

# The Way of the Wolf, Part I

by Doombeez,

Taylor Kioke had always loved nature. Her parents started taking her out camping with them when she was just three years old, and had always told her, as far back as she could remember, that there was more to the world than what people saw on the surface. Nature was wild and strange in ways that people could not comprehend, especially in the modern times, when so much of the natural world was overtaken by concrete, steel, and plastic.

“Technology will always have its place, little one,” her mother had said, “but nature will always have its secrets. We cannot teach them to you, but someday, if you respect the natural world and listen quietly and carefully, some of them may be revealed to you.”

And indeed, the first time one of those secrets was revealed to Taylor, she was six years old. It happened while she and her family were out in the woods, one mid-summer day. Strictly speaking, where they were camping was not, such as it was, a campground. It was on the border of a national forest with a name that she was quite incapable of pronouncing, and if they were caught out there, somebody would have strong words for them. But that had never been an issue for them, nor was it likely to ever be. Her father was a clever man, and no matter where they went, they never seemed to leave a single trace of their presence.

At the moment, her mother was out fishing, her father was preparing a stew for dinner, and Taylor had been told to wait in the tent until they came to get her.

And Taylor, of course, had been no such thing. She wanted to explore, and so she did. She wasn't afraid of being lost. Even at such a young age, she had an unrivaled knack for navigation. She wanted to experience the natural world at its rawest, its most pure and primal, and she certainly could not do that from the inside of a tent.

She was currently playing in a little clearing she had found, standing on an old tree stump and waving a stick she had found around, as if it were a mighty wizard's staff and the forces of nature were hers to command. Suddenly, she heard a rustling noise from a nearby bush.

Most children would have been frightened at such a noise, considering the possibility of all the different wild animals that it could have been. Not Taylor. She had a stick, and therefore she felt absolutely fearless.

“Who’s there?” she said, brandishing her stick. “I’m not afraid of you, you know!”

The bush parted, and a small head poked out of it. It was a young boy, about her age, if she had to guess, his deeply tanned skin tone and dark hair a close mirror to her own features.

“What are you doing here?” he said, cocking his head in curiosity.

“I’m exploring!” she said, with the confidence that only a child could have. “What are *you* doing out here, hmm?”

“I live here,” said the boy. “Well... not *here* here, but close to here. My mom and dad told me not to go out too far, but I wanted to see what was out there.”

“Well, *I’m* out here,” said Taylor, nodding. “And what do moms and dads know, anyway?”

“Yeah, that’s what I said!” said the boy, brightly. “My name’s Vale.”

“It’s very nice to meet you, Vale,” she said, hopping off her stump and offering him a hand. “I’m Taylor.”

With that, Vale crept out of the bush, and Taylor let out a gasp. From his head to his waist, the boy looked just like her, aside from not wearing any clothes. But past there, where normally a set of legs would be, he had the four-legged body of a wolf, covered in silver-grey fur. Taylor let out a gasp.

“You’re a doggy!” she said, darting forward and running a hand across his back.

“I’m not a *dog*,” he huffed indignantly. “I’m a wolf, a fierce and mighty hunter! And I... ooh, that feels nice.”

“You’re so soft!” she cooed, as she started to pet him. And despite his best efforts to stop it from doing so, his lupine tail started to wag.

“Why are you a wolf-person?” she said, looking him over curiously. He shrugged.

“I dunno,” said Vale. “Why are you a human-person?”

Taylor considered this for a moment. Even though she was six years old, and therefore knew everything, this was a bit beyond her. “Are there other wolf people where you came from?” she asked.

He deflated a bit when she asked this, his shoulders sagging.

“Oooh,” she said. “Are you the last of your kind? Are you an orphan? Are you on a quest for revenge? Can I come?” She brandished her stick again. She’d always wanted to go on a quest for revenge!

“What? No!” said Vale, looking very confused. “I mean, kind of? I’ve got a mom and a dad and two sisters. My mom’s a deer and so’s one of my sisters and my grandma’s a horse, but I’m the only wolf.”

“Oh, okay,” said Taylor. That made perfect sense to her, though she was a bit disappointed that there wouldn’t be any revenge. “I’ve never met someone who was a wolf or a deer or a horse before, though.”

“Yeah,” said Vale, looking a bit sheepish. “I’m... kinda not supposed to tell humans about us. It’s a big secret. So, uh, is it okay if you don’t tell them? I’m gonna be in big trouble if they find out.”

“Ooh, don’t worry,” said Taylor. “I’m really really good at keeping secrets! I found out what my mom is giving my dad for his birthday and I’m never ever gonna tell anyone that ever!” There was a brief pause. “It’s a really pretty knife. So there, now you gotta keep that a secret too!”

Vale let out a laugh. “You’re funny, Taylor,” he said. “And you smell nice. You wanna play?”

“Sure!” said Taylor, brightening up. Nobody had ever told her that she smelled nice before!

The two played happily together for what felt like forever, but what was actually about twenty minutes, when Taylor heard the sound of her mother calling out to her.

“I’ve gotta go,” she said, in a hushed tone. “Don’t worry, I won’t tell them about you!”

“Will I ever see you again?” said Vale.

“Yeah, definitely!” said Taylor. “My parents come out here every year!”

“If you come back, I’ll find you,” said Vale, beaming brightly. “I’d recognize that smell anywhere!”

And with that, the two shared a brief yet intense hug before Taylor ran off. She knew she was going to get a scolding, but it had been worth it. Because she had made a new friend, a special friend. And it was the best thing ever!

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Vale had been a very unusual child. And not just because of the fact that he was a different species from his parents and siblings.

He was the youngest, technically. Him and his siblings were triplets, of course, but he was born last and that gave them seniority.

The circumstances of his birth were very unusual as well. His father, unlike everyone else in their village, only had two legs. Grandma Jaci had explained it all to them when they were very young. Trey had once been something called a human, but Grandma Jaci had changed him with magic, so that he could be a part of her family. That same magic was what had allowed Vale and his siblings, Rime the equine and Mica the cervine, to be born at all.

Despite them all being different, however, their mother, Tula, had made it very clear that they were all equally loved. Vale knew that. He loved his mother and his father and even his sisters. But he always knew he was different. He was smaller and weaker than his sisters, and never seemed to have as much energy. That was why, on his thirteenth birthday, his father took him to see Dr. Dex.

Vale was absolutely amazed when he saw the massive structure where Dr. Dex lived and worked, a huge grey building covered with twisted vines. When Trey took him through the sliding doors made of smoky glass, Dr. Dex was waiting for them. Like his father, he stood on two legs. He was lean and slim, with bright eyes and long ears.

“How nice to see you again, Vale,” said Dr. Dex, kneeling down to greet him properly. “The last time I saw you, you had only just been born.”

“This place is so weird,” said Vale, looking around. “Dad says it used to be something called a hopsital?”  
“A hospital, yes,” said Dr. Dex, nodding. “Built by humans over a hundred years ago! But when they had no further use for this place, well, that was when my people came in.”

“Wow,” said Vale, looking around at the structure, which was unlike anything he’d ever seen back at the village, where almost everything was made of wood. The walls here were all made of some sort of stone, and the room was lit by glass globes that were full of silvery light. “You stole a building?”

“Is it really stealing if what you’re stealing is something that would otherwise have been destroyed?” said Dex, looking innocent.

“It absolutely still is,” said Trey, rolling his eyes.

“Okay, yes, it is, but they wouldn’t have missed anything,” said Dex, getting up and shrugging. “But this place is special. The Hospital has become a refuge for those who have no place else to turn, and *it’s* taken

on a life of **its** own since we brought **it** to our world. But you didn't come here for a history lesson, did you?"

"I mean, I wouldn't mind," said Vale. "This place is really neat!"

"He definitely takes after his grandmother," said Trey, ruffling his son's hair.

"Very well then," said the fae, turning on his heel and beckoning for them to follow. "Let us take a look at you, then."

In the examination room, the doctor took a few drops of Vale's blood, and he was brave and didn't flinch at all, even if he had to close his eyes and squeeze his father's hand really tightly.

Dex hummed a strange, atonal melody to himself as he examined the little glass tube containing the blood sample, swirling it around, sniffing it.

"Are you going to find out why I'm a wolf?" said Vale, causing both Trey and Dex to give him a look. Vale folded his arms and rolled his eyes. "People try not to be weird about it," he said. "But it is weird. Even people who don't know who my mom and dad are give me funny looks sometimes. And I've never seen another wolf like me. Tell me the truth, please?"

Dex sighed. "The truth is no less than you deserve," he said. "It's true. Though you share the bloodline of your parents, though grew in your mother's womb as surely as your sisters did, you are not like them. You are not a centaur, little one. You are a dire wolf."

Vale listened intently and wide-eyed as the doctor spoke. "A... dire wolf?" he said. "That sounds so much cooler than just a regular wolf."

Dex rolled his eyes. "Your children are picking up some rather strange vocabulary from you, Trey," he said. "But indeed. Most of the people you will meet will have never seen another dire wolf before. But I have. I had a dear friend who was one. She died a little over four hundred years ago. And that was the last time I have ever seen a dire wolf."

"Four hundred years?" said Trey. "That long?"

"Oh yes," said Dex. "Warfare and illness reduced their numbers severely, and they simply could not replenish their numbers quickly enough. And so they went extinct. Until now."

Vale was reeling, as if he was having trouble taking all of this in.

“If there hasn’t been any more dire wolves for hundreds of years,” he asked, “then where did I come from?”

“That, my dear, is the interesting question,” said Dex. “Your mother, because she wanted so dearly to start a family with your father, invoked very old magic to help them do that.”

“Yeah, they told me all about that,” said Vale. “But I still don’t understand.”

“And you may never do so,” said Dex, shrugging. “The magic of the shamans is deep and powerful and a little bit alive. And it decided that you needed to be brought into the world. Perhaps as a cost to your mother. Perhaps as a gift to her. But regardless, here you are.”

This was all so far above Vale’s head that he could barely take it all in. So he didn’t even try. There were more important things to worry about. “What were the direwolves like?” he said. “Can you tell me about them?”

“I can do better than tell you,” said Dex, smiling wide. “I can show you, if you will let me.”

Vale nodded eagerly. Dex winked at him, then put two fingers to his own temple and closed his eyes, whispering a word of power. His fingertips glowed blue, and they were, in turn, touched to Vale’s forehead.

In his mind’s eye, Vale could see them, charging across the open plains, huge and majestic. His eye focused on one in particular, and time slowed down as she began to leap, clutching a giant spear in her hands as she closed in on her prey, an enormous boar. Looking between the boar and the hunter, Vale only then realized how huge she was. Grandma Jaci was the biggest centaur he had ever seen, big and strong enough to carry his mother on her back if she so desired. And the dire wolf had to be at least as big as her, if not bigger. She was absolutely beautiful.

Vale blinked, and he was standing in the hospital again.

“Wow,” he said, absolutely breathless. “She was amazing! Was that your friend?” “Indeed,” said Dex, a wistful gleam in his eye. “Was she not beautiful?”

Vale nodded excitedly. “Is that how big I’m going to get when I grow up?”

Dex hesitated for a moment, looking to Trey. Vale felt himself deflate somewhat.

“I will be upfront with you,” said Dex. “You are quite healthy. But your nascence was troublesome. Cervines very rarely have more than one baby, and triplets are practically unheard of, even in all of my years. I believe you are something of a runt.”

“A runt?” said Vale, folding his arms in annoyance.

“Isn’t there a more tactful term you could have used?” said Trey, giving Dex a long look.

“It is what it is, and it is neither good nor bad,” said Dex. “I am simply telling the cub the truth.” He looked back to Vale. “You certainly have some growing to do, will not grow up to be quite as big and strong your sisters, physically.”

Vale felt himself sink down even further. So that was how it was going to be? He was a runt?

“Do not think that this means you are in any way lesser,” said Dex, so sharply that it startled Vale out of his funk. “You are small. So what? You are still *you*, and what you are is still incredibly special. You will have more to offer the world than your strength. Of this I am certain.”

The doctor had more to say on the matter, of course, but it had all been something of a blur to Vale. As was the rest of the day. They returned home, they spoke with Vale’s mother and sisters, there were a lot of big hugs, they told him that even if he was a runt they would never love him any less, blah blah blah. Vale barely took any of it in. He was deep in thought.

What did that doctor know, anyway? After all, he was told that his very existence should have been impossible, and here he was! So many things in his family had come to be in defiance of the way things were. Why should he be any different? He would figure things out in his own way! Maybe he could even learn his own magic! After all, if his mother and his grandmother could do it, why not him?

But not even the fact of being a runt could bring him down. Because it was the middle of summer, and tomorrow, he would have someplace very special to be.

He told his mother that he was going to go out in the woods for awhile, early in the morning, and she made sure he went off with plenty of snacks and such, and so he went off, far beyond the boundaries of the village, into the deep woods, where nobody would choose to go. He hoped he’d make it in time. He’d had some close calls in the past, but he always made it.

And then he smelled something, a familiar smell from out in the clearing, and as he caught it, he put on a burst of speed, barreling through the bushes and into a clearing, where she was waiting for him.

“Vale!” she cried, her eyes bright and wide as she saw him. “You came!”

“Have I missed it yet?” said Vale, as he fell into her embrace. Every year, on this day, at this time, she came to their special place, and the two of them got to meet again. Neither of their families knew anything about the other. In Taylor’s case, they wouldn’t have believed her, and in Vale’s case, they wouldn’t have approved.

So it was their secret together.

“Here,” he said, unslinging a leather satchel from his back. “Have one of my mom’s nut cakes. They’re amazing.”

“Oh, thank you,” said Taylor, brightly. “I brought you something, too.” She brought out something long and thin in a red-and-yellow wrapper. As she peeled it away, Vale could smell something spicy and meaty.

“What’s this?” said Vale, sniffing curiously.

“It’s called a Slim Jim,” said Taylor, offering him the stick. “Try it!”

Vale then bit off a hunk, chewed curiously for a moment... then started gagging and retching while Taylor fell to the ground, rolling in laughter.

“Humans eat this?” said Vale, wiping his mouth. “Willingly?”

“Some humans,” said Taylor, hopping up onto the tree stump in the clearing. Vale smiled and padded up to her, settling down beside her. “So how have you been lately?”

“Funny you should ask,” said Vale. “Just the other day something kind of rough happened. Um, this might be kind of complicated.”

“I’ve got time,” said Taylor. “Lay it on me.”

“Okay, so, you know how I said that my sisters are different from me? Well...”

Twenty minutes later, Vale had told Taylor the whole story, and she listened intently as she nibbled on her Slim Jim.

“Wow,” she said. “But I mean, I don’t see how it’s that big a deal. So you’ll be small. So what?”



“It’s not that I mind being small,” said Vale, shrugging. “It’s just... all my life I’ve had this weird feeling that something wasn’t quite *right* with me. Something inside of me. I couldn’t tell what it was, but I never felt quite as comfortable in my skin as everyone else. And I think this is related to it.”

“I can understand that,” said Taylor. “I’m sure you’ll figure out a way to live your best life. You deserve to be happy.”

“Thanks,” said Vale. “I actually feel a lot better having talked to you about it. But I’ve talked about myself the whole time! How have you been?”

Taylor let out a deep sigh. “It’s been a hell of a year, wolfie,” she said, shaking her head. “Do you remember last year when I told you that my dad was sick and I was worried?”

“What about it?”

“Well, two weeks later, we found out he had cancer.”

“Cancer?”

Taylor gave Vale an odd look. Then she laughed. “I’m happy you don’t know what that is,” she said. “It’s an illness. A really bad one. Like, the worst one you can get. Lots of people die from it.”

“Oh, gods!” said Vale, putting a hand on his chest. “Did your dad-”

“No, no,” she said, putting her hands up. “That’s the thing, he’s fine now! We had really good doctors, and as of last spring, he’s doing really well.”

“That’s good,” said Vale, brightening up. “But that had to take a lot out of you.”

“You have no idea,” said Taylor, shaking her head. “But it made me decide something. I want to be a doctor. Not everyone gets help as good as my dad got. I want to be able to help other people.”

“That’s great!” said Vale. “I’m sure you’ll be great at it!”

“I know I will be,” she said.

“It sounds like human doctors can do some pretty amazing things,” said Vale. After a pause, he added, “Do you think a human doctor could make me bigger?”

“Aww, wolfie,” she said, patting Vale on the head. “I don’t think so. But you just said you know people who can use magic. Maybe there’s some magic that can make you bigger?”

“There might be,” said Vale, shrugging. “But that kind of magic is very hard to work with. My grandmother’s really good at it.”

“Then maybe you’ll be good at it too,” said Taylor, brightly. “Here, let’s make a deal. I’ll become a really good doctor, and you’ll be a really good... magic user. [Wizard](#). Whatever you call it.”

“Shaman,” said Vale. “I’d be a shaman. And... I don’t know if I *can* be a shaman.”

Then Taylor leaned forward and smooched Vale on the forehead. He started to blush.

“I believe in you,” she said. “Let’s do this together.”

Vale beamed brightly. “Yeah!” he said. “You know what? You’re right! Let’s do it together! And... maybe you can teach me some human doctoring?”

“Sure, I can try,” said Taylor. “And maybe you can teach me about magic? I mean, I probably can’t *do* magic, but it’s still pretty cool.”

“It really is,” said Vale, brightly. “I’ll tell you all about it!”

And the two of them talked until the sun started to set. They parted ways, and as they did, Vale’s spirits were considerably lightened. But as he did so, a thought nagged at him.

*It’s going to be a long year.*

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Several more years went by, as years were wont to do. Vale dove right into learning more about magic. He learned from Jaci, of course, but to his surprise, Dex offered to tutor him as well. In fact, the fae had taken quite a shine to Vale, and had often come to seek the boy out even when it was not time for one of their lessons.

It was after one of these lessons that the two of them sat on the roof of the hospital, watching the permanent aurora that made up the sky in the little pocket realm.

“You’ve come a long way, Vale,” said Dex, thoughtfully.

“Thank you, Dr. Dex,” said Vale. He was a little over eighteen now, and though he had filled out a bit, he was still the smallest of his siblings, being about a hair shorter than Mica. He had told Dr. Dex about his interest in altering his body, and had been informed, in no uncertain terms, that if he started doing that before he had a firm grasp of the fundamentals, the damage he could do to himself or others was quite gruesome. And so he learned.

“Do you know why I agreed to start teaching you?” said Dex, thoughtfully.

“Out of the goodness of your heart?” said Vale. Dex laughed.

“Not so much,” said Dex. “The unkind say that elves lack empathy, and there is a kernel of truth in that. We approach relationships differently than others do. But no. The reason I’ve taken you under my wing is because the Hospital likes you.” Vale hesitated before responding.

“That isn’t a metaphor, is it?”

“It is not,” said Dex, smirking at him. “Look at this place. Lives begin here, they end here. It is a place of immense joys and sorrows. The soil, air, and water are suffused with magic. And this hospital took on a life of its own. Not a life like you or I have. They do not speak, nor eat, nor breathe. But they have an awareness. A personality. And they like you.”

Vale took a moment to consider this. He reached down and gave the roof of the hospital a pat.

“Thank you, I guess?” he said. Dex let out a laugh.

“I’m telling you this because I think you are on the cusp of something great,” said Dex. “The Hospital does not perceive people as beings of flesh and blood, but of flows of magic, of life force. And yours is very interesting. I look forward to seeing what comes of it.”

“I’ll try not to disappoint you,” said Vale, nodding. “But I have to go for now.”

“Ah, yes,” said Dex. “You have a meeting to prepare, I suspect.” Vale felt his heart start to race, but before he could say anything, Dex raised one finger, bidding him to be silent.

“The Hospital does not speak, but she can be listened to, if you know how,” said Dex. “And I have listened to her. What she has told me is that your flow will only reach its full potential once entwined with the flow of another. There is somebody very special in your life right now. And I think there could be something very special in store for the both of you, if you trust in those around you and allow things to happen.”

With that, Dex took his leave. Vale stood there on the roof for some time, thinking about the fae's words. Did the hospital - which was apparently alive - really tell Dex about this? Or had the fae figured it out some other way? But either way, he turned those words over and over in his mind.

They were still turning as Vale's family gathered for dinner that evening. His mother and father, his aunt, and his siblings were engaged in idle conversation while Grandma Jaci doled out portions of her legendary barley stew. Vale ate quietly and thoughtfully as conversation happened around him, at something of a loss for what to do next.

"Vale?"

He snapped back to reality as he heard his mother's voice. She was looking straight at him with a worried look on her face. Of course, that was always how she looked at him, which was part of the problem.

"Is there something on your mind?" she went on, scooting closer to him.

Vale was of two minds. On the one hand, his mother was always trying to protect him. He was the runt, and in some ways, he would always be to her. But on the other, he knew she loved him deeply, and he in turn loved her just as much. He knew she meant well.

He was standing before something of a crossroads, two wildly different paths ahead of him. In a way, what he said next would change his life forever. But would it be for better or worse?

"Hey, mom?" he asked. "...Was it hard for you and dad? With him being so different from everyone else? Did anyone else ever give you trouble?"

Tula shook her head. "We're a small community," she said. "We all have to be there for each-other. We always made sure to sort out disagreements quickly when they came up. There's nothing that can't be overcome if you're open about it."

"I'm not so sure about that," said Vale. He took a deep breath. "There's something I need to tell you. Something really important."

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Vale saw that Taylor was in the usual spot, her face buried deep in a biochemistry book. (He was moderately impressed with himself for even knowing a word like 'biochemistry', something that he had Taylor to thank for.) He was in no mood to wait any longer, and he quickly made himself known, bursting out of the bushes. She let out a startled yelp, tossing the book aside, then laughed as she saw who it was.

“Wolfie!” she said, the two of them quickly embracing. “You butt, you startled me!”

“Sorry,” said Vale, blushing a bit. “I’m just happy to see you.”

“The years just keep getting longer and longer, huh?”

“They really do.”

“Well, first thing’s first!” she said, pulling off her backpack. “I brought you some new books, just like you asked for. They’re in my bag. How’s the magic lessons going?”

“Pretty well, actually,” said Vale. “I’ll show you! Give me a hair.”

“I’m sorry?”

“One of your hairs,” he said, holding out a hand. “A fresh one.”

Curious to see where this was going, she plucked one of her hairs out, wincing a bit as she gave it to Vale. Vale held out his hand, palm up, with the single dark hair placed in it. He closed his eyes and concentrated for a moment, willing the energy of his own body to mingle with hers. This was an early trick that Grandma Jaci had taught him, but this would be his first time doing it without her supervision. Still, he knew he’d gotten it down so...

The hair disintegrated in a little wisp of smoke, and Vale felt a little surge of energy. Taylor shivered as, in a few moments, her hair turned from black to red.

“Hah, nice!” she said. “You’re cute as a redhead!”

“Wait, I’m what?” said Vale, patting his own head. “That wasn’t supposed to happen, it was just supposed to change yours.”

Taylor took a handful of her own hair and looked at it, laughing. “Maybe my hair’s just special,” she said, beaming at him. “Uh, this is temporary, right?”

“It’s... supposed to be,” said Vale, feeling himself blush.

“Well, life’s an adventure, right?” said Taylor, patting the stump to beckon Vale closer. “Honestly, dying my hair isn’t the worst thing I’ve ever had to justify to my parents. Cramming for pre-med forgives a lot of sins, it turns out.”

Vale walked over to her, taking a seat in his usual place. "...Hey, Taylor, can I ask you something?" he asked.

"You just did, wolfie," she said, patting his head.

He rolled his eyes at her. "I feel like I know you better than anyone else, but I also feel like I don't know you nearly well enough. We've been seeing each-other once a year for... ten years now?"

"Almost thirteen years," said Taylor, nodding. "...And honestly, I kind of feel the same way. But it's not like things can ever really be different, can they? We're from different worlds, if you'll pardon the cliché."

"We are," said Vale, lowering his head a bit. "But... you're still really special to me, Taylor. Special like nobody else is. If I told you that things could be different... would you want them to be?"

Taylor went silent, and Vale feared the worst. He started to curse internally. This is why he'd never wanted to say anything. He looked up to apologize, and as he did so, he felt Taylor's hands on his face, pulling him in for a deep, tender kiss.

Vale felt a surge of sparks down his spine. The world melted away and, in that moment, nothing mattered and everything would be okay.

"I've turned down a lot of people in my life," said Taylor. "And I haven't been able to tell anybody that it's because I've fallen for a mythological being."

Vale felt his heart thumping with elation, but it wasn't over yet. There was still one more bridge to cross. "I need to show you something," he said. "Promise me you won't freak out."

He turned towards the brush, put two fingers to his lips, and let out a soft whistle. Two more figures stepped out of it: A pale-skinned man covered in thick brown fur from the waist down, and a bronze-toned woman with the lower body of a doe.

Taylor put her hands to her mouth as her breath caught in her throat.

"Mom, dad," said Vale, gesturing. "This is Taylor."

Slowly, as if approaching an animal that she was trying not to startle, Tula came closer to Taylor.

"Hello, Taylor," she said, kneeling down to be closer to her eye level. "It's very nice to meet you."

“Hi,” said Taylor, still kind of breathless. “Um... you’re totally a centaur.”

Trey started to chuckle. “You were right, Vale,” he said. “She’s really smart.”

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The four of them sat around the stump for some time. Tula had brought additional snacks, particularly a large quantity of the nut cakes that, she was pleased to hear, Taylor was quite fond of, and an earthen jug full of fresh cider. Both of them very politely refrained from mentioning their son’s impromptu die job, though Vale could see the amusement in his father’s eyes.

“We were a bit taken aback to learn about you, of course,” said Tula, nodding. “It’s been so long since we’ve had any sort of regular human contact, and we’re not eager to let in any more.”

“Smart move there,” said Taylor. “Humans are garbage.”

Trey laughed again. “Oh, I like her,” he said.

“*Anyway*,” said Tula, sharply. “I was a bit upset at first, but I’ve talked to my family, and, well... my son’s been in contact with you for over a decade and you haven’t revealed us to the world yet. And he’s clearly mad about you.”

“So with all that in mind,” said Trey, “We want to give you a chance. If we ever want to peacefully cohabit with humans again, we have to start somewhere. And that somewhere is you. So you have our blessing.”

“Thank you, Mr. and Mrs... centaur?” said Taylor, uncertainly.

“They don’t do family names,” said Trey. Taylor nodded.

“I’m learning things already!” she said, brightly. “And I would love to learn everything about your world, if you’d let me!”

“It looks like you’ll have a good teacher,” said Tula. “Well, I’d say that’s settled. We’ll leave you two alone to talk things out.”

“What about the rest of the village?” asked Vale. “Do you think they’ll be ready to let a human in?”

“We’ll start working on them,” said Trey. “Slowly. They did once, after all. In the meantime, I think I know a place where the two of you will be able to meet regularly in the meantime.” He winked at Vale, and with that, Vale’s parents left them.

“That went better than I expected,” said Trey. “How do you think that- mmmph!”

As soon as they were out of sight, Taylor pounced on him and kissed him again. When they parted this time, her eyes were watering.

“We can be together now,” she said. “Together for real, not just this once a year bullcrap. I’ve been dreaming of this for all my life but I never thought I’d actually get it.”

Vale felt the same way, but he couldn’t find the words to describe it. So he didn’t use his words. He leaned back into her embrace and kissed her more, harder and faster than before, his hands wandering down her back, hers playing across his chest.

Time slowed to a crawl as they experienced each-other’s taste, their smell, their warmth, and the rest of the world simply melted away. They were reluctant to part, and as they did, their eyes remained locked.

“...There was something else I wanted to give you, too,” she said, reaching into her backpack. “I... wasn’t sure if you’d be receptive. I kept going back and forth. But now I know for sure that I want to give it to you.”

“What is it?” asked Vale, curious.

Taylor took a deep breath, putting her hands on her chest as she started to unbutton her blouse.

“Me.”

Before Vale could say anything else, the garment was quickly unfastened and tossed aside, leaving her dressed only in a bra and leggings.

Vale started to stammer, trying his best to stay focused. He knew, from his conversations with Taylor, that humans tended to be more modest and reserved than centaurs.

Centaur only ever wore clothes when it was cold enough to necessitate some extra layers. Family units frequently had many members. They were very open with their sexuality. But nevertheless, Vale had never indulged, partly because he was always somewhat embarrassed about his body.

Seeing Taylor in this way right now, he didn’t spare a single thought for that. He just wanted to admire her.



“You mean... right here?” he said. “Right now?”

“I don’t think there’s a better time than now,” said Taylor. “I can’t even comprehend the ways my life is going to change from here on out! So I want this moment right here to be extra special for us.” She leaned forward and kissed him again, and this time, it was much more subdued.

“So, I’ve always kind of wondered,” she said, tracing a finger along his chest. “What exactly you’re packing.”

“I mean, it’s right there,” said Vale, blushing. “I’m sure you’ve had plenty of opportunities to peek if you wanted to.”

“...Maybe I peeked a little bit,” said Taylor, her cheeks coloring. “But maybe I want a more hands-on approach, hmm?”

Vale nodded. He rolled over onto his side, spreading his legs, and Taylor got a good look at him. Like other centaurs, his most delicate bits were contained in a protective sheath when not in use, but that was where the similarities ended. His was covered in thick fur, his sack a bit less pronounced than the cervines and especially the equines. And the tip of it, red and tapered, was starting to protrude. Taylor let out a gasp, reaching out to slowly play her fingers across his sheath, and little by little, more and more of his cock started to emerge.

“I was right,” she said, wrapping her hand around it as it continued to engorge. “It *is* more like a dog’s. I wasn’t sure what to expect there.”

“I hope you’re not disappointed,” said Vale, shrugging playfully.

“Nothing about your body could possibly disappoint me,” said Taylor, as she relinquished her grasp. “Would you like to touch me now?”

“More than anything,” said Vale, reaching out to help her remove the rest of her clothing.

“Let me,” said Taylor, reaching around her back. “If your mom’s any indication, I’m guessing that centaurs aren’t big on bras. It might give you some trouble.”

With a moment’s work, she undid the fasteners and let the garment fall to the ground, revealing her breasts to Vale. Her proportions were much more modest than anyone’s he’d ever met. And she was more beautiful than any of them.

“Hope you’re not put off by my weird bipedal shape,” she said, as she stood up and started to pull off her pants. Finally, she stood before Vale, naked as he was for the first time.

She certainly wasn't furry like his father was; she only had tufts of hair under her arms and around her groin, as well as some sparse hair on her legs. Nor was she smooth and lithe all over the way the elves were, having some definition to her limbs.

"I know I'm not much to look at," she said, looking a bit sheepish.

"I mean, neither am I," said Vale, which was true. Even though his mother did his best to feed him, he had always been a bit on the scrawny side, to say nothing about his small size in relation to his peers.

"Hush up, wolfie," said Taylor, who regained her composure immediately and booped him on the nose. "You're beautiful."

"So are you."

She leaned in for another kiss, which Vale happily accepted, delighting in the way her naked body pressed up against his chest.

"So," she said, looking him up and down. "How do you want to do this? Like, physically? Maybe we should have asked your dad for some pointers first." Vale let out a nervous laugh. "Maybe you could lie on the stump?" he said, looking it over. "It's about the right height."

"Hold on," she said. She dug into her backpack once again, and pulled out a small blanket, lying it over the stump. "I... may have been planning this for a bit," she said, blushing as she settled down on it. "I guess this day was just meant to happen like this, huh?"

Vale momentarily thought back to Dex's words about his flow being entwined with another, and he smiled. "Yeah," he said, nodding. "I think it was."

"Well, don't keep me waiting too long," said Taylor, spreading her legs wide, revealing herself to him. Her snatch was smaller than he anticipated, but as beautiful as the rest of her nevertheless. And he could smell how aroused she was. It sent shivers down his spine, and it was all he could do to stop himself from just mounting her up like a beast.

"I'll be as gentle as I can," he said, as he padded over her, positioning her between his legs.

"Hold on," she said, and he could feel her hand on his cock, lining it up with her, and he could feel the tip press up against her wet entrance. "Alright, I'm ready when you are."

Mindful of the difference in size between them, Vale took a breath and pressed himself forward, slowly and carefully. He heard her cry out as her walls started to engulf him.

“Are you okay?” he said, hesitating. “Is that too much?”

“No, no, not at all,” said Taylor. “It’s just... nn... more intense than I expected it to be... keep going, please!”

Vale’s instincts were positively screaming at him. He could feel the heat radiating off of her. Her aroma was threatening to overwhelm his senses. He had a receptive mate, and he wanted to bad to just take her, claim her, make her *his* and his alone. To *rut*.

But in her voice, he could hear, despite a touch of nervousness, how happy she was. This was Taylor. His secret friend. His confidant. The flow that intertwined with his own. And he knew that he would never do anything to hurt her, not ever.

Planting his feet as solidly as he could, he started to work his hips forward, and Taylor let out a pleased cry as he pushed into her, and she let out a long, low moan.

“Feels nice,” she said, her voice quivering. “Feels... really *really* nice... ooh, Vale, keep going, please... make love to me, Vale!”

Vale’s voice was catching in his throat. She felt good as well, her passage surrounding him in warmth and heat, and he started to steadily buck, pushing into her in a quick rhythm as his cock expanded to its full length. On his latest stroke, he felt some resistance.

“Oof, hold on a sec,” said Taylor, panting heavily. “What’s that?”

Vale felt himself blush. “That’s... my knot,” he said. “I don’t have to try and push it all the way in...”

To his surprise, Taylor laughed.

“Of course it is,” she said. “You know what? Life is too short to not try new things. Go ahead and push it in. But, um, if you hear me say ‘periwinkle’, then pull out, okay?”

Vale nodded, took a breath, then started to push into her once again. He heard her groaning as he met resistance. She was tight, *really* tight, and it was a bit of a struggle to get it in. But soon, he felt his knot slip past her outer lips, and she let out a high-pitched squeak.

“That feels really weird!” she cried out. “But... good! Weird-good! Nn! Keep going, wolfie! Go harder! I can take it!”

Now fully in her, Vale could feel her squeezing him more tightly, and he started to buck his hips more rapidly. It felt so strange and good and he felt like he was just about ready to burst...

“Keep going, keep going!” she repeated. “Keep... going... please, I’m... I’m about to... nnnNNNNN!”

And with that, Taylor moaned loudly as her pussy gripped him like a vise, and that was when Vale felt the dam burst, his cock pulsating inside of her as he came hard inside of her, feeling his knot swell. As he started to come down, he could still feel Taylor squirming beneath him, but he was beginning to feel weak in the knees. As slowly as he could, he tipped over onto his side, falling over and dragging Taylor with him. He could now see her more clearly, nuzzling into his belly, his knot firmly inside of her.

“That felt so good, wolfie,” she cooed, running a hand through his fur. “Thank you so much. I’m glad my first time was with you.”

“Me too, Taylor,” said Vale, reaching down to run a hand through her hair. She looked up and smiled at him, then wiggled her hips about, trying to pull off of him. Unfortunately, his knot had swollen up so much that they were stuck tight.

“Um... how long is it going to be like this?” she asked.

“When I touch myself, it goes down in about ten minutes,” said Vale, his cheeks reddening to their deepest shade yet. “Quicker if I go jump in cold water.” “Well, I don’t want you to drag me across the forest floor to go find a lake,” she said, giving him a pat. “So I’ll just wait it out, if you don’t mind.” He felt her shift a little bit, pressing her body against his, and Vale felt himself relax.

He didn’t mind at all.

~\*~

For the first time, Vale woke up the day after seeing Taylor, only to see Taylor again. The two had, at some point, fallen asleep while waiting for Vale’s knot to deflate.

“So what happens now?” said Taylor, as she cleaned herself up by means of a packet of wet wipes.

“Now, I think there’s somebody I’d like you to meet,” said Vale, who was brushing twigs and grass out of his fur. “I think it’s pretty important. There’s a little bundle of herbs my satchel. Get it for me?”

With the bundle in his hand, Vale tried to will it to light by means of a small charm that he had been taught, but to no avail. He hadn’t quite gotten the hang of this one yet.

“Let me,” said Taylor. She held out a small metal device - something Vale would later learn that she called a ‘zippo’ - and produced a bit of flame from it, lighting the end of the herbal bundle. Once it was smoldering, Vale started to wave it through the air in slow circles, reciting a chant that he knew by heart. And a shimmering distortion appeared in the air.

“Holy shit,” said Taylor, as she watched it happen. “Magic is real.”

“It took you this long to realize that?” said Vale, smirking as he gestured to himself.

“That’s different!”

Vale reached out for Taylor’s hand, and she took his as he made his way through the portal, crossing over into the perpetually twilit realm of the fae.

“What is this place?” said Taylor, her head darting around. “Why are there so many stars? How did a hospital get here? *Is that an elf?*”

Sure enough, there was a green-skinned and white-robed figure approaching them, moving with some haste.

“I think he might be able to answer your questions better than I could,” said Vale.

“Good, because I have *so many of them.*”

~\*~

Vale found himself on the roof of the hospital once again, this time joined by both Dex and Taylor. The fae regarded Taylor with curiosity and interest.

“Do you realize, young lady,” said Dex, “that you’re the first human to intentionally set foot in this fae realm in centuries?”

“Guess I’m just a trailblazer,” said Taylor. To her credit, once she had gotten over the shock of meeting an elf (and after Vale very hurriedly told her not to call him an elf), she had gotten over the shock quite quickly. It helped that he was basically human-shaped, if you put aside the green skin and slightly-too-long-for-comfort limbs. “So wait, when you say ‘intentionally’...”

Dex very quickly waved her off. “What you have with my student here is very interesting,” he said. “His bond with you gives him strength. Tell me, do you have any unusual ancestry?”

“Not as far as I know,” said Taylor, shrugging. “Are you going to tell me that I have latent magical powers? *Am I a wizard?*”

Dex rolled his eyes. “You are not a ‘wizard’,” he said, making air quotes along with the statement. “You are not, inasmuch as I can tell, particularly special in and of yourself.”

“Oh, thanks.”

“But you have something special with Vale,” Dex continued, ignoring her interjection. He gave her a little smirk. “There’s more to learn about the world beyond mortal ken than magic. You said you aspired to be a doctor yourself, yes?”

“I’m working on it,” said Taylor, folding her arms.

“A noble aspiration, to be sure,” said Dex. “It’s been far too long since anyone has made an effort to bridge the gaps between humankind and the hidden world. I think, perhaps, it is time somebody made the effort. I am willing to teach you, young lady. I will expand your knowledge in ways you could never have dreamed of.”

“You’d do that?” said Taylor. “You trust me that easily?”

“Normally, I wouldn’t just take a lovestruck young wolf’s word for it,” said Dex, giving Vale an aside glass. “But one of my... superiors likes you enough to give you a chance.” With that, he tapped his foot on the roof and gave Vale a wink. “But nothing comes without a cost, and there is a boon I would ask of you in exchange for my tutelage.”

“If you’re about to ask me for my firstborn or something, then you can just--”

Dex pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed. “Humans,” he said. “What would I even do with a human baby? No, nothing so crass as that.” He leaned in closer. “You’ve been bringing young Vale books, yes? Tell me... could you perhaps provide me with some tomes of contemporary human medical knowledge? The last time I cared to check, leeches were the big thing, and I would love to hear how far they’ve come since then.”

And soon, Vale and Taylor stepped out back into the world they knew once again.

Night had fallen, and Taylor was curiously fingering the crystalline pendant that Dex had given her as a parting gift. Vale nervously ran a hand through his hair. Dex had, after ribbing him a bit, returned it to its natural shade. He'd offered to do the same to Taylor, but she had politely declined,

“So let me get this straight,” she said. “I just have to hold onto this, burn some herbs, and I can come back to the hospital from anywhere?”

“Anywhere at all,” said Vale, who hadn't let go of her hand. “This is really happening.”

“I'm going to learn about magic!” said Taylor, squeezing him excitedly. “And, well, see you too, which is nice, but *magic!*”

Vale laughed and hugged her to his chest. She was just so cute when she got excited.

~\*~

Things got interesting over the next several years.

Getting to see Taylor nearly whenever she wanted was the biggest change. Taylor had gotten started in med school, and Vale was becoming increasingly adept in magic. Once a week, they would have lessons together with Dex, Vale honing his skills, Taylor catching the fae up on the latest in medical science.

Part of Vale had worried that Taylor would grow tired of him, once she had gotten over seeing him so frequently, but luckily, this turned out not to be the case. His life was, in short, going better than it ever had.

But all was not well.

“Come on, Grandma Jaci!” said Vale, feeling frustrated.

“I am sorry,” said Jaci, shaking her head. “But this is not something to be trifled with lightly. Altering yourself so deeply can be dangerous in more ways than you can imagine. I have been practicing these techniques for almost a century, and there are still things I would not do lightly.”

It was an old argument. For all that he was getting better and better at wielding the primal forces of creation, Vale never forgot his goal. And that was why he needed to learn the art of body magic.

Jaci was renowned as being the most learned in the ancient and sacred art in the whole tribe. Even Dex's knowledge paled in comparison to hers.

“Your grandmother is right,” said Tula, patting Vale on the shoulder. “I know that you want to change, but you can get hurt very badly. I don’t know what I would do with myself if something happened to you under our watch.”

“Mom,” said Vale, sighing and gently brushing her hand away. “I love you, but I’m not your little runt that needs protecting. I want to do this. I’ve always wanted to do this. I’m willing to take a risk.”

Tula looked over to Jaci, who heaved a heavy sigh.

“You are restless, little one,” said Jaci. “I do not blame you. There will come a time when you are ready to practice these arts. But this time has not yet come. You will know when you are ready.”

“Listen to Jaci, Vale,” said Tula. “Not because she’s your grandmother, but because she has experience that we lack. She knows how much this means to you.”

Vale looked over to Jaci, and then to his mother, and groaned. He loved them, deeply and truly, and he hated arguing with them... but he *was* ready. He could feel it in his bones. He would need to prove it to them.

~\*~

“Wolfie? Is there something on your mind?”

Vale snapped back to reality as Taylor nudged him in the ribs. He looked back over to her. He was laying on his back, with Taylor resting on top of him. The lesson with Dex had been particularly tricky, with Vale being too frazzled for any of his attempts working as intended. They had gone off to blow off some steam in the traditional way - which is to say, carnally - but he was still quite distracted.

“I just... it’s my family, you know?” he said, shrugging.

“Ah, family,” said Taylor. “I know what that’s about. Always tricky, isn’t it?”

“Yeah,” said Vale. “Family’s family. I love them, but I just can’t shake the feeling that they’re still trying to protect me.”

Taylor rolled over, looking up into his eyes. “Why don’t you prove to them that you don’t need protecting anymore?” she said. “Dr. Dex always said you have a lot of potential. Why wait for someone else to say you’re ready to realize it?”



Vale looked up, his mind racing. He had always been cautious, but when Taylor spoke, something inside of him just went *click*. And he had a thought.

*If not now, then when?*

“Taylor?” he said, in a far-away voice. “Can you meet me at the stump tomorrow evening?”  
Taylor blinked. “Uh, yeah, sure,” she said. “Why, what are you planning?”

“I’m going to realize my potential. One way or another.”

~\*~

Vale sat by the stump, examining the leatherbound notebook in his hands, and hoping that it really was better to ask for forgiveness than permission.

Grandma Jaci was, indeed, the most skilled shaman in the whole tribe, not to mention several neighboring tribes. She’d been helping people with her skills for many years, and she was a very orderly person. That meant that she took notes. A lot of notes. And Vale found what he was looking for in one of them. It was almost trivial to find what he needed. Before him, he had built a little fire, and atop it was set one of Jaci’s small leather cauldrons, filled with water and a number of fragrant herbal extracts. It had to be heated carefully, so that it would heat the liquid within but not burn.

There was a shimmer in the air as Taylor stepped out into the clearing. She was dressed plainly, in a tank top and shorts.

“I’m here,” she said. “You ready for some toil and trouble, then?”

“What?” said Vale, blinking. Then he looked down at the cauldron, and smirked.

“Oh, right. Well.” He paused, taking a breath. “Taylor... I can’t do this without you. What I’m going to ask you to do might hurt a little bit. If you want to stop, I’ll stop. But I just want you to know--”

Taylor quickly put a finger to his lips. “Hush, wolfie,” she said. “Let’s do this. Anything you need that I can give, it’s yours.”

Vale nodded. “Good,” he said. From his satchel, he withdrew a small knife made of bone. “I’m going to need a few drops of your blood, then.”

To her credit, Taylor didn’t even hesitate, pricking her finger with only a slight wince and squeezing a few droplets into the simmering liquid. Vale did likewise.

Body magic was different than the form of it worked by the fae and similar beings; fae magic worked by imposing your will over reality, and there were specific forms to produce specific functions. The magic practiced by the shamans of his people was more natural, more wild, and there was no specific formula that would produce the same result every time. The credo of practicing body magic was ‘do what feels right’. And this felt right. He wouldn’t be where he was without Taylor, and so he needed Taylor to be a part of his magic.

As their blood mingled together, the water in the cauldron started to bubble and smoke, then slowly thicken into a gel. Vale reached out and grabbed Taylor’s hand, squeezing it tight.

“...I love you, Taylor,” he said. “You give me the strength and the courage to do this.”

“I love you too, Vale,” she said, squeezing his hand tight. “And I want you to be the best self you can be. I want you to be happy.”

Vale nodded. With a word, he snuffed out the fire, leaving the cauldron full of a thick, faintly luminous ointment.

“I need you to rub this over my body,” he said. “All over. Every inch of me.”

Taylor nodded, grabbing a double-handful of the stuff. “Let’s do this, wolfie,” she said. And with that, Vale closed his eyes and laid down as Taylor got to work. As she began to rub him down, starting with his head and shoulders and working her way down, he concentrated. He thought about the memories that Dex had shown him, of the direwolf warriors charging across the plains. He saw the weathered face of Dex’s old friend in his mind’s eye, and in her, he saw what he was always meant to be. He kept this image fixed on his mind as Taylor continued to work the ointment into him, finishing up on his upper torso and beginning to rub it into his fur. His skin grew warm and flushed where she touched, as she continued to rub it over his back, down his legs, across his tail and his underbelly, and finally...

“You said *all* over, right, wolfie?” she said.

“Yes,” said Vale, his eyes shut tight. “Please, hurry.”

And with that, he could feel Taylor’s hands all over his most sensitive regions, rubbing the ointment over his sheath and his balls. The ointment seemed to heighten sensation, and he could feel his arousal begin to grow from her touch, like a fire within him.

“Oh wow, wolfie,” she said, giving his cock a gentle squeeze. “You’re getting hard...”

Vale gasped. Her touch had never felt like this before. He didn't know what that ointment was doing to him, but he knew he wanted more of it. "T-Taylor," he panted. "Touch me more... please..."

"Ooh?" said Taylor, a playful smirk crossing her features. "You like that, hmm?" She started to stroke him back and forth, and Vale clasped his hands over his mouth to choke back a scream. Every one of his senses was screaming. He'd heard people speak of burning with desire before, but now he was feeling that literally.

There was a wildfire within him, and he felt like if it was not quenched, it would consume him.

"If you liked that," said Taylor, shifting around a bit. "Then I bet you'll love this." Before he could ask what she was doing, he felt her mouth engulf his cock, her lips around his shaft, her tongue teasing at his tip.

At this he let himself fall onto the side to then turn on his back. As Taylor lost the grip on the penis, she looked at him concerned.

"Climb up I want to reciprocate" He said already panting.

To that Taylor laid on him, went back to lick his member, and tease it. When all of the sudden she was forced to swallow it up to the knot as Vale lift her hips up, with the help of both his arms and front paws, to then start eating her up, lapping at her already wet vagina.

Taylor surprise soon become arousal, and return to her task with much more vigour, doing a parody of push-up succeeding so to drive the dick in and out her throat as Vale moved himself in sink to never leave the warm and wet touch of her lower lips

Any semblance of rational thought swiftly left Vale's mind, and he threw his head back and *howled*, the sound echoing through the trees and filling the sky as Taylor started to climax too over his chest. The last thing he was aware of before he passed out was his cock throbbing as he came into Taylor's mouth.

~\*~

Vale woke up with sunlight stinging his eyes. He felt dizzy and fatigued and absolutely covered with sweat, and each and every one of his muscles was sore, as if he'd run a hundred miles without stopping while carrying an entire tree. Where was he? And more importantly, what had happened last night?

As Vale's vision returned to him, so too did the memories of last night. Taking Jaci's notes, brewing the salve, and then Taylor rubbing it onto him, and then she... wow.

Where was Taylor? He felt around a bit, one of his hands brushing against something wooden. The old tree stump, right, that's where they were! Only it felt different. He rubbed the last vestiges of sleep out of his eyes, looking down at the old stump. It looked different from before. It looked... smaller?

"Wolfie?"

Vale startled, standing up straight and looking around. "Taylor?" he said, his head darting from side to side. She was nowhere to be found. "Where are you?"

"Down here."

He looked down. Taylor was standing in front of him, still nude, but wrapped in a towel. Her hair was wet, as if she had just bathed. And she was...

Normally, Taylor stood fairly close to Vale's eye level. Now, she barely came up to his navel. Taylor quickly started to pat himself down.

"Oh my, wolfie," she said. "What big everything you have."

Vale threw up his arms and let out a whoop of absolute elation.

"It worked!" he yelled. "It worked! I'm... I'm..."

"Big," said Taylor, reaching up to run a hand across his flank. "Really, really big."

"I'm *big*," said Vale, breathlessly, as he looked himself over. "I have to be almost as tall as Grandma Jaci now! And it feels *amazing!*"

"I should hope so," said Taylor, nodding. "Right after [we](#), ahem, finished last night, I got really tired all of a sudden and nodded off. When I woke up, you were still fast asleep, but you were, well, like this. And, um... that wasn't all that changed."

With that, she dropped the towel and spread her legs apart. At first, Vale wasn't sure what she was showing him. She sighed and pointed down. Sheepishly, he knelt down, until he was close enough to see what she was pointing at. And then he saw it.

There was a new addition between Taylor's legs. He could still make out the folds of her pussy, but right above it, where her pearl ordinarily would have been tucked away, was a long, flaccid cock.

“Yeah, I screamed bloody murder when I got up to take a leak and found this,” said Taylor, smirking at him. “You didn’t even twitch. It was hard as a rock, too, so I went and had a dunk in the lake to cool it down.”

“I don’t know what to say, Taylor,” said Vale, looking downtrodden. “Grandma Jaci always told me that body magic could do strange things, but I didn’t want to--”

Taylor made a dismissive gesture. “Listen,” she said. “You don’t mind it,... do you? I got the feeling that centaurs were a lot less picky about this type of thing than humans are.”

“No, not at all,” said Vale, running a hand over Taylor’s thigh. “It’s just as beautiful as the rest of you.”

“Then I can deal with it,” she said, nodding. “It felt kind of nice when I tried touching it. But also, I told you this so I could let you know that a size upgrade isn’t the only thing this weird mojo gave you.”

Vale gave her a curious look. Taylor paced around him, walking over to his backside. He saw her lift up his tail, move her hand under it, and--

Vale let out a yelp as she touched *something*, and he felt a warm, wet sensation, right between his legs. He wasn’t quite as flexible as his mother was, but he did his best to curve his body around for a look. And sure enough, nestled right between his balls and his tailhole, was...

“Yep,” said Taylor, nodding. “You’ve got a pussy now. [And by the looks of it a human pussy too, even if bigger](#)”

Vale, still in shock from... well, *everything*, wasn’t sure what to say about that. That was unexpected, to be sure. But it was a part of his new body, right? And what’s more, somehow it *felt* right. And so, there was only one thing to say about it.

“...Can you touch it again?” he said, blushing. “That felt really, *really* good.”

Taylor winked at him, and soon, he could feel her fingers brushing against his plump nethers, before plunging into his new orifice. It accepted her entire hand with ease, and as it did so, arousal blossomed out from it. It felt similar to when she touched his cock, but different. Warmer, more intense, more drawn out.

And speaking of his cock, it, too, made itself visible as Taylor slowly pumped her hand in and out, growing out of his sheath... and out... and out and out and out.

“Damn, wolfie,” said Taylor, her eyes wide. “You’re swinging a baseball bat down there.”

“Holy shit,” said Vale, using a common exclamation that he picked up from Taylor. “If I try to mate you with that, I’ll split you in two!”

“We’ll find a way,” said Taylor, running her unoccupied hand along his length. It twitched appreciatively at her touch, especially when she gave the base a squeeze. Vale started to shudder. The combined stimulation of his cock and his new pussy was almost too much to handle, and it was all he could do to not collapse into a gibbering mess.

“Maybe that’s a bit too much quite yet,” said Taylor, who was trying not to laugh. “I don’t know if you want some time to get used to your new body before we go too far, but--”

“Taylor?” said Vale, peering over his shoulder. “Fuck me. Please.”

“Thought you’d never ask, wolfie,” said Taylor, grinning as she changed positions. Her cock was hard and ready, and she looked eager to try it out.

“Just go slow at first, okay?” Vale quickly added, as he felt his pussy being probed for the first time.

“Of course,” said Taylor, rubbing his flank. With that, she slowly began to enter him.

“F-fuck!” she cried. “It feels so... so... like I’m being squished all over... no wonder guys want this all the time!”

Vale could only grunt in agreement. He hoped that Taylor experienced half as much pleasure as this when they made love. He was absolutely seeing stars, and it wasn’t long before he felt his muscles contract and his chest tighten as good sensations burst out from where Taylor penetrated him and quickly crashed over his body like a wave, leaving pure satisfaction in his wake. He was afraid for a moment that he might pass out again, but that feeling soon passed.

“Fuck, Wolfie,” said Taylor, catching her own breath. “Did you come already? I barely got started.”

“S-sorry,” said Vale, trying to right himself. “Everything’s very... new.”

“Don’t worry about it,” she said. She straightened up and approached him, giving him a soft kiss. “We’ll have plenty of time to try new things. And I can think of so, so many things I want to try. I’ve got *ideas*, wolfie. I want to get *creative*.”

Vale smiled at her. It was nice to have something to look forward to, because there was an inevitable conversation in his near future that he did not relish having.

But before that he had one last thing to do. He set Taylor down on the stomp and crouch down bringing himself to the level of her new addition still wet of his on juices.

“Seen that you did a test run on me I would like to do one on you, sorry in advance but this is going to be my first time” so he engulf her penis and bubble his head up and down. Even if his proportion of the human part had gotten bigger too, the penis was large enough to hit is throat when full inside. He also started to lick his juices off it finding them appealing. Soon he felt it throb and cum shoot out of it.

Taylor moaned and fell limp. Scaring Vale but he soon notice that everything was ok. It seem that he was good at it and it like it too. Maybe a second nap would help him too and so he spooned his mate before drifting off.

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Despite the fact that he was now almost twice her height, Vale was still quite intimidated by his mother. She did not lose her temper often, but when she did, she was like a wildfire.

“Can’t *believe* you,” she fumed. “Of all of the reckless, irresponsible... what were you *thinking?*”

Vale, for his part, just sat back and let it happen, holding Taylor’s hand the whole time. He’d known this was coming, and there was nothing for it but to let Tula get it out of her system.

Jaci was there as well. She was making tea as the tide of harsh words continued to roll in.

“I just... what if something had happened to you?” said Tula, as she started to run out of breath. “You have no idea how dangerous this can be! If something had happened to you, I... I don’t know...”

“Mom, nothing *did* happen,” said Vale, seeing his opening. “I couldn’t wait any more. I know you worry about me, but there’s never a time when you would have felt ready. I had to try.”

“I... you...” Tula stammered, trying to compose herself. “...Jaci, would you please say something?”

Jaci took a long sip of tea. Then she turned to Vale, looking him over, up and down.

“...Very impressive,” she said. “It should not have been possible for one so unlearned to pull off such a feat, and yet here it stands, right in front of me.”

Both Vale and Tula went silent, staring at Jaci. She shrugged.

“What’s done is done,” she said, nodding. “And it cannot be readily undone. And it seems like it went off as well as it could have. Though I imagine that there were some unexpected effects.” She looked over to Taylor, who, though she was now fully dressed, was blushing covering a bit the bulge in her pants.

“This one is very special,” said Jaci. “Tell me, is there any history of magic in your lineage?”

“I don’t think so,” said Taylor. “My great grandfather was a medicine man, but I don’t know how much actual magic he did. He just helped people any way he could.”

“That is commendable,” said Jaci, nodding. “Regardless. There may not be magic within you, but there is something special in the bond you have together, and now that bond is deeper than ever.”

“Dex would say that our flows are intertwined,” said Vale, nodding.

“Dex is kind of pretentious,” said Tula, sighing and folding her arms. “...I’m sorry I fussed over you so much. Tell me something. Are you happy?”

“I’ve never been happier,” said Vale.

“Then I can’t stay mad about that,” said Tula, opening her arms. Vale came forward and embraced her, nearly lifting her off the ground.

“The next time you wish to read my notes, please just ask me,” said Jaci. “And in the meantime, I need some stones removed from my herb garden. You would not make a decrepit old woman like myself do that, yes? I trust that, with your newfound strength, it will be quite trivial for you.”

Vale, who knew full well that Jaci was the least decrepit person in the family, nodded quickly.

Five minutes later, Vale and Taylor were sitting out in Jaci’s garden, Taylor splayed over Vale’s back.

“You’re so much comfier now, wolfie,” she said, nuzzling into his fur.

“Glad to help,” said Vale, nodding.

“So where do we go from here?” said Taylor. “You got what you always wanted.”

“The same thing I’ve been doing,” said Vale. “I still want to help people. I’m going to continue my studies with Dex. Start learning how to heal people, like you do.”



“And I’ll be with you every step of the way,” said Taylor, wrapping her arms around his stomach. “Man, I just can’t get over all of this. I feel like I could just ride you into battle?”

“...That doesn’t sound like a half bad idea,” said Vale, slowly standing up, Taylor still on his back. “Hold on tight.

“What’s that supposed to-- YEEK!”

And with that, Vale took off, clearing Jaci’s fence with one mighty leap and hitting the ground running. The sound of Taylor’s laughter echoed through the village.

In blue the parts add by **Myself**