

Marlot rested his head back on the headrest. Trembor's home was similar to his, a small house for unmated people. It had a bedroom, an office, a living room, where the wolf was currently sitting, and a kitchen/eating area. That was the smallest room in the house since people without families weren't expected to process their own kills – that was what the processing store was for.

"Want something to drink?" Trembor asked from the kitchen.

"Sure, whatever you have that'll help me relax. He took off his shirt and threw it on the seat opposite him. The lion's living room had a couch and two seats, all of them plush and comfortable, covered in natural tan hide. On the wall hung the vid unit, with pictures of his family around it, most of which were of young cubs.

"This is what you need." Trembor appeared in the doorway and lobbed a can at him.

Marlot caught it and read the label. Alcohol wasn't his first choice, but it would indeed help him relax. He pressed a claw in the top and was rewarded with a spray on his face, chest, and the laughter of a lion.

"Thanks a lot," Marlot growled, "Like I need this after the day I've had. Do you have any idea what it's like dealing with the folks from the missing person's bureau? They think they can do whatever they want." He moved to stand, but Trembor pushed him back down and straddled his lap.

"You said you needed to relax. I happen to know that you find my licking you relaxing, and seeing how it's my fault you're covered with alcohol, I have no choice but to do it."

The wolf tensed.

"You know the laws have changed. This hasn't been illegal for over a few decades."

"I know," Marlot whispered, "but that never mattered where I grew up. It never ends well for males like us there."

Trembor raised the wolf's muzzle with a finger so he could look in his eyes. This wasn't a new reaction from his wolf, although each time Trembor hoped for something different. He nodded and got off him.

Marlot caught his arms. "I didn't mean it like that. It's just the two of us here, so it's fine." He pulled the lion back to him, and the lion fell on his lap.

"It is, is it?" He leaned in, and licked Marlot's muzzle. "Alright, but there's a condition tonight. You're spending the night."

"I can't," Marlot replied, his voice quivering. "I have to go back to my place. we can't have people talk."

Trembor placed a finger on his lover's lips. "This isn't negotiable. If we start this, you're spending the night." His voice was soft but firm. He didn't care how long it took, although some days he wasn't sure Marlot even wanted to change. He was going to get

his wolf to become comfortable with who they were.

Marlot closed his eyes and calmed his breathing. He couldn't quite chase the fears away, but he still nodded.

With a smile, the lion leaned in, and they kissed.

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Marlot came slightly away as he felt Trembor shift on the bed and reach for something on the shelf on the headboard, and then reposition himself. Marlot didn't open his eyes as he snuggled up against the lion's back. His lover's body felt so nice. He draped an arm over the lion and slowly ground against him. This rubbing together that felt quite good.

"Good morning." Trembor placed a hand on the wolf's arm and pulled him a little tighter.

"Is it?" Marlot's voice had a dreamy quality to it. Trembor was still slick from their play before they slept, and the wolf easily slipped between the lion's cheeks.

"It must be," Trembor said, with a purr to his voice. "I can feel someone's morning wood."

Marlot changed his angle as Trembor spoke. "It isn't wood." He pushed in, and Trembor moaned loudly in pleasure. He threw a leg over the lion's and pushed further in. When he stopped moving, he was almost all the way in.

Trembor panted heavily. "No, that's definitely not wood. Wood wouldn't feel anywhere near this wonderful.

Marlot held Trembor tighter in response to the comment. He didn't understand why such a simple compliment could make him feel so loved. The wolf began thrusting languidly, savoring how good this felt, along with the moans and groans of his lover.

For his part, Trembor held Marlot's arm, gently rubbing the fur as the wolf picked up speed. The times he could enjoy his lover's company like this were few and far between. Normally Marlot left as soon as they were done, leaving the lion to sleep alone.

Marlot's insistent thrusts forced Trembor to turn onto his stomach. From that position the wolf moved faster, Grunting each time his knot felt resistance. he knew he shouldn't, they didn't have time to tie, but he couldn't help himself, he pushed harder, making Trembor gasp with each thrust.

With a grunt from both of them, the knot went in, and the ancestral part of Marlot's brain took over. He bucked on top of the lion, both trying to pull out and go deeper. He kept at it until his orgasm hit, and then he collapsed over him, his strength gone.

"I'm sorry. I'm so sorry," Marlot whined softly. "I know I shouldn't have, but I couldn't stop myself."

Trembor shushed him gently. "It's alright, I don't mind. This way I get to have you with me that much longer."

Marlot opened his mouth to respond, but the words stuck in his throat. He buried his muzzle in the lion's mane and breathed in his

scent. He couldn't say them, those three little words. Each time he thought about doing it, he remembered the last time he did say them to someone, and how later that same day he was killed. His tail, which had been wagging behind him, dropped at the memory.

His killers hadn't even tried to be discreet, they had proclaimed his killing. For a moment it looked like they were going to be killed in retaliation, since the cub hadn't been of predation age. But then they revealed he had been a tail raiser, and they were celebrated. Even the cub's family joined in the congratulations.

Marlot didn't know how they had found out, but he was lucky that they didn't know about him. He would never forget that day, and what those three words caused.

Drinking his lover's smells, he forced himself to remember this wasn't the time of his youth, or of that backward community. That, as the lion said, what they were wasn't a crime anymore.

But he still couldn't get those three words to leave his lips.

They held each other in silence, waiting for Marlot's knot to go down. Trembor looked at the time and shut the alarm off, then did the same to his pad.

Once enough time passed Marlot pulled out. He went slow and did everything he could to be gentle, even shrunk his knot was still large. Most canines only had vestigial knots now. He was one of the rare ones with a fully developed one. Trembor winced when it finally popped out.

Marlot rolled off the lion and sat on the edge of the bed, looking at the floor. He so wanted to tell his lion how he felt.

When he looked up, Trembor was next to him, offering him his hand. Marlot took it and was pulled into a tight hug. When the lion released him, he felt a little better. He smiled at his lover, who returned it. before pulling him to the bathroom.

Under the hot water jets of the shower, Marlot noticed Trembor hadn't climaxed. He didn't hesitate. He dropped to his knees, and before the lion could comment, he proceeded to remedy that.

Marlot closed his eyes, and he worked. he loved how his lion smelled and how he felt. He liked feeling Trembor shudder in pleasure. And he loved how he tasted. The lion held Marlot's head in place and grunted.

He never lasted long, but Marlot didn't mind.

He stood, licking his lips with a satisfied grin. Trembor kissed him hungrily, purring as they shared his taste.