting, wasn't breathing heavily. It was savoring the moment, toying with me.

A low rumble vibrated in its chest, a predatory purr that sent a fresh wave of terror crashing over me. The air crackled with an almost tangible tension. I could feel the heat radiating from its fur.

My mind screamed at me to run, to do something, anything. But my legs felt rooted to the spot, heavy and unresponsive. It was like being trapped in amber.

It took a single step forward, and the ground trembled beneath my feet. Thump. Thump. The sound echoed in the confined space, a death knell. It really was coming for me, and I knew it was going to kill me. These were my last seconds alive.

The creature didn't snarl. It didn't threaten. It simply advanced. A slow, deliberate stalk, each movement radiating an effortless dominance that crushed my spirit. The playful teasing seemed to be gone. Now, it was just... hungry.

The gold of its eyes seemed to deepen, darkening to a molten gold that reflected the fear churning within me. It could smell it.

I realized, with a sickening certainty, that whatever had intervened before hadn't stopped the wolf. It had merely delayed the inevitable. My inevitable death, I thought.

The wolf lowered its head slightly, its nostrils flaring as it inhaled my scent, a slow, deliberate act of assessment. Then, it opened its jaws. A slow, wide roar that showcased rows upon rows of razor-sharp teeth.

Click.

The sound was almost insignificant, barely audible over the pounding of my heart, but it was there. The subtle, unmistakable click of those teeth closing. A promise of violence, delivered with chilling calm.

It was closer now. I could feel its breath on my face, hot and musky, a tangible manifestation of impending doom. The world seemed to narrow, to shrink, until all that existed was the monstrous silhouette of the wolf and the desperate, frantic pounding of my own heart. This wasn't a hunt anymore. It was a prelude to something far more terrifying.

The world tilted, and I braced myself for impact. Surely, it was going to eat me alive,

right?

It didn't happen yet, though. Instead, the wolf paused, suspended in a silent standoff. It circled me, not aggressively, but with a deliberate, measuring grace that was far more unnerving. What was it thinking?

It wasn't charging, wasn't threatening, simply... observing. And smelling. Smelling me.

It moved with a fluid, almost liquid motion, each stride precise, each turn a slow, elegant curve. The scent emanating from it intensified; musk, earth, and something else... something deeply territorial. It washed over me, stealing the air from my lungs and leaving a strange, vibrating heat in its wake. I didn't like the way it made me feel. It made me feel weak.

The circle was slow, deliberate. A predator assessing its prey, but without the frenzy of an imminent attack. It was more... thorough. Methodical. It was as if it was cataloging me, assessing every scent marker, every nuance of my being.

It passed close enough that I could feel the brush of its fur against my skin, a coarse, surprisingly warm caress. A shudder rippled through me, not entirely of fear. There was something unsettlingly intimate about it, a violation of my personal space on a scale I'd never experienced. Once again, something I thought would never happen occurred. Then I remembered all the strange things that had happened since it began its pursuit, and I realized this was my new normal.

The wolf's head dipped slightly as it passed, its massive muzzle hovering inches from my face. Was it going to eat me now?

I held my breath, paralyzed, not daring to move or even blink. The sheer size of it was overwhelming, suffocating. It made me feel so small.

I could feel the heat radiating from its body, and the faint tremor in its muscles.

Its golden eyes, those unsettling pools of molten gold, never left my body. They weren't predatory now, not exactly. They were... assessing. Analyzing. And something else. Something... curious. I didn't understand what I was seeing.

The air thickened with the wolf's scent, mingling with my own fear and desperation, creating an intoxicating, almost hypnotic blend. I felt lightheaded, disoriented, like I was trapped in a dream gone horribly wrong.

I felt like I might pass out, but I couldn't allow myself to. I knew I wouldn't wake up if that happened.

As it circled, I realized something profoundly disturbing. It wasn't just smelling me. It was... feeling me. Like the scent itself wasn't enough. It was delving deeper, somehow... probing.

A strange tingling sensation spread across my skin, starting at my fingertips and spreading inward. It wasn't painful, not precisely. It was more like... an awareness. A deep, visceral awareness of my own body, of the delicate balance of hormones that coursed through my veins.

It knew. It knew what I was. An omega.

There was no doubt about that, but it was also not really a secret. Every alpha knew that I was an omega. My scent always gave me away.

The wolf completed its circle, returning to the spot where it had begun. It stopped directly in front of me, its massive chest blocking out the fading light. It lowered its head, butted its muzzle gently against my shoulder, a gesture that was oddly comforting, and strangely possessive.

It wasn't a threat. Not anymore. It was acknowledging something. Something inherent. Something inescapable. It was acknowledging my omega. And that acknowledgment sent a new chill down my spine, colder than any fear I'd experienced.

What did it want? Was I going to find out the answer to that question before it swallowed me whole?

Page 2

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Damon

"You are trapped here with me," I said, the words rumbling from my chest in a low growl, a sound that vibrated through the very ground between us. It wasn't quite speech, not fully human, but enough to convey the message.

He wouldn't understand the nuances, the subtle undercurrent of possessiveness woven into the phrase, not yet.

His name was Elliot. I knew everything about him—his lineage, his anxieties, the quiet desperation that fueled his flight.

Some people would say that was creepy, but not me. It was in my nature to be like that.

I knew about the Archive, the stifling expectations, the hidden magic simmering beneath his delicate surface. But he knew nothing about me. And in that moment, he was afraid—very, very afraid, as he should be.

Being afraid was good. It meant he wasn't an easy prey.

I felt it, a ripple of raw terror emanating from him, a tangible wave of scent. It was intoxicating, undeniably. And also... utterly fascinating. He smelled of fear and old books, of longing and suppressed yearning. A dizzying combination, and one I'd find myself savoring for a while.

He thought I was going to eat him. The foolishness of it was almost endearing. Yes, I

was going to devour him—but in an entirely different way. The physical consumption would be... unnecessary.

He was going to be one. All of him.

I lowered my head further, nuzzling his shoulder again, a gesture that was intended to be reassuring, even though it likely felt like anything but. My fur brushed against the thin fabric of his shirt, and I registered the faint, sweet scent clinging to it—a trace of his own unique omega musk, barely there beneath the layers of fear.

"Quiet," I rumbled, the word escaping as more of a vibration than an actual sound. It was meant to quell the frantic pounding in his chest, to assert a fragile semblance of control. "No need for that." I tilted my head, observing him with those golden eyes. "You're not going to be hurt."

I had to say that. Otherwise, he might have a heart attack, and I didn't want that, of course.

He didn't respond, of course. He simply stood there, frozen, trembling slightly, like a captured bird. A very delectable-smelling bird, I thought wryly.

"Do you... understand?" I pressed, the question laced with a hint of amusement. My voice remained low, a guttural murmur that seemed to resonate within the confines of the forest. It was a test, more than anything else. To gauge his comprehension, to assess the depths of his fear.

I just wanted to know what he was like. This was our first interaction.

I paused, allowing the silence to settle between us. Then, I added, almost casually, "Your father... There are some things about him I have to say. Not all of them are bad, though."

The flicker in his eyes, a brief flash of surprise, quickly masked by renewed terror, told me everything I needed to know. He hadn't expected that. He wasn't prepared for it. That was going to be a lot of fun.

I let out a low puff of air through my nostrils, a sound somewhere between a sigh and a chuckle. "Don't be afraid," I repeated, softer this time, trying to promise him that, even though he was trapped with me here, everything was going to be fine. "There's much more to come."

"You're remarkably quiet," I continued, the sound vibrating through the forest floor and into Elliot's trembling form. "Most humans have a lot of questions when they find themselves cornered by large canines."

He swallowed audibly, a tiny, panicked sound. "I... I don't know what to say."

And truly, what could he say? Not much, I realized.

"Truth is always a good start," I countered, tilting my head, letting my gaze linger on his face. He was so cute. "Though I understand it's hard in your situation."

"Why? Why me and what's going on here?" The words were barely above a whisper, strained and fragile. Fragile, just like he was.

"Why not you?" I responded, smirking. "You were running. You ran right into me."

A shudder rippled through him. "I didn't run into you."

"Oh? Then what was that?" My voice deepened, a low growl vibrating in my chest. "That frantic energy? The scent of fear practically radiating off you?"

He flinched. "I... I had a reason."

"Reasons are fascinating," I mused. "Tell me them, then. Don't keep anything from me, otherwise..."

"It's... complicated," he mumbled, his gaze darting around the forest floor. He seemed to be avoiding my eyes. Seemed? I immediately thought. He definitely was.

"Most things are," I agreed. "Life is rarely straightforward, is it?" I paused, allowing the silence to hang in the air. "Tell me a little about your family."

He hesitated, clearly weighing his options. "My father... he works for someone powerful."

There was something he didn't say. He was thinking that I knew more about his father than I was letting on. And in some way, he was right.

"Powerful how?" I pressed subtly, feigning ignorance for now.

"I don't want to talk about it," he mumbled, burying his face in his arms.

"That's not very helpful," I commented. The understatement of the century, I thought amusedly.

"I'm just scared, okay?" Elliot snapped out suddenly. "Can you... can you shift back?"

The question surprised me slightly. It was direct and desperate, a plea for normalcy in a situation that was anything but. I considered it, weighing the implications. Revealing myself would be a risk. But so was prolonging this tension.

"Patience," I rumbled, a low vibration in my chest. I had already made my decision, and he wasn't going to like it. "Everything in its time. There are protocols to follow."

"Protocols?" Elliot echoed, his voice rising slightly in disbelief. "You're following protocols while you have me trapped in the middle of nowhere?!"

I let out a soft huff of amusement. "Everything is protocol. Even this, little omega."

"But why? What do you want from me?" He was becoming more assertive, and it intrigued me.

"That's a question you'll find an answer to," I replied cryptically. "Eventually."

He glared at me, or rather, at the wolf that was me. "You're not helping."

"I am providing context," I countered. "You ran away from something. You're seeking sanctuary. And you've stumbled into my territory. That is all that there is to it."

"Your territory? So, you own this forest?"

"In a way," I agreed, the word laced with a subtle undertone of power. "Everything has its rightful owner. Don't you agree?"

He didn't respond, just stared at me in silence. He didn't know what to say, which was understandable.

"You have a sharp mind," I said finally, breaking the quiet. "It's a shame you're wasting it on fear."

"And you have a very strange way of putting people at ease," he retorted, defiance flickering in his eyes.

I let out a low chuckle. "Perhaps. But I am known for my unconventional methods."

"Unconventional is one word for it," Elliot replied, his voice still trembling slightly but gaining a hint of steel. He was fighting, and I found myself appreciating that, even as I knew he would lose. They always all did.

"Indeed," I rumbled, circling him again, slower this time, savoring the way his scent sharpened with anxiety. "Though I prefer 'efficient.'" I paused, letting the word hang in the air before adding, with a playful smirk, "Time is precious, Elliot. Best not to waste it on unnecessary fuss."

He glared at me, or rather, at the large wolf that was currently orbiting him like a predator around its prey. "You're enjoying this, aren't you?"

"Amusement is an important part of survival," I countered smoothly, letting my gaze linger on his face. It was such an adorable face, framed by those unruly curls and illuminated by those wide, apprehensive eyes. A perfect little omega face. "Besides, it's not every day I encounter a runaway with such... potential."

He frowned, clearly unsure what to make of my words. "Potential for what?"

"For everything," I replied, letting the word trail off, letting him wonder what he should be thinking in that moment. The air around us thickened, almost feeling suffocating. I could feel his pulse quickening, his omega scent intensifying. Delicious.

"I'm not a toy," Elliot retorted, a flash of anger momentarily eclipsing the fear in his eyes.

"Of course not," I agreed smoothly. "You are far too valuable to be a mere plaything. You are... a project." My voice dropped to a low murmur, sending a fresh shiver down his spine, if my senses were accurate. "A fascinating study. And, ultimately... mine."

The words were meant to unsettle him, to test the boundaries of his defiance. And they certainly seemed to be doing so, as a wave of genuine alarm washed over him. Good.

"You're insane," he whispered, shaking his head slightly.

"Perhaps," I conceded, tilting my head. "But insanity is often merely perspective. And my perspective is, quite simply, that you belong here, with me." A possessive warmth bloomed within me, a deep, visceral certainty. He was going to be mine. It was inevitable, as natural as the changing of seasons.

I could practically feel it already—the way he would scent-mark our territory, the quiet contentment of his presence, the unwavering loyalty in those hazel eyes. He wouldn't resist for long. Omega's rarely do. They crave protection, belonging—a place to call home. And I offered all of those things, wrapped in an alluring package of dominance and power. And in his case, he craved home more than anything else.

"You don't even know me," Elliot protested weakly, but the fight had already started draining out of him.

"That's precisely what makes this so intriguing," I replied, drawing closer, until my muzzle was just inches from his face. The scent of his fear, now laced with a faint undercurrent of something akin to fascination, filled my nostrils. Irresistible. "I intend to find out."

He closed his eyes briefly, bracing himself for... what? He didn't know. I certainly didn't. And that was part of the fun.

"Tell me," I purred, letting the sound vibrate against his skin. "What were you running from, Elliot Hayes?" The question wasn't accusatory, but rather curious. A gentle probing, designed to loosen his defenses and coax out the truth. Because

sooner or later, he would tell me everything.

"Don't..." Elliot began, but the words caught in his throat, a strangled sob escaping instead. He pressed his hands against his face, shoulders shaking visibly. "Just... stop it."

Stop? Stop what? Stop this little game we were playing? I don't think so.

I observed him silently, the internal amusement warring with a flicker of something else—a surprising wave of... pity? It was fleeting, quickly suppressed, but there. Still, I registered it. He was crumbling, and frankly, it was rather pathetic. And yet, somehow endearing. More endearing than pathetic, to be honest.

"Stop what?" I asked, feigning ignorance, though I knew precisely what he wanted me to stop. "Providing stimulating conversation? Sharing my... insights?" I almost laughed after saying the last thing.

He lifted his head, face streaked with tears, eyes red-rimmed and swollen. He looked utterly wretched, a delicate flower battered by a storm. And yet, even in his distress, there was a spark of defiance still flickering within him.

"You're mocking me," Elliot choked out, the accusation raw and vulnerable. "You're enjoying it."

"Merely observing," I corrected gently, letting my voice soften slightly. "Omegas are fascinating creatures when under pressure. You reveal so much about yourself." I paused, letting the words sink in. "It's quite entertaining, really," I added, almost as an afterthought. The arrogant smirk returned, a subtle flash of teeth amidst the wolfish features.

He flinched at my words, a fresh wave of tears spilling down his cheeks. "Why are

you doing this?" He pleaded. "Just... leave me alone."

Leave him alone? Not yet. As I thought before, he was mine.

A pang—something akin to regret—twitched within me. I hadn't intended to break him quite so thoroughly. It was almost... messy. Still, I wasn't about to back down. Not now.

"I can't do that, Elliot," I said. "You're here. And you're mine."

He recoiled as if I'd struck him. "How... how do you know my name?" The question was delivered in a rush, fueled by desperation and rising panic. And the answer was simpler than he thought.

The blatant shift in topic caught me off guard for a moment, though. I hadn't expected him to bring that up. Clever boy. "That's a remarkably astute observation," I purred, deliberately prolonging the suspense. I let out a long, slow breath, savoring the way his eyes narrowed, trying to pierce through my facade.

"Stop playing games with me," he snapped. "Who told you?"

"Information is currency, Elliot," I replied cryptically. "It flows freely when properly acquired." I paused, letting the ambiguity hang in the air. "Let's just say I have... sources." And, of course, I wasn't going to reveal them.

He scoffed, a wet, broken sound. "Sources? What, do you have spies in my father's library?"

"Your father is an interesting man," I mused, ignoring his jab. "A collector of knowledge, a guardian of secrets. He has a fondness for certain... arrangements." I let the implication sink in. "He isn't always as discreet as he believes."

Elliot's eyes widened, understanding dawning in their depths. A wave of realization washed over his face, leaving him pale and shaken. "You're connected to him and you know him personally," he whispered. There was no mistaking the horror in his voice.

"Connected is a rather broad term," I conceded, letting my gaze linger on his face. "Let's just say we share... mutual interests." And then, because I couldn't resist, I added, "Besides, it was never a secret that you were the prodigal son of a very important man."

I saw the fight drain completely out of him. He slumped against a nearby tree, defeated.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Elliot

The blood drained from my face, leaving me cold and clammy. I never thought I would hear something like that.

Connected to my father? Sharing mutual interests with that wolf? It was a chilling prospect, far more terrifying than the initial chase through the forest. My entire life had been a carefully constructed lie, a shield against the world's harsh realities. And now, that shield was shattered.

I had no protection. I had to protect myself.

"What kind of interests?" I managed to choke out. I really didn't want to say anything, but still had to. The words tasted like ash in my mouth.

The wolf chuckled, a low rumble that seemed to vibrate through the very ground beneath me. "Those are questions best left unasked, Elliot." He paused, and for a moment, I thought he was going to drop it, let me wallow in my despair. Instead, he continued, "But since you're so curious..."

"My name is Damon Vexley." The words were deliberate, formal, contrasting with the predatory growl that had accompanied them earlier. Then, with a sudden ripple, a shimmering distortion filled the air around him. I gasped, instinctively recoiling as the wolf began to... unravel.

The transformation was breathtaking, mesmerizing, and deeply unsettling all at once. The massive form of the wolf seemed to compress, bones shifting and reforming, fur

receding into the skin, muscles reshaping themselves with an almost agonizing fluidity. It happened quickly, yet felt like an eternity stretched thin. I thought I would never see such a thing.

And then, he was human. Standing before me, fully naked, his skin gleaming in the dappled sunlight filtering through the trees.

I stared, dumbfounded, unable to process what I was seeing. He was even more imposing as a man than he had been as a wolf. Taller, broader, with a presence that seemed to fill the entire clearing. His ice-blue eyes, now unmasked by the fur, held a potent intensity that made it difficult to breathe.

He didn't move, didn't flinch at my stunned silence. He simply stood there, naked and unapologetic, radiating an aura of absolute confidence. It was disorienting.

I was pretty sure he was enjoying my reaction. Given the way he was looking at me, there was no reason to think differently.

My breath hitched in my throat, a nervous flutter in my chest escalating into something else entirely. I hadn't expected this. Not this. The sheer audacity of it, the blatant disregard for how I might feel. It was both shocking and strangely exhilarating.

I quickly averted my eyes, my cheeks burning with a mixture of embarrassment and an unwelcome, burgeoning arousal. "You... you can shift?" I stammered, the question sounding ridiculously inadequate even to my own ears.

I mean, yeah, of course he could shift. Why did I even ask that question? I was so stupid.

A slow, predatory smile curved his lips, revealing a flash of white teeth against his

tanned skin. "I can, yeah," he replied, his voice now deeper, richer, infused with an undeniable sensuality. He took a step closer, closing the distance between us. My heart pounded against my ribs like a trapped bird.

"It's a rather useful skill," he continued. "Especially when one has... business to conduct." He paused, letting his gaze trail down my body and back up again. The blatant assessment made me acutely aware of every inch of my own skin. "And you, Elliot Hayes, appear to be rather central to that business."

I swallowed hard, struggling to regain control of my racing thoughts. "What... what do you want from me?" I repeated, the question feeling weak and inadequate even as it left my lips.

He took another step closer, invading my personal space. The scent of his skin, clean and musky, filled my senses, almost overwhelming. "Because you are mine. You are in my territory, so you're mine now."

"Mine?" I repeated, the word tasting like defiance on my tongue. "I'm not an object to be claimed, Damon. I'm a person."

His smile widened, revealing a hint of predatory amusement. "A very appealing one," he murmured, his eyes raking over my face. "And quite valuable." Valuable? I asked, wondering what he meant by that. He took another step closer, until I could feel the warmth radiating from his skin. "You are in my care now."

I bristled, pushing back against his dominance, despite the unsettling flutter in my stomach. "I don't need your care. And I certainly don't belong to you."

He chuckled softly, a low rumble in his chest. "Oh, but you do. You just haven't accepted it yet." He paused, letting the words hang in the air before adding with a playful smirk, "It will come to you."

No, it will never come to me, and even though I wanted to say that right to his face, I knew it wouldn't make a difference.

My gaze flickered downwards, drawn against my will. A completely involuntary reaction, I swear. It was like my eyes had a mind of their own. And suddenly, all coherent thought seemed to evaporate from my brain. I literally could not think.

His... anatomy... was rather impressive. I mean, really impressive. I'd never seen anything quite like it, even in the most lurid of romantic novels I'd devoured when I was younger. It was... substantial. Very substantial. Hanging there, fully exposed, surprisingly pale against his tanned skin. Even flaccid, it possessed a certain undeniable presence.

Even though I knew it was wrong, I wanted all of it. Every single inch.

I quickly snapped my eyes back up to meet his, mortified. My cheeks burned with a furious blush. Oh god. I can't believe I just did that. I felt like the most foolish, inexperienced omega in existence.

Because now... Now he was going to take advantage of my mistake.

He was watching me, of course. And not with surprise or confusion, but with a slow, deliberate amusement that sent a fresh wave of heat surging through my veins. A corner of his mouth lifted in a knowing smirk. He knew I'd been staring. How could I be so stupid?

"Interesting, isn't it?" He drawled, winking slowly. "Most omegas find themselves... captivated."

I sputtered, desperately trying to regain some semblance of composure. "I was not... I wasn't looking," I stammered, the words sounding feeble even to my own ears. "It's

just... you're naked! And... and big!" The last word escaped in a mortified whisper. I should not have said it.

He threw his head back and laughed, a rich, throaty sound that resonated through the clearing. It wasn't a mocking laugh, not entirely. It was... appreciative. And somehow, incredibly infuriating. "Big, you say?" He teased, wiping a stray tear from his eye. "I suppose it is rather hard to miss."

The laughter subsided, leaving a comfortable silence in its wake. His eyes softened slightly, the predatory gleam receding to reveal a hint of something else—a flicker of genuine amusement, perhaps even... kindness? It was fleeting, quickly masked by his usual aura of dominance, but I caught it nonetheless, and I didn't know what it meant.

"Look," I said, attempting a more serious tone. "This is insane. I need to go. I need to find somewhere safe."

He raised an eyebrow, a hint of challenge in his eyes. "Safe? From what, Elliot? From me?" He took another step closer, closing the distance until I could feel his breath warm against my skin. "You're not going anywhere."

"Don't be ridiculous," I retorted, trying to maintain a facade of defiance. "I'm not a prisoner." Or at least, that was what I thought.

He simply ignored my protestations, reaching out with a hand that seemed impossibly large, impossibly calloused. It enveloped my own, dwarfing it completely. The difference in size was startling—his hand rough and weathered, mine soft and slender. A jolt of unexpected sensation ran up my arm, a strange combination of nervousness and... something else. Something I didn't quite understand.

He squeezed gently, commanding without saying anything, and pulled me to my feet. My legs were shaky, protesting the sudden movement, but he steadied me with a

surprising gentleness.

I hadn't put up much of a fight, I realized with a touch of shame. Perhaps it was the exhaustion, perhaps the lingering fear, or perhaps something else entirely. There was something undeniably compelling about his dominance, his raw power. A strange sort of security in being completely controlled.

"Where are we going?" I asked, my voice barely audible. He didn't answer verbally, just turned and began walking deeper into the forest, setting a brisk pace. I followed, reluctantly at first, then with a growing sense of inevitability.

"You're awfully quiet," Damon commented after a few minutes of silence. His voice was low and resonant, easily carrying through the dense undergrowth. "Most people have a lot to say when they're being escorted against their will."

"I'm processing," I replied defensively. "It's a bit difficult to engage in witty banter when you've just been abducted by a naked wolf-shifter."

He chuckled, the sound warm and surprisingly pleasant. "Abducted? That's hardly fair. More like rescued, I think."

"Rescued from what?" I retorted, rolling my eyes. "My perfectly normal, albeit slightly chaotic, life?"

"From yourself," he countered. "You were running blind, Elliot. Headlong into oblivion."

What was he talking about? He didn't know anything about me. He might know my name and about my father, but who I really was? That he didn't know anything about.

I stopped walking abruptly, turning to face him. "And you think you have a better

plan for me?"

I was just curious what he might say as an answer.

He shrugged, a gesture that was both casual and dismissive. "Let's just say I have resources. Connections. And a distinct lack of patience for pointless wandering."

And pointless wandering wasn't what we were doing in that moment?

"So, what? I'm your new pet project now?" I asked, holding back a chuckle.

"Something like that," he agreed, resuming his walk. "A fascinating one. Besides, it's not every day an omega wanders into Nightshade territory."

I frowned. "The Nightshade... is that what you call your operation?"

"A family business," he corrected smoothly. "Generations in the making." He paused, glancing at me over his shoulder. "We're involved in various ventures. Let's just say we have a hand in keeping things running smoothly."

"And what exactly does that involve?" I pressed, my curiosity overriding my apprehension.

He considered for a moment before replying. "Maintaining order. Protecting our interests. Ensuring the stability of the region." It was vague, evasive, but I suspected he wasn't lying. Not entirely, at least, and he was doing it on purpose.

"So you're... criminals?" I blurted out, regretting the question as soon as it left my lips.

I hadn't heard anything about the Nightshade, or whatever his group was called.

He let out a soft laugh, shaking his head. "We prefer the term 'entrepreneurs,' Elliot. With a certain... flair for efficiency." He paused. "Don't worry your pretty little head about it. You won't be expected to participate in anything unsavory."

"I don't want to participate in anything!" I exclaimed, my voice rising slightly. "I just want to go home!"

"Home is where you are," he replied, his tone shifting to something softer, more persuasive. "And right now, home is with me." He paused, then added with a playful smirk, "Besides, your father will be quite relieved to know you're safe and sound."

I did not want to see my father.

Page 4

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Damon

The forest thinned abruptly, opening into a clearing dominated by an imposing wrought-iron gate. It was enormous, easily twenty feet high, intricately designed with snarling wolves woven into the metalwork. Beyond it, I could glimpse manicured lawns, sprawling gardens, and a mansion that could only be described as opulent. It was a far cry from the wild, untamed beauty of the woods we'd been traversing, and it was home.

Elliot stopped dead in his tracks, his eyes wide with disbelief. "What is this place?" He whispered, his voice barely audible above the rustling leaves. He kept a respectable distance from me, which I found amusing given my current state of undress. He was definitely struggling, and I was more than happy to observe that struggle. I was enjoying it.

"Home," I replied, leaning casually against one of the gateposts. It felt good to finally be here. "My home. And as you can see, it's a pretty spectacular one."

I watched him survey the scene, his expression shifting from shock to something akin to... awe? He was easily impressed, I realized. A dangerous quality in someone so vulnerable. Yet one more reason to be with me.

"You live here?" He asked, widening his eyes. "All alone?"

"Not entirely," I corrected. "I'm the first councilor of the Nightshade Wolves." The title rolled off my tongue easily. It meant I was second in command, advisor to the boss, the strategist, the enforcer. I was the one who kept the wheels turning smoothly,

who ensured that everything ran like a well-oiled machine, and it did.

I watched Elliot's face as he processed that information, the subtle shift in his expression indicating a growing understanding of my position. He knew now. Really knew.

He knew I could assure his protection.

"The Nightshade Wolves?" He repeated. "You mean... you're part of that organization?"

"Part of it? I am it, in many ways," I responded, letting the words sink in. "We're a family, Elliot. A rather extended one."

He took a step back, his gaze darting around as if searching for an escape route. "What does your organization do?" He asked cautiously, as if expecting me to launch into a monologue about illegal activities.

And if that was really what he thought, then he was just being stupid.

"We provide services," I replied, deliberately vague. No point in saying much more than that, after all. "Let's just say we specialize in resolving conflicts and maintaining stability within the region." A fancy way of saying that we controlled everything, from trade routes to political influence, and crime, too.

"And what exactly do you want from me?" He pressed, his voice regaining a semblance of its earlier defiance, and repeating the same question he'd already asked me a few times.

I pushed myself off the gatepost, moving closer to him, deliberately invading his personal space. "You're starting to ask all the right questions," I lied, letting my gaze

linger on his face. He was radiating anxiety, and it was intoxicating.

I wanted all of it, no denying it. Although, at the same time, I wished he was less repetitive.

"But I'm not going to answer them just yet," I continued, tilting my head playfully. "Patience, Elliot. Everything in its time." And as a matter of fact, everything would happen when I said so.

He swallowed hard, his eyes darting over my naked body. He was still struggling with the whole situation, and I couldn't help but feel a sense of... triumph. It wasn't just about dominance; it was about control. And right now, I had complete control over him.

"Why are you... like this?" He blurted out all of a sudden, his cheeks flushed with embarrassment. The question was clumsy, awkward, but it revealed a vulnerability that I found surprisingly endearing.

I raised an eyebrow, feigning innocence. "Like what?"

"Naked!" He exclaimed, his voice rising in pitch. "You're just walking around naked!" I couldn't believe he said that. I'd never had to explain myself for something so simple.

However, maybe that said something about me.

I chuckled, shaking my head. "It's comfortable," I said with a shrug. "And besides, it's not exactly unusual around here. Most people get used to it." A silent admission of the eccentricities of the Nightshade Wolves.

"I doubt that," he mumbled, averting his gaze.

The gates creaked open, revealing a stern-faced guard standing watch. He nodded curtly in my direction before focusing on Elliot. I smiled at him, a gesture that conveyed both authority and familiarity.

"Come," I said, extending my hand towards him. "Let's go home."

Stepping through the gates was like entering another world. It was far from the first time I was there, but it felt different every time.

The manicured lawns gave way to a sprawling complex of interconnected buildings, all constructed from gleaming white stone and adorned with intricate carvings. But it wasn't the architecture that stole Elliot's attention—it was the inhabitants.

There were a lot of them. And most of them were... naked. There was nothing surprising about it to me. But to Elliot, he was learning that I'd told him the truth.

Men, large and muscular, strolled casually through the gardens, engaged in animated conversations while completely unclothed. Some were sparring lightly, their bodies glistening with sweat. I could hardly contain my excitement, my dick hardening, but only slightly.

Others were tending to the vibrant flowerbeds, their backs bare and surprisingly graceful. It was a tableau of unapologetic masculinity, utterly jarring against the backdrop of refined luxury.

Elliot stopped dead in his tracks, his eyes widening to an almost comical degree. He stared, mouth agape, as if witnessing a particularly bizarre dream. Again, he was realizing that I was right. I hadn't lied.

Him learning that I hadn't lied was a good thing. I wanted him to trust me. He was going to stay here for a long time with me.

Elliot was needed. He was going to be useful.

"Are you... are you serious?" He finally stammered out, barely able to articulate the words.

I suppressed a grin, thoroughly enjoying his bewilderment. I had been waiting before, wondering what his reaction would be like. "Welcome to Nightshade Manor," I said, guiding him further into the grounds. "We're rather relaxed about attire here." My voice was low, laced with amusement as I watched him try to process the scene before him.

I could tell he still couldn't believe it. Something in him kept telling him he was imagining everything, even though he was wide awake.

"Relaxed?" He repeated, his voice cracking slightly. "That's... that's an understatement. It's utter chaos!" He glanced around nervously, as if expecting someone to notice his complete and utter discomfort. "Why? Why is everyone... like this?"

Why was he still pretending he didn't like it? I could tell what he was thinking. He wanted to undress and walk around naked just like most people in here were.

"It's tradition," I explained casually, steering him past a group of men engaged in a heated discussion about... well, I couldn't quite make out what they were arguing about, but their intensity was palpable. "It's freeing. It eliminates distractions."

I could tell he didn't believe the last part. If anything, he thought that it was the polar opposite.

I paused, letting my gaze linger on his increasingly flustered face. "Besides," I added with a playful smirk, "it's rather difficult to maintain any sense of modesty when

you're constantly surrounded by exceptionally attractive men."

He sputtered, his cheeks turning an even deeper shade of crimson. "I... I don't think that's appropriate," he stammered, attempting to regain some semblance of composure.

"Oh, lighten up, Elliot," I chuckled, nudging him playfully. "You'll get used to it. Or at least learn to ignore it." I paused and glanced over his shoulder. "Speaking of which," I said casually, pointing toward a particularly large man sculpting a marble statue with impressive skill, completely bare-chested, of course, "that's Rhys. He's our head of security."

Elliot's eyes darted to Rhys, then back to me, his expression a mixture of disbelief and horror. "Head of security? Naked?"

"Highly effective," I assured him with a wink. "Keeps everyone from the outside on their toes." From the outside, I specified, because people who frequented the manor often didn't find his nakedness unusual, of course.

Elliot let out a shaky breath. "I think I need to sit down."

"Nonsense," I said, guiding him towards a nearby patio overlooking the gardens. "You'll be fine. Just try to breathe. And try not to stare." Although, judging by his current expression, staring was proving rather difficult for him.

I preferred that he stared at me, by the way.

I settled into a wicker chair, crossing my legs and observing him with amusement. "So," I said, breaking the silence, "tell me, Elliot, do you think you'll fit in around here?" I smiled at him, enjoying his discomfort.

He swallowed hard, his eyes darting around the patio, taking in the scene of naked men casually lounging about.

Page 5

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Elliot

The absurdity of the situation hit me like a runaway train, washing away any remaining pretense of calm. It was one of the most absurd things I had seen in my life.

I couldn't help but burst out laughing. Not a polite chuckle, not a nervous giggle, but a full-blown, hysterical laugh that echoed through the patio and drew curious glances from the lounging alpha pack members.

I couldn't help but find it absurd that my laugh drew more attention than their nakedness.

"This is insane!" I exclaimed, wiping tears from my eyes. "Utterly and completely insane! You expect me to just... stroll around in the middle of this place? Surrounded by half-naked men? It's like a fever dream! A very, very strange fever dream."

I stopped laughing abruptly, the reality of my situation crashing back down on me. The amusement evaporated, replaced by a rising tide of panic and anger.

This was no joke. They really had me trapped here.

"And you expect me to just... accept this?" I demanded, turning to Damon, my voice trembling with frustration. "This is ridiculous! This is insane! I'm not some pet to be paraded around your... your naked club!"

My eyes darted around the patio, taking in the casually lounging men, and a sudden

wave of claustrophobia washed over me. I truly, really was trapped, confined within these gilded walls, surrounded by strangers who were barely clothed. On top of all that, their nakedness was the most absurd factor.

"I don't want to be your prisoner," I protested weakly, my voice cracking slightly. "I didn't ask to be here! You took me from the forest! You kidnapped me!"

I glared at Damon, his amusement unwavering. His eyes were still sparkling with that infuriating mix of enjoyment and possessiveness. He really was enjoying seeing my outburst, wasn't he?

"As I said before, you're not a prisoner, Elliot," he said calmly, as if addressing a child throwing a tantrum. The thought made me furious. "You're a guest. A very special guest."

"A guest who can't leave?" I retorted. "A guest who has been stripped of his freedom and forced into this... this bizarre situation? That's not a guest, Damon. That's a hostage!"

He understood that and we both knew it, but he still wasn't going to admit it. He just wanted to keep toying with me.

I took a deep breath, trying to regain control, but the frustration was bubbling up inside me like a volcano about to erupt.

"And for the love of all that is holy," I added, gesturing wildly at his naked body, "put some clothes on!"

The demand felt strangely liberating, a small act of defiance against this surreal situation. It wasn't about the nudity itself, it was about the power dynamic, the blatant disregard for my boundaries, and the sense of being reduced to an object of

amusement.

"Put some clothes on! Please!" I repeated. "Just... cover up a little!"

Was that really so difficult?

Damon stared at me for a long moment, his expression unreadable. The playful smirk slowly faded from his lips, replaced by a flicker of something else—surprise, perhaps? Or maybe... amusement. He found me so funny, didn't he?

"Demanding, are you?" He said. "I hadn't realized that you were going to be quite so assertive and sensitive."

Sensitive? He didn't know anything about me.

He paused, studying me with those piercing blue eyes. "Very well," he said finally, a mischievous glint returning to his gaze. "If it's what you want."

Yes, it was what I wanted, but was he really going to give it to me?

He stood up suddenly, turning towards the manor.

"You're serious? You're just going to... go inside?" I asked, incredulous. "To get clothes? While I'm standing here, freezing and feeling like I've stumbled into some bizarre, naked cult convention?"

And I knew what he was going to tell me. He was going to tell me to follow him. As if that could solve anything.

He simply shrugged, a gesture that oozed careless confidence. "Efficiency isn't always immediate, Elliot. Patience is a virtue." He then turned and began walking

towards the mansion, beckoning me to follow. "Besides, it wouldn't do to catch a chill before we get properly acquainted with our surroundings, so follow me."

I was right.

Regardless, I reluctantly trailed after him, muttering under my breath about the absurdity of it all. The sheer laziness of it! "So, what's inside? More naked men sculpting marble statues? Do you have a fully clothed butler serving champagne?"

He chuckled, his voice echoing through the sprawling gardens. "Something like that. We prefer to call it 'refined living'." He paused, glancing back at me with a knowing smirk. "And yes, we do have a rather excellent sommelier."

The interior of the mansion was even more opulent than I'd imagined. Vast hallways stretched out before us, lined with priceless artwork and illuminated by enormous chandeliers. The air hummed with quiet activity—hushed conversations, the clinking of glasses, the soft strains of classical music drifting from somewhere deep within the house. It felt like a museum, but lived in, and quite lavishly at that.

"This is... excessive," I said, not daring to raise my voice.

"Excess is merely a state of mind," Damon replied, his eyes sweeping over the room with an air of detached amusement. "We simply appreciate the finer things in life." He paused, then added with a playful grin, "And we have the resources to indulge them."

I rolled my eyes. "Right. And what exactly does Nightshade do to acquire those resources?" I pressed, determined to get some real answers.

But even though I asked that question, I knew they did things that were in a legal gray area.

He led me down a long hallway, pausing before a massive oak door. "As I said, we provide services," he repeated, echoing his earlier response. "Let's just say we have a talent for resolving delicate situations and ensuring stability."

"And what kind of 'delicate situations' are we talking about?" I persisted, feeling like I was chasing a ghost.

Before he could answer, he opened the door and ushered me into a lavish study, filled with leather-bound books, antique maps, and a massive mahogany desk. The room radiated an air of quiet power, a sanctuary from the chaos of the rest of the house.

It was his office. I was in his dominion now even more than I was before. It was a chilling thought.

"We'll discuss that later," he said, turning his attention to a nearby wardrobe. "For now, let's focus on something more pressing—my attire."

And then, the agonizing process began.

Damon started with a slow, deliberate grace, unbuttoning a hidden shirt with an almost theatrical flourish. He savored each movement, each pause, drawing out the anticipation like a conductor prolonging a dramatic crescendo. Each piece of clothing was carefully selected, examined, and then slowly, meticulously put on. A black silk undershirt first, clinging to his sculpted chest. Then, tailored trousers, the fabric rustling as he eased them over his legs.

"Are you serious?" I asked, struggling to contain my exasperation. "You're going to take an hour to get dressed?"

And somehow, I already knew the answer to that question.

He chuckled, not even bothering to look up. "Patience, Elliot. It's a lost art." He paused, admiring the way the trousers draped over his form. "Besides," he added with a wink, "a man must present himself properly."

Present himself properly. Fucking motherfucker. He was doing that just to keep toying with me, and the worst thing about it was that it was working. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't ignore it.

The minutes ticked by with agonizing slowness. I paced the room, fidgeting and muttering under my breath. I watched him pull out a crisp white shirt, slowly buttoning it up with meticulous care. Then came a black tie, knotted with practiced ease. The final touch was a flawlessly tailored black suit, which he slipped on with a flourish, transforming his appearance into something sleek and undeniably powerful.

Was he going to a formal meeting? I had no idea, and I didn't want to ask.

"Finally," I exclaimed, throwing my hands up in the air. "You're done! It took you longer to get dressed than it would take to negotiate a peace treaty that stops World War III!"

He turned to face me, a slow, satisfied smile spreading across his lips. His ice-blue eyes sparkled with amusement as he surveyed me, taking in my growing frustration.

"Did you enjoy the show?" He asked, tugging the right corner of his mouth and showing me his perfect teeth. "It's a performance, Elliot. Everything is a performance." Then, he tilted his head and added: "And you, my dear, are my audience."

Meanwhile, I couldn't deny it anymore. No matter how much I tried to hide it, Damon knew. Knew that my dick was rock-hard beneath my clothes, tenting my pants embarrassingly. I could feel the sticky precum leaking from the tip, dampening my

boxers, and it was driving me crazy.

I hated myself for feeling this way. Really, really hated myself.

Fuck, why did he have to be so damn sexy? So confident and dominating? It was infuriating and arousing all at the same time.

Damon sauntered over to me, a smirk playing on his lips. He knew exactly what effect he was having on me, and he loved it. Loved toying with me, making me squirm.

"You seem... uncomfortable, Elliot," he said, his voice a low rumble that sent shivers down my spine. He leaned in, bringing his face inches from mine, and I could smell the faint, tantalizing scent of his sweat mixed with his natural musk. It was intoxicating, and I struggled to suppress a groan.

"I'm fine," I muttered, trying to maintain a shred of dignity. "Just eager to get this over with."

He let out a low, rumbling chuckle, a dark timbre that echoed deep within me. "Over with? Oh, darling, we're just getting started." He paused, his gaze flicking down to my crotch, and I swore I could feel the heat of his stare like a physical touch. "In fact, I'd say you're very... eager indeed."

I blushed crimson, cursing my traitorous body. Damn omega hormones. I was supposed to be a rational adult, not a hormonal teenager ready to jump his bones at the slightest provocation.

Damon's gaze lingered, his smirk growing wider. "Tell me, Elliot," he breathed, his voice dropping to a seductive purr. "Do you usually react this strongly to alphas? Or is it just me?"

Should I even answer that question? Part of me was telling me that I shouldn't.

I swallowed hard, trying to ignore the way my pulse quickened at his proximity. "It's not you," I insisted, my voice coming out sharper than I intended. "I just... I'm horny, okay? It's been a while."

He let out a deep, velvety laugh, and it was so rich and intoxicating that it sent a wicked pulse straight to my core. "Ah, I see." He leaned in even closer, his lips brushing against my ear. "Well, I can help with that, you know. A little relief goes a long way in improving one's mood."

I froze, my breath catching in my throat. Was he seriously offering...?

And why was I surprised, anyway, considering the type of man he was?

"No, thank you," I said stiffly, forcing myself to push him away. "That's not going to happen right now."

He backed off, but the smug smile remained. "Of course you can," he agreed, though his eyes challenged me. "But sometimes, it's nice to have a helping hand, isn't it?"

I grunted noncommittally, refusing to rise to the bait. He was enjoying this far too much, and I refused to give him the satisfaction of seeing me lose control.

But fuck, it was hard. Harder than my aching cock straining against my zipper. The scent of his skin, the heat of his body, the pure alpha maleness that radiated from him—it was all driving me crazy.

I was a young, fertile omega, after all. My body craved an alpha's touch, his seed. And damn it, Damon Vexley was temptation incarnate.

Still, I had to resist. Had to maintain some semblance of self-control. Because giving in to him—to this—would mean losing myself, and I couldn't afford to do that. Not with so much riding on my freedom.

Not with so much at stake.

Page 6

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Damon

I strolled casually around the expansive office, running my fingers along the spines of ancient tomes, feigning disinterest. Inside, however, a storm was brewing. I could still taste Elliot's frustration, still feel the heat of his gaze as he watched me dress. And fuck if it didn't excite me, knowing I affected him so viscerally.

Yet, I needed to play this cool. Needed to make him believe I didn't care. That he meant nothing more to me than any other piece of valuable property under my roof. It wasn't true, of course, but I still had to pretend.

"Would you look at that?" I murmured aloud, pulling out a dusty volume bound in worn leather. "A first edition 'The Art of War'. Sun Tzu himself would be proud."

Elliot glared at me from across the room, arms crossed tightly over his chest. His hazel eyes flashed with anger, his cheeks flushed a delightful shade of pink. It took considerable effort not to smile, not to march over there and take those plump lips in a burning kiss that would leave no doubt about how much I wanted him.

But I held back. Instead, I turned my attention to the book, flipping through the yellowed pages with exaggerated casualness. Inside, a part of me was telling me I was being evil.

"You know, they say that patience is the key to victory," I commented, not looking up from the text. "That true strength lies in restraint."

"That's funny," Elliot snapped, his voice trembling with barely suppressed emotion.

"Because from where I'm standing, it looks like your 'restraint' has cost you whatever shred of dignity you might have once possessed."

I raised an eyebrow, glancing at him briefly before returning to my perusal of the tome. "Dignity is such a transient thing, wouldn't you agree, Elliot? One moment it's here, and the next..." I gestured vaguely, letting the sentence trail off.

His hands clenched into fists at his sides, his entire body shaking with pent-up rage. It was adorable, really. Like watching a kitten attempt to appear fierce, which only made me want to keep this going.

"But then again," I continued, allowing a hint of cold cruelty to enter my voice, "perhaps dignity isn't something an omega should concern himself with. It's rather an alpha trait, don't you think?"

He bristled at the jab, his anger morphing into something deeper, darker. Hurt flickered in his eyes, quickly masked by another wave of fury. Good. Let him stew in it. Let him wonder what he'd done wrong.

"And what exactly are you implying, Damon?" He growled, taking a step towards me. "That omegas aren't capable of feeling dignified? Of making their own choices?"

I shrugged, closing the book and slipping it back onto its shelf. "I imply nothing, Elliot. Merely stating facts, as I see them." I turned to face him fully, letting my expression harden into an impenetrable mask. "You are an omega. Your place is beneath an alpha. You exist to serve us, to cater to our needs."

The words were harsh, deliberately cruel. But necessary. I needed him to understand his position, to accept it. To submit to it, eventually.

"I am not a possession!" He shouted, slamming his fist down on a nearby table. A

vase wobbled precariously under the impact, threatening to topple over. That was unacceptable behavior. "I will not be treated like one!"

"Then stop acting like one," I replied calmly, walking slowly towards him. With each step, I could feel the tension between us growing thicker, heavier. Like static electricity crackling in the air before a thunderstorm. "Stop throwing tantrums like a child who can't get their way. Stop trying to control everything, everyone. That is not the role of an omega."

I stopped just inches from him, close enough to feel his breath on my cheek, to see the dilation of his pupils as desire warred with anger within him. Close enough to smell the sweet, heady musk of his arousal, despite his best efforts to suppress it. As expected, his attempts were pointless.

"It is the role of an alpha to lead, to decide, to command," I continued, narrowing my eyes. "And right now, little omega, I am commanding you to stand down."

For a long moment, we remained locked in silence, neither backing down nor giving in. Then, finally, Elliot's shoulders slumped ever so slightly, and he looked away, breaking eye contact.

It wasn't submission—not yet—but it was a start.

"We'll discuss your... position further later," I said, turning away from him and walking towards the door. "Until then, I suggest you find yourself someplace comfortable to rest. You've had quite the ordeal."

I could see the confusion in his eyes. He was wondering why I wasn't going to give him a room to stay in for the time being. And the answer to that was very simple as I actually wanted him to crash in my room.

Elliot stood rooted to the spot, shock etched into every line of his delicate features. For a fleeting moment, I thought I saw fear flicker in his eyes—a vulnerability that made me want to pull him close, protect him from whatever demons haunted his past. But then, almost instantly, his gaze hardened, his chin defiantly.

"Why do you play these games, Damon?" His voice shook with suppressed emotion, but there was steel in his spine now, a fire igniting in those hazel depths. "What do you hope to gain by treating me like this?"

I leaned against the desk, feigning nonchalance even as my heart pounded in my chest. Fuck, the kid had guts. More than I'd given him credit for, apparently.

"What games would those be, Elliot?" I asked casually, though I knew precisely what he meant. The sudden shift in dynamics intrigued me. Challenged me. And I never backed down from a challenge. It wasn't in my nature to do that.

"You know damn well what I'm talking about," he snapped, stepping closer until barely a foot separated us. His scent engulfed me, that tantalizing blend of omega musk and something uniquely him. It took considerable effort not to groan aloud, not to haul him against me and claim him here and now.

His proximity affected me, but I couldn't let him see that. Not yet. So I arched an eyebrow instead, affecting boredom. "Enlighten me."

His hands clenched into fists at his sides, the knuckles turning white with the force of his grip. Yet, his voice remained steady, unwavering. "Your hot-and-cold act. One minute you're all charm and smiles, the next you're cold and distant. You push me away, then you reel me back in. What gives you the right to treat me like this?"

To be honest, I couldn't remember doing that often, but I admired his audacity, truly I did. But I also knew I could use this moment to my advantage. To show him exactly

how powerless he was against me. Against the raw, primal attraction simmering between us.

In a swift, fluid motion, I pushed off from the desk and closed the distance between us. My hand shot up, cupping the side of his face, holding him in place as I leaned in, pressing my lips roughly against his.

He stiffened for a brief instant, surprise and disbelief flashing across his expression. Then, to my immense satisfaction, he melted into the kiss, his body relaxing against mine, his lips parting beneath the pressure of my own.

Fuck, he tasted exquisite. Sweet and yielding, yet with a spark of fight that I loved. It was exactly the taste I was hoping to feel.

I deepened the kiss, tangling my tongue with his, swallowing his startled gasp. He whimpered softly, his fingers gripping my shirt, pulling me closer. He wanted more of me, and there was no denying it.

When I finally pulled back, his lips glistening and swollen, I watched as realization dawned in his eyes. Horror and embarrassment replacing the dazed lust that had been there mere moments ago.

"What the fuck?" Elliot snapped, pulling away abruptly and wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, as if trying to erase the evidence of our shared desire. However, it was a pointless gesture.

"Don't 'what the fuck' me, omega," I retorted. "You enjoyed that as much as I did. Maybe even more," I winked.

Heat flared in his cheeks, embarrassment warring with anger in his expressive hazel eyes. He opened his mouth to protest, but I cut him off before he could utter another

word.

"I can smell your arousal, Elliot," I pointed out cruelly, relishing the way his flush deepened at my blunt observation. "And don't think I didn't notice how eagerly you kissed me back." I paused, letting the harsh truth sink in. "Deny it all you want, but we both know it felt good."

He looked away, unable or unwilling to meet my gaze any longer. But I wasn't done with him yet. No, far from it. This game, this party of dominance and submission, was just beginning.

"Tell me, Elliot," I murmured, leaning in close enough for my breath to fan over his ear. "If I were to slide my hand between your legs right now, would I find you hard and ready? Dripping pre-cum?"

His sharp intake of breath betrayed him, but he stubbornly refused to acknowledge the validity of my question. Instead, he crossed his arms defensively over his chest, attempting to create some semblance of a barrier between us. And of course, it wasn't working.

"This changes nothing," he declared, his voice tight with barely suppressed emotions. "I still refuse to be treated like this—like some object you can toy with whenever it suits you."

A dark chuckle escaped me. "Oh, darling boy," I whispered, tracing the edge of his jawline with my fingertips, reveling in the shiver that ran through him despite his best efforts to remain stoic. "This changes everything. Because now I know what you really want. Now I know how you respond."

I leaned back, studying him intently, enjoying the way his chest rose and fell rapidly as he struggled to maintain control over his erratic breathing.

I understood how he was feeling. I had felt like that during a complicated time when I was younger.

His pupils were dilated, his skin flushed—the physical signs of his desire clear for anyone with half a brain to interpret.

"And mark my words, little omega," I continued, my voice hardening with resolve. "I will have you. I will take you in every imaginable way, and you will beg for more by the time I'm finished with you. And when that happens, you'll thank me for giving you what you truly crave."

Elliot's eyes flashed with renewed anger, his chin lifting defiantly. "I will never beg for anything from you, Damon Vexley. Not today, not ever."

Oh, is that so?

The air crackled with tension, an electric charge coursing between us, threatening to ignite like a summer storm. His denial only fueled my desire further; his fire called to mine, challenging me in ways few dared.

If he knew the effect that his defiance was having on me, he would have already changed his behavior.

"You seem very sure of yourself, omega," I taunted, stepping closer once again. Our bodies were almost touching now, close enough for me to feel the heat radiating from him. Close enough for him to see the hunger etched into every line of my face. "But then again, so did the Titanic."

He scowled, clearly unsure whether to laugh or growl at my audacity. Before he could decide, I grasped his wrist, tugging him towards me. His eyes widened slightly, surprised by the sudden contact, but he refused to pull away.

"Do you know why alphas are dominant, Elliot?" I asked, my voice low and dangerous. My thumb stroked patterns on the inside of his wrist, feeling his pulse quicken under my touch. "Because we're built to hunt."

His swallow was audible, but he held firm, refusing to show weakness. "You make it sound like we're animals, reduced to base instincts."

But were we really so different? I asked myself. No, I didn't think we were, I answered immediately.

"Sometimes, those instincts serve us well," I replied, smirking. "They help us survive. Help us thrive."

"And what do you plan to do, alpha?" He shot back, a spark of challenge lighting up his beautiful hazel eyes. "Hunt me down like prey?"

"That depends on you, omega," I countered, releasing his wrist and trailing my fingers up his arm instead. Goosebumps prickled along his skin beneath my touch, belying the cool indifference he tried to project. "Do you wish to be hunted?"

Our gazes locked, each willing the other to blink first. The world around us faded, the tense dance of dominance and resistance playing out solely between us. Eventually, he would relent.

Finally, Elliot broke eye contact, looking away with a frustrated huff. "You're impossible," he muttered, taking a step back. "And infuriating."

More impossible or infuriating? I mused.

"Yet here you stand," I pointed out, gesturing to the space between us. "Still arguing, still fighting. Still wanting."

He closed his eyes briefly, a silent admission of defeat—or perhaps surrender—but when they opened again, there was no softness left within them. Only determination.

"If you think that I'm going to roll over and accept whatever bullshit you throw at me, Damon, you've got another thing coming," he said firmly. "I won't submit willingly, no matter how much you push."

"We shall see about that," I replied, offering him a small smile filled with promise and warning. With that, I turned away, leaving him standing alone in the office. As I walked out, I heard him let out a low growl of frustration—and something else. Something primal, raw, and undeniably arousing.

Page 7

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Elliot

Fuming, I paced the length of the ostentatious hallway, hands clenched into fists at my sides. I would rather be anywhere but here, but it wasn't up to me, was it?

My heart pounded in my chest like a drumbeat echoing my conversation with Damon, each thump resonating with the fury simmering inside me. I was so furious that I could barely control myself.

Fury at myself, primarily. How could I have allowed him to kiss me like that? To reduce me to a quivering mess of wanton need with just one press of his lips against mine? It was embarrassing, infuriating... and absolutely exhilarating.

My heart was already accelerating just thinking about his soft lips pressing against mine.

The memory of his mouth on mine sent unwanted shivers down my spine, making my traitorous body ache for more of what I shouldn't want. Damn it! This wasn't supposed to happen. I was supposed to remain calm, collected, and unaffected by his charms. That was the bare minimum.

Yet, all it took was one moment of weakness, one slip-up, and he had me reeling. When my guard was down, he took advantage of it.

And gods above, the man was insufferable! Arrogant, smug, infuriatingly confident... and utterly, undeniably alpha. Every word that dripped from his perfect, sinful lips seemed designed to provoke a reaction—whether it be anger, arousal, or some twisted

mix of both.

I took a deep breath, trying to steady myself as I wandered through the labyrinthine corridors of this manor. The grand estate was a testament to wealth and power, but its opulence failed to impress me amidst the whirlwind of emotions storming inside me.

I could hardly think about the place where I was, considering all the other shit going on in my life.

As I ventured deeper into the bowels of the beast's lair, I found myself confronted with an unsettling display of naked flesh and unapologetic masculinity again. It was hard to miss it.

Alphas lounged openly in various stages of undress, seemingly oblivious to their surroundings. And to be honest, I was surprised some of them were not completely naked.

Some sprawled on plush chaise longues, engrossed in heated debates; others engaged in physical activities—sparring matches, weight training, even wrestling bouts that appeared far too intimate for mere sport.

The sight of so many powerful, half-naked men parading about should have been disconcerting, yet I couldn't deny the stirring it elicited within me. Each glimpse of sculpted muscle, every flash of thick cocks swinging freely between sturdy thighs, stirred a growing hunger that I struggled to suppress.

Was this normal behavior for alphas? Or was this merely the Vexley pack's particular brand of debauchery? Or maybe even something else entirely I was unaware of?

I paused before a vast window overlooking the expansive gardens, watching as two burly alphas rolled around in the grass, locked in a passionate embrace. Their limbs

tangled together, bodies pressed close, mouths fused in a frenzied exchange. Heat flushed through me as I watched, unwelcome desire pooling in my belly.

Why did this turn me on so damn much? Why did seeing these dominant males rutting and preening like proud beasts make my cock throb painfully in my pants? Why did part of me want Damon to fuck me?

Damn Damon for putting these images in my head! For making me crave things I knew I shouldn't. Things I barely understood.

A harsh laugh escaped me as I realized the irony of my situation. Here I was, an omega—the very essence of submission and nurturing—surrounded by alphas who wore their dominance like armor. And instead of shrinking back, cowering under their collective might, I was standing tall, challenging their authority, defying expectations. Maybe that was why I was so frustrated, because I might be fighting against my own nature.

But why did I keep having those thoughts? Because Damon brought out the worst in me? Because he pushed me, prodded me, taunted me until I snapped?

Or was it because he saw something in me—something hidden beneath layers of self-doubt and fear—and refused to let me hide from it any longer?

My thoughts were interrupted by the soft padding of footsteps behind me. I tensed, turning slowly to face whoever dared approach me while I was lost in thought.

It was one of the guards that had been posted at the gate. His muscular form was draped in nothing more than a loose silk robe, tied loosely at the waist. His broad chest bore intricate tattoos—symbols and sigils that seemed to dance across his skin as he moved. To be honest, I was surprised he was wearing something at all.

"Ah, the new pet," he rumbled, eyes gleaming with amusement as they swept over me. "Damon's little omega plaything. I'm Hunter, by the way."

My blood ran cold at his words. 'Pet'? Was that what Damon thought of me? A plaything to be paraded around, a possession to be flaunted? I didn't even have to voice that question. Damon was an asshole. Of course that was exactly what he thought of me.

The insult was blatant and infuriating, igniting a fresh wave of anger within me.

"I am nobody's pet," I snapped back, clenching my right hand. "And I will not be treated as such."

Hunter merely chuckled, his eyes crinkling at the corners in amusement. He really seemed to enjoy taunting me and piling on the pressure. Well, he could try, but that wasn't going to work on me. I was stronger than that and soon he would know.

"Such spirit," he said with a mocking tone, leaning against one of the pillars. "Damon has good taste, then. You're defiant enough to be entertaining." He paused before adding: "But we all belong to someone here at Nightshade."

"Does that make you the owner?" I retorted, my gaze narrowing as he watched me out of the corner of his eye. "Because if so," a dangerous glint shone in my eyes, "I'd suggest getting your leash."

His smile didn't waver, but there was something new behind those eyes—a flicker of respect that hadn't been there before. "You're feisty," he admitted softly, his voice dropping to a low rumble. He finally stepped away from the pillar and walked closer with purpose. "I appreciate it."

"What is this place?" I asked abruptly, needing to shift the focus away from my

simmering anger. "This isn't some kind of... club, is it? What exactly does Nightshade do?" My voice was strained as I tried to keep everything calm and collected. It had been brewing inside me for too long now, so, what could be done about that?

And deep inside, I knew what the Nightshade Wolves did. I just didn't want to admit it.

He considered my question for a moment before answering with a casual shrug. "We're... facilitators," he said with an almost bored indifference. "Connectors of people who need things."

Again with the vagueness? I hated it.

"What kind of 'things'?" I pressed further, impatience creeping into my tone.

Hunter grinned, revealing a flash of white teeth. "Information, influence, resources," he answered smoothly. "Anything that money can buy." He paused briefly before adding: "And some things that money can't."

I frowned, sensing the veiled threat in his words. It wasn't just about legal business; there was something else going on beneath the surface of this organization—something darker and more sinister.

"So, you're essentially a black market operation?" I asked, deliberately testing his reaction. "A cartel running under the guise of luxury services."

And I knew that was the truth, so his answer didn't matter much.

His smile widened slightly as he seemed pleased that I was picking up on certain aspects of their way of life. "You're quick," he conceded with a nod. "We prefer to

think of ourselves as... innovators." He paused, then added in a low voice, "Like the Yakuza, but more refined."

"And Damon?" I asked pointedly. "What's his role here? Besides being an infuriating distraction and tormentor?"

Hunter let out a hearty laugh, the sound echoing through the hallway. "Damon? Oh, he's the... talent scout," he said with mock seriousness. "He has a knack for finding stray omegas, you see. Lonely little things wandering around, needing someone to take care of them. Someone to make them happy."

The sheer absurdity of his statement made my blood boil. He really found this funny, didn't he? "Happy?" I spat out. "You think Damon Vexley can make anyone 'happy'?"

I couldn't believe his audacity. His words were a calculated jab, designed to provoke a reaction—and it worked. That was why he was doing it.

"Don't underestimate him," Hunter said casually. "He has a way of getting what he wants."

"And what is it that he wants from me?" I asked. "To break me? To mold me into something I'm not?"

Hunter shrugged, his expression unreadable. "Damon's intentions are... complex. Best not to worry your pretty little head about it." He paused, then added with a mischievous grin, "Just enjoy the ride."

Enjoy the ride? I hated it. I hated everything about what was happening here.

I glared at him, wanting nothing more than to punch him in his smug face. But I knew that would be foolish, reckless. So, instead, I channeled my anger into icy silence.

"So," Hunter continued after a moment, breaking the tense atmosphere, "you must be hungry, little omega. All this drama must have worked up an appetite."

I hadn't realized how hungry I was until he pointed it out. My stomach rumbled in response, betraying my earlier attempts at stoicism. The journey through the forest, the confrontation with Damon, the unsettling tour of this manor—it had all taken a toll.

"Damon is waiting for you in the grand dining room," Hunter announced, gesturing down the hallway. "He's expecting you."

Expecting me? I didn't like that one bit.

My heart sank at the prospect of another encounter with that infuriating alpha. But my stomach protested, and I knew I couldn't refuse. It was better to face him again, wasn't it?

The thought of a proper meal—something other than the stale bread and water I'd been subsisting on since escaping—was almost irresistible.

"And why would he be waiting for me?" I asked, narrowing my eyes.

Hunter shrugged again, that infuriating smirk playing on his lips. "He likes to play games," he answered with a shrug. "Besides, everyone here wants a piece of you." He paused, then added with a wink, "Even me, so enjoy the show."

I bit back a frustrated sigh and started walking towards the dining room as I followed Hunter, my every step heavy with reluctance. I hated this place. I hated Damon. And I hated the fact that I was probably going to end up liking whatever disgusting meal he'd prepared for me.

The grand dining room was even more opulent than the hallway we had just passed through. A long mahogany table stretched across the room, laden with an array of dishes that looked both extravagant and intimidating. Crystal chandeliers glittered overhead, casting a warm glow on the scene. And at the head of the table, sitting in a high-backed chair, was Damon Vexley, his dark eyes fixed on me with an intensity that sent shivers down my spine.

He rose to his feet as I approached, a predatory gleam in his eyes. "Took you long enough," he murmured. "I was wondering when you'd decide to grace us with your presence."

Page 8

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Damon

I watched as Elliot reluctantly approached the table, his expression a mixture of defiance and apprehension. He didn't want to be here, obviously, but he also didn't have another choice.

The sight of him—his slight frame, his unruly curls, the vulnerability lurking beneath that carefully constructed facade—stirred something primal within me, tightening my muscles and raising a familiar heat between my legs.

I tried to maintain an air of nonchalance, leaning against the head of the table and regarding him with an amused expression. It wasn't easy, though. The raw desire churning inside me threatened to spill over, betraying the carefully controlled persona I'd cultivated for so long.

There were so many things I wanted to do to him, but couldn't in that moment.

"Welcome, Elliot," I said, my voice smooth and welcoming. "I trust your journey here was... satisfactory?"

He didn't bother to meet my gaze, instead focusing on the elaborate spread of food laid out before us. The aroma was intoxicating—a collection of spices, herbs, and roasted meats.

"It could have been shorter," he muttered.

I chuckled, finding a perverse pleasure in his continued resistance. "Patience is a

virtue, little omega. You'll learn that soon enough." I gestured to the chair opposite me. "Please, sit. Let's not stand around like awkward teenagers on a first date."

He hesitated for a moment before reluctantly taking a seat, carefully positioning himself as far away from me as possible. However, it still wasn't going to work.

"So," I began, picking up a fork and examining it with exaggerated interest. "Tell me about yourself. What did you do before stumbling into my little world?"

His eyes flickered up to mine, a hint of suspicion in their depths. He was wondering where I was going to take this conversation.

"It's not really something I like to talk about," he said defensively, averting his gaze.

"Oh?" I raised an eyebrow, feigning disappointment. "I thought we were going to get acquainted."

He shifted uncomfortably in his chair, avoiding my gaze once again. "It was... complicated."

"Aren't most things?" I countered, spearing a piece of roasted asparagus and popping it into my mouth. "Tell me about your family, Elliot."

That seemed to be the wrong question. He visibly stiffened, his jaw clenching. Plus, he was most likely thinking that I already knew everything about that.

"My family is... not relevant," he said curtly.

"Everything is relevant," I insisted, my eyes locking with his. "Especially your past."

I could see the conflict raging within him, the desire to reveal, the fear of exposure. It

was fascinating to witness, and it fueled my own desire for control.

"Let's just say," he began slowly, "they wanted something different for me than what I wanted for myself."

"A common story," I agreed with a knowing smirk. "Many people feel stifled by their families' expectations. What exactly did they want you to be?"

He hesitated again, chewing on his lip as if struggling with the decision to confide in me. Finally, he let out a sigh.

"They wanted me to be... scholarly," he said, his voice barely above a whisper. "To dedicate my life to preserving ancient knowledge."

"And you didn't want that?" I pressed.

"It was... suffocating," he admitted, a hint of bitterness creeping into his tone. "All those dusty books, all those forgotten languages. It felt like I was trapped in a gilded cage."

I had felt like that sometimes before, so I could relate.

"So, you escaped," I concluded.

He nodded, his gaze fixed on the tablecloth. "I wanted to experience life. To see the world. To be... free."

And now he was, with me, and he was freer than he had ever been.

"And what have you found?" I asked, smirking.

He looked up at me, a flicker of defiance in his eyes. "Chaos," he said bluntly. "Nothing but chaos."

I chuckled, finding his assessment rather amusing. "Perhaps you just haven't found the right kind of order yet." My gaze drifted down to my waist, noticing my erection. "Maybe you just need someone to show you the way."

His cheeks flushed, and he quickly averted his eyes. But I could see the flicker of desire in them, the acknowledgment that my words had hit their mark.

I leaned forward, closer this time, my voice dropping to a husky whisper. "Tell me, Elliot," I murmured, "what do you truly crave?"

The absurdity of the question hung in the air. Elliot's face contorted into a mask of disbelief, his hazel eyes widening as he stared at me. The flush that had begun creeping up his neck intensified, staining his cheeks a vibrant pink. His reaction was priceless.

"That's... that's a ridiculous question," he finally sputtered, shaking his head slightly. "What kind of answer are you expecting? I'm literally sitting across from a man who runs a criminal organization! My craving is to escape, to find a way out of this insane situation."

A way away from me? I thought amusedly.

I let out a low chuckle, enjoying the indignation bubbling within him. It was a refreshing change from the stoic resistance he'd been projecting earlier. "Fair enough," I conceded. "But everyone craves something, Elliot. Even you."

He opened his mouth to retort, but I cut him off with a raised hand. "Don't deny it. Everyone has desires, hidden or not. It's what makes us the people we are."

The air was heavy, a palpable energy that crackled between us. I watched as he wrestled with his thoughts, his expression shifting between annoyance and contemplation. He seemed genuinely bewildered by my persistence, and I relished the challenge of breaking down the walls that surrounded him.

Suddenly, there was a commotion near the far end of the table, a loud crash followed by a flurry of panicked voices. A server, laden with a tray of ornate pastries, had tripped, sending the delicate desserts scattering across the pristine white tablecloth.

Chaos erupted in the dining room. Servers rushed to clean up the mess, while the other inhabitants of the manor turned their attention to the spectacle. The sudden disruption momentarily broke the intense connection between Elliot and me.

As the servants scrambled to clear the spilled pastries, a young man—one of my younger associates—attempted to steady a wobbling table laden with silverware. In doing so, he inadvertently bumped into the chair opposite Elliot, sending it sliding across the polished floor.

Elliot instinctively reached out to grab the chair, preventing it from crashing into him. But as he did so, the sudden movement threw off his balance. He stumbled forward, arms flailing in an attempt to regain his footing.

And that's when it happened.

Driven by his instinct to steady himself, Elliot's hand instinctively shot out, grasping for something—anything—to prevent a fall. His fingers closed around the armrest of the chair beside him, which, due to the unexpected jostling, had been subtly shifted closer to his own.

But it wasn't just any chair he grabbed onto. It was my chair.

The moment our hands connected, I felt a jolt—a physical reaction that resonated deep within my body. It was subtle, almost imperceptible, but undeniable. The contact sent a wave of heat rushing through me, tightening my muscles and making my breath catch in my throat. I hadn't expected this to happen.

I hadn't consciously moved, hadn't intended for it to happen, but as Elliot pulled himself upright, the momentum shifted us both. He didn't release his grip, and I didn't tell him to. The contact somehow felt... right.

The chairs were close enough now that our bodies were practically touching. His shoulder brushed against mine, making my body tense up slightly. It wasn't a forceful touch, but it was intimate, unexpected. He was breathing subtly on my neck.

The room seemed to fade away, the chaos and commotion receding into the background. All that remained was the electric charge coursing between us, the undeniable proximity of his body against mine. I could smell him now, that intoxicating blend of omega musk and something uniquely Elliot, filling my lungs with each breath.

He stiffened, his eyes widening as he realized the situation we were in. The color drained from his face, leaving him looking pale and vulnerable. He was clearly mortified by our closeness, even though there was nothing wrong with it from my point of view.

"Oh," he gasped, his voice barely audible above the ongoing commotion. "I... I'm sorry."

I was surprised he said he was sorry. I thought it was something he would never say to me.

He reached out to release my arm, but I didn't let go. I held on just a little longer,

savoring the brief connection. It was a subtle rebellion, a silent assertion of dominance.

As Elliot's hand gripped my arm, I took full advantage of the opportunity before him. I leaned in closer, letting my nose graze the soft skin just below his ear. His scent enveloped me. It was intoxicating, and I couldn't help but draw in a deeper breath, wanting more of it. I wanted all of him, actually.

His body tensed at the contact, but he didn't pull away. Instead, he tilted his head ever so slightly, giving me better access to his neck. It was a subtle invitation, one I couldn't resist.

"Damon?" He whispered, uncertainty coloring his melodic omega voice.

"What do you think you're doing?" I murmured back, my lips brushing against his earlobe. I felt him shiver, heard his quick intake of breath.

"I... I don't know," he stammered, struggling to maintain control over his emotions and his desire.

"You seem to be sniffing me like a predator," he continued, trying to keep his tone light despite the rapid beating of his heart.

"And if I am?" I asked, allowing my tongue to flicker out, tasting the saltiness of his skin. He gasped, his grip on my arm tightening.

"It's... improper," he managed to utter.

"Propriety is overrated," I replied, my teeth gently nipping at his earlobe. He let out a low moan, his body pressing back against mine.

"If anyone sees..." he began, only to trail off as my free hand slid around his waist, pulling him flush against me.

Someone was already probably seeing this, actually.

"I don't care who sees," I growled softly, my erection pressed firmly against his hip. There was no hiding it now, not with how close we were. And besides, I wanted him to feel exactly what he did to me.

He swallowed hard, his eyes darting nervously towards the others in the dining room. They were either too engrossed in their conversations or deliberately ignoring us, pretending they weren't witnessing our exchange.

"They can look all they want," I assured him, my thumb stroking circles on his side. "They won't interrupt." Not unless I wanted them to.

"But why are you doing this?" he asked, genuine confusion in his voice. "Why keep teasing me like this?"

I pulled back slightly, allowing myself a smirk. "Because I can," I stated simply. "Because you're here, unprotected, and because I want to."

It was brutal honesty, but he deserved to hear it. Besides, he needed to understand that in this world—the Nightshade Wolves' world—I made the rules. Especially when it came to him.

"So, you are just going to keep using your power to toy with me?" He challenged, a hint of anger sparking in his hazel eyes.

"Isn't that what power is for?" I countered, my gaze locked with his. We were so close, our breaths mingling, our hearts pounding in sync.

He opened his mouth to retort, then closed it again, seemingly unable to find an adequate response. I had him at a loss for words, which was a rare feat indeed.

"Why don't you just kiss me again already?" He finally snapped, frustration etched onto his beautiful features.

Page 9

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:18 pm

Elliot

Enough was enough. I'd had it up to my eyeballs with Damon Vexley's constant taunting and his relentless games. He thought he could play me like a fiddle, stringing me along with false promises and half-truths, but I was done being his puppet.

As he remained there, smugly reveling in my discomfort, his hot breath on my neck and his arms wrapped possessively around me, I knew I had to put an end to this madness once and for all. If he wanted to push boundaries, fine—I'd show him just how far I was willing to go.

Before I could talk myself out of it, I lifted my face just slightly, my heart pounding wildly in my chest. Our gazes clashed, his icy blue eyes widening in surprise as he registered the intent behind my move. Good, I thought. Let him see that I wasn't some timid little omega to be manhandled at will.

And then, without any further hesitation, I kissed him.

My lips crashed against his, all pent-up frustration and long-suppressed desire fueling my actions. The initial shock lasted only a split second; then, he responded, his strong arms wrapping tighter around me, pulling me flush against his firm body.

Our tongues clashed, exploring each other's mouths, dueling for dominance. I tasted him fully, savoring the unexpected sweetness that lay beneath his harsh exterior. He groaned into my mouth, a sound of raw pleasure that sped up my heart, igniting a fire within me that threatened to consume us both.

For a moment, time seemed to stand still. Nothing else mattered—no more alphas, no more criminal organizations, no more fear or uncertainty. Just him and me, lost in a whirlwind of passion that neither of us could have predicted.

But eventually, reality intruded once more, and I reluctantly pulled away, gasping for air. My head spun, my body aching with a need I couldn't quite comprehend. What had started as a rebellious act quickly escalated into something deeper, something more profound than I ever thought possible.

Damon stared at me, his expression a mix of astonishment and hunger. His lips were red and swollen from our kiss, his pupils dilated with desire. It took him several seconds to regain his composure, during which I could practically see the wheels turning in his mind, trying to process this new development.

"You... you kissed me," he finally said, his voice colored with disbelief.

"And?" I challenged, raising an eyebrow. "You didn't enjoy it?"

His smirk returned, though this time it held a hint of vulnerability. "Enjoy doesn't even begin to cover it," he admitted, tracing the line of my jaw with his fingertips. "But tell me, little omega, what brought about this sudden change of heart?"

I shrugged, affecting nonchalance despite the turmoil inside me. "Call it a momentary lapse in judgment," I replied, offering him a small smile. "Or perhaps I've decided to fight fire with fire."

His chuckle rumbled through his chest, sending vibrations that resonated deep within me. "Well played," he murmured, leaning in to press another soft kiss to my lips. This one was gentle, barely more than a whisper, and he told me so much through it.

When he pulled back, his eyes searched mine, seeking answers that I wasn't sure I

had. Or maybe he was looking for something else entirely.

"What do you want, Elliot?" He asked softly, his thumb brushing over my lower lip. "Really want? Not just now, not just physically, but truly, deeply." His gaze intensified, holding me captive. "What drives you? What haunts your dreams and fuels your desires?"

The question caught me off guard, piercing straight to the core of who I was, what I yearned for. And as I sat there, surrounded by opulence and danger, cradled in the arms of a powerful alpha, I realized that I didn't know the answer.

Not anymore.

Because all I really wanted—in that moment, in that place, with that man—was him. All of him. Every dark, dominant inch.

"I..." I began, faltering under the weight of his scrutiny. "I guess I just want to feel alive," I confessed, my voice barely above a whisper. "To experience everything life has to offer—to good and bad—and to make my own choices, free from expectations and obligations."

A slow smile spread across his face, transforming his stern features into something almost boyish. "Then we'll figure it out together," he promised, pressing another tender kiss to my forehead. "Whatever it takes."

With a flick of his wrist, Damon waved his hand dismissively toward the crowded dining room. "Everyone out!" He commanded, his voice echoing like thunder. The sudden declaration startled those present, causing a flurry of movement as people scrambled to comply, their chairs scraping loudly against the polished floor before they hurriedly exited the grand dining room. Within moments, we were left alone amidst the remnants of the lavish meal, the silence broken only by the distant hum of

activity beyond the closed doors.

He turned his attention back to me, his ice-blue eyes gleaming with an intensity that made my stomach flutter nervously. But there was also something else, a promise lurking beneath the surface.

"So..." I began hesitantly, licking my suddenly dry lips. "What are you planning on doing now?"

Damon leaned back in his chair, his gaze never leaving mine as he slowly unbuttoned his crisp white shirt. One button at a time, he revealed tanned skin and hard muscle, showing me the same muscles I'd already seen. Each deliberate action drew me in further, making it impossible to look away.

"Apart from giving you exactly what you want, little omega?" he replied, a wicked grin playing on his lips. His fingers paused briefly at the last button, allowing me a tantalizing view of his bare chest. I swallowed hard, struggling to maintain some semblance of control as I fought the urge to reach out and touch him.

"Isn't that what you've been doing since I arrived?" I shot back, arching an eyebrow in mock challenge. Despite the bravado, my heart pounded wildly in my chest, and I could feel the heat rising in my cheeks.

Damon laughed, a rich sound that reverberated through the empty room. "Oh, Elliot," he mused, shaking his head slightly. "Always ready with a comeback."

With practiced ease, he slid the shirt off his shoulders, revealing sculpted muscles honed by years of discipline and power. My mouth went dry as I drank in the sight of him, my eyes tracing the lines of his abs, the broad expanse of his chest, and the way his biceps flexed with each subtle movement.

"But no," he continued, standing up gracefully and stepping closer to where I remained seated. "Tonight is different. Tonight, I'm going to give you everything you've ever desired."

He came to me, moving behind me with predatory grace. His hands came to rest on my shoulders, squeezing gently as he leaned down to speak directly into my ear. His breath was warm, tickling the sensitive skin and sending goosebumps erupting along my arms.

"And what if I actually don't want anything from you?" I whispered, tilting my head to the side to grant him better access to my neck. It was a blatant lie, and we both knew it, but I couldn't help myself. Teasing him seemed to come naturally when I was around him.

His low chuckle rumbled through me, vibrating every cell in my body. "Liar," he accused softly, nipping at my earlobe. I gasped, my hips shifting involuntarily in response to the unexpected contact.

"You can't fool me, Elliot," he murmured, trailing kisses down the length of my neck. "Your body betrays you, telling me exactly what you crave."

His hands moved from my shoulders, sliding down my arms until they reached my wrists. He grasped them firmly, lifting my limp arms up and placing them on the edge of the table. I was effectively trapped, pinned between his solid form and the hard wood beneath me.

"Not fair," I groaned, dropping my head forward as he continued to explore my exposed flesh with his mouth. "You're using your size and strength to overpower me."

"All's fair in love and war, little omega," he replied, his lips curving into a smirk

against my skin. "And right now, this feels a lot more like the latter than the former."

Before I could respond, he spun me around, forcing me to face him once again. Our gazes locked, and I felt my resolve crumbling under the weight of his intense stare. There was so much hunger in those icy blue depths—so much desire that mirrored my own.

"Do you know how long I've waited for someone like you?" He asked. "Someone who challenges me, who defies me, who makes me want things I shouldn't?"

I shook my head silently, unable to find my voice amid the whirlwind of emotions swirling within me.

"I didn't think it was possible," he confessed, tracing the line of my jaw with his fingertips. "But here you are, throwing all my carefully laid plans into chaos."

A small smile tugged at the corners of my mouth. "Well, life is full of surprises," I managed to say, finding my voice at last.

Damon's gaze darkened, and he leaned in close, our noses practically touching. "Indeed, it is," he agreed, his voice a low growl. "And now, I intend to make sure yours is full of nothing but pleasure."

Damon stepped back, breaking the heated moment between us. I couldn't help but feel relieved.

Before I could protest or even register what was happening, he started removing the rest of his clothing. With swift, confident movements, he shrugged off his shirt completely, letting it fall to the floor beside him. Then, he kicked off his shoes and removed his socks, one by one.

My eyes widened as I took in the full glory of his naked torso—the definition of his muscles, the way they rippled and tensed with each movement. I had seen him without a shirt before, but this moment still felt different.

Next, he reached for his belt, slowly unbuckling it while maintaining eye contact with me. The metal clinked loudly in the otherwise silent room, drawing my attention downward. He pulled the leather strap free, tossing it carelessly aside before tackling the button and zipper of his pants.

As he lowered the fly, I caught a glimpse of dark hair peeking out from the top of his boxers. My heart raced faster, knowing that soon, I would see all of him again.

With a final, almost casual push, he shimmied out of his pants, leaving him standing before me in nothing but a pair of black silk boxers. They clung to his hips, accentuating the powerful V-shape that disappeared beneath the waistband.

I swallowed hard, trying to maintain some semblance of composure despite the riot of hormones coursing through my veins. He looked... incredible. Like a god carved from stone, brought to life with a pulse of raw energy.

It was different from before. This time, it was more appropriate.

He stood there for a moment, allowing me to drink him in, a smug smile playing on his lips. Then, he hooked his thumbs into the waistband of his boxers, pushing them down inch by inch, revealing more and more of himself.

When they finally hit the floor, he stepped out of them, kicking them aside to join the growing pile of discarded clothing. And there he was, naked and proud, standing tall and formidable before me.

My breath caught in my throat as I beheld the full extent of his dick. He was thick

and long, pulsing with need. A shiver ran down my spine, anticipation building within me like a storm about to break.

"So," he said. "Here I am, giving you everything you wanted. What do you plan to do with it?"

The question hung heavy in the air, filled with possibilities and promise. But all I could manage was a stammered, "I... I don't know."

And indeed, it was difficult to think in that moment.

He chuckled, stepping closer once more. His hand cupped my cheek, tilting my chin upward to meet his gaze. "Then let me show you," he whispered, leaning in to capture my lips in another searing kiss.

Damon

As my lips met Elliot's once more, an insatiable hunger consumed me. It wasn't just physical; it was needy, a ravenous beast clawing its way out from deep within my core. I needed him—every inch of him—and I needed him now.

Our tongues clashed, exploring each other's mouths with increasing ferocity. I could taste his desperation, matching my own, and it only served to fuel the inferno burning inside me. My hands, no longer content with simply holding him, began their own 'exploration', roaming over his lithe form, mapping out every curve and dip.

His clothes were suddenly an intolerable barrier, something to be eliminated immediately. I couldn't wait any longer to feel his skin against mine, to claim him entirely.

Starting with his jacket, I gripped the lapels roughly, tearing them apart with little regard for the delicate fabric. Buttons popped off, scattering across the table with soft pings. Elliot gasped into my mouth, surprised by my sudden aggression, but I didn't stop. Not when I was so close to having him exactly how I wanted him.

Next, I attacked his shirt, grabbing handfuls of the material and pulling violently. Seams tore, revealing glimpses of smooth, peachy skin underneath. I yanked harder, ignoring his muffled protests, driven by an overwhelming desire to possess him completely.

"Damon!" Elliot cried out, breaking our kiss briefly as I exposed his chest. "You're tearing my clothes!"

He didn't need to worry. I would give him new ones later after we were done.

"That's the idea," I growled, not slowing down in the slightest. If anything, hearing his voice, seeing the flush spreading across his cheeks, only spurred me on further.

His undershirt followed next, barely putting up a fight as I ripped it away from his body. With each piece of clothing I shredded, I revealed more of him, more of the soft, vulnerable flesh that begged to be claimed.

Elliot trembled, his breaths coming in short, sharp gasps. I could sense his struggle between fear and excitement, the battle waging within him as he tried to make sense of what was happening. There wasn't much to make sense of. This was happening because he allowed it to be.

"What are you doing?" He asked, his eyes wide with disbelief as I tore at his slacks, popping the button open and dragging the zipper down with brute force.

"I'm taking what's mine," I replied, my voice low and commanding. There was no room for doubt or hesitation here, especially not when I had been craving this for so long.

I pulled his pants down, exposing his lean legs and the thin material of his briefs. Unable to resist, I traced the line of his thigh, feeling the muscles quiver. The scent of his arousal filled my nostrils, driving me wild with lust.

"And what if I don't want to be yours?" He challenged, his hazel eyes blazing with defiance even as his body betrayed him.

"Too late for that," I said, smirking as I hooked my fingers into the waistband of his briefs. With one swift tug, I ripped them clean off, leaving him completely nude and at my mercy.

There he was, fully exposed, every inch of his beautiful, trembling body laid bare for me. I took a moment to appreciate the sight, drinking in the smooth planes of his stomach, the narrow hips, and the delicious V leading down to his hardening cock.

"You're... you're crazy," he whispered, wrapping his arms around himself in a futile attempt to cover up.

"No," I corrected, tracing the line of his jaw with my fingertips. "I'm determined. And soon, you'll understand why."

My gaze locked onto Elliot's, watching as his pupils dilated and his breath hitched in anticipation. I could see the pulse throbbing at the base of his neck, hear the rapid beat of his heart echoing in my ears like a primal drumbeat calling me home.

I reached out, trailing my fingertips along his arm, feeling the goosebumps erupt beneath my touch. His skin was so soft, so smooth, unlike anything I'd ever felt before. It was like velvet under my calloused hands, and I found myself craving more of it.

My hand continued its journey upward, brushing past his elbow, his shoulder, until finally, I cupped his cheek. His hazel eyes fluttered closed, a small moan escaping his lips as I leaned in, pressing my forehead against his.

We stood there for a moment, our breaths mingling, our hearts beating in sync. Then, slowly, I slid my hand down his neck, his collarbone, pausing at the hollow of his throat where his pulse raced wildly.

"I can feel your heartbeat," I murmured, my thumb rubbing circles against his vein. "It's racing, just like mine."

Elliot opened his eyes, locking gazes with me once again. "What does that mean?" He

asked, his voice barely above a whisper.

"It means..." I began, my hand continuing its descent, skimming over his nipple, making him gasp. "...that you're excited. That you want this as much as I do."

To prove my point, I wrapped my hand around his hard length, giving it a slow, firm stroke. He let out a low groan, his head falling back as I worked him with practiced ease.

"And what about... what you promised earlier?" He managed to utter through ragged breaths. "About giving me everything?"

A wicked grin spread across my face as I released my grip on his cock, only to grab both of his wrists in one hand. Before he could protest, I lifted his arms above his head, pinning them to the table behind him again.

"Well, you should remember that this is just the beginning, little omega," I growled, leaning in close enough for our noses to brush. "But first, I think it's time we even the playing field."

With that, I dropped to my knees before him, holding his gaze captive while I ran my tongue along the inside of his thigh. He shivered, his eyes widening in surprise as I moved closer and closer to his center. He didn't think I was going to do this.

"You're going to suck me off?" He gasped, sounding almost scandalized by the suggestion.

"Why not?" I countered, nipping at the tender skin near his groin. "After all, you've done nothing but tease me since the moment we met."

He could argue with that, but decided not to. Instead, he bit his lip, his hips jutting

forward slightly as if inviting me to continue.

"So," I began, my hot breath washing over his sensitive flesh. "Let's see how well you taste."

And then, without any further warning, I took him into my mouth, swirling my tongue around his thickness, tasting the salty precum leaking from the tip. He moaned loudly, his hips bucking as I sucked him deep, taking him all the way to the back of my throat.

"Fuck, Damon!" He cried out, his hands gripping the edge of the table for support. "That feels amazing!"

I chuckled, vibrating the sound along his length, drawing another gasp from his lips. But I didn't stop. Not when he was writhing so beautifully, not when he was begging for more with each desperate thrust of his hips.

Instead, I doubled my efforts, using my hand to pump him in rhythm with my mouth, bringing him closer and closer to the edge. I wanted to feel him come undone, to watch as he lost control completely.

"Damon, please!" He pleaded. "I'm going to... I'm going to..."

I released my hold on Elliot's wrists, allowing his arms to drop limply to his sides. He looked at me, his hazel eyes mirroring his confusion and lust, panting heavily from the intense sensations that had just washed over him.

"Are you going to leave me hanging like that?" He asked, a playful smirk tugging at the corner of his mouth.

I raised an eyebrow, feigning innocence. "Like what?"

He rolled his eyes, gesturing towards his rock-hard cock, which was still glistening with my saliva. "This," he said, wrapping his hand around his length. "You can't just start something like that and then stop."

I shrugged, affecting nonchalance. "Maybe I just like tormenting you."

He narrowed his eyes, considering me for a moment before a mischievous glint entered his gaze. "Fine," he declared, releasing his grip on his cock. "If you won't finish what you started, then I'll just have to return the favor."

Before I could react, he sank to his knees before me. I tensed, anticipation surging through me as I waited for his next move.

"You think you can torture me?" He asked, running his tongue across his bottom lip. "Two can play at that game."

He leaned in, placing a soft kiss on the sensitive skin just below my navel. I shuddered, my abdominal muscles contracting at the sudden contact. It was such a simple gesture, yet it sent waves of pleasure radiating through me.

"And you want to know something?" He continued, his voice barely above a whisper as he trailed kisses lower and lower, edging closer to my throbbing length. "I love playing games."

I could hardly believe it. Here was this delicate omega, who had initially seemed so shy and hesitant, now taunting me, teasing me, driving me wild with desire. It was exhilarating, and I couldn't wait to see what he had in store for me.

"So, let's play," I growled, my hands fisting in his messy curls, guiding his head towards my cock. "Let's see what you've got."

He grinned, looking up at me through his long lashes, and then, finally, he took me into his warm, wet mouth. I let out a low hiss, my head falling back as I savored the sensation of his tongue swirling around my head, his lips stretching to accommodate my thickness.

"Fuck, Elliot," I moaned, my hips jerking reflexively as he took me deeper, inch by agonizing inch. He was inexperienced, I could tell from the way he struggled to relax his throat, but he was eager, enthusiastic, and incredibly talented nonetheless.

He set a slow, steady rhythm, working me with his mouth and hand in perfect synchronization. The pressure was just right, not too tight, not too loose, driving me absolutely mad with need.

"Jesus Christ," I cursed, my grip on his hair tightening as he picked up speed, his suction becoming more intense. "Where did you learn to do that?"

He pulled back briefly, a devilish twinkle in his eyes. "Wouldn't you like to know?" He teased before diving back in, taking me even deeper this time.

I couldn't take it anymore. The sensation was too intense, too exquisite. I needed more. I needed to touch him, to claim him as my own.

"Stop," I ordered, pulling him off my cock with a pop. He looked up at me, surprise written all over his face. "Get on the table," I commanded, pointing towards the expansive wooden surface behind him.

He hesitated for a moment before obeying, climbing onto the table and lying back, his legs dangling over the edge. I joined him, positioning myself between his thighs, my hands running up and down his toned calves.

"Now," I began, locking my eyes with his. "Where were we?"

He bit his lip, looking up at me with those large, doe-like eyes. "I think you were about to lose control," he whispered, his hips bucking slightly as I ran my fingertips along the inside of his thigh.

"And I think you were about to drive me insane," I countered, smiling wickedly as I settled myself comfortably between his legs, preparing to continue the game we were playing.

Elliot

Damon hovered above me, his eyes locked onto mine, burning with intensity. His broad chest rose and fell with each ragged breath, matching the uneven rhythm of my own heart. I could feel the heat of his body, mere inches away from mine, yet not quite touching—a tantalizing promise of things to come. He wanted to torment me for as long as he could.

His hand reached out, cupping my cheek gently, his thumb tracing the line of my jaw. A shiver ran through me at the tender gesture, contrasting sharply with the raw power emanating from every pore of his being. This wasn't the same alpha who had torn my clothes off moments ago, driven by primal hunger. No, this was someone else entirely—someone far more dangerous because they cared enough to go slow.

And the worst and best thing about that? It was that I liked it.

"Are you ready for me, little omega?" He murmured, his voice a low rumble that vibrated through me, settling deep within my core. My stomach flipped, excitement and nerves warring within me as I nodded silently, unable to find the words to express how much I wanted this.

I didn't even have to answer his question. He already knew the answer to it.

A smirk played on his lips as he positioned himself at my entrance, his thick, throbbing length pressed against my hole. I gasped, my body instinctively tensing at the unfamiliar intrusion. But he didn't rush me; instead, he paused, allowing me a moment to adjust, to acclimate to the feel of him.

He was thoughtful, something I thought he couldn't be. How many more things about him did I not know?

"Relax," he cooed softly, leaning forward to press a gentle kiss to my forehead. "Just breathe."

I focused on filling my lungs, inhaling deeply and exhaling slowly, trying to calm the storm of emotions raging within me. And when I felt ready, I nodded once more, giving him permission to proceed.

I hoped I was right.

He began to push in, ever so slowly, his gaze never leaving mine. I could feel every ridge, every vein, every tiny detail of his shaft as it stretched me open, filled me completely. It was incredible, unlike anything I'd ever experienced before, pleasure and pain that left me gasping for air.

"Oh god," I whimpered, my nails digging into his shoulders as he sank deeper inside me. "You're so big."

And him being big didn't even begin to describe it. He was so much more than that.

Damon chuckled, a sound that rumbled through him and reverberated within me. "And you're so tight," he replied. "So fucking perfect."

Once he was fully sheathed within me, he paused, giving us both a moment to savor the sensation. I could feel his pulse throbbing in sync with mine, our bodies connected in ways I hadn't thought possible.

"Do you have any idea what you do to me?" He asked, his voice barely above a whisper. Before I could respond, he began to move, pulling out slowly, torturously,

only to slide back in just as gradually, drawing a long, low moan from my lips.

It was agony, pure and simple. Agony because it felt so good, so right, that I knew I would never be able to live without it now. Agony because he was taking his sweet time, drawing out the anticipation, building the tension until I thought I might burst. In a way, he was kind of evil.

"You're killing me," I groaned, arching my back as he hit that spot deep inside me that made stars explode behind my eyelids. "Please, Damon..."

"What is it you want, little omega?" He taunted, his pace remaining maddeningly steady despite my pleas. "Tell me exactly what you need."

"I need... I need..." I stammered, my thoughts scattering as he rolled his hips, grinding against that sensitive bundle of nerves. "Faster... harder..."

Damon's response was a dark, predatory smile that sent shivers down my spine. "As you wish," he growled, picking up speed, slamming into me with increasing force. The table beneath us creaked and groaned under the onslaught, mirroring the sensations coursing through my body.

With each thrust, he claimed another piece of me, branding me as his own. And as I lay there, helpless and writhing beneath him, I realized that I didn't mind one bit. In fact, I craved it – I craved him – more than anything else in the world.

As if reading my mind, Damon suddenly shifted gears, his hips snapping forward with greater urgency. His thick length filled me over and over again, the head of his cock brushing against that magical spot deep inside me that made my vision blur and my toes curl. I realized, in that moment, how experienced he was.

But he didn't stop there. Oh no, that wouldn't be nearly enough for an alpha like him.

Not when he could have so much more control, so much more dominance.

His right hand wrapped around my aching cock, stroking it in rhythm with his powerful thrusts. Every time he drove into me, he pulled upward on my shaft, twisting slightly at the tip to send jolts of electricity shooting through me. It was pure pleasure.

"Oh fuck!" I cried out, my hands clawing at his broad back, searching for something—anything—to ground me amidst the storm of sensation, but there wasn't much more than that. "That feels too good!"

Damon merely grinned, his eyes gleaming with wicked intent. "Too good?" He echoed, his thumb rubbing circles around the sensitive head of my cock. "Or just right?"

Before I could answer, he picked up the pace even further, his hips pistoning like a well-oiled machine. Each snap of his hips brought a guttural grunt from his lips, the sound vibrating through me.

The table beneath us shook violently, the legs scraping against the polished floor as we rutted. My moans mingled with his growls, creating a chorus of desire that filled the vast dining room, echoing off the walls and bouncing back to envelop us once more.

"So close," I panted, my orgasm building rapidly, threatening to overwhelm me at any second. "Damon, please... I can't hold back much longer." And I truly, really couldn't.

In response, he leaned down, capturing my mouth in a searing kiss. Our tongues clashed, our teeth clicked, and our breaths became one as he continued to pound into me, his hand working my cock with all his experience.

I could taste myself on his tongue, the salty tang of precum mixing with the unique flavor that was entirely Damon. It only served to drive me wilder, pushing me closer and closer to the edge.

He broke away briefly, his forehead resting against mine as he gazed deeply into my eyes. "Cum for me, Elliot," he commanded. "Show me how beautiful you are when you fall apart."

And then, with one final, brutal thrust, he pushed me over the precipice, sending me tumbling into oblivion.

My entire body convulsed, waves of ecstasy crashing over me as I came undone in his arms. My release coated his hand, hot and sticky, marking him as surely as if I had claimed him instead of the other way around.

But even as I rode out the aftermath of my orgasm, Damon showed no signs of slowing down. No, he simply adjusted his grip, using my slickness to stroke me faster, harder, determined to draw out every last drop of pleasure from my trembling form. The man was relentless.

I couldn't believe it. Even after everything, even after making me come harder than I ever had before, he still wasn't done with me. He wanted more. Needed more.

And as I looked up into those ice-blue eyes, I realized that I wanted to give it to him. All of it. Everything I had and more.

Damon's breath grew ragged, his movements jerky and erratic as he chased his own release. The sight of him teetering on the brink, so uncharacteristically vulnerable, ignited a fire within me. I wanted to see him lose control, to watch him shatter, and that was exactly what was going to happen.

His hips stuttered, his cock throbbing inside me as he neared the edge. I could feel the tension coiling in his muscles, the heat radiating from his skin as he held himself back by sheer willpower alone. However, I could tell it wasn't going to last long.

"Not yet," he growled between clenched teeth, his fingers digging painfully into my hip. "Not until I say so."

But I knew he was close. Too close. And I wanted—no, needed—to push him over the edge.

With a defiant smirk, I tightened my inner muscles, squeezing his cock like a vice. A feral groan tore from his throat, his eyes rolling back as he struggled to maintain his composure.

"Fuck, Elliot," he rasped, his voice laced with warning. "You're playing with fire."

"And what if I want to get burned?" I taunted, locking gazes with him, daring him to take what he truly desired.

Something primal flashed across his face, a raw hunger that sent a thrill coursing through me. In that moment, I felt it—the connection between us, wild and untamed, a force neither of us could deny or control.

He slammed into me with renewed vigor, each thrust punctuated by a low, animalistic grunt. His hand worked my spent cock with expert precision, drawing forth unexpected waves of pleasure that left me gasping and writhing beneath him.

"I'm going to fill you up," he snarled. "Mark you as mine in the most carnal way possible."

"Yes," I moaned, my fingernails raking down his back, leaving red welts in their

wake. "Do it. Claim me. Make me yours."

His rhythm faltered, his cock swelling impossibly larger within me as he reached the point of no return. With a final, powerful surge, he buried himself deep inside me, his hot seed pulsing forth in thick ropes, coating my insides.

I could feel it—every scorching spurt, every pulse of his length—as he emptied himself completely within me. The sensation was exquisite, unlike anything I'd ever experienced. It was as if our bodies were merging, becoming one, bound together by something far stronger than physical pleasure.

As he continued to spill into me, I could sense the change taking place. An invisible tether snapped into existence, linking us irrevocably. I belonged to him now, just as he belonged to me. And the best thing about that? He wanted it so much.

When the last wave of his orgasm subsided, Damon collapsed onto me, his chest heaving as he fought to catch his breath. His heart pounded against mine, our sweat-slicked skin sticking together as we lay entwined.

For several long moments, neither of us spoke. We didn't need to. Words would never be enough to convey the depth of emotion passing between us, the profound shift that had occurred in the space of mere minutes.

Finally, Damon raised his head, his gaze softening as he took in my flushed cheeks and dilated pupils. A small smile played at the corners of his mouth, a rare moment of tenderness amidst the storm of desire that had consumed us both.

"You're mine now," he whispered, tracing the line of my jaw with his fingertips. "All mine."

And as I stared up into those icy blue eyes, I knew without a shadow of a doubt that

he was right. There was no use denying it—not to myself, not to him. I belonged to Damon Vexley, heart, soul, and body.

As for what tomorrow might bring... well, that was a question for another day. For now, there was only this moment.

Page 12

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Damon

Our bodies spooned together, limbs tangled together. I ran my fingers through Elliot's disheveled curls, watching as the moonlight danced upon the sandy strands. My omega was quiet, contemplative, but I could sense the whirlwind of thoughts swirling behind those hazel eyes.

"What's on your mind, little omega?" I asked softly, pressing a gentle kiss to his temple.

He hesitated before speaking, choosing his words carefully. "This changes nothing, you know."

A smirk tugged at the corner of my lips. I had expected as much from my stubborn little omega. "Is that so?"

"Yes." He nodded firmly, his chin set in determination. "We had a moment—an incredible moment—but that's all it was. Just a moment."

Just a moment? Oh, I didn't know about that.

I chuckled, trailing my fingertips along his arm, feeling goosebumps erupt under my touch. "Oh, Elliot. Always so full of pride and denial."

He bristled, pulling away slightly. "It's not denial. I'm simply stating facts."

Did he really think that? Did he really think I could believe him?

"Facts, huh?" I countered, shifting my weight to pin him beneath me, my hands caging his head in on either side. "Then let's talk facts. You're here, in my bed, after I've just claimed you thoroughly. Your scent is all over my sheets, your heat still clings to my skin, and yet you insist that none of this means anything?"

It was baffling, really.

His breath hitched, his pupils dilating as he gazed up at me. "You... you can't hold me captive forever."

"No," I agreed, brushing a strand of hair away from his face. "But I don't have to. You're not a prisoner, Elliot. Not unless you want to be."

He scoffed, rolling his eyes. "Please. Like I have any choice."

He had plenty of choices, actually. He just didn't like any of them.

"Choices are funny things," I murmured, running my thumb across his bottom lip. "Sometimes, they look different when you step back and take a good, hard look at them."

"And what choices do I supposedly have?" He challenged, his eyes burning with a different intensity now.

"A chance to stay here," I began, counting off each option on my fingers. "To learn more about who you truly are. To explore this... thing between us." I paused, letting the implications sink in. "Or, you could choose to leave, to walk away from everything you've discovered tonight."

Elliot swallowed hard, considering my words. "Why would you even give me that option?"

"Why wouldn't I?" I shot back, a hint of anger creeping into my tone. "Do you think so little of me that you believe I would force you to stay against your will?"

"No," he admitted softly, his gaze dropping to my chest. "That's not what I meant. It's just... unexpected, coming from someone like you."

"Someone like me?" I echoed, raising an eyebrow.

"Yes, you know," he said, waving his hand vaguely. "An alpha. Someone used to taking what they want without regard for anyone else's feelings."

"I won't deny that I'm like that sometimes," I conceded, my expression softening. "But I also know the value of consent, of respecting boundaries—even if they sometimes chafe against my nature."

"That's... that's surprisingly progressive of you." His surprise was palpable, and I couldn't help but feel a swell of satisfaction knowing that I'd managed to catch him off guard once again.

"And then there's the fact that I genuinely care about what happens to you," I added, tucking a curl behind his ear. "I want whatever makes you happy, whatever helps you thrive. And if that means allowing you to spread your wings and figure out where you belong in this world, then so be it."

He was silent for a long moment, absorbing my words, searching for some hidden agenda that wasn't there. Finally, he sighed, deflating beneath me. "Okay, fine. Maybe I am no longer a prisoner. But that doesn't mean I have to accept this... lifestyle. This... pack dynamic."

He was obviously talking about our clan's preference to be naked.

"You don't have to accept anything," I assured him, tracing patterns on his bare shoulder. "All I ask is that you keep an open mind. That you consider the possibility that there might be something worth exploring here, something that could bring you pleasure and fulfillment beyond your wildest dreams."

He shivered, his cock twitching against mine at the suggestion. "And what if I decide I don't want that? What if I decide I want to maintain my independence, my freedom?"

"If that's truly what you desire," I replied, cupping his cheek, "then I'll support you. I'll help you find a way to live your life on your terms, outside of the Nightshade pack."

He seemed taken aback by my response, his mouth opening and closing several times before he finally spoke. "Really?"

"Of course," I said, smiling down at him. "I may be many things, Elliot—a dominant alpha, a powerful leader—but above all, I am a man of my word. If you tell me that you wish to leave, then I will make sure it happens."

"But..." He trailed off, biting his lip uncertainly. "What about us? What about what happened earlier?"

"What about it?" I asked, though I knew exactly what he was referring to. "You said that it changed nothing."

"It was... incredible," he admitted reluctantly. "The best sex I've ever had. The most intense experience of my life."

A smug grin tugged at my lips. "Glad to hear it."

"But it doesn't change anything," he repeated, his nails digging into my shoulders. "It was just one night. One amazing fuck. Nothing more."

I chuckled, shaking my head. "Always so quick to dismiss your own desires, aren't you, little omega? So eager to put yourself back in that neat little box labeled 'Independent' or 'Unavailable'."

"Well, what else am I supposed to think?" He demanded, his frustration mounting. "You can't possibly expect me to believe that we share some deep, profound connection after one roll in the hay!"

"Maybe not," I conceded, pressing a gentle kiss to his forehead. "But I do expect you to recognize that our connection goes far deeper than mere physical attraction. We're bound together now, Elliot." And I had marked him.

He looked up at me, his hazel eyes filled with uncertainty and fear. "How can you be so sure?"

"Because I've felt it before," I whispered, the ghosts of my past threatening to resurface. "With another omega, years ago. A love lost too soon, taken from me before its time. But I never stopped believing in the power of such bonds—that they exist, that they're real, and that they're worth fighting for."

His breath hitched, his voice barely above a whisper as he asked, "What happened to him?"

My heart clenched painfully, the memories of that tragic day washing over me like a tidal wave. "He died giving birth to our child," I rasped, my throat tight with emotion. "A beautiful boy who didn't survive the birthing process."

"I'm so sorry," Elliot murmured, his arms wrapping around me, offering comfort and

solace. "I can't imagine how much that must have hurt."

"It did," I agreed, burying my face in his neck, breathing in his sweet scent. "But that pain taught me valuable lessons. I still carry them with me, even today."

We lay there in silence for a while, each lost in our thoughts, our bodies pressed tightly together. Finally, Elliot broke the quietude, his voice tentative as he asked, "So, what does this mean for us? For our future?"

I took a deep breath, preparing myself for the conversation ahead. "That depends entirely on you, little omega. On what you want—and what you need—to be happy, safe, and fulfilled."

As we lay entwined, basking in the warm glow of post-coital bliss, I couldn't help but notice the subtle shift in Elliot's demeanor. The stubborn pride that had been his shield moments before began to crack, revealing the vulnerability hiding beneath. It was clear that the weight of his circumstances was finally catching up with him, just as I thought it would happen.

"Damon," he started, eyes looking left and right. "About what I said earlier..."

I waited patiently, knowing full well that whatever was troubling him would come out eventually. And when it did, I wanted him to feel comfortable enough to be completely honest with me.

"Yes?" I prompted gently, brushing a strand of hair away from his face.

He sighed, shifting uncomfortably. "It's just... everything I said about leaving, about having choices... it was mostly bullshit."

I raised an eyebrow, trying to keep any hint of judgment from my expression. I

already knew it was all bullshit.

"Oh?"

"Yeah," he muttered, looking down at where our fingers were intertwined. "There's literally nothing waiting for me outside these walls. My family—well, they don't give two shits about me. They probably haven't even noticed I'm gone yet."

A pang of sympathy echoed through me, but I kept my expression neutral, allowing him to continue without interruption. I had felt the same way sometimes about my own family.

"And as for friends... Well, let's just say that growing up in a secluded community dedicated to preserving ancient lore didn't exactly lend itself to making lifelong pals. I mean, sure, there were people I knew, but none of them were particularly close. Not really."

He paused, taking a deep breath before continuing.

"My prospects for a professional career are equally bleak. I spent my entire life learning ancient languages and studying esoteric histories, thinking that I'd go off and become some sort of renowned linguist or historian. But then reality set in, and I realized that nobody gives a damn about dead languages or dusty old books anymore. At least, not anyone willing to pay a living wage."

He shook his head, a bitter laugh escaping his lips. I didn't know why he ever thought it was going to be different. It should have been obvious to him that it was a dead end.

"So yeah, when I told you that I could leave here and start fresh—I wasn't being entirely truthful. Because honestly, Damon, the thought of going back to that empty

house, alone and isolated, makes me want to scream."

There it was—the raw honesty I had been waiting for. I pulled him closer, pressing a soft kiss to his temple. I wanted to protect him and make him feel loved.

"I see," I murmured. "And what about staying here, with the Nightshade Pack? What do you think about that option?"

He hesitated, considering my question carefully. "To be perfectly honest, it terrifies me. All this nakedness, the constant displays of affection and intimacy... It's all so foreign and overwhelming. But at the same time..." He trailed off, biting his lip nervously.

There was also the fact that we weren't like most other people. We were criminals. It was dangerous to be with us, but at the same time, going back to his family was boring.

"But at the same time?" I prodded gently, wanting to hear the rest of his thoughts.

He glanced up at me, those large hazel eyes filled with uncertainty. "At the same time, I find myself craving it. This sense of belonging, of acceptance—it's something I've never experienced before. And yes, okay, maybe I'm drawn to you. To what I know you can make me feel. But more than anything, I'm terrified of losing this feeling of connection. Of being truly seen by someone for the first time in my life."

As he spoke, I felt the truth resonating within me. I knew that if given the chance, we could build something incredible together.

"That fear—that feeling of being seen—is valid," I assured him, my thumb tracing circles on his shoulder. "But know this: you will always be seen here. You will always matter. And as for the nudity, the openness... Well, that might take some

getting used to, but I promise you, once you embrace it, you'll find a freedom unlike anything else."

He looked up at me, hope shining brightly in his eyes. "Do you really believe that?"

"I do," I replied firmly. "And I also believe that you deserve a second chance—a chance to create a new life for yourself, surrounded by love, support, and acceptance. A life where you can be truly free to be who you are, without fear or shame."

He searched my gaze, looking for any sign of deception. Finding none, he nodded slowly, his decision made.

"You're right," he whispered, his voice steady now. He looked calmer. "This is where I belong. With you. With the Nightshade Pack."

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

Elliot

The table tennis ball whizzed past me, bouncing off the wall behind me and rolling to a stop near my feet. I bent down to pick it up, using the moment to compose myself and push away the rising panic threatening to consume me. I forced a smile onto my face as I turned around, tossing the ball back into play.

Damon smacked it effortlessly, sending it flying across the net towards me. I lunged forward, swatting it back with slightly less grace than usual. Our game continued, each shot executed with practiced ease, our laughter filling the air as we played.

But beneath the surface, my mind raced, my stomach churning with anxiety. Something was seriously wrong—and it wasn't just my terrible hand-eye coordination. No, it was something else, something I didn't even want to think about.

I hadn't bled since we started sleeping together. Sure, I had always been irregular, but days months without even a hint of my period? That was unheard of. Even scarier, I had taken every precaution possible to prevent pregnancy. Damon and I had both gotten tested; we used condoms religiously; hell, I was even on birth control pills.

Except for that one time, our first time...

But I didn't want to remember that, so how was it possible that I still felt queasy, my chest tender, and inexplicable fatigue dragging at my limbs?

The only explanation was too terrifying to consider—that somehow, despite all our efforts, I was carrying Damon's child.

My heart pounded wildly in my chest as I tried to focus on the game, on the sensation of the racket hitting the ball, on the sound of Damon's deep, rumbling laugh. Anything to distract from the whirlwind of fear and denial spiraling through me. But it wasn't working.

"Hey, you okay over there?" Damon called out, concern etching lines around his eyes as he paused mid-swing. "You look a little pale."

Shit. Had I been that obvious? Probably, I immediately thought.

"Oh, yeah, I'm fine!" I chirped, forcing another bright smile. "Just a bit tired, I guess."

His expression softened, and he walked around the table, pulling me into a tight hug. "Why didn't you say something earlier?" He chided softly, pressing a kiss to my forehead. "We don't have to keep playing if you're not feeling well."

I melted into his embrace, drawing strength from his warmth and solid presence. If only he knew the real reason behind my sudden pallor...

He was always so worried about me. His love for me was genuine.

"No, no, I'm fine, really," I insisted, pulling back slightly. "Let's finish the game. I need the distraction."

He studied me for a moment longer before nodding reluctantly. "Alright, but if you start to feel worse, we're packing it in, understood?"

"Yes, alpha," I teased, trying to lighten the mood. "Now come on, let's see if you can beat me fair and square—or cheat your way to victory like usual."

The tension in his shoulders eased, and he grinned, playfully smacking my ass as he

returned to his side of the table. "Well, well, well. Someone's finally learning to give as good as he gets."

Our rally resumed, but my thoughts remained elsewhere, consumed by the daunting prospect of potentially being with child. How would Damon react when he found out? Would he resent me for trapping him with an unwanted baby? Or would he accept it with open arms, eager to bring another child into the fold? Or was it his plan all along?

As much as I hated to admit it, the idea of carrying Damon's child filled me with a strange sense of pride and possessiveness. It felt primal, almost savage, to imagine growing round with his seed inside me. But along with those heady emotions came a wave of fear—fear of the unknown, fear of losing what precious little independence I had managed to carve out for myself within this world of alphas and omegas.

What if I couldn't handle fatherhood? What if I was terrible at it? What if I put the baby in danger?

And then there were the practical concerns—the logistics of raising a child in a house full of naked men, the potential consequences of bringing a new life into a world as dangerous and unpredictable as the one we inhabited...

However, part of me was sure that if I were really pregnant, Damon would make sure that my living conditions were better. So maybe there wasn't so much to worry about.

No matter which direction my thoughts took, they inevitably circled back to the same question: Was I truly ready to become a parent?

I knew I needed to confront my fears head-on, to address them with Damon instead of bottling them up inside. But how could I possibly voice these doubts and worries aloud without sounding petty or insecure?

With a heavy sigh, I hit the ball a little harder than intended, sending it careening wildly towards Damon. He reacted swiftly, his reflexes catching it mere inches from the ground. He looked up at me, surprise etched into his features.

"What's going on in that pretty little head of yours, Elliot?" He asked, concern lacing his words once more. "You've gone quiet again, and your shots are getting sloppy."

"I... uh..." I stammered, scrambling for an excuse. "I guess I've just got a lot on my mind, you know? All this pack stuff, figuring out where I fit in..."

It was a flimsy lie, but hopefully, it would be enough to satisfy him—for now.

Damon set down his racket, walking slowly towards me until he stood close enough for our bodies to brush. His hand cupped my cheek, tilting my chin up so that our gazes met.

"You listen here," he said firmly, yet gently. "There is nothing more important to any of us than making sure you feel welcome, safe, and happy. You don't have to figure anything out alone—not while I'm here. Not while any of us are here."

Tears pricked at the corners of my eyes, threatened to spill over. Damn him and his way with words. He was so good at it.

"Thank you," I whispered, leaning into his touch. "That means a lot."

He smiled warmly, wiping away a stray tear with his thumb. "Good. Now, why don't we take a break from this game and go find some snacks? Maybe some food will help chase away whatever demons are haunting you today."

And maybe he was right, but part of me thought that it wasn't going to make a difference.

Damon led me by the hand through the sprawling manor, our footsteps echoing off the polished marble floors. We passed through grand hallways adorned with intricate tapestries and massive oil paintings, each step taking us further away from the tension that hung heavy in the air during our aborted table tennis match.

We entered the expansive kitchen, a space that seemed entirely too large for its purpose. The stainless-steel appliances gleamed under the soft lighting, and the counters were spotless, save for a small island in the center. Damon guided me towards it, pulling out a stool for me before disappearing behind the counter. He was always so thoughtful.

"This might not seem like much," he called out, rummaging through cabinets and drawers, "but I promise you, it'll hit the spot."

Moments later, he emerged with a cutting board, a knife, and several ingredients laid out neatly beside them. He began to chop and slice with practiced ease, the rhythmic sound of metal against wood oddly soothing. As he worked, he hummed softly, a tune I didn't recognize but found comforting nonetheless.

My racing thoughts disappeared, replaced by all the good moments already spent with him.

The aroma of fresh fruit soon filled the air, accompanied by the sweet scent of honey and the earthy richness of nuts. When Damon finally turned around, he held aloft a platter piled high with delicate slices of apple, pear, and orange, drizzled generously with local honey and sprinkled with toasted almonds.

"A fruit salad?" I asked, surprised. "For me?"

Damon placed the platter in front of me, along with a fork and a napkin. "Not just any fruit salad," he corrected, pouring two glasses of chilled sparkling water. "Your

favorite fruit salad."

I blinked, taken aback. How did he even remember that?

But then, I realized that there was nothing actually surprising about that. I was the most important person to him.

"When we first started spending time together, after..." He paused, clearing his throat slightly. "After you became mine, I paid attention. I noticed things—like how you'd always pick the fruit salads when given a choice between dessert options. And whenever we had them at home, you'd eat every last bite, no matter how full you were."

A warmth spread through me, starting at my chest and radiating outward. It hadn't occurred to me that he'd been paying such close attention to my habits—let alone remembering them weeks later.

"But why go through all this trouble now?" I asked, genuinely curious. "What changed?"

Damon leaned against the counter across from me, crossing his arms as he studied me intently. "Because I can see that something's bothering you, Elliot. Something big. And I want to understand what it is so I can help."

I shifted uncomfortably in my seat, suddenly self-conscious under his scrutiny. I took a deep breath, steeling myself for the conversation I knew was inevitable.

"There's... there's something I need to tell you," I admitted reluctantly, pushing the untouched fruit salad aside. "But I don't know if you're going to like it."

Damon raised an eyebrow, remaining silent and still. He waited patiently for me to

continue, giving me the space to gather my thoughts.

"I've missed my period," I blurted out, unable to keep the worry from creeping into my voice. "And I know we took precautions, but I can't shake this feeling—I think I might be pregnant."

The room fell silent for a long moment, the only sound the distant ticking of a clock somewhere down the hallway. Damon's expression remained neutral, unreadable, giving nothing away.

"And you haven't told me this sooner because...?" He prompted gently, his tone measured despite the storm of emotions I could sense brewing beneath the surface.

I sighed, running a hand through my disheveled curls. "Because I was scared. Scared of your reaction, scared of what this meant for both of us, scared of everything changing." I looked up at him, searching his gaze for any hint of anger or resentment. "And part of me wondered if maybe I was being paranoid—that maybe it was just stress or hormones or something else. But then again, another part of me felt certain that this was real, that there was a life growing inside me."

Damon pushed off from the counter, rounding the island to stand directly in front of me. His hands cupped my cheeks, tilting my head back so that our eyes met. In his depths, I saw a swirling mix of possessiveness, pride, and a fierce determination that made my heart pound wildly in my chest.

"You are carrying my child," he declared, his voice resonating with primal satisfaction. "Our bond has grown stronger than ever, and our connection has created new life."

He pressed a passionate kiss to my lips, branding me with his claim as surely as if he had marked me physically. When he pulled back, his eyes shone with possessiveness,

and a broad smile stretched across his face.

"I am proud beyond words," he whispered, resting his forehead against mine. "Proud to call you my omega, my partner, and soon-to-be father of my child."

My heart swelled with love and relief, my fears melting away under the heat of his adoration. I wrapped my arms around him, holding him tightly as I allowed myself to truly believe in this new reality—the reality where I wasn't just Elliot Hayes anymore; I was also the omega who carried Damon Vexley's child.

Damon's strong arms enveloped me, pulling me closer until our bodies were flush against one another. His hardness pressed against me, and I could feel the hunger rising within him once more—as raw and powerful as the day we first came together.

"You are mine," he growled, nipping at my earlobe. "Every inch of you belongs to me now—and especially this beautiful body that grows ripe with my seed."

His hands roamed over my curves, worshipping each dip and swell as if they were sacred artifacts. A low moan escaped my lips as desire coursed through me, setting me ablaze with need.

"Damon," I gasped, grinding against him shamelessly. "Please..."

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

Damon

My heart pounded in my chest like a wild beast clawing its way free, primal instincts surging through my veins as I held Elliot close. The scent of his arousal mingled with the sweetness of the fruit salad, a potent combination that threatened to overwhelm my senses. Yet, amidst the chaos of my raging desires, one thought stood out above all others:

Mine.

This tiny, fragile-seeming man was mine. Every curve, every freckle, every beat of his heart belonged to me. And now, even more so, with the precious gift he carried within him—my child.

A ferocious urge to protect, to cherish, and to dominate surged within me. It was an ancient drive, hardwired into my DNA by centuries of alphas before me. To provide, to shelter, to claim—not just Elliot, but the vulnerable life growing inside him.

My mind flashed back to a memory long buried, dredged up from the darkest corners of my soul. An image of a pale, lifeless form, limbs limp and eyes vacant—a haunting echo of the omega who had once been mine. Beside him lay the tiny, stillborn body of our son, a tragedy that had torn apart not just my heart, but my very essence.

No, I vowed silently, clenching my jaw against the sudden, searing pain. Not again. Never again.

Elliot deserved better. He deserved a chance to experience true joy, to bask in the warmth of family without the shadow of loss looming overhead. And I would make sure he got it—I swore it on my name, on my honor, and on the legacy of the Nightshade Wolves.

With renewed purpose, I claimed Elliot's mouth, pouring all my protective fury, all my possessive fire into the kiss. Our tongues clashed, our teeth clicked, and our breath became one as I drank deeply from his lips. He tasted like honey and apples, like sunlight and promise—like hope.

I wanted to consume him, to devour every inch of him, to merge our beings until there was no telling where one ended and the other began. But more than that, I needed him to understand—to truly comprehend—the depth of my devotion, the unbreakable chain that bound us together.

As Elliot pulled back slightly, breaking the heated frenzy of our kiss, I felt a flicker of disappointment. But then, those large hazel eyes blinked open, and I found myself captivated by the confusion swimming within them.

"And... and what about the fruit salad?" He asked, voice breathless and tinged with uncertainty.

It took me a moment to process his question, my mind still clouded with primal urges and the overwhelming rush of emotions that had taken hold of me. When I finally did, I couldn't help but chuckle, a warm, rumbling sound that seemed to surprise both of us.

"What about it?" I murmured, brushing a strand of hair away from his face, my fingers lingering on the soft skin of his cheek.

"It... it looks amazing," he stammered, cheeks flushing a soft pink. "And I don't want

it to go to waste. You made it special for me..."

His words trailed off, leaving behind a comfortable silence as we gazed into each other's eyes. In that moment, I realized that while I might have been lost in the storm of my own desires, Elliot had been here, present, taking everything in. Even when faced with news that could have sent him spiraling, he had managed to maintain his compassion and consideration—for me, yes, but also for something as simple and pure as a plate of fruit.

A wave of love washed over me, stronger than any possessive instinct or raw desire. This was the Elliot I adored—the thoughtful, caring, empathetic being hidden beneath layers of fear and self-doubt. The omega who would make an incredible father.

"You're right," I said softly, pressing another gentle kiss to his lips. "We shouldn't let such a beautiful creation go to waste."

Reaching around him, I grabbed the platter and fork, placing them carefully on the counter beside us. With a smirk, I picked up a slice of apple and brought it to his lips, feeding him slowly and deliberately.

"Mmm," he hummed, eyes fluttering closed as he savored the taste. "So good."

As he chewed, I watched his Adam's apple bobbing in his throat, entranced by the simple action. My cock throbbed painfully in response, eager to feel that motion against its length. But I pushed down the urge, wanting this moment to last—to burn itself into my memory forever.

"Damon," Elliot whispered, opening his eyes to meet my gaze. "What happens now?"

The vulnerability in his voice tugged at my heartstrings, and I wrapped my arms tightly around him, pulling him close. Resting my chin atop his head, I breathed in his

scent, letting it fill my lungs and calm my racing thoughts.

"We take things slow," I promised, running my hands soothingly along his back. "You'll see a doctor tomorrow, someone discreet and trustworthy. We'll confirm if you're pregnant—and believe me, little omega, I already know deep in my bones that you are—but either way, we'll figure out what steps need to be taken next."

He nodded hesitantly, his small hands gripping my shirt as if seeking reassurance. I held him tighter, offering whatever comfort I could.

"But no matter what," I continued, tilting his chin up so that our eyes met once more, "know this: nothing will change how I feel about you. Nothing will diminish your worth in my eyes—or in the eyes of the pack. To us, you'll always be the most precious thing in the world."

His eyes glistened with unshed tears, and I quickly brushed them away with my thumbs before they could fall.

"I never thought..." he started, pausing to clear his throat. "I never thought anyone could want me like this—not after... not after everything that happened in my past."

My heart ached for him, for the loneliness and rejection he must have endured. It really must have been a lot.

Even amidst the pain, there was a spark of defiance burning bright within him—proof of his strength and resilience.

"Well, get used to it," I growled playfully, nipping at his lower lip. "Because I'm never letting you go. Not ever."

He smiled weakly, leaning into my touch. "But what about the others—your family,

your friends? Won't they think differently of me? Of us?"

My family? He hadn't even met them. No need to worry about what they would think.

I shook my head firmly, my expression hardening. "Let them think what they want. Their opinions mean nothing to me—nothing compared to your happiness and well-being. If they can't accept you, if they can't support us, then they're welcome to leave."

Elliot searched my gaze, looking for any hint of insincerity. Finding none, he sighed, melting into my embrace. His body relaxed, and the tension that had been coiling his muscles began to ebb away.

"Thank you," he whispered, burying his face in my chest. "For believing in me, for accepting me just as I am."

Now he was thanking me. When we first met, he thought something like that would never happen.

I held him closer, my heart swelling with emotion. "There is nothing to thank me for, little omega. It is I who should be grateful—infinite times over—for finding you."

As Elliot clung to me, his words filling me with warmth and pride, I couldn't help but marvel at the fact that he was carrying my child. Our child. A new life growing within him. I just really couldn't believe it. The news was almost too good to be true.

Our bodies pressed together, and I became acutely aware of every delicious curve and dip of his form. My cock throbbed, trapped painfully beneath the thin barrier of my clothing, yearning to come out, almost begging. Yet, I knew I needed to rein in my desires, to focus on comforting and caring for my omega above all else. If I didn't do that, I wouldn't forgive myself.

With gentle fingers, I grasped the hem of Elliot's t-shirt, lifting it slowly as he raised his arms, allowing me to strip him bare. His naked torso pressed against mine, soft skin meeting firm muscle, sending shivers of pleasure coursing through me. I wanted to explore every inch of him, to map each freckle and scar with kisses and caresses. And god help me, but I was certainly going to do that, and more.

Next, I targeted the waistband of his jeans, popping open the button before sliding the zipper down. Hooking my thumbs into the fabric, I dragged both pants and underwear down his legs in one fluid motion, leaving him completely exposed to me. His erection jutted out proudly, and I couldn't resist wrapping my hand around its velvety length, giving it a slow, firm stroke.

He gasped, arching into my touch, and I relished the power I held over him—the ability to make him tremble with desire, to reduce him to breathless moans and desperate pleas.

"Damon," he whimpered, breathing heavily over my neck. "Please..."

"What do you need, little omega?" I murmured, trailing my lips along his jawline, feeling the stubble there scratch deliciously against my skin. "Tell me."

He hesitated, searching for the right words. I gave him time, knowing that he wasn't one to vocalize his desires easily. But I also knew that part of him craved the dominance I offered—that he thrived under my guidance and control.

"I... I want..." he stammered, cheeks flushed with embarrassment. Cute, I thought. "I want you to fuck me. Hard."

A surge of lust pulsed through me, and I squeezed his cock in response, making him groan.

"You really want that? Aren't you afraid of what I might do, knowing what I know now?" I asked, already knowing the answer. Needing to hear him say it nonetheless. "To fill you up with my seed?"

His eyes fluttered closed, and he nodded eagerly. "Yes," he breathed. "God, yes..."

I smirked, running my thumb over the slit at the tip of his cock, collecting the bead of pre-cum that had formed there. Bringing it to my mouth, I licked it clean, savoring the salty tang of his arousal.

"So eager," I teased, releasing his shaft only to grip his ass, pulling him flush against me once more. "So desperate for my cock."

He moaned, grinding against me shamelessly, seeking friction and relief. I could feel the heat radiating from between his legs, the dampness that coated his inner thighs—evidence of his desire, his readiness.

But still, I held back, wanting to draw out this moment, to build the anticipation until neither of us could stand it anymore. No need to rush anything, after all.

"Damon," he panted, desperation creeping into his voice. "Why are you torturing me like this?"

I chuckled, low and wicked, enjoying the sight of him writhing and squirming in my arms. "Because, little omega, I love watching you beg for my cock. And because I know that when I finally give you everything you want, it will be even better than either of us can imagine."

His breath hitched, and I felt his nails rake across my back. The bite of pain sent another wave of lust crashing through me, and I knew that I wouldn't be able to hold out much longer.

But still, I persisted, determined to draw out this moment, to make it last forever in our memories.

"And besides," I added, nipping at his earlobe, "don't you remember what we promised?"

He shuddered, a full-body quake that rattled him to his core. "Y-yes," he whispered. "I remember."

"Good," I growled, squeezing his ass possessively. "Then let's make sure that happens sooner rather than later. Because nothing—not anything in this world or the next—will stop me from making you mine in every way possible."

With a sudden urgency, I grabbed the hem of my own shirt, yanking it off in one swift movement. Elliot's hands were quick to follow, exploring the newly bared expanse of my chest, tracing the lines of muscle and the scattering of dark hair that led southwards. A low growl rumbled in my throat as his fingers danced across my abs, teasing and tantalizing.

Our bodies swayed together as we worked to shed the remainder of our clothes. My shorts and boxer briefs joined the growing pile on the floor, leaving me just as naked as he was. Our erections brushed against each other, and we both sucked in sharp breaths at the contact—a preview of the pleasure yet to come.

Elliot's hands continued their exploration, moving lower now, cupping my ass and pulling me closer. I could feel the heat emanating from between his legs, the wetness that coated his inner thighs. The scent of his arousal filled the air, and I knew that he was ready—more than ready—for what came next.

My hands mirrored his actions, gripping his firm cheeks and lifting him slightly, encouraging him to wrap those long, lean legs around my waist. He complied

willingly, locking his ankles behind my back, and pressing his hardness against my stomach.

We stood there for a moment, locked in an embrace, our hearts pounding in sync, our breaths coming fast and heavy. The world outside ceased to exist; there was only us, only this raw connection that bound us together.

Slowly, I turned us towards the counter, laying him down on its cool surface. His body shivered as it made contact, a soft moan escaping his lips.

"Are you cold, little omega?" I murmured, brushing a strand of hair away from his face. "Or is it something else?"

He bit his lip, a hint of a smile playing at the corners of his mouth. "Something else," he admitted softly.

"Good," I replied, trailing my fingertips along his collarbone, his sternum, and then his belly button. "Because I'm going to make you burn, Elliot. I'm going to set fire to your very soul."

And then, I lowered myself onto him, claiming his mouth in a searing kiss that left no doubt about my intentions.

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

Elliot

As Damon entered me, inch by agonizing inch, I couldn't help but gasp at the sheer size of him. God, how did he fit so perfectly inside me? It was like he had been crafted specifically for this purpose—to fill me completely, to stretch me deliciously. It really was something else.

"Fuck, Damon," I panted, clawing at his shoulders as he pushed deeper, deeper still. "You're so fucking big."

He grinned, a wicked gleam in his eye. "And you take me so well, little omega. Like you were made for me."

I nodded, unable to form coherent thoughts amidst the haze of pleasure that consumed me. Maybe I really was made for him. For this. For us.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, he bottomed out, his hips flush against mine. We both let out a shuddering breath, our eyes meeting and holding. In that moment, there was nothing else in the world but us—and the tiny spark of new life growing within me.

Damon's hand caressed my cheek, his thumb brushing away a bead of sweat. "Are you okay, love?"

Love. He'd called me love. I knew it wasn't some fleeting endearment, not with Damon. No, it meant something more. Something real.

He didn't say it just because it felt right in that moment, but because he couldn't keep it to himself anymore.

"I'm perfect," I breathed, wrapping my arms around his neck, pulling him closer. "This... this feels right. You feel right."

His smile widened, and he pressed a tender kiss to my forehead before resting his chin atop my head. We lay there like that for a while, simply basking in the warmth and intimacy of our joining.

"So, what do you think?" Damon asked eventually, breaking the comfortable silence. "About children's names, I mean."

I hummed thoughtfully, my mind racing with possibilities. "Well, if it's a boy, maybe something powerful. Like Aiden or Kellan."

"Aiden Vexley has a nice ring to it," Damon mused, rolling the name around on his tongue. "But Kellan? That sounds almost... too pretty for a pup."

I laughed, pinching his side playfully. "Hey! There's nothing wrong with a little prettiness. Besides, who knows what kind of personality he'll have? Maybe he'll be all flowers and rainbows."

Damon chuckled, nipping at my earlobe. "Alright, alright. Let's say it's a girl instead. What would you choose then?"

"Hmm..." I trailed off, considering. "Something classic, perhaps. Or maybe something unique, but not too out-there. Oh, I know! How about Nyx?"

"Nyx Vexley," Damon repeated, testing the sound of it. "Yes, I quite like that. And if she grows up to be half as fiery as her name suggests, I'll have my work cut out for

me."

I smiled, imagining a little girl with wild curls and sparkling hazel eyes, running through the forest with her father hot on her heels. "She'll be amazing, whatever her name ends up being."

"And what about middle names?" Damon asked, his voice taking on a more serious tone. "Would you consider giving our child your father's name—Hayes—as a tribute to your lineage?"

My heart swelled at the suggestion, touched that he would even think of such a thing. But my relationship with my father wasn't good—far from it—so I had mixed feelings about the suggestion.

"That means a lot, Damon. Really, it does. But... I'm not sure I'm ready to honor my family just yet. Not until they've earned my forgiveness—for pushing me away when I needed them most."

That was the politest way I could articulate my thoughts to Damon. I knew that he meant well, but my family was a sensitive issue. I felt betrayed by them.

Damon nodded understandingly, pressing another kiss to my temple. "Of course, love. Whatever you decide, just know that I support you. Always."

I knew that he did and always would. There was a reason why I felt so happy with him now. I would still be a mess without him.

We shared another moment of quiet connection, lost in our own thoughts and dreams for the future. Then, suddenly, Damon shifted slightly, causing his thickness to rub against that spot deep inside me—the one that always made me see stars.

I gasped, arching into him, seeking more friction, more pressure. "Damon..."

"Yes, love?" He murmured, his voice low and dangerous.

I knew he was aware of how it would make me feel. He wasn't a fool.

"It's too much," I whimpered, biting my lip against the overwhelming sensations coursing through me. "Too good."

He smirked, knowing full well the effect he had on me. "Just wait until I start moving, little omega. Until I give you everything you can handle—and maybe even a little bit more."

A shiver ran down my spine, anticipation coiling tightly in my belly. God, yes. I wanted that—I wanted all of it. Everything he could give me, everything we could create together.

"But first," he continued, his expression softening once more, "we need to talk about practical things. The pack will want to celebrate our news, of course—but I understand if you're not ready for that just yet. And we should also discuss living arrangements, now that you'll be carrying our child."

I sighed contentedly, melting into his embrace. "Let's leave those details for later, hmm? Right now, I just want to enjoy this—to revel in the fact that we're creating something beautiful together."

Damon's eyes shone with pure lust, and he pulled me close, burying his face in my neck. "You are truly extraordinary, Elliot Hayes. Truly, truly one-of-a-kind."

With a sudden ferocity, Damon began to move within me, pulling back only to slam forward again, each thrust driving deeper than the last. He didn't even give me a

warning.

His grip on my hips tightened, fingers digging into my flesh as he held me steady, impaling me on his thick cock over and over again.

"Fuck, Damon!" I cried out, clawing at his back, leaving red welts in my wake. The pain only served to heighten my pleasure, pushing me closer to the edge with every brutal snap of his hips.

"You like that, don't you, little omega?" He growled, baring his teeth in a savage grin. "Taking my big alpha cock like this?"

He didn't even need to hear my answer. Of course he already knew it.

"Yes!" I screamed, meeting him thrust for thrust, eager for more, needing it, craving it. "God, yes!"

Our bodies slapped together, the wet sounds of our joining filling the air along with our grunts and moans. Sweat dripped from our brows, mingling with the scent of sex and desire that hung heavy around us. It was intoxicating and addictive.

Damon leaned back, pushing my legs wider apart, allowing him to plunge even deeper, something I didn't even think possible.

Each stroke hit that magical spot inside me, sending shocks of ecstasy rippling through my body. My vision blurred, and I saw nothing but white-hot sparks behind my closed eyelids.

"So fucking tight," Damon panted, his breath coming in ragged gasps. "Your ass was made for my cock." And I knew he was right about that.

And then, with a final, powerful surge, he buried himself to the hilt, throwing his head back in a roar of release. Hot jets of cum spilled into me, coating my insides, marking me as his. It was scalding, the texture silky yet thick, filling me completely, stretching me deliciously.

I could feel it dripping out of me, running down my crack, pooling beneath me on the countertop. Yet, despite the mess, I couldn't help but moan in satisfaction, savoring the sensation of being filled by my alpha—of feeling his life force pulsing into me.

As Damon slowly came down from his high, he looked at me with an intensity that stole my breath. "Elliot," he rasped. "I've never... I've never come so hard in my entire life."

I smiled weakly, my body trembling with aftershocks. "Neither have I," I admitted softly. "But I think it has something to do with... you know..."

And he knew exactly what I was talking about. It was no secret.

"The baby," he finished for me, nodding in understanding. "It makes everything feel more intense somehow."

I nodded, unable to find the right words to express what I felt. But Damon seemed to get it—he always did. It was one of the reasons why we were happy to be together. He really always understood me.

With a tenderness that belied the roughness of our lovemaking, he scooped me up into his arms, cradling me closely. Our combined juices leaked from between my asscheeks, trickling down my thighs, but neither of us cared.

"I love you, Elliot," Damon whispered, pressing a gentle kiss to my forehead. "More than anything in this world—or any other."

I melted into his embrace, my heart swelling with happiness. "I love you too, Damon. So much it hurts sometimes."

He chuckled, hugging me tighter. "Good. Because I intend to keep loving you until it does hurt—a lot."

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

Damon

The scent of lavender and chamomile hung in the air, contrasting with the usual musk and leather that permeated our smaller home. It was Elliot's choice, he said it helped soothe his nerves—a constant state these days. He'd always had an affinity for calming scents, a gentle counterpoint to my own inherent intensity.

I stood by the window of our cozy living room, watching the rain lash against the glass. Nine months. Nine months since the day I'd felt him surge into me, that burning connection that cemented our fate. Nine months since we'd confirmed we were expecting a son—a son we named Stellan—a name imbued with strength and resilience, much like his father.

The house was smaller than the Nightshade HQ, far less opulent, but it suited us. It felt... domestic. Safe. A place for Elliot and Stellan to thrive. Though, if I were honest, the 'domesticity' felt more like a gilded cage lately. My responsibilities within the Nightshade pack had intensified over these past months. The recent power struggle with another faction left me stretched thin, constantly pulled in multiple directions. I was dealing with trade routes, managing territories, and mediating disputes—all while trying to be a present partner and expectant father.

It really was a bit too much sometimes.

Elliot sat on the plush, cream-colored sofa, his pregnant belly a prominent bulge beneath a loose-fitting sweater. He was meticulously folding laundry, each crease crisp and precise.

I never thought I would see him doing something like that one day. It was a small, mundane task, but he performed it with a quiet concentration that both charmed and worried me.

He looked small. Not physically, though his frame had certainly softened under the weight of pregnancy. No, it was something deeper—a shrinking of his spirit, an almost palpable dimming of that bright hazel light in his eyes. He'd withdrawn, become quieter than usual, his sharp wit dulled by a weary sadness I couldn't quite decipher. It drove me wild sometimes.

I cleared my throat, trying to break the silence without startling him. "Everything alright, love?"

He looked up, forcing a smile that didn't quite reach his eyes. "Just fine, Damon. Just... folding laundry." He gestured weakly towards the neatly stacked pile of clothes.

"You've been folding a lot of laundry lately," I commented, walking over to sit beside him on the sofa. I gently placed my hand over his, feeling the warmth radiating from his skin. "Are you bored?"

He shrugged, avoiding eye contact. "Not really. It's... therapeutic."

I frowned slightly. Therapeutic? Folding laundry wasn't usually therapeutic. He used to find solace in reading ancient texts and exploring forgotten languages—things that ignited his mind and lit up his eyes. Now, he seemed content with the quiet repetition of mundane tasks.

"You haven't touched your books in weeks," I pointed out softly. "And you barely eat anything anymore."

He sighed, a weary sound that seemed to carry the weight of the world. "I just... haven't felt like it."

My heart clenched with a familiar pang of guilt. I knew I hadn't been as present as he deserved. The pack demanded my attention, and I'd prioritized my responsibilities over our relationship, telling myself I was doing it for us, for Stellan's future. A terrible excuse.

"I'm sorry, Elliot," I murmured, squeezing his hand gently. "I know I haven't been around much. Things have been... complicated."

He finally met my gaze, and I saw a flicker of something raw and vulnerable in his eyes. "It's more than that, Damon," he said softly, his voice trembling slightly. "It feels like we're drifting apart. Like... like we're just going through the motions."

My blood ran cold. That was the last thing I wanted. The thought of losing him—of losing what we had built together—was unbearable. I wasn't going to let it happen. I couldn't.

"That's not true," I insisted, leaning closer and brushing a stray curl away from his forehead. "We're just... adjusting. To the baby, to the new house, to everything."

He shook his head slowly, a sad smile playing on his lips. "It's deeper than that, Damon. It's like... you see me as your omega, as the vessel carrying our child. You don't really see me anymore. The Elliot Hayes who loved obscure languages and had a sarcastic wit?"

My throat tightened. He was right. Somewhere along the line, I'd allowed him to become defined by his omega status, by the life he carried within him. I'd been so focused on protecting him, on ensuring his well-being, that I'd forgotten to simply see him. To appreciate the unique and wonderful individual he was.

It was difficult to admit that I had let that happen. I should've been stronger.

"That's not fair," I protested weakly, knowing even as I said it that he was speaking the truth. He would never lie about something like that, after all.

He didn't respond, simply continued to gaze at me with those heartbreakingly sad hazel eyes. In that moment, I saw a reflection of my own failings—my ambition, my possessiveness, my inability to truly balance my responsibilities with the needs of those I loved.

"I need you to be present, Damon," he said finally. "Not just physically, but... emotionally. I need you to see me. To hear me. To remember that I'm more than just an omega carrying your child."

And I knew he was. I didn't have to prove that to him, but I knew that he was right about what he was saying.

The rain continued to fall against the windowpane, each drop a poignant reminder of the distance that had grown between us. The scent of lavender and chamomile, once so calming, now felt suffocating—a constant reminder of the peace that was slowly slipping away from our lives.

I reached out and pulled him close, burying my face in his soft hair. "I will," I promised. "I'll do better, Elliot. I promise. I'll make you see that I do."

The words were still hanging in the air, my promise a fragile thread against the backdrop of our strained silence, when a searing pain ripped through Elliot. He gasped, his body arching violently as he clutched at his abdomen, his knuckles white against the plush fabric of the sofa.

"Damon!" he cried out. "Something's... something's wrong!"

My heart lurched into my throat. Those were the words I'd dreaded. Labor. I wasn't ready for it, even though it was about the right time.

"Elliot! What is it? What's happening?" I scrambled to my feet, adrenaline coursing through my veins.

Another wave of pain convulsed through him, sharper, more insistent than the last. His face contorted in a grimace, sweat beading on his forehead.

"Contractions," he gasped, struggling to breathe. "They're coming... really fast."

I rushed to his side, kneeling before him and taking his trembling hands in mine. I was going to do whatever was possible to make him feel better and help him.

"Okay, okay, breathe with me. Slow, deep breaths." I tried to project a calm I certainly didn't feel, my mind racing as I calculated the distance to the nearest hospital. It was too far. We wouldn't make it in time.

Then, a frantic banging echoed from the front door. Loud, insistent. What the fuck was happening now?

"Who's that?" Elliot whimpered, his voice barely audible above the roaring in my ears.

Before I could answer, the door burst open, and Hunter, one of my enforcers, stood there, his face etched with urgency.

"Sir! We have a situation! There's been an attack on the perimeter! The Serpents are trying to breach our territory!"

My blood ran cold. An attack? Now? With Elliot in labor? This was beyond surreal.

"Can't it wait?" I barked, trying to keep my voice level. "My omega is going into labor!"

Hunter's expression softened, but his professional demeanor remained. "Sir, they're already inside the compound. They're targeting the research labs. We need every able body to defend our territory."

I cursed under my breath. This couldn't be happening. Not now. Not like this.

Elliot let out a strangled cry, clutching his stomach even tighter. The contractions were coming relentlessly, each one stealing his breath.

"Damon..." He groaned, his eyes clouded with pain. "I... I don't think I can..."

Ignoring Hunter, I threw myself over Elliot, cradling him protectively. "We'll manage, love. We'll get through this."

Suddenly, the lights flickered, plunging the room into near darkness. A low hum filled the air, followed by a crackling sound.

"What the hell was that?" I muttered, my senses on high alert.

Before I could react, a voice crackled through the comm system implanted in my ear. It was Marcus, my second-in-command.

"Damon, we have a code red! The Serpents have deployed an electromagnetic pulse. All electronic devices are offline. Including... communications and medical equipment."

My stomach dropped. No phones. No internet. No contact with the outside world. And no monitoring equipment for Elliot's labor. We were completely on our own.

The Serpents were going to pay.

Another contraction hit Elliot with brutal force, and I felt him stiffen beneath me. He started to murmur, a low, guttural sound escaping his lips.

"Push, Elliot," I urged, remembering snippets from the birthing classes we'd reluctantly attended. "Push with all your might."

He didn't respond, just continued to groan, his body wracked with pain. Then, a thin stream of blood trickled from between his legs.

"Elliot!" I yelled, panic rising in my throat. "Are you okay? What's wrong?"

He shook his head weakly, his face pale. "I... I don't know. The pain... it's overwhelming."

Just then, a deafening explosion rocked the house. The windows shattered, showering us with glass. The room plunged into complete darkness.

I instinctively shielded Elliot with my body, praying that none of the debris had struck him.

"Damon!" Elliot screamed. "I can't... I can't feel anything!"

My heart hammered against my ribs. Something was terribly, terribly wrong. He was losing consciousness, and I had to do something about it before it was too late.

With a surge of adrenaline, I fumbled for my lighter, the small flame filling the darkness. As the flickering light illuminated Elliot's face, I saw his eyes were unfocused, his skin clammy. This wasn't good at all.

"Stellan's coming," I whispered, more to myself than to him. "He's coming now."
That was the most alarming thing about all this.

Another pain ripped through him, more intense than anything I'd witnessed before.
And then, with a final, shuddering gasp, Elliot's body went limp in my arms.

"Elliot!" I cried, shaking him gently. But he didn't respond.

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

Elliot

As consciousness slowly returned, I found myself lying on my back, staring up at a stark white ceiling. The scent of antiseptic filled my nostrils, and the hum of machinery surrounded me. Where was I? And why couldn't I feel... anything below my waist? What was going on?

I turned my head stiffly, looking around the strange room. It wasn't a hospital; there were no sterile beds or white coats in sight. Instead, it appeared to be some kind of makeshift infirmary, filled with medical equipment and supplies haphazardly strewn about. IV stands stood sentinel next to my bed, dripping a steady stream of fluid into my veins. Monitors beeped softly, tracking my vital signs—vital signs that seemed eerily stable considering the chaos from earlier.

"Damon?" I croaked, my throat dry and scratchy. "Where are you?"

I hoped he was okay. Otherwise, I wouldn't know what to do.

No response came, save for the soft hum of machines. Panic began to rise inside me as I realized I was alone—completely and utterly alone—in this cold, antiseptic room.

I had been alone before, but it was never anything like this.

"Hello?" I called out, my voice stronger this time. Still nothing. I don't know why I expected anything different.

I tried to sit up, wincing at the sudden burst of pain in my abdomen. My hand flew to

my stomach, only to encounter smooth skin instead of the familiar bulge of pregnancy. Confusion gave way to a cold dread as I lifted the sheet covering me, revealing a long, angry scar running vertically down my torso.

"What the--" I gasped, horror washing over me as the truth sank in. They had cut me open. To save Stellan.

But where was he? Was he safe? Alive?

Tears stung my eyes as fear gripped me, threatening to consume me whole. I needed answers. I needed Damon, and I needed him right in that moment.

With renewed determination, I ignored the protest of my body and swung my legs over the side of the bed. A wave of dizziness hit me, but I gritted my teeth and pushed through it, using the edge of the mattress to pull myself upright. I also removed any and all tubes going into me.

The room spun briefly before settling into focus once more. I took a deep breath, steeling myself for whatever lay ahead. I had to find Damon. I had to find my son.

Each step felt like walking on knives, but I refused to let it slow me down. I stumbled out of the makeshift infirmary, blinking against the harsh fluorescent lighting of the hallway beyond. Doors lined either side, all closed tight. Which one led to Damon—and hopefully, Stellan too?

I hoped they were together, no matter what had happened.

As I hesitated, trying to decide which door to try first, a low moan echoed through the hall. It sounded like someone in agony. Or pleasure. Either way, it was clear that whoever made that sound was suffering greatly.

Without hesitation, I limped towards the source, pushing open the nearest door. Inside, I found a figure strapped to a chair, their face contorted in pain, sweat pouring down their forehead. They looked vaguely familiar, but my mind was too foggy to place them.

"Who are you?" I asked, approaching cautiously. "Do you know where Damon Vexley is?"

The figure struggled to speak, their lips curling back in a grimace. "El... Elliot," they rasped, recognition flickering in their eyes. "You shouldn't... You need to rest."

It was Hunter—the enforcer who'd barged in earlier. He looked terrible, his usually spiky hair matted and damp, his green eyes wild with pain.

"No," I insisted, shaking my head. "I need to find Damon. Do you know where he is?"

I really couldn't care much about him in that moment.

Hunter nodded weakly, pointing towards the end of the hallway. "Basement... lab... He's there." His voice trailed off, his head lolling forward as another spasm of pain racked his body.

Whatever was happening to him, it didn't look good. But I couldn't worry about that—not when Damon and Stellan might still be in danger. They were my priorities in that moment.

Ignoring the throbbing ache in my belly, I hurried towards the basement stairs, my heart pounding in my chest. Each step sent jolts of pain shooting through me, but I gritted my teeth and pressed on, determined to see this through.

At last, I reached the heavy metal door leading to the basement. With a trembling hand, I grasped the handle and pulled, revealing a dimly lit laboratory filled with strange equipment and glowing vials. In the center of the room, Damon stood over a small table, cradling something precious close to his chest.

"Damon!" I cried out, relief flooding through me at the sight of him.

He turned to face me, his ice-blue eyes reflecting a mix of surprise and guilt. In his arms, swaddled tightly, lay our son—Stellan. He was tiny, fragile, yet perfect in every way.

"He's alive," Damon murmured, his voice thick with emotion. "We made it, love. We're both okay now."

I staggered towards him, tears streaming down my cheeks, and collapsed into his embrace. As we held each other tightly, I finally allowed myself to believe that everything would be alright—that somehow, we would get through this together.

But even as I clung to him, questions remained unanswered. What had happened while I was unconscious? How had they saved Stellan? And why did Hunter seem to be in so much pain?

As if reading my thoughts, Damon pulled away slightly, his expression serious. "Elliot, there's something you should know. Something important."

His tone sent a shiver of unease down my spine. Whatever it was, I knew it wouldn't be easy to hear.

"Elliot," Damon began softly, his voice barely above a whisper. He looked down at me, those eyes filled with a mix of relief and fear. "You passed out earlier. During your... delivery."

I swallowed hard, my throat still dry and scratchy. I figured that was what had happened, but it still felt weird hearing him say it.

Despite the fear gnawing at me, I needed answers. "Stellan?" I asked, my voice trembling. "Is he—"

"He's alive," Damon cut in, his face breaking into a weak smile. "He's perfect, love. Beautiful." His gaze drifted towards the small bundle cradled in his arm, a warmth filling his eyes as he looked upon our son. Then, his expression turned serious once more, his brows furrowing. "But there were complications. With the birth..."

I felt a chill run through me. Complications? What kind of complications? I needed to know everything.

"The doctor said..." Damon hesitated, searching for the right words. "The placenta didn't detach properly. They had to perform an emergency cesarean section." Not to mention all the pain I'd felt before passing out.

My hand flew to my belly, feeling the long scar hidden beneath the sheet. So that was why Hunter had mentioned someone cutting open my belly. It all made sense now.

"And Stellan?" I pressed, my heart pounding in my chest. "Was he injured?"

"No," Damon replied quickly, shaking his head. "No, he's fine. Healthy. Strong." He glanced down at our son again, a proud smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. "They managed to extract him safely. It was touch-and-go for a while, but... he pulled through."

Relief washed over me like a tidal wave, leaving me lightheaded. Our son was safe. That was all that mattered.

In a way, I was kind of glad that I passed out before giving birth. I wouldn't have been able to handle the situation well.

"Then why do you look so worried?" I asked, studying Damon's tense features. Something was still bothering him, I could tell.

Damon sighed, running a hand through his thick hair. "Because of what happened next. Marcus radioed in—the Serpents attacked before we could reach the hospital. An electromagnetic pulse took out all our electronics—including the monitoring equipment in the ambulance."

I gasped, horror filling me. "So, they couldn't monitor us? Or... or treat us?"

"Not until they got us here," Damon confirmed, nodding towards the makeshift infirmary. "We had to find somewhere else to bring you both. Somewhere safe from the fighting—and equipped enough to deal with your condition."

"And where exactly is 'here'?" I inquired, looking around the dimly lit room. "It doesn't seem like a standard hospital."

"It's not," Damon admitted, shifting uncomfortably. "It's one of our pack's secure facilities—a place used for... sensitive operations."

"Sensitive operations?" I echoed, raising an eyebrow. "Like what?"

Before Damon could answer, a low moan echoed through the hallway outside. Both of us turned to see Hunter limping towards us, his face contorted in agony. I was surprised he could still walk.

"What's wrong with him?" I whispered, concern etched onto my face.

Damon's jaw tightened, anger flashing across his features. "That's part of the reason I'm worried, Elliot. Those 'sensitive operations' involve experiments on shifters—like Hunter. We've been trying to reverse some of the effects caused by past research gone wrong."

I stared at him, shock coursing through me. Experiments? On their own people? The thought was horrifying.

"But... why would you do something like that?" I stammered, struggling to comprehend such cruel actions.

But maybe there was nothing to understand. People could be evil sometimes, especially when they had something to gain.

Damon's expression darkened further. "For power, Elliot. Control. And unfortunately, progress sometimes comes at a cost."

I shook my head, disgust rising within me. This wasn't the Damon I knew—that much was clear. But then again, neither of us truly knew each other anymore, did we?

"And what about Hunter?" I prompted, steering the conversation back to the immediate problem. "What's happening to him?"

Damon sighed, rubbing his temples. "A side effect of one of the experiments caused some sort of toxic reaction when he shifted. We're trying to stabilize it, but... things aren't looking good."

Another groan escaped Hunter's lips as he collapsed against the doorframe, his body wracked with pain.

"We need to help him!" I exclaimed, attempting to run to him despite the protest of

my abdomen.

Damon gently pushed me back down, his expression firm. "Stay put, Elliot. You're in no state to be moving around. Besides, I can handle this."

As if on cue, Hunter let out another cry of agony, followed by a sickening wet sound. Damon rushed forward, catching him just as his legs gave out completely.

"Fuck," Damon muttered, supporting Hunter's weight effortlessly. "You okay, soldier?"

Hunter nodded weakly, clinging to Damon. "Y-yes, sir. Just... just a little dizzy."

Damon's brow furrowed as he examined Hunter closely. Whatever he saw, it clearly concerned him.

"This isn't normal, Elliot," he murmured, turning back to me. "His symptoms... they're getting worse. Fast."

He didn't even have to tell me that. It was pretty obvious what was happening to Hunter.

Fear gripped me as I realized the true extent of our situation. Not only were we trapped in a secret facility during a dangerous attack, but now, one of our protectors was falling apart before our very eyes.

"I don't understand," I confessed, confusion warring with fear inside me. "Why are these things happening? Why now?"

Damon's gaze hardened, determination flickering within those ice-blue depths. "Because fate has a fucked-up sense of humor, Elliot. And she's decided to test us

today—to push us to our limits and beyond."

He paused, taking a deep breath before continuing. "But I have faith—in myself, in you, and most importantly, in us. We can figure this out. We'll save Hunter, protect our home, and raise our son."

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

Damon

As I cradled Stellan close to my chest, watching Elliot sleep peacefully beside me, I allowed myself a moment of quiet relief. It wasn't something I thought I'd have anytime soon, considering the chaos going on outside.

Our son was alive, healthy, and nestled safely between us. That was all that mattered in that moment.

Yet, the calm wouldn't last long. I just knew it wouldn't.

There was too much to attend to—the attack on our territory, Hunter's deteriorating condition, and the ever-present threat of the Serpents looming over our heads. Not to mention the delicate balance between Elliot and me, which seemed more precarious than ever.

I needed to deal with that soon, but it wasn't so easy, or simple.

First things first—I needed to check on Hunter. His earlier collapse had left me shaken, and I couldn't ignore the fact that he might be suffering from something far more sinister than mere exhaustion or stress. If his symptoms continued to worsen, we'd have a real crisis on our hands. In other words, a crisis that could jeopardize not only his life but also our entire operation here. And that was definitely not something I could let happen.

Leaving Elliot and Stellan to nap undisturbed, I made my way upstairs and found Marcus barking orders into a satellite phone, the only communication device still

functional after the EMP strike. He looked up as I entered, relief flashing across his face.

"Damon! Thank fuck you're alright. How's Elliot and the baby?"

"They are fine," I replied curtly, not wanting to dwell on the details. There was no time to do that, after all. "But I'm worried about Hunter. Have you seen him since I carried him downstairs?"

Marcus' expression turned grave. "Yeah, I checked on him a few minutes ago. His vitals are all over the place. Heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation... none of them make any damn sense."

My gut twisted into knots. This was bad and not just for Hunter, but for everyone involved in this clusterfuck. If his condition worsened, there was no telling how it would affect the rest of our operations or how it might impact the pack dynamics.

Some people wouldn't admit it, but he was an important member of our organization.

"We need to get him stable," I growled, my mind racing through possible solutions. "Can you prep an IV line with some sedatives? Maybe that will buy us enough time to figure out what's going on."

It wasn't going to be enough, but still better than nothing.

Marcus nodded, already moving toward the medical supplies scattered around the room. As he worked, I paced, my thoughts spiraling through countless scenarios, and none were pleasant.

Then, as if sensing my inner turmoil, Marcus glanced up at me, his brows furrowing. "What's really eating you, boss?" He asked, not bothering to sugarcoat anything. He

never did that. "It's not just Hunter, is it?"

So, it was that obvious, wasn't it?

I sighed, running a hand through my hair. Leave it to Marcus to cut straight to the chase. The man was like a bloody terrier when he wanted answers.

"No," I admitted, leaning against the countertop. "It's everything else. The Serpent attack, the EMP, the fucking experiments gone wrong..." I trailed off, shaking my head. "It feels like we're drowning under shitstorm after shitstorm, and I don't know how much longer we can keep our heads above water."

Marcus finished preparing the IV line, then approached me, placing a firm hand on my shoulder. "We'll find a way, Damon. You always do."

His confidence in me stirred something deep within me, reminding me why I'd chosen him to work for me. Together, we'd weathered storms before, and together, we'd weather this one too.

"You're right," I said, resolve hardening my voice. "Now let's go sort out this mess with Hunter."

As we descended back into the basement lab, I tried to push aside my lingering concerns about Elliot and our strained relationship. No matter what I did, it wouldn't be easy. There was no immediate solution.

Right now, Hunter took precedence—and I owed it to him to ensure his safety and well-being.

However, as soon as we entered the lab, I knew that focusing solely on Hunter would prove challenging. Elliot sat upright on the makeshift bed, holding Stellan close to his

chest, his eyes wide with worry as he watched Hunter convulse violently on the floor nearby. I felt sorry for them both.

"What's happening?" Elliot cried out, fear lacing his voice. "Is he okay?"

"Not yet," I murmured, kneeling down next to Hunter while Marcus administered the sedative. Within moments, Hunter's seizures subsided, though his breathing remained labored and shallow. As I said, it was going to have to suffice.

Elliot scooted to the edge of the bed, reaching out to take my hand. "Please tell me he's going to be okay," he whispered, desperation clear in his hazel eyes. He was always empathetic with everyone, except the people that tried to hurt him.

I squeezed his fingers gently, offering what little comfort I could muster. "We'll do everything in our power to help him, love. But you should prepare yourself for the worst-case scenario."

He bit his lower lip, nodding bravely. His courage was one of the reasons I was proud of him.

"Okay," he choked out. "Just promise me that... once this is over, we'll talk. About us. About everything."

The raw vulnerability in his voice sent a pang of guilt through me. I'd been so focused on protecting him, on ensuring his physical safety, that I'd neglected the emotional aspect of our relationship. And now, it felt like we were teetering on the brink of disaster.

"I promise," I said firmly, gazing into those beautiful, tormented eyes. "Once this nightmare is behind us, we'll sit down and hash out whatever needs hashing."

A small smile tugged at the corners of his mouth, giving me hope. Regardless, first we had to survive this ordeal intact.

With Hunter stabilized and safely transferred to an upstairs room, we turned our attention to the rest of the pack. Thankfully, the majority seemed unharmed, save for a few minor injuries and bruises sustained during the skirmish. However, the true extent of the damage wasn't immediately apparent; the electromagnetic pulse had rendered most communication devices useless, leaving us isolated and cut off from the outside world.

Nonetheless, we pressed onward, determined to restore order amidst the chaos. While Marcus coordinated the cleanup efforts outside, I rallied the remaining members, organizing search parties to locate any missing or injured packmates. Simultaneously, I tasked others with assessing the structural integrity of our buildings and gathering supplies to repair any damaged infrastructure. That all happened after the Serpents realized they couldn't win.

Throughout it all, Elliot stayed by my side, his presence a constant source of strength and resilience. Despite the turmoil around us, he maintained an unwavering optimism, his belief in our ability to overcome adversity never wavering. Even when faced with the daunting prospect of raising our child in such uncertain times, he remained steadfast, his determination to provide Stellan with a safe and loving home unyielding.

Days blurred into weeks as we worked tirelessly to rebuild and heal. The Serpents' attack had left deep scars, both literal and figurative, but our pack proved resilient, rallying together to face each challenge head-on.

The rhythmic rise and fall of Stellan's chest against Elliot's was a mesmerizing sight.

He'd fallen asleep nursing, a tiny hand curled around Elliot's finger, and the quiet domesticity of the scene settled something within me I hadn't realized was fractured. We were in our bedroom now, weeks after the attack, the house slowly returning to a semblance of normalcy. But the normalcy felt... fragile. Like a carefully constructed facade masking a deeper unease. And that, I thought, was something difficult to change.

I sat on the edge of the bed, watching them, a knot tightening in my chest. We hadn't truly talked since that promise amidst the chaos, the one about hashing things out. I'd been deliberately avoiding it, burying myself in pack duties, in rebuilding, in anything that would keep me from confronting the growing distance between us.

I knew it wouldn't be easy, so that was why I kept avoiding it.

It was cowardly, perhaps. But facing Elliot's disappointment, his quiet sadness... it was a weight I wasn't sure I could bear.

"He looks so peaceful," Elliot murmured, not looking up. "Like he doesn't have a care in the world."

"He's lucky," I replied, the word catching in my throat. "He doesn't know about the messes we make."

A sigh escaped Elliot's lips. He finally lifted his gaze, meeting mine with a weary sadness that pierced through my defenses.

"Is that what you think of me, Damon?" He murmured. "A mess?"

The question hit me like a physical blow. "No," I said quickly, reaching for his hand. "Never. That's not what I meant."

He allowed me to take his hand, but his grip was limp, lacking the usual spark of defiance. "Then what did you mean? Because it feels like you're barely looking at me these days. Like I'm just... here. Existing. A vessel for our son."

The truth of his words stung. I had been distant. Distracted. Lost in my own internal battles, I'd failed to see the toll it was taking on him.

"I've been busy," I offered lamely, knowing how inadequate it sounded.

"Busy?" Elliot's voice rose slightly, a flicker of anger igniting in his eyes. "Busy ignoring me? Busy avoiding any real connection? Busy pretending like everything is fine when it clearly isn't?"

He was right, of course. I was a master of deflection, of burying my emotions beneath layers of duty and control. But Elliot saw through it all. He always did.

"I didn't want to burden you with my problems," I admitted. "With the pack, with the Serpents... I didn't want to add to your stress."

"Burden me?" Elliot scoffed. "Damon, we're partners. We're supposed to share these things. I want to know what's going on in your head, what's weighing you down. I want to be there for you, just as I know you want to be there for me."

His words were a balm to my wounded pride, a gentle reminder of the bond we shared. But it wasn't enough. Not yet.

"It's more than just the pack," I confessed, my gaze dropping to our intertwined hands. "It's... it's the responsibility. The fear. I lost an omega before, Elliot. I lost a child. I can't... I can't bear the thought of losing either of you."

The silence that followed was suffocating. I braced myself for his anger, his

accusations, but they didn't come. Instead, he squeezed my hand, his touch warm and reassuring.

"You won't," he said softly. "I'm not going anywhere, Damon. And neither is Stellan."

He shifted slightly, adjusting Stellan in his arms. "But you have to let me in. You have to let me share the weight with you. I'm not some fragile flower who needs to be protected. I'm a capable, intelligent omega. And I'm your partner."

His words resonated deep within me, stripping away the layers of guilt and self-doubt that had been suffocating me for weeks. He was right. I had been treating him like porcelain, afraid to touch him, to truly connect with him for fear of breaking something.

"I know," I said. "I'm sorry. I've been a fool."

He smiled, a genuine, heart-stopping smile that reached his eyes. "You're a stubborn, overprotective fool," he corrected. "But you're my fool."

I chuckled, relief flooding through me. "And you're my omega."

"And our son's father," he added, his gaze drifting towards Stellan. "Which means we have a lot of work to do. This isn't just about us anymore."

He was right. Stellan had changed everything. He'd brought a new level of responsibility to our lives. It was daunting, terrifying even, but also... exhilarating.

"What do you want?" I asked. "What do you need from me?"

Elliot considered my question for a moment, his brow furrowed in thought. "I want

you to be present," he said finally. "Not just physically, but emotionally. I want you to talk to me, to share your fears and your hopes. I want you to remember that I'm not just a baby-bearer, but a person. A partner. A lover."

"And I want you to stop trying to fix everything yourself," he continued. "Let me help. Let me be your strength when you're weak. Let me be your anchor when you're lost."

I nodded, my heart swelling with love and gratitude. "I will," I promised. "I will try my best."

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

Elliot

With Stellan fed and drowsy once more, I carefully shifted him onto his back, arranging his blankets just so. His tiny hands twitched slightly as he settled into sleep, a soft coo escaping his lips.

"All tucked in," I whispered, pressing a gentle kiss to his forehead before straightening up. Turning to face Damon, I found him watching me with an unreadable expression.

"You've got a real way with him," he murmured, taking a step closer. The warmth radiating from him made me acutely aware of how cold I felt inside without him nearby.

"He's easy to please," I replied softly, brushing past him towards the door. "Come on, let's leave him to sleep."

In the hallway, I couldn't help but glance back one last time, ensuring our son was indeed fast asleep. Satisfied, I turned to find Damon standing right behind me, his eyes gleaming with an intensity that sent a jolt of desire coursing through me.

His hand reached out, tracing the line of my jaw, sending shivers down my spine. "You look beautiful like this," he murmured. "Soft, caring..."

I swallowed hard, my throat suddenly dry. "And you look... dangerous," I countered, my gaze dropping to his full lips. "Like trouble waiting to happen."

A wicked grin spread across his face, revealing teeth that were almost predatory. "Good thing I like making trouble," he growled, pushing me gently but firmly against the wall.

My breath hitched as his body pressed against mine, the hardness of his arousal evident through his jeans. His mouth came crashing down on mine, hungry and demanding, leaving no room for hesitation or doubt.

I melted into him, wrapping my arms around his neck, and tangling my fingers in his thick hair. He groaned against my lips, his hips grinding against me, seeking friction.

"We should..." I gasped, pulling away briefly. "We shouldn't..."

Damon's response was to nip at my bottom lip, eliciting a moan from deep within me. "Fuck that," he muttered, trailing kisses along my jawline and down my neck. "I've waited long enough."

He scooped me up suddenly, cradling me in his powerful arms as if I weighed nothing. I clung to him, my legs wrapping around his waist as he carried me down the hall towards our bedroom.

Kicking open the door, he strode inside, not bothering to turn on the lights. The moon cast everything in a silvery glow, casting shadows that only served to heighten the anticipation building within me.

Gently lowering me onto the bed, Damon stood tall, his silhouette framed by the doorway. He began to undress slowly, peeling off layers until he stood naked before me, his cock straining proudly.

I bit my lower lip, drinking in the sight of him. God, he was gorgeous—all hard lines and sinewy strength, a work of art carved by nature itself.

"You're wearing too many clothes," he rasped, crawling onto the bed beside me. His hands moved quickly, efficiently stripping me bare until I lay exposed beneath him.

His touch set fire to my skin, every caress igniting a trail of flame that burned hotter than anything I'd ever known. He explored my body as if it were a foreign land, claiming every inch with possessive strokes and tender whispers.

When his mouth finally closed around my cock, I cried out, arching my back as pleasure shot through me like lightning. He took me deeper, his tongue swirling expertly, driving me insane with need.

But he didn't stop there. Oh no, Damon Vexley never did things halfway. He teased and tormented, bringing me to the brink of ecstasy again and again, only to pull back when I thought I might explode.

"Not yet," he chided, smirking as he crawled back up my body. "Not until I say so."

His words sent a thrill of defiance coursing through me. I wrapped my legs around him, locking my ankles together, holding him captive between my thighs.

"And what if I don't listen?" I challenged, bucking my hips against his. "What then?"

He grinned, a wild, untamed smile that made my heart race. "Then I'll have to punish you," he promised, nipping at my earlobe. "Tie you up, spank your pretty little ass red, make you beg for mercy."

The image he painted sent a wave of heat flooding my core. I whimpered, clinging to him, desperate for release.

"Your skin is so soft," Damon murmured, running his fingertips along my inner thigh, making me twitch. His touch left trails of fire wherever it landed, igniting desires I'd

tried to suppress during our recent estrangement.

"And yours is hard," I retorted, pressing my palm against his sculpted chest, feeling the firm muscles beneath. My fingers danced down his abdomen, brushing against the thick length resting between his legs. He growled softly, a warning that only served to egg me on.

We were playing with fire, teasing each other mercilessly, drawing out the anticipation until it became almost unbearable. But still, we held back, unwilling to rush the moment.

Damon captured my mouth again, his tongue plunging inside, tangling with mine in a dance that mirrored our growing desperation. I moaned into him, arching my back, pushing myself against his chest. The friction sent jolts of pleasure straight to my core, leaving me even harder and wanting.

His hand slipped between my legs, cupping me possessively. I gasped, breaking the kiss, as he began to stroke me, his thumb circling my cockhead. My hips moved in rhythm with his movements, seeking more pressure, more contact.

"Not fair," I panted, wrapping my hand around his cock. "You have to stop if I have to."

He chuckled darkly, not slowing his pace. "Is that an order?"

"Yes," I groaned, squeezing him tightly. "Unless you want me to make you come before you're ready."

He considered my challenge for a moment before finally relenting, removing his hand from my throbbing center. I whimpered in protest, but he silenced me with another searing kiss.

"Now it's your turn," he murmured against my lips.

Eagerly, I pushed him onto his back, straddling his waist. Leaning down, I took his nipple into my mouth, swirling my tongue around it before gently biting down. He cursed under his breath, his hands gripping my hair as I switched to the other side, lavishing it with equal attention.

Trailing kisses down his torso, I made my way towards his erection, which stood tall and proud. I ran my tongue along the underside, eliciting a deep rumble from within him. Looking up, I caught his gaze, holding it captive as I took him fully into my mouth.

I worked him slowly, using every trick I knew to drive him wild. Sucking, licking, twirling my tongue around the head. Each movement drew forth a new response, a new curse uttered from between clenched teeth.

But just as I felt him nearing the edge, I pulled back, denying him release. His eyes flew open, blazing with frustration and desire.

"You little tease," he growled, flipping us over so that he now hovered above me.

"I learned from the best," I taunted, grinning wickedly.

He laughed, a genuine, heartfelt sound that warmed me from within. Then, his expression turned serious, hungry. Bending down, he returned the favor, parting my thighs and settling himself between them.

The first swipe of his tongue sent shockwaves through me. I cried out, grasping at the sheets beneath me as he devoured me, his mouth skilled and unyielding. Every flick, every suck, brought me closer to ecstasy, yet always stopped short of sending me tumbling over the edge.

Just when I thought I might lose my mind, he would pause, blowing cool air across my heated flesh or nuzzling my inner thigh, driving me crazy with need.

And then, he would start all over again, building me up, bringing me to the brink, only to pull back at the last second.

It was torture, a sweet, delicious torment that had me writhing beneath him, begging for release.

"Please, Damon," I pleaded. "Please let me come."

"Definitely not yet," he replied, breathing with difficulty. "Not until I say so."

As our lovemaking continued, I found myself growing increasingly frustrated with Damon's teasing tactics. He seemed determined to draw out our pleasure indefinitely, pushing us both to the limits of endurance.

"Why are you torturing me like this?" I groaned, bucking my hips against his face once more. "You're killing me."

His chuckle vibrated against my sensitive skin, sending shivers coursing through me. "Patience, my dear omega," he murmured, pausing briefly before diving back in, his tongue swirling expertly around my entrance.

I gasped, gripping the sheets tightly as waves of sensation washed over me. My orgasm built steadily, coiling in my core like a spring ready to snap. But just as I felt myself nearing the edge, Damon pulled away again, leaving me panting and desperate.

"You bastard!" I cried out, my fists clenching. "You can't keep doing this!"

He laughed, a dark, satisfied sound that made my blood boil. "Oh, but I can," he taunted, crawling up my body to claim my mouth in a searing kiss. I could taste myself on his lips, salty and tangy, heightening my arousal.

Frustrated beyond belief, I decided to take matters into my own hands. Wrapping my legs around his waist, I rolled us over, pinning him beneath me. His eyes widened in surprise, but before he could react, I slid down his torso, taking his cock deep into my throat.

He cursed, his fingers tangling in my hair as I worked him with eager enthusiasm. I wanted to make him lose control, to show him that two could play at this game. And judging by the feral sounds escaping his lips, I was succeeding.

"Elliot..." he growled, warning lacing his tone. "If you don't stop..."

I ignored him, doubling my efforts, sucking harder, faster. His hips bucked off the bed, driving his cock deeper into my mouth. The room filled with the sounds of our moans and wet, sloppy noises.

Damon's grip tightened in my hair, pulling me off him suddenly. I looked up, startled, to find him breathing heavily, his eyes wild with lust.

"I said, stop," he rasped, his voice ragged. "But you didn't listen."

A wicked grin spread across my face. "Oops," I teased, licking my lips. "Looks like someone needs to teach me a lesson."

His expression darkened, a primal hunger gleaming in those ice-blue depths. In one swift motion, he flipped us over again, positioning himself between my thighs.

My thoughts were interrupted abruptly as Damon grabbed both of my wrists, pinning

them above my head. Before I could protest, he leaned down, capturing my mouth in a burning kiss. His tongue plunged in, dominant and unyielding, exploring every inch of my mouth.

I moaned into him, bucking my hips involuntarily as desire coursed through me. He responded by grinding his hardness against mine, drawing a gasp from my lips as pleasure shot through me.

"Damon..." I panted, breaking the kiss only to have him trail hot, open-mouthed kisses along my jawline and neck. "Please..."

He chuckled darkly, his breath sending shivers down my spine. "Please what, omega?" he taunted, nipping at my earlobe. "Tell me what you want."

"You," I gasped, arching my back as he sucked hard on my pulse point. "I want you."

"Not enough," he growled, releasing my arms only to push my legs apart roughly. He settled between them, his gaze locked onto mine as he began to stroke himself leisurely. "Be specific, Elliot. Tell me exactly how you want me."

The sight of him pleasuring himself sent a jolt of heat straight to my core. I licked my lips, my eyes never leaving his hand as it moved up and down his length.

"I want you to cum on me," I said finally. "Everywhere. I want to be marked by your seed again."

A wicked grin spread across his face, and he increased the speed of his strokes. "Is that what you want?" he rasped, his breathing growing ragged. "To be covered in my cum?"

"Yes," I whimpered, writhing beneath him. "Mark me, Damon."

His grunts grew louder, more primal, as he continued to pleasure himself. The room filled with the sounds of our labored breaths and the wet slap of skin hitting skin.

Suddenly, he pulled away, straddling my chest instead. His hand moved faster, more insistently, and I knew he was close.

"Open your mouth," he commanded, eyes glinting with evil intent.

Obediently, I complied, sticking out my tongue as he aimed his cock towards my waiting mouth. With a final, strangled groan, he came, thick ropes of semen painting my face, my neck, and my chest.

I closed my eyes, savoring the feeling of his essence coating my skin. When I opened them again, Damon was watching me with an intensity that made my heart race.

Leaning down, he kissed me deeply, tasting himself on my lips. "You look fucking beautiful like this," he murmured, trailing his fingers through the mess on my face before bringing them to my mouth. I suckled greedily, cleaning off every last drop.

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

10 years later...

The sun dipped below the horizon, casting the Nightshade Wolves' compound in a warm, golden glow. Ten years had passed since the chaos that once threatened to tear everything apart. Now, the pack thrived under a renewed sense of unity and purpose.

I stood on the porch of our sprawling home, watching as our son, Stellan, chased after Marcus' youngest pup, Sable. Their laughter echoed through the air, pure and carefree, contrasting with the dark days of yore.

At ten years old, Stellan was the spitting image of his father – his delicate features softened only slightly by the strength of my alpha blood coursing through his veins. His hazel eyes sparkled with mischief and intelligence, and his laugh held the same infectious warmth that had drawn me to Elliot all those years ago.

"Look at him," Elliot said softly, stepping up beside me. He wrapped an arm around my waist, leaning his head against my shoulder. "He's grown so much."

I placed a hand over his, giving it a gentle squeeze. "He has indeed," I agreed, pride swelling within me. "He's becoming quite the little warrior."

Elliot chuckled, looking up at me with those expressive eyes. "He gets that from you, you know. The stubbornness, the determination..."

"And the quick wit?" I added, raising an eyebrow.

He grinned, pushing playfully at my chest. "Well, he does take after both of us in that

regard."

Our banter was easy now, natural and comfortable—something that had taken time and patience to cultivate. Over the past decade, we'd worked tirelessly to rebuild not just our territory, but also our relationship. It hadn't always been smooth sailing; there were storms along the way, challenges that tested our resolve and pushed us to our limits.

But together, we weathered every storm, growing stronger with each passing day. And now, standing here side by side, I knew without a shadow of a doubt that we would face whatever came next as one.

Our bond had deepened, blossoming into something far more profound than either of us could have imagined. We'd learned to communicate openly, honestly, and without fear of judgment. In doing so, we discovered that our connection ran deeper than mere lust or even love—instead, it was a primal, soul-deep link that transcended time and space.

"You've done well, Damon," Elliot murmured, his gaze locked onto mine. "You've made Nightshade Wolves into something extraordinary."

"The pack wouldn't exist without you too" I replied, brushing a strand of hair behind his ear. "Your presence, your wisdom... they've shaped us into who we are today."

His cheeks flushed pink at the compliment, but before he could respond, Stellan raced towards us, breathless and grinning. "Dad!" He exclaimed, launching himself at us with abandon. We caught him easily, laughing as we lifted him off the ground, hugging him tightly between us.

"Yes, little wolf?" Elliot asked, smiling down at him affectionately.

"I found a new den for me and Luna," Stellan announced proudly. "It's bigger than last week's!"

"That sounds amazing," Elliot praised, ruffling his hair. "Show us later?"

"Definitely!" Stellan promised, squirming out of our embrace. "Come on, Luna! Let's go explore some more!"

We watched as our son bounded away, disappearing into the forest with Luna hot on his heels. As their laughter faded into the distance, Elliot turned to me, his expression thoughtful.

"Do you ever miss the old life?" He asked quietly. "Before all this?"

I considered his question carefully, reflecting on the past decade and the countless changes we'd faced. Finally, I shook my head.

"No," I admitted truthfully. "I don't. Because this... this is where we belong. Here, with our family."

Elliot smiled, leaning into me once more. "Together," he whispered. "Forever."

Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 5:19 pm

15 years later...

More than twenty-five years had passed since that fateful night when Damon found me lost and terrified in the woods. Since then, our lives had intertwined, grown, and changed in ways I never could have imagined.

The sun dipped below the horizon, casting an orange glow across the sprawling estate that had once belonged to Damon's family, and now, it was ours. As I sat on the porch, watching our son Stellan play with his own child, a granddaughter named Briska, I couldn't help but reflect on how much had transpired during those quarter of a century.

Damon stepped up behind me, wrapping his arms around my waist and pressing a gentle kiss to my neck. "Penny for your thoughts," he murmured.

I leaned back into him, relishing the warmth and strength of his embrace. "Just thinking about how far we've come," I replied softly. "About everything that's happened."

He nodded, his gaze following mine to where Stellan chased after little Briska, her giggles filling the air. "Indeed," he said. "We've weathered quite the storm, haven't we?"

"More than one," I agreed, turning to face him. My eyes drifted over the lines etched onto his face by age and experience, finding comfort in every familiar crevice. He looked older, wiser, as did I, I suppose.

"And look at you," he continued, running a thumb along my jawline. "You were always beautiful, but now... you're positively radiant."

I blushed at the compliment, though it wasn't empty flattery. Over the past decade and a half, I'd grown into myself, embracing my role as both omega and partner to an alpha as powerful as Damon Vexley. The journey hadn't been easy; there were times when I doubted myself, when I thought I wouldn't measure up. But with Damon's unwavering support and belief in me, I'd risen to meet every challenge head-on.

"What made you grow into such a formidable force?" He asked, his ice-blue eyes gleaming with pride.

I smiled, remembering the road I'd traveled to get here. "Well, it took some time," I admitted. "But eventually, I realized that my worth isn't defined by others' expectations or approval. It comes from within, from the choices I make and the actions I take."

"That's true," he agreed. "Especially in a pack dynamic like ours. You've earned respect, Elliot. Not just from me, but from everyone."

His words warmed me, reminding me of the progress I'd made not only in my relationship with Damon but also within the Nightshade Wolves pack. When I first arrived, I was timid, uncertain, and often overwhelmed by the raw power and dominance that permeated every aspect of their society. Now, however, I held my own, respected for my intellect, empathy, and wisdom.

Our conversation shifted naturally to other topics like the upcoming harvest festival, the newest additions to our extended family, and Stellan's burgeoning interest in pack politics. Through it all, one thing remained crystal clear: our bond had grown stronger, deeper, and more unbreakable with each passing year.

As twilight gave way to darkness, we retreated indoors, leaving Stellan and Briska to

their games under the watchful eye of their nanny. Hand in hand, we ascended the stairs toward our private chambers, anticipation building between us like electricity crackling in the air.

Once inside, Damon pulled me to him, capturing my mouth in a passionate, dominating kiss that left no room for doubt. His hands roamed my body, igniting sparks wherever they touched, while mine clutched at his shirt, eager to strip away the barriers between us.

"Elliot," he groaned against my lips, breaking the kiss only to trail hot, open-mouthed kisses down my neck and chest. "You always drive me wild so much."

I gasped, arching my back as he lavished attention on my nipples, drawing them tight and hard. "And you..." I panted, struggling to maintain coherent thought. "You consume me."

With deft fingers, he unfastened my pants, pushing them down until they pooled at my feet. I stepped out of them, kicking them aside as I began to work on his belt, eager to feel him skin-to-skin.

When finally, blessedly, nothing stood between us, I wrapped my legs around his waist, pulling him closer, urging him to fill me completely. With a low growl, he obliged, driving deep and hard, stretching me wide.

Our lovemaking was passionate, intense, and filled with the love and longing that had only grown stronger through the years. We moved together, our bodies syncing seamlessly, as if choreographed by some divine force. Each thrust, each stroke, brought us closer to the edge, until finally, with a cry torn from my very soul, I tumbled over, taking Damon with me.

In the aftermath, we lay entwined, our hearts pounding in sync, our breaths slowly returning to normal. Damon pressed a soft kiss to my forehead, brushing damp

strands of hair from my brow.

"I love you, Elliot," he whispered. "More than anything."

My heart swelled, overflowing with happiness and contentment. "I love you too, Damon," I replied, my voice equally choked. "Forever."

As we drifted off to sleep, side by side, I couldn't help but think of the incredible journey we'd undertaken together. From two lost souls, struggling to find their place in the world, we'd become something so much greater—partners, parents, leaders, and above all, lovers bound by an unbreakable connection.

Life hadn't always been easy, but then again, nothing truly worthwhile ever is. And despite the challenges, the obstacles, and the storms we'd weathered, one truth remained constant: Damon Vexley was, and would always be, my home.

End of Book 10