

# Chapter Twelve\_Teal

In Chapter Twelve of the story, titled "Teal," the narrator describes an evening spent cooking with Branthor, highlighting the challenges posed by his oversized kitchen equipment. The cooking experience turns into a shared activity as Branthor assists her, although their banter reveals some underlying tension regarding their arrangement. When she questions why he lacks the specialized utensils used by his sisters-in-law, they both acknowledge, in a light-hearted manner, that he doesn't want a human bride.

Throughout the chapter, Teal reflects on personal habits, such as the taboo of licking spoons while cooking, which she questions after observing Branthor's playful insistence on trying it. Their playful teasing escalates in the kitchen, and Teal finds herself increasingly attracted to him, particularly when he licks the spoon clean, triggering unexpected desires.

They enjoy a romantic dinner of spaghetti and meatballs on the back porch, illuminated by beautiful lights in the garden. While they share conversations, Teal notices Branthor's reluctance to embrace their potential relationship, despite their obvious chemistry and a DNA match that suggests compatibility.

As the evening progresses, Teal grows tired but feels hesitant to retreat to her own bedroom, unwilling to face the next day's reality at the Temple where Branthor plans to deliver her. Instead, she takes a bold step by sneaking into his bedroom naked and snuggling into his sheets, creating a playful, intimate atmosphere.

When Branthor finds her, a mixture of embarrassment and attraction fills the moment. Teal teases him about the comfortable bed, and their flirtation escalates as they discuss a mysterious oil Branthor has. He explains that it assists brides and grooms with significant size differences, hinting at the physical challenges their relationship may present. Teal expresses a desire to understand how it feels, and Branthor appears conflicted yet undeniably drawn to her.

The chapter captures a blend of humorous moments, budding romance, and the tension surrounding their arranged marriage, culminating in Teal's determination to act on her feelings, reinforcing the emotional stakes in their relationship.