# **Reluctant**

By: Tabitha Thomas

7-11-2020

*‘Why am I in pain?’* Dark eyes fluttered open and the brightness in the room told him it was day but what time? Peering over to his bedside table he saw his phone flash the numbers across the screen and was that a crack? *‘Already 8:15? How did that scratch get there and why is my body-’* Gazing down he saw his pants still on and bandages and cool packs on his chest and stomach; what happened last night? He then remembered that he had taken the same path and was jumped and that girl. His eyes narrowed as he stared around the room, “That girl...” His voice hissed as he managed to sit up fueled by annoyance, he stood all the way as he held his waistline and limped into the hall and then gazed into the living room on the couch and saw the blue saber girl resting there. He looked as though he was about to yell at her but stopped abruptly when he saw the bruise on her cheek and a cut there that was swollen. A soft sigh escaped his lips as knew it would be wrong to wake her so violently by yelling; after all she did get him home and clearly saved him once again. It would seem even she got injured in the process; something he stood strongly against.

His free hand rubbed the back of his neck and he looked to the TV and then the device next to it, “Alexa, start morning routine.” With that the blinds on the windows shifted open and the auto locks on the windows popped and then began to open letting in a cool morning breeze. The suns light came in and lit the girl on the couch which seemed to rouse her. Knowing she was slowly becoming conscious he spoke softly but still in a monotone way, “Get yourself together and I’ll escort you out.”

Spyke gave a large yawn as her fangs showed and she smacked her mouth feeling its dryness. She heard the Alexa start talking about weather and current events. Another yawn and she looked up tiredly to the hybrid male as she sat up rubbing her eyes, “How are you feeling?”

He was reluctant to say anything and sighed, “Alright but sore to say the least. Now get your things; you need to get home.”

Spyke then narrowed her eyes unamused, “No.” She saw his surprise and she got up from the couch and pointed to him, “I saved your ass again last night and still no fucking thank you!? I would have left but I thought your alarm would go off and now you are kicking me out after tying to help?”

“I have things to do. I don’t have time to argue... with...” He had paused and his face went red as he looked at the saber girl whom was in just a tank top and panties. He was swift to turn around and covered his face, “Put on some clothes!”

Spyke looked down nearly forgetting herself that she had stripped out of her uniform but this would be a nice edge to get him to do what ‘she’ wanted, “Alright fine. I’ll get dressed and leave after you shower, I rebandage your wound, and feed you breakfast.”

Topher couldn’t believe what she was saying, making demands in his home but at the same time she could turn this around if she called the cops, they would assume he took advantage of her and that cut and bruise would add domestic abuse to his clean record. Couldn’t have that, now could he? A frustrated grunt left his lips as he headed towards his room, “Fine.” He hissed and shut the door swiftly. “I can’t believe this woman, or girl. How ignorant. Why do I have to put up with this?”

Spyke simply grinned in victory and moved into the kitchen and saw the lights turn on automatically thanks to the sensors. Gazing in all his cupboards and fridge as well as freezer she was disappointed. He had a beautiful home and great equipment and dishware but looked as though he never used it. Even worse there wasn’t much in the means of food except for some frozen dinners and a few drinks in the fridge. “Ugh, this guy is hopeless.” Going back into the cupboards she checked dates on a few items hoping she could put together some sort of breakfast. She jumped when she heard a hissing noise and saw the fancy coffee-maker begin making his morning coffee. Moving down the hall she peered into the master bed and saw the bathroom door cracked and steam coming from it. Slowly she approached and spoke from outside, “Do you even eat breakfast?”

The shower had helped calm his nerves but his soreness it had almost let him forget there was a girl here until he heard her voice. He pulled the curtain close thinking she was peeping in and peered out seeing her back facing him and it seemed she was looking at her phone. He groaned and rubbed his temple knowing it was no use arguing but he had to state the obvious, “Do you know what privacy is?” Seeing her wave her hand and still scroll her feed he continued to wash his body, “No, I skip breakfast. Coffee and out the door to work.”

“You’re calling off then.”
 “Excuse me?” He had to peer from the curtain and was surprised she was now staring at his face with a dead serious look.

“You aren’t going in in your condition! You need a day of rest to recover. Who knows if you have any internal damage!”

He was staring at her with an almost disgusted face; was she really telling him what to do? He had no words as he shut the curtain and continued to wash his body only to gasp and throw the washcloth over his privates when her head was suddenly at the curtain, “GET OUT!”

“CALL OFF!”

“You can’t tell me what to do! This is- This is-” He was lost for words from anger, frustration, and now embarrassment.

“Do it or I'll join you in the shower; don’t think I won’t do it.” She slid the thin strap of her spaghetti string down her shoulder. Seeing him recoil and close his eyes and wave his hand at her; she smiled and started for the door looking back, “I’ll be taking your phone and wallet to the shop with me so I can get back in. Use my phone to call your work. The code is 0666. I’ll be back in 15.”

The hyena ears drooped down as he rubbed his head and mumbled to himself. After his shower he dressed in casual clothing such as his sweats and a black long sleeve as the rooms were still cool from the A/C coming on overnight. In the living room he saw her phone on the table and sat down slowly wincing and took the device and entered the code and saw she had the phone already pulled up. Calling work, he spoke with a manager explaining the situation and then hung up and deleted the most recent call number, “Can’t have her finding out where I work. I’ll be lucky if she doesn’t stalk me.” Now having her phone in his hand, he was half tempted to go browsing for more info on her but at the same time he was worried what he may find; however, he also didn’t want to come across anything inappropriate that may get him in trouble. Deciding that probing though her phone was a bad idea he set it down and stared at it then gazed up, “Alexa track my phone’s location.”

On the device it showed live feed of a dot on a map making its way back towards his home from a local market that he knew was a 10-minute walk away. Taking her phone back up he stared intently then took out his laptop and opened it and opened a new notepad and went through her contacts and found ‘Coach’. He typed in the laptop the name and number to perhaps have some sort of leeway in persuading her to leave. Not paying attention he looked to her phone and saw the chat with her coach and was intrigued a moment as Spyke was asking for help with resume writing for colleges as well as asking about references and writing for grants and scholarships. Scrolling up he saw a group photo of her and her team. She was attractive but goofy which made her stand out. A small smile graced his lips as he scrolled the photos from her coach, ‘*Perhaps there can be some sort of compromise then...’* He closed the app and went to put it down but saw a message from a male profile on the phone with the text, ‘Hey Whore you busy this weekend? I want some fun ;p’ Something in Topher clicked and he tightened his fists lightly and he blinked in surprise at his own actions. Sure, he was upset with the vulgarity of this male speaking to her as such but there was something more that he hadn’t expected; a hint of jealousy. Clicking on the text he looked to the name and couldn’t help but chuckle as she had saved his name as ‘Skumbag’. A thought came to his head as he looked up his phone number and saw that it was an existing contact. He opened it and saw a peaceful image of him sleeping and the name for him was ‘Soccer Antlers’. Another small smile and he heard the door as he quickly cleared the apps and shut it off before looking up to the girl whom was in some of his shorts which fit loosely on her and even a tee which was a bit tight around her chest area, “Why are you wearing my clothes?!”

Entering she rolled her eyes shaking her head and walked to the kitchen, “Relax, I will return them but I’m not wearing my dirty uniform. Plus, there is blood on it.” Lowering the bags, she began to work putting things away and prepping breakfast. Walking in she handed him the ice packs, “Put these on while I cook.” Leaving his phone and wallet with him, she went back to the kitchen.

He could tell his phone wasn’t hacked but then again, he was sure that wasn’t her intent; in his wallet was the exact change and receipt from the transaction that she had made. His eyes scrolled over the items she bought and raised a brow, “Rather large number of items on this list, Miss Winters.”

“You don’t have to be so formal with me, I already saw you naked.”

“WHAT?!”

“Just kidding! Anyways I’m making you some premade meals for the next few days that will help you recover faster. You need to have a healthy diet to keep up with your body trying to heal.”

He sighed in relief thinking his pants were still on when he woke up so it’s very likely she left him alone in fear maybe she would be charged with sexual abuse. Sliding the ice pack under his top he winced and then relaxed into his seat with closed eyes. Clearly, he nodded off because when he opened his eyes, he saw a plate before him and a note with it.

‘Sorry I have been such a pain. I just am looking out for you. Hope you enjoy breakfast. More food in the fridge for later. I labeled them. If you feel any discomfort you should go to hospital. If you need anything here’s my cell. Spyke~ ‘

Topher got up and limped into the kitchen seeing it was cleaned after her cooking and even checked the fridge seeing the boxed meals that clearly would last him the week. Going to his room he saw his clothing folded neatly on the bed. Going to the couch he sat down and ate the bowl of what looked to be omelet contents. He jumped and his eyes went wide finding the taste superb! Clearly, she knew a thing or two about cooking. Taking his phone, he thought of the scratch and bruise on her cheek and the work she had done to make sure he was alright. A sigh escaped as he took the phone and typed in her cell and left a text:

‘Thank you for making the meals and last night. I’d like to propose a trade for your help. You are in college but I’m sure you are looking for grants and scholarships for larger colleges; I’d like to schedule time with you to help you with them. Don’t just show up at my place... Let me know your free time and I’ll meet you. -Topher.' He finished the breakfast swiftly and laid on the couch and then felt his phone buzz looking at the reply and blushed.

‘Omgosh! About time I got a thank you! Also how much did you see in my phone; pervert! 😛 Only half joking! I’ll gladly take your help if think you can tolerate me and like a challenge. If not don’t bother and erase my number now.’

“A challenge... Yeah I’ll say...”