

# Kyanite University

## Moving In

“Your room key should be around here somewhere...” The seafoam lapine behind the desk furrowed her brow, scrambling over tiny manilla envelopes labeled with room numbers. The lobby area was buzzing, people posted against the walls as others worked their stuff through the masses, hauling suitcases and plants and cardboard boxes. The occasional raucous laughter, warm cheers of people being reunited after a long summer, peaked above the din of all the chatter.

“I swear, I literally *just* saw it— aha!” She pushed the office chair backwards as she stood up, before crouching down and fumbling along the floor to lift up an envelope, lightly tinged with dust. A disgusted face and a little flick later, it was fresh as new, and she offered it over. 328.

“That’s yours! Let’s see, and your roommate...” She scoured over the list on her desk, scanning through columns. Her eyes finally settled on a name.

“Oh, it looks like Delacroix already moved in yesterday. Have you met him yet?” I shook my head, and she put a paw over my mouth and stifled a laugh.

“He’s got a reputation on campus – a little *extra*, which is saying something around here. But he’s a sweetheart, promise. And I’m Jasmine! Sorry, move-in day gets crazy, I guess I forgot to introduce myself.” She thumped a paw against her head as she stood up, and took my hand for a quick shake.

“Kaspar.” I shook it back, flashing a smile.

“Well, Kaspar, I think you’re good here. Elevators are there, stairwell’s right beside them and probably a better bet.” Jasmine pointed a hand behind me, and I turned around to see a sizeable queue. “Just head right on the third floor, right again, you’ll find it.”

“Thanks!” I gave a wave, and she flicked her attention right over to the next person as I walked off.

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328.

Turning the door and walking into the room was like stepping into a fantasy of a cozy bedroom. Swathes of pink and red rugs almost entirely covered the hardwood floor, and the few spaces that would’ve been left a dark lacquered brown to contrast were overrun with sizeable cushions and poufs, scattered like debris despite looking extravagant and pristine.

The air took on a spicy, sugary scent, the dorm perfumed just shy of being too much – though *liberally* more than ignorable. Despite lavish curtains being half-drawn over the windows, not a single spot of the room was left dark: flickering candles, hovering pink motes of magic, and a few real lamps made a network of warm lighting across the whole space.

A desk stood in the corner, crystalline vials and decanters littering its breadth, and beside it was an ornately carved wooden wardrobe that just barely cleared the ceiling. But what was easily the elephant in the room, especially in size, was the bed: more than king-sized, it was just as decorated as the entire room, with a quilted comforter laying the foundation for a mess of pillows and throw blankets, and a plushie of a hyena claiming its throne in the midst of it. It must've been ten, twelve feet across, and took up nearly all of the left side of the room.

It made the one dingy-looking cot in the right side look more like a prop for comedic effect than a real piece of furniture.

I pushed delicately through the sea of fluff and fabric, the empty spaces just far apart enough to be inconvenient for striding, before finally arriving at what I could only assume was *my* space. The cot, and a plywood set of dresser drawers, neatly tucked away in the corner. A chuckle burst out of me at the contrast, but it's not as if I needed much more. Or had much more to fill the space.

Some mumbled talking outside brought my attention back to the door, and I saw the knob jiggle as it opened. The sliver I saw through the expanding doorway was just as pink as the room, and as I saw more it immediately made more sense.

A behemoth of hot pink and cream pushed the door aside: a furred dragon, with cerulean spiraling horns pushing through an elegant mane of hair. He swiped a lionish paw across his forehead, getting the hair from his eyes as he let out a warm laugh. A charcoal poodle, just a little less tall than the colossal dragon leading the way in, gave an equally amused chuckle, putting a paw with an obsidian pouf around the wrist over his mouth.

"I believe he's moving in today, we should be seeing him any time now," the dragon said, a chorus of bubbly giggles coming from the both of them as they walked in, their attentions locked on each other. And as if it couldn't be more apparent they were friends, they had matching outfits: athletic shorts and sleeveless tops that let fluff blossom from between their muscled chests.

"Well, we'll have to give him a proper welcome! He's a– *oh!*" The poodle exclaimed, pointing at me. His eyes lit up, and he turned the dragon by the chin to look at me too. They both grew wide, giddy grins.

"Aren't you *precious*?" The dragon purred, winding toward me through the maze of cushions before extending a paw. He must've had three, four feet on me, and looking up at him all I could see was his fanged smile and purple eyes sizing me up.

"I'm Delacroix. Your new roommate. And you must be mine," Delacroix rolled, his eyes glinting with a mischievous look as I shook his hand.

"Uh, yeah! I am!"

He raised up an eyebrow, letting go of my hand and snickering as he put his paw on my shoulder. "And, your name?"

"Oh!" I laughed, feeling the heat stir into my cheeks. "I'm Kaspar, sorry."

"Nothing to be sorry for, Kaspar. I have that effect on people," Delacroix bubbled, taking his paw off me and wiggling his digits toward me. "They just seem to lose their focus around me. Maybe *to* me. And that's *without* magic involved."

"Ahem." The poodle left standing at the door pretended to clear his throat.

"Gosh, and how inelegant of me," Delacroix said, waving the poodle over. "This is my *darling* friend Ulrich."

"I'm just 'friend', am I?" Ulrich piped up, brushing against Delacroix's side as he stepped just a touch too close and bumped hips with him. "Here I thought we were so much more."

"And here *I* thought we decided not to include gratuitous context for someone we've just met." Delacroix rolled his eyes, tussling a paw over Ulrich's incredibly fluffy mane before delicately patting down the cloud of fur. "He's my boyfriend-flirt kind of something."

"I keep telling you you can *just* call me your boyfriend and say you're poly." Ulrich crossed his arms up over his chest, putting on a faux pout as Delacroix petted him. "I'm pretty sure *everyone* can see it. Been around your new roommate for ten seconds and you're already messing with my hair..."

"Well, *I could*." Delacroix smirked and gave Ulrich's head a final ruffle just to undo the neatness before pulling his paw back. "But I'm so *lavish* with my affections. I don't want people thinking getting treated like an adorable little stuffed toy is a boyfriend-only privilege." Delacroix's eyes swiveled down on me, and something about his look made my face flare.

"Uh..." I mumbled, looking down and away.

"Ah, but we're being impolite, Ulrich! We all ought to get to know each other better." Delacroix squatted down, putting his beaming face narrowly below mine to keep his eyes on me. "Come now, nothing to be shy over. Let's get you situated, at the least! What more do you have to bring in?"

"Oh, this is it. I didn't bring a lot." I was relieved for a moment, before he let out a melodramatic gasp.

"This is it? Just the one suitcase? No furniture, plants, little home amenities?" Delacroix looked incredulous, before tutting and poking at the cot. "These things'll break your back, y'know."

“Pffft, Delacroix, where would he even *put* something?” Ulrich nudged an elbow at the dragon’s side, gesturing to the rest of the his claimed domain.

“I could make room!” Delacroix protested, putting his chin up in the air and standing upright. “I just like decorating. And yesterday, you dared to claim it was too much – and as if by fate, I’m decorating for two, so *there*.” Delacroix boasted, before he gave a moment of pause and looked down at me with pleading eyes. Surprisingly cute, for a giant dragon. “Assuming you don’t mind, Kaspar?”

“Better choose your words wisely,” Ulrich teased, smirking as Delacroix batted a paw at the poodle.

“Oh, no, you’re good! I’m awful about decorating,” I chuckled. Delacroix lit up in victory, flashing a wide smile at Ulrich just before raising a paw over my head. He left it hovering gingerly a few inches over my hair.

“May I?” Delacroix said, as though it was the most candid thing in the world. Ulrich’s eyes rolled.

“Uhh...” I raised an eyebrow up. “Sure?”

His paw came down like a giant pillow, messing through my hair and trailing pristinely manicured claws over my scalp. Delacroix cooed quiet little murmurs as he leaned in, his breath rolling hot and humid down over the top of my head. My cheeks burned with heat, but I was genuinely unable to bring a hand up to stop him, it felt undeniably good. Those divinely soft pawpads worked slow, soothing waves over my head, and a warm, fuzzy feeling thrummed in my chest, and my eyes lidded as the touch was all I wanted to focus on.

“Aww, he’s so cute!” Ulrich whispered, just loud enough that I was sure he meant for me to hear.

“*Everyone’s* cute when they’re under my paws,” Delacroix said, his voice honeyed with delight as he kept massaging over my head. “But, you’re right. He might even be cuter than *you*.”

“Well, now you’re just taunting me,” Ulrich huffed, before sitting down behind me on my bed. Delacroix silently gloated for a few moments more, before taking his paw off my head, giving me a pat, and sidling around me to sit down.

It took a few moments to come back to my senses, and I found myself shaking my head as I stirred back to consciousness, drawing some giggles from Ulrich and Delacroix. I whirled around, and the two of them had left just narrow enough of a space for me to sit between them. Ulrich patted it.

“Sorry,” Delacroix said, stifling a giggle as he was clearly not *that* sorry. “I just can’t resist it sometimes. All I see is the top of people’s heads, and they always act so adorable when I pet them. Rewarding them with something I like to do, that’s just good for everyone, wouldn’t you agree?”

“Uh huh, or that’s Delacroix’s way of saying he likes teasing guys who melt at being adored over,” Ulrich interjected, sticking out his tongue. “It only took me three, four times to figure out which one of us enjoyed it more. But he’s got a way of making you like him. I just can’t understand it, myself.” Ulrich laughed, as Delacroix glared at him from across the bed.

I nestled in between the two of them, rubbing a hand up against my reddened cheek. It was hot. Not just warm, *hot*. “Well... It’s not so bad. I’m just not used to someone being that affectionate, is all.”

“Oh, you will be,” Ulrich joked. His fur was pristinely groomed, with poofy tufts at his wrists, ankles, and the end of his floppy ears. And it rubbed against me as he leaned in all buddy-like. “So, where’re you from, Kaspar? Around here?”

“No, it was actually pretty far out. I’m from some no-name town, maybe six, seven hours south. Kyanite’s always been a kind of pie-in-the-sky place for me, I’m kind of still a little shocked I’m actually *here*.” I pressed my hands together. “It feels... Unreal. But at the same time, not as unreal as I was expecting, I guess.”

“Y’know, I had the same feeling when I got here! It definitely gets more impressive once classes get underway,” Ulrich gave a light pat on my shoulder. “You’ll find it home soon enough. I’m from up north. Delacroix, though, he’s born and raised right here.”

“I’ve come to Kyanite countless times growing up, it felt just natural to go here when the time came for it,” Delacroix said, sprawling out and stretching. The cot creaked under his weight, but he just reclined to lay backwards, folding his hands behind his head and yawning. “I’d be more than happy to show you around the campus, and the town! We ought to hook you up with some furniture, maybe go shopping for some outfits, too...”

“Delacroix’s also a little bit on the extravagant side, in case that wasn’t obvious,” Ulrich snickered, to which Delacroix’s smile just widened all the more. “He’s loaded. Really living up to that dragon stereotype.”

“Hey, I’m ‘loaded’ because I got scholarships, I’d appreciate you mentioning. And I spend every cent as reasonably as possible.” Delacroix’s tail, easily as long as I was tall, whipped up into the bed, flicking its end of feathery pink fur against Ulrich. The rest settled down into my lap, heavily keeping me situated right where I was.

“Oh, *suuure*. Hey, Kaspar,” Ulrich said, before widely gesturing around. “Do you think you need *two* more sets of hands to count the number of pillows in a room? Or three?”

Delacroix gave a chuff, before letting his tone shift to a faux-serious mockery. “Well, if my room is looking cluttered, I *have* been thinking that the hyena is a little clashing...”

“You better not even *think* about getting rid of little Smidor,” Ulrich said, reaching across me to push a hand at Delacroix’s pecs. “I got that hyena for him our first year together! Spring semester, he was all ‘plushies are childish things, beneath the likes of me,’ but then I caught him hugging it to sleep when I came back early over the weekend.”

Delacroix sat up, his tail draping over his thigh. The smirk on his face was gone, and red was showing from beneath his cream fur as he gave a meager push at Ulrich’s shoulder.

“Aww, come on Del, it’s cute! Isn’t it cute, Kaspar?” Ulrich turned me toward Delacroix, using me as a shield as he put both hands on my shoulders and kept me between the two of them.

“Well, it is *kinda cute*...” I said, seeing Delacroix staring daggers over me at Ulrich.

“I just missed you, is all. And the *hyena* is what’s cute. I’d never mistreat such a generous gift,” Delacroix huffed, crossing his arms over his chest and flicking his eyes up to the ceiling.

“I’m kinda surprised you two aren’t still roommates. You seem pretty...” I worked over the words, and Ulrich piped up a much better phrasing.

“Perfect for each other? Yeah, we are.” He snickered, before letting me go and stretching out his arms up over his head. “Sadly, I’m focusing on astral magic this year, so I’m over at the observatory during the night – poor Delacroix needs his beauty sleep, don’t wanna interrupt him. And the observatory wouldn’t do any favors for his magic, all those cute little bubbles would just freeze over midair.”

“But we’ll still have plenty of time for each other. Dates, studying, visits...” Delacroix said, before patting a paw on my shoulder. “As long as it’s okay with you, of course. I wouldn’t want us to become an inconvenience for you, I know even my first year was a little difficult at times.”

“Oh, yeah! It’s totally fine with me.” A smile pushed up on my cheeks, before I tried to look a little less excited.

“See, Del?” Ulrich smirked. “Totally cool! And, hey, you get to have two *experienced* upperclassmen at your disposal to help you with any homework, and cramming for midterms, and all that good stuff.”

“Word to the wise, being a test subject for Ulrich here is usually a good way to find yourself unable to walk for a few days.” Delacroix snickered, before Ulrich’s face turned bright red.

“N-Not that!” Ulrich exclaimed, pushing at Delacroix. “Ugh, you’re never gonna let me live that down! I was practicing restoration magic with massaging and, to be fair, Delacroix did say it felt *really good*. It just became an issue when his muscles were *too* relaxed... For I think like a day or two.”

“To his credit, it *was* really good. Did you ever perfect that elusive technique, mmm?” Delacroix smugged, tugging himself upright and standing beside the bed.

“Yes, actually. But maybe I’ll just mess it up and leave you lying facedown for a few days to teach you a lesson,” Ulrich said, before hopping to his feet and reaching a hand out to me. “C’mon, let’s go grab something to eat. We can show you around, too!”

“Yes, the Arc ought to open by now. Best spot to eat on campus. They have some great brunch options, too – griddled french toast, mmm...” Delacroix mumbled.

I took Ulrich’s hand, and just like that, we were off: me trying to play off being wedged between a giant poodle and an even more towering dragon.