

## **Guarded by an Alien Hunter**

### **Bonus Content**

#### *Vander*

Earth's only sun sets and the skies above San Francisco grow dark. Stars begin to sparkle in the night sky. I open the windows to catch the summer breeze and scan the area. This street and all the vantage points are safe. The fresh air allows me to scent enemy infiltration, of which there is none.

My family unit continues to remain safe in my care, as always.

Katie is not home and remains at work for two more hours. This is why I must prepare dinner for our two offspring.

"I am making pizza," I announce.

Lucy, my eight-year-old daughter, looks away from the main screen in the living area, claps and yells with delight. "I love pizza." She pauses. "But...mom..."

My older son, Bander, who always speaks with upmost honesty, narrows his eyes at me over his hand-held screen. "Mom makes it better than you."

"Your mother has a late meeting at work tonight, so you have me, making pizza."

Both of our offspring groan. They have light blue skin, similar to mine and good hunter instincts, the same as my clan. But other than that, they look and act very human. I raised them to read the local human speak, as well as the Zagwa language, without the need of a universal translator. My parents and siblings help when they come to visit, speaking our language to them and teaching our culture. Both offspring went with Katie and I to Zagwa for an extended visit

when they were small, before they started school on Earth. It takes a month to travel there, and a month to return, so it isn't a trip to take lightly.

I crack my knuckles and roll back my shoulders. "I can cook pizza as good as your mother," I announce.

"No...no. Can't we order take out?"

"Or have a box of Mac and Cheese?"

I frown because they know I hate both human tactics. "We are eating fresh food made here in our domicile."

I stomp into the kitchen to take out the ingredients.

We still live in the same domicile that my mate's family purchased when Katie came of age. Where we met and became mates. Within her extended family this is considered a small home, but Zagwa families live in close quarters for familial closeness, connected to larger meeting areas for community access. More prestigious clans have additional quarters connected to more elaborate gathering spaces, but familial quarters do not get larger, so the size of this home, to me, is just right. Our two offspring share the second bedroom. I have no need to move to a larger space and neither does Katie.

"I want McDonald's," Lucy pouts.

I ignore this nonsense and turn on the pizza oven to preheat.

I continue to enjoy living on Earth amongst the humans. I work with the local office of the governmental law enforcement as a consultant and trainer, which keeps me busy and close to home. And I have my own workspace there to store my weapons and hovercraft. I keep a few at home, of course, but they are in a special lock box under our bed, which Katie hates because she says it takes up valuable shoe space.

My female has so much clothing she has to rotate “off season” clothing to a storage facility. I find it odd, but she seems happy with the arrangement.

“Turn off those screens. Come in here and wash your hands,” I growl. “You’re both making your own pizzas.”

They look startled. “What?”

“If you think I to do such a bad job, you can make your own. My only job will be to cook it in the oven. This way I can’t be blamed for how it turns out.”

They turn off their screens, enter the kitchen and follow directions.

I take out the dough my female always keeps prepared for occasions like this. “One for you and another for you.” I drop a roll on each dusted board and hand them the rollers. They get to work. They have done this before, but not often because their mother treats them like toddlers instead of beginning hunters who need to learn to forage and prepare their own food.

“Daddy, do you think my pizza looks right?” Lucy questions.

I raise my eyebrows at the hole she’s made in the middle of the dough. “Pick it up and knead it again then put it down to roll out. You can fix it.”

I nod at Bander, who appears to be an expert at this, similar to his mother.

“What toppings do you want this time?” I question them both, trying to keep their minds off the fact that they’ve got only me and not their mother.

“Just cheese.”

“I want pepperoni.”

I set the red sauce and the ingredients out for them to apply to the pizzas as they like. The oven is heated up. “Are you ready?” I question Lucy.

“Yes,” she beams.

I slide her rough-looking, oddly shaped cheese pizza into the special oven. She watches in amazement as it bubbles up and cooks. Meanwhile, Bander finishes his neatly arranged pepperoni pizza.

The timer dings. I get Lucy's pizza out and cut it into slices. Then Bander's pizza is cooking. I make up pizzas for both myself and for Katie. I know exactly what she enjoys. She always wants a vegetable pizza and I like cheese with fresh basil. Soon I fall into a rhythm of sliding pizzas into and out of the oven. Bander gets his finished pizza and I cut that too into slices. The kitchen smells like the food we are baking. It is pleasant.

I take my pizza out and slide Katie's inside, then I sit at the table with my offspring and start on my own pizza.

"Dad, are we going hunting tomorrow?" Bander questions.

I pause to wipe my mouth. "Yes, tomorrow is Saturday and we are going to the Sierra Nevadas."

"Can I go too?" Lucy asks.

"Yes, the both of you go, always. We will take the hover craft and go to the same plain in the mountains again. We will again stalk and find the prey, which we then release. When you get older I can teach you true Hunter skills and even send you to Zagwa."

"Maybe," Bander grunts.

I force myself to not respond. They are half human and might instead want to take after their mother and possibly go to a school of higher learning here and take on a different career path. Of course, I hope both will want to be Hunters like their father.

Then we are quiet, finishing up our favorite meal. I eat my own pizza in record time and glance at the oven, wanting more, but then look at the clock. I stand from the table. “Let’s go pick your mother up. She being driven home by Evie, but we can surprise her.”

“Yes,” Lucy claps. “Let’s do that.”

“I’m not done,” Bander grouses.

“Take it with you.”

I put away the ingredients and place Katie’s pizza in the special container for travel. “Let’s go.”

It’s now fully dark outside. Our black SUV is parked in the detached garage. My mate originally had a small, flimsy vehicle that looked very dangerous. Now we have the largest EV that this planet makes. Earth is still highly primitive, but I do believe they are very close to being accepted into the four sectors.

I wave at the family parking their vehicle into the garage next to ours. Lucy and Bander also yell out greetings. This building still has the same mated pair living above as before, and they have more offspring too. Our children play together often.

I pull out and start the drive toward downtown. The streets are reasonably clear and we reach the area quickly.

My mate sends a text while I’m driving. *I’m all done. Going downstairs with Evie. I’ll be home soon.*

I tap the screen, choosing dictation. “Wait for me, I am picking you up.”

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I pull into the underground garage and park illegally because I’d rather get a ticket than risk my female’s safety. I lower the driver’s side window.

“Vander,” the security guard groans. “You’d better make this quick.”

Katie and another female spill out of the elevator. My mate looks over at me and the kids in our SUV, laughs, waves goodbye to her coworker and strides over.

My breath catches in my throat.

Katie Best is still the most beautiful, sexy, smart and kind female I’ve ever met. I can’t get over my luck at finding such a mate. We’ve been mated for over ten years now and I still want her naked in my bed. And by my side for every decision I make in life.

I get out of the car and stride over to her.

Her blue eyes widen as she watches me. “What?”

My arms go around her small frame as I give her a deep kiss.

She drops her bag to the ground, giggles and wraps her arms around me in return and kisses me back.

I begin to trail my lips down her neck and close to her ear. “Is it over?” I ask.

“Yes,” she whispers. “My period is over and you’re getting lucky tonight.”

I hold her tighter and grab her ass.

“Gross,” Bander yells from the open window of the back seat. “I want to go home.”

I chuckle and let go of my sexy mate.

“Mom,” Lucy yells, “we brought you pizza.”

“You did?”

I pick up her work bag and put it in the back of the SUV.

Katie skips over and gets in the front passenger seat. She clicks in her seat belt. I hand her the pizza box. She opens it and gasps with delight. “My favorite toppings.”

“You’ve taught me well.” I scan the vicinity, verifying that Evie made it safely to her own car and has pulled out before us. Then I start the SUV, wave goodbye to the guard, and begin to pull out too.

Katie deftly picks up a slice, takes a big bite and swallows. She licks her lips and glances over at me. “I love you.”

“Love you too,” I respond with all seriousness.

“I love you guys too,” Lucy chirps from the back seat.

Bander lets out a grunt.

Katie laughs with delight. “We are so lucky.”

I nod in agreement and drive home through the streets of San Francisco.