Colby, Rock, and Ray peeled off to go in search of Georgina Summer, and the rest of them headed at a fast walk toward the Limit. Marty didn’t mind the quick pace. The sooner they got to the Limit, the sooner he could hurry his bride up the stairs to her bedroom.

All of them were silent on the walk back to the Limit. Marty didn’t know what the others were thinking about, but the frequent glances Victoria sent his way told him what she was thinking about, and it was the same thing on his mind. Eagle, walking behind them, made occasional low growling noises. Marty suppressed a grin. His new brother-in-law didn’t seem to be entirely happy with his sister’s marriage, but if all he did was growl a little bit, Marty wouldn’t complain.

They passed through the gate at the limit and paused halfway up the walk. Hawk waved them all into a cluster. “Stone, Eagle, get your gear and put it in Marty’s room. Marty’s old room,” he clarified. “Then we need to notify the other delegates about the new circumstances. Quill, you talk to brother Saul and his boys.”

Hawk appointed each of them tasks for the next few hours. Only Victoria and Marty were spared any chores. Hawk only glanced at them and waved a dismissive hand toward the back of the house. Victoria showed off the dimple at the corner of her mouth.

“Good night, everybody,” she sang out with a cheery smile. “See you in the morning.”

Eagle straightened with something like alarm. “You just wait a minute,” he said. “I need a minute to get my stuff before the… festivities begin.”

Victoria giggled and squeezed Marty’s hand. “Festivities. I like that word.”

“Me, too.” As Marty leaned toward her, he heard Eagle groan and take off at a run. “We can take our time going up to our room,” he suggested.

Disappointment filled Victoria’s face, but a smile cleared it. “Okay.” She waved at the others. “Good night.”

Once the others had gone off to fulfill their assignments, Marty put an arm around his newly married mate. She felt impossibly good against him., even through her thick coat. He didn’t have the ultra-sharp sense of smell that the wolves did, but she smelled divine to him.

“Let’s walk slowly toward the house,” he whispered in her ear. He didn’t have to bend to do that. Just one more thing to love about Victoria. “We wouldn’t want to make your brother blush.”

Her chuckle was throaty. “He’s not a prude. Really.”

“But you’re his sister.” He thought about it. “My sister is much older than I am and her husband is nearly ten years older than she is. I don’t think they’re the romantic type. I’ve never even seen them kiss.”

“Well, they must have,” Vic pointed out. “They have four children.”

“True.” He opened the back door for them to slip into the mudroom. “Upstairs?”

“Follow me.”

The staircase was narrow enough that they couldn’t climb the stairs side by side. Walking a couple of steps below her gave him a fine view of her perfect ass. Soft and curvy, it moved with an alluringly feminine sway. Marty almost reached to caress it. *Not here*, he told himself. *Soon. Soon you can touch all of her, every stunning, heart-stopping inch.*

At the top of the stairs, Victoria turned right and opened a door. She clicked on the light and stepped into the room. Heart suddenly jumping into his throat, he followed her in. The room was small, and made to look even smaller by the slanting ceiling. Only here, in the center of the room, could he and Victoria stand straight. His gaze went to the neatly made double bed. Of course, standing wasn’t a particularly large part of his plan for tonight. Victoria’s cheeks were brightly pink, her eyes wide and staring at him with an expression he wasn’t sure of. Was it fear? Bridal nerves?

She launched herself at him and her kiss was almost an attack. No, it wasn’t fear. He buried his hands in her hair and clenched the thick locks in his fingers. They had kissed before. Gentle, respectful kisses. This was entirely different. Her mouth devoured his. Her enthusiasm made up for her lack of expertise. He took control of the kiss, slowing it down to something more exploratory. Not quite gentle, but leisurely. He used his tongue to stroke along hers, demonstrating what he liked in a kiss. Thorough. Deep. Hot. Then he used his fists in her hair to tilt her head back so he could explore her throat.

“Coat.” Her voice was a gasp between pants. “Take it off.”

He lifted his head and looked down into her eyes. “Is it too warm in here for a coat?”

Some of the glaze left her eyes. “Too warm? What? I’m not going to need my coat—”

She broke off when he laughed, her eyes narrowing. “You’re laughing now? This is no time to joke.”

“This is the perfect time to laugh. Laughing makes me happy. You make me happy.” He slipped his hands up to cup her cheeks. “Victoria, do you have any idea how much I adore you?”

She opened her mouth, but seemed to forget how to speak when he smoothed his hands down her throat to her collarbone to the top button on her coat.

“I’m going to take this off you now,” he whispered. “Is that okay?”

She reached for his coat. “You bet, as long as I can take this off you.”

Their coats discarded on the floor, he returned his lips to her throat, letting them wander up to the place behind her ear. She liked that. He could tell by the way her breath quickened and her head leaned to the side to give him more room. She liked his teeth on her earlobe even more. Her tiny breathy moan was like music to him. She was so responsive, this beautiful mate of his.

“Whoa,” he said, trapping her seeking hands against his belt. “We don’t need to rush this.” He raised her hands to his lips. “It’s our first time. Our wedding night. We have time to make this fun.”

“Fun?” she echoed.

He laughed again at the note of surprise in her voice. “Yes, fun. The most fun two people in love can have naked.”

“We’re not naked,” she pointed out. “Yet.” She undid one of the buttons on his dress shirt and gave him flirty eyes. “Let’s fix that.”

No, his mate wasn’t shy. He loved that about her. She seemed to have taken his words about not rushing to heart. She unbuttoned his shirt one button at a time, taking several moments in between each to kiss and lick every inch of his chest that she revealed. His shirt fell soundlessly to the floor. He tried to stand quietly and allow her to caress him. His feline side loved being caressed. He tried to suppress the content purr of his cat, but failed.

Victoria gave him a satisfied smile. “Do you like that?”

“Uh-huh,” he purred. “Playing. I love to play.”

“Well, then.” She stepped back, spreading her arms wide. “Play with me.”

His cat side wanted to crouch and leap on her, but he controlled himself. Her spread arms stretched the fabric of her blouse taut over her breasts. He wanted to see them. “That’s one invitation I’ll never refuse.” He placed his hand on her collarbone and slid it slowly down to cover one of her breasts. “So soft. So beautiful.”

She arched her back to push her breast more firmly against his palm. “How can you tell it’s beautiful? You haven’t seen it. If you’re waiting for an invitation, consider yourself invited.”

A fine tremor worked itself through his body. “Again, an invitation I’ll never refuse.” Was his control as great as hers? His fingers were embarrassingly clumsy on the buttons of her blouse. He wanted to see her. He needed to see her.

“Don’t tear my blouse,” she chided. Laughter was barely hidden under her scolding tone, but her breasts, still concealed by silky fabric, jiggled against his knuckles with her suppressed giggles. “It’s one of my favorites. I ordered it from Lisa and Hannah, and I even helped to make it in their workshop.”

He got a firmer grip on a button and doggedly slid it through its hole. “Then you must know how to mend it.”

Victoria gave a little scream. “Don’t tear it!”

“Take it off,” he ordered.

“Bossy, bossy.”

But she finished unbuttoning it and slid it down her arms. He didn’t watch it float to the floor. His gaze was fixed on her. Her breasts were hidden beneath a brassiere of peach colored satin, her belly was soft and white.

“Your pants, too.” He cleared his throat to remove the frog that threatened to choke him. “Please, take off your pants.”

She folded her arms over her breasts. “Oh, no.” She unfolded one arm to wag a finger at him. “It’s your turn. *You* take off *your* pants.”

The cat was delighted at the play. Marty unbuckled his belt, unzipped, and stepped out of his trousers. Slanting a glance her way to be sure she was watching, he slid his underwear down and off. Completely naked, he gave her a silent minute to look her fill. His cock jutted up, aching with his need for her, but he was content to play a little longer. The way her eyes widened pleased him. He propped his fists on his hips and grinned at her.

“Here I am, mate. I think I’m a few steps ahead of you. You better catch up. Your pants, please.”

She hesitated with her fingers at the waistband of her pants. Was she shy now? No, apparently not. She reached instead behind her back and the peach satin slipped down her arms. His breath came out of him in a sigh of appreciation.

“I was right.” His vice was slightly hoarse. “Beautiful.”

She hooked her thumbs in the sides of her pants, slid them over her full hips, down soft white thighs, and then she stood before him, beautifully naked. And beautiful she was. Her breasts were large and white, tipped with crinkled pink nipples. Her waist was small, her hips generously curved, her thighs soft. She truly was a beautiful woman. That wasn’t just what a man in love would say about his wife. Victoria Wolfe Madison would be considered a great beauty by any man.

“Mrs. Madison, your beauty stuns me. I am the luckiest man alive.”

She slid her hand down her ribs to her waist and over the flare of her hip. “My mom told me that in the Times Before, women built like us were considered fat and ugly.”

He shook his head in disbelief. “Were they blind? You’re perfect.” He took her in his arms and shuddered with delight at the feel of her bare body pressed to his. “Perfect. And you’re mine.”

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