

PHASE ONE: THE CATALYZATION

TWO: The Confession (Day 2)

Thursday, September 5, 2013

"Hey Lukan, I finally got to you today..." said the light voice Lukan's best friend Fall, a dark gray wolf with the most brilliant blue eyes. The creature had managed to catch Lukan before school started the following day, September 5. It wasn't often anymore that he would be able to, Lukan observed. Although it was still potentially too early in the year to know for sure.

"Fall!" he called. "How have things been for you?" the raccoon asked brightly.

The lupine shrugged. "Same as always. Same shitty school, different classes and different reasons to just hate this nonsense..."

"My year's been off to a rough start so far," Lukan confessed. "My classes are so much harder than I thought they'd be."

"Well you're a Junior now, right? You should know that by now, shit'll be getting real," Fall remarked. "It's the year of the ACT too. I bet the all of the Junior level classes will be trying to prepare you for it all damn year too."

Lukan suppressed a gag. "Ugh, don't remind me... And it'll be your turn next year, right?"

Fall dipped his head. "Sadly. But we gotta get through it."

"I just wish things were like last year where everything just seemed to be perfect, ya know? It's bad enough that all this construction crap has made everything more complicated than it needs to be. I can't imagine what it's like for the other Juniors and the Seniors who drive..." Lukan rambled.

"It was bad before and now it's three times worse. This school wasn't meant for two thousand students. Wasn't it originally built with eight hundred in mind or something?" Fall asked.

Lukan shrugged. "Then Lilac Grove exploded and now this. Apparently they're building the new school to be able to house two thousand. But what about the future? They can't just keep expanding the buildings forever."

"Who the hell knows?" Fall just shrugged.

"Oh yeah and I also met this guy yesterday..." Lukan started, not realizing that he had just abruptly changed the subject.

"A guy? Who?" Fall tilted his head.

"He was a really tall otter from Castoria. I met him online from a post I made... Um..." Lukan wasn't sure what to say next, as he never does.

"A tall otter?" Fall echoed.

"Y-yeah, he uh... suffers from depression much how I used to. I uh... offered to help him with it and uh..." And he trails off again.

"Shouldn't that be done by the psychiatrists or whatever?" Fall prompted skeptically, narrowing his eyes to magnify that skepticism.

"Y-yeah, but... I still want to help him," Lukan responded sheepishly.

"How old is the guy?" Fall pressed.

"Eighteen apparently. I dunno if I ever actually saw him around when I was still lived in Castoria three years ago," Lukan answered. "Don't worry, I met him in person, so I can vouch that he's not some 50 year old pedo or some shit..." he added as Fall opened his maw again to interject. "I heard enough of the 'be careful what you do online' shit from my mom and propaganda movies billions of times already."

"Eighteen... so has he just graduated? Lucky bastard..."

Lukan had a nagging suspicion that Klaus had actually not graduated at all for some reason. Klaus did not strike him as a guy who had successfully withstood high school until the end. "Possibly," was what he said.

At that instance, the bell had rung to signal that the school day was about to begin. "Welp. There's the bell. I'll see you later, Lukan!" Fall said as he headed off towards the hallways. Lukan said his temporary farewell to his close friend and headed to art class.

"Hey Kira, what are you planning to do with your family history project?" Lukan asked his only other friend left in school, whom he was fortunate enough to have history class with, Kira. She was a silvery wolf with amber eyes. Lukan wondered why all his friends were wolves. Except Tyler, the one who moved last year, who was another fellow raccoon like himself. And now Klaus, he supposed.

"Well my family was originally from Japan long ago. I think I'm a third generation here now, I think? It will be based off of that.." she responded. "Why? Worried about yours?"

Lukan sighed. "I know literally nothing about my family... And neither does my mom. Only thing I know is that my great grandmother worked with the Air Force during World War 2... And that's literally it."

"Base it off of that fact then?" she offered.

Lukan scowled. "Even if I did... what about the heirloom thing? I think my mom has a bunch of her stuff locked away somewhere, but none of it really has anything to do with the war. I-I think..."

"Well it's something, right?" Kira shrugged.

Lukan also shrugged. He looked for the burly tiger teacher at his desk. "Hey, Mr. Harrison? How long does the project have to be? I uh... I literally know nothing about my family..." Lukan had a strange thought that most of his mother's side at least were farmers in Iowa. But what kind of interest could he make off of something that was potentially not true? He had to learn a little more...

"There's no specific length, but try to make it as long as you can," was the teacher's answer. He seemed to have attempted to evade Lukan's question.

"I guess I will have to ask my mom if she knows anything more. I doubt it though," he added worriedly. This project was going to be worth a lot of points. Why can that be if the year had just started? Lukan did not understand. He most certainly hoped he wasn't going to be fucked over by this thing early on... His mother was a perfectionist when it came to his grades after all.

The last bell rang, lifting Lukan's spirits. "Oh thank God. I think I was going to melt in this room if I was to stay in it any longer. Yep. Still 90 degrees outside, the room is facing the sun, and the AC is broke in this part of the building. That adds up to a fiasco alright. Lukan's fur was damp with sweat. Oh and being covered in thick fur helped nothing either. Also, Lukan was looking forward to seeing Klaus again today. He made his way towards the north parking lot, which was also where the school busses were. Lukan usually rode the school busses home, but now Klaus was going to take him it seemed. On the days Klaus would visit of course.

Lukan scanned the north parking lot for the tall mustelid. The creature definitely stood out amongst the rest. How many other otter heads can be this close to the sky after all? Lukan found him almost instantly and made his way towards him.

"Whew! It's a hot day out, isn't it?" Lukan asked as he got to him.

"Oh hey! It's my new little raccoon buddy! Lukan!" Klaus greeted him happily. "And I know right? We usually stop hitting 90 by the start of September, so what's the deal?" He was looking into the sky as he said that.

"I have no fucking clue. Global warming I guess," Lukan shrugged.

"Yet we see so much snow that it's ridiculous. Are they sure we're warming up?" Klaus asked.

"Supposedly, we're still technically in the ice age. It's just progressively getting warmer over twenty thousand years or something, I dunno. I dunno how legitimate anything scientists say are myself so..." And there he goes. Rambling randomly once again. Why? Why must Lukan suffer from this nonsense all the time!?

"Is that so? That explains a lot... Actually no it doesn't," Klaus replied.

"S-sorry..." Lukan apologized awkwardly.

"Aw, don't be sorry, silly coon. It's because it doesn't make sense that makes me question everything so much," Klaus replied light heartedly.

"Do you believe in God or something then?" Lukan asked directly.

Klaus scowled. "There are a lot of reasons why I do not..." he said slowly. "Why, do you?"

Lukan shook his head. "I believe with what I see with my own eyes. Religion? Nope. Science? Only if it's like TOTALLY proven and not some dumb theory..."

Klaus shrugged. "I often wonder about everything. But I don't believe anything. It makes speculating that much more fun, you know?"

Lukan hadn't thought about it that way before... "Yeah I suppose it does, doesn't it? Well then... um... So what do we do now...? Uh...?" Lukan wasn't sure what to say next.

"Whew!" Klaus said again. "I dunno, but how about you and I get out of this heat? It's killing me."

Lukan nodded. "Me too."

Klaus had ended up driving the two of them to the mall a bit further east of the school. It was always nice and air conditioned in there. Lukan wondered how much electricity was needed to sustain such a large building temperature like that...

"Aah... so much better," Klaus stretched. "So... I suppose you'll be wanting to know more about my story, huh...?" he prompted as they sat in lounge chairs towards the center of the mall.

"Huh...? O-oh you're sure you want to tell me now?" Lukan prompted apprehensively.

Klaus nodded firmly. "Y-yes. I am. I have to soon, otherwise you wouldn't be able to help me, silly," he added with a smile. But that smile faded instantly. It seemed he was remembering something. "Those five years ago... they seem like an eternity."

Lukan nodded. "Same here... but go ahead. Tell me what's happened, Klaus... Please."

Klaus took a long, shuddering breath as if he were hesitating. Then, he started to speak, not having any eye contact with Lukan. Lukan recognized what was in those eyes. It was regret. But what would he regret? A decision he made? Much like the one Lukan had made as well around the same time...

"Well... It's a story of hurt and betrayal. I was pushed around as early as kindergarten by bullies... I was alone until 2nd grade. Made a friend. We were friends for a while but bullying was still as usual. I made another friend in 3rd. And then another one. So I had 3 friends.

But by middle school they met new crowds and abandoned me. Except the one. One night I was vulnerable around him and, it led to cuddles and then sex. Little did I know I made the biggest mistake of my life. The whole entire school knew within in a few days. And therein begins hell for me. Being abused over being gay. Having a bully

as a friend and having to hide myself from my family. In high school it was too much by then. I had to drop out at 16. I got my GED at 17, last year. After being treated for depression a little later my family knows I'm gay and that I had sex with my ex friend. They accept me thankfully. But, it's mostly the bullying that leaves me broken. It was harsh and unrelenting..."

Lukan could not speak right away. He had no idea that things had gotten that bad for the poor otter so recently. "K-Klaus...?" he finally said, looking into the otter's eyes. They were glistening with tears. "I-is all this true?" he whispered as he pat the creature on the back.

"I-I... yes. Yes it is. This... is only a part of it, but... yeah. That's the gist of it..." Klaus struggled to say.

"I do not know what to say, Klaus... You really are a strong creature to have made it out of that shit. You know that right?" Lukan prompted slowly.

"Sometimes I don't think I have, Lukan. It all still haunts me to this day, what happened. I need help getting over it all... That's why I reached out to you..."

Lukan gave the otter a comforting hug. It was awkward since they were still sitting down. "I will do my best, Klaus. Gaining friends saved me. I hope it will save you too. Friends you can trust. Nobody that will abuse you in any way. I'm here for you..." Quite possibly what had astounded Lukan the most about what he's said just now was how confident he sounded. No stuttering. No breaks or pauses. No uncertainty. Just words. That rarely to never happens for him... What could this mean...?

"Th-thank you Lukan... Y-you're the only one who's ever promised me that..." Klaus sniffled softly.

"I know what it feels to have your trust broken you know... I can't stand when it happens to someone else. I mean... considering... In 2008... two horrible things happened to me. First on July 15, and then on August 20... Unforgivable. I should have pressed charges. But I was only 11... and my mom did not understand what had happened to me... And now justice will never be served..." Lukan growled sadly.

"Will you tell me your story then..?" Klaus asked softly.

Lukan sighed. "O-okay... H-here goes..

"I could still remember what had caused this to happen. Unlike your story Klaus, mine began when I was 11. Or maybe 10. Depends on where I'd want to start but. The gist of it began simply. Me and my mom lived in a city called Kadan in the next state. It's three times the size of Lilac Grove. And it was March when this started. It started from something so simple, yet so common at the time. As you and I know, the economy was absolutely thrashed at the time. So what else could start the adventure than my mom losing her job? Yeah something like that. What could we do? We may

have had a lot in savings, but due to the economy, costs for everything skyrocketed too high for us to cope for very long. It took only two months for all our money to disappear. We had to sell a fuck ton of crap we had our entire lives. Childhood memories, valuables, you name it. All gone forever. It helped us stay for maybe a little longer. On June 1, we were forced out of home. We had two options. Either move with a couple of my mom's friends to the town of Bright in the south, or find a homeless shelter. My mom asked me what I wanted to do. Why she asked an 11 year old idiotic cub was beyond me. Just because I was smarter than most cubs my age doesn't mean I am always right. In fact it was opposite. When it came to decisions like that, I was always wrong. Nevertheless. I chose to move to Bright.

At first moving to Bright was not so bad. Sure it was a lot hotter and uncomfortable and me and my mom had to live in their basement. The worst part about the basement was all the spiders and bugs. And they did not really bother me that much. N-no... what bothered me was something that happened a month and a half in."

Lukan took a deep breath as he approached one of the dark parts of his story. He wasn't entirely sure he could go on. But a reassuring paw on his back told him it was going to be okay.

"It's okay Lukan... take your time," Klaus said quietly.

"Midway through July. We were having dinner. And I asked what it was. When I got the answer, I almost panicked. Sure what may have been a simple food a lot of people had. But one of the ingredients I KNEW existed in them was something I was very, very allergic to. I told them this.

...They did not care. I was forced to eat dinner, because they claimed that they were working hard to help us. Sheltering us and feeding us. They saw my denial of it as a sign of ungratefulness. I tried to tell them that it wasn't. But they told me and my mom we had to get out in three days if I did not show my gratitude. So I had no choice...

It was instant. I was very sick with something that I dare not speak. I was sick for three days straight, unable to eat anything, unable to sleep, unable to concentrate. It did not help that the summer heat only made it a million times worse. I was in a constant state of discomfort, pain, and nausea. I felt like I was close to death. I remembered. That enough of the stuff could actually kill me. It wrecked me. Dare I say. The initial illness ended after three days. But the effects never went away. Though I was not sick anymore, the discomfort in my system continued to persist... for months.

It was a dark time after that. If adults could not be trusted either, than I would never talk to anyone ever again. I would find no guidance, no consolation, and no

friends. No anything for the rest of my days. And most of all, I would never trust myself ever again for making such a horrible, HORRIBLE mistake in choosing to go to Bright. I may not have had a choice in the end, but the fact that I made it still gives me chills.

School began criminally early in August. Instantly I was outcasted. By myself. As in I outcasted myself from the crowd to make sure that I would never trust anyone. No one could ever be trusted. The sixth grade was different too. Now we had separate classes in separate classrooms. Needless to say, it was not easy adapting to it all at first. But if I thought that I was going to get out of this school in one piece, I was wrong.

On my second day there was this bully. He would always call me the nastiest of names. Some of which I actually never heard of before. And one of them... was actually the word "faggot"... it scares me that he was right in that regard. He would physically abuse me, verbally berate me. The teachers who knew what was happening only bat their eyes. And I did not report him. The abuse continued as long as I remained there all the way to November. But...

There was something that happened just a week into the school year. August 20. I had an attack. From being poisoned, the effects never truly went away, and sometimes I would find myself flinging myself to a trash can or toilet. Most of the time, nothing would happen, thank God. But one teacher in particular, did not understand how sick I still was at that point. And she told me to get back to my position. It was PE class by the way, the easiest class to set it off. And if I did not. Office for me. I had no ability to argue with her. I had to get to the nearest trash can and... eventually it DID happen this time. Guess who did not fucking care! Sent to the office with suspension threatened on me...

I was lucky that this time, my mom cared about me and did something about it. We were going to sue the school over this. But we found that it was not enough of an offense to do so. But she made sure the staff of the school would understand that I was a very sick cub. And that I needed special help for it. Insultingly though, I was sent to a class for disabled cubs to replace my PE class. I was sick; I was not disabled. But something in my psyche had apparently changed enough, for them to consider me disabled. And it scared me.

Eventually, we were given medication for the illness that I had. And on top of that, I had been evaluated and eventually diagnosed with depression... I truly hope I've beaten it now... but my life in the five years that followed that point, except 2012 have been... rough. To say the least..."

Lukan took another deep breath and realized he pretty much summed up his entire story in one go, something Klaus admitted he did not with his own. And also unlike Klaus, he was not able to control tears flowing down his face. He looked down

at his paws as silence permeated the aftermath of what he just confessed. Klaus was more than likely more speechless than he was.

"Lukan... How...?" Klaus finally spoke.

Lukan's ears perked. "How...? What...?"

"How did you survive that shit...? And even believe you beat depression...? How is anyone that strong...?" Klaus breathed.

Lukan shrugged. "I don't think I am... the past 20 months have just been... pretty lucky I guess...?"

Klaus sighed. "Luck... It seems that superstition only works out in favor of those who do not deserve it, or for those who are already happy... And not for creatures like us... you know? Or is it all just an illusion...?"

"Are you getting philosophical over there, silly rudderbutt?" Lukan couldn't help but laugh a little.

"Maybe. But I've been told I do that sometimes," Klaus said.

"So do I, but never really in front of everyone else," Lukan replied.

"Why because they think it'd be weird? I like being weird," Klaus stated.

"I didn't say it was a bad thing, silly creature," Lukan responded.

Klaus sighed as passerby occasionally glanced at them. "I know. Hey Lukan. Do you really think you can help me at all? I mean... the main reason I never replied to you was because even the best psychiatrists in the region couldn't fix me. I thought that maybe, someone who knows exactly how I feel could."

Lukan shrugged. "I have no idea. I have no experience in any of this shit. But I will do my best. I mean.... I dunno what it's like to abruptly have sex with your friend, but... the bullying thing... I definitely do... D-don't get me started on some shithead named Spencer in the 6th grade... he... definitely made the poisoning situation worse than it needed to be."

"What did he do to you?" Klaus asked curiously.

Lukan was initially hesitant to answer. "Well he did anything a typical bully does, but you know, a lot worse. I think he was a special needs student and they were trying to hide that fact. I dunno for sure though. I never saw him in that disabled class, thank God."

"Scum. They'll never understand what we've been through," Klaus growled. "And that's why creatures like us need to stick together. So we can beat them."

Lukan laughed. "At least you don't have to deal with them anymore, Mr. Adult."

Klaus shook his head. "There are bullies in adulthood too. And in some ways, they're even worse than kid ones. Especially if they happen to be your boss at work."

"Damn. Can I stay a teen forever?" Lukan requested.

"I wish the same thing myself. But time doesn't work like that, I'm afraid," Klaus dipped his head.

"Well... I guess we'll see how our lives will turn out soon enough I guess," Lukan shrugged. "I... I still don't know how to help you though," he said worriedly.

Lukan couldn't believe what Klaus did next. Klaus gave him a small lick on the face. Lukan tried his damndest to suppress a blush. "Don't worry. I'm sure you'll figure something out. In fact... I think you already are helping a ton."

"Y-you think so?" Lukan stammered incredulously.

"Absolutely! All I need is a friend I know I can trust. I dunno why, but... I think that could be you, Lukan."

Lukan looked down at his paws. "I dunno what could possibly make you think that... but..." He stopped talking at that moment. He stared at the big clock that was on the wall in front of one of the mall's center anchors, Target, watching it tick closer and closer to the future.

"We should get you home, shouldn't we?" Klaus prompted. "Hey. I have a bold question to ask. Could I possibly stay over at your place for tonight?" He saw Lukan's face turn incredibly hesitant and uncertain. "I-I really don't like going home... I don't hate my family, but they aren't... nice. Please?"

Lukan sighed as he and Klaus stood onto their paws. "I dunno... my mom is one of the most strict creatures on the planet when it comes to someone visiting. And on a school night no less." He noticed that Klaus was giving him sad eyes. Now why would he do that...? "Argh... alright I guess it won't hurt to ask at least... But if she says no, I have to tell her it was your idea..." he said. He knew his mom would interrogate him about the mysterious creature, especially if she thought that he was the one dragging him around the place and not vice versa. Lukan hated paying for others' ideas above a lot of things.

They hadn't got back home until about 6:30 in the evening, which was much later than Lukan was used to coming home at. And surprise, surprise, his mother wasn't happy in the least but. The mother raccoon was as short as she was but at least twice the width.

"Where have you been!? And who is this otter?!" she exclaimed the second he opened the door. "I was worried about you, you know?"

"I'm sorry, I was out with a friend of mine. I definitely wasn't planning to be out for so long," Lukan said. "Although I wish you would stop worrying so much about me. I'm not a complete cub anymore you know?"

"I'm a mom. It's our jobs to worry," Mrs. Benka replied. "Who is this otter friend of yours though? You never told me that you had one, I don't think."

"No. He's a newer friend. This is Klaus Richie? Right?" he looked to the otter.

The otter laughed humorously. "No it's Richtors, you silly coon." Lukan almost did not hide his blush.

"S-sorry."

"It's cool. So uh, Mrs. Benka, I was wondering if I could stay the night here?"

The mother raccoon's eyes widened. "What? Now why would you want to do that?" she asked, puzzled. "Lukan you know how I feel about people coming over right?"

"I-I do, but he wants to... We thought we'd at least ask..." Lukan replied as calmly yet defensively as possible.

"I know, but you know how I feel about creatures I don't know anything about..."

"My name is Klaus H. Richtors, born to Kuaren and Krystina Richtors. I am 18 years old and have a younger sister named Kandice. I was born in Kentucky, on January 29, 1995. I dropped out of high school due to immense bullying..."

Lukan had to stop him before he rambled on too much longer. "Whoa, Klaus, I don't think that's quite what she meant..."

"Well now she knows more about me, right?" Klaus replied with a shrug. "Mission accomplished."

"Well where is he going to sleep though? I don't think we've got air mattresses or anything around. And isn't it a school night..?" There she goes worrying again about the things Lukan predicted she would...

"Alright, alright. Could I at least stay until he goes to bed then?" Klaus compromised.

Lukan turned to the otter again. "Aren't your parents going to be mad if you're home so late though?"

Klaus shrugged. "Maybe. But I don't see why since I don't have anything to wake up early for. I swear, parents do worry too much. No offense of course," he added to Lukan's mother. She did not respond right away. "And if anything, teen boys like Lukan need as much social interaction as they can get. You know how they get when they're lonely."

Wait, what did Klaus mean by that? Lukan's mother looked even more confused than he probably did. "I know that applies to most boys his age, but Lukan always insisted he was different..."

"I did too, Mrs. Benka. I did too. And then I let teenage hormones hit me and... it wasn't fun."

"Alright, I understand. You coming up with as many reasons as you can to get me to say yes. I can take that hint. Alright, you can stay. But please be out before I go to bed at least?"

"Oh thank you, Mrs. Benka. I promise not to be too much of a nuisance."

"I hope so," was her reply.

That evening wasn't spent on too much in particular. Klaus and Lukan hung out in Lukan's room and just... talked. Talked more about their likes and dislikes, and original goals in life before things changed. Klaus mentioned how much he liked Japanese culture which led to Lukan mentioning his friend, Kira... Lukan never paid much mind to what they were conversing about. He just let his mind follow wherever Klaus took it. Of course he still found a lot of what Klaus was saying to be fascinating, but Lukan never bothered concentrating on the road they took to get there.

"I'm sorry, Klaus. I am such a boring ass raccoon," Lukan said in embarrassment when Klaus pointed out that there wasn't all that much in Lukan's room.

"I find you more interesting than that, Lukan..." Klaus replied.

"Huh...? But why?" Lukan asked, perplexed that any creature would ever say such a thing.

"Well I really like the stories you tell. They're so interesting. And your personality. I find it adorable," Klaus answered casually.

"A-adorable?" Lukan gave a shaky echo.

"Of course, you silly coon. Adorable," Klaus nodded firmly. "I'm sorry if I seem a little too forward, but it's honestly how I feel."

Lukan wasn't sure how to feel about that. He wondered just what the otter was up to... The raccoon was far from sure how social interaction like this worked out after secluding himself for years. "That's okay. Um... It's actually kind of flattering," Lukan definitely knew he wasn't able to hide a blush anymore. He silently cursed himself. Why was he letting this otter do as such!?

He saw something flash in Klaus's face. Lukan couldn't tell exactly what it was. His only theory was the proposition that Klaus was struggling to control himself for some reason. What would that possibly be? Then it Klaus spoke, in a very shaky voice.

"I-I'm sorry about this, b-but..." Klaus then took a firm hold of his shoulders and planted a kiss right on the lips.

At 10:59 PM, Lukan was suddenly thrust into a moment of passion so overpowering, that he failed to understand it, nor how to react to it. His heart throbbed louder in his ears, louder than his music at full volume. All he could comprehend was the lips planted firmly on his. He wasn't sure if he should try to kiss back. But Klaus had broken it before he could decide.

"L-Lukan. I'm so sorry... I... I honestly think I am falling in love with you or something but... I should never be this forward! L-look... I never met anyone like you. Nobody seemed to get how I feel, but when I see that you do, I just--" he trails off.

"K-Klaus... I uh... I dunno what to say..." Lukan stammered almost as hard, a very deep, and impossible to avoid blush on his entire face. "I've never been in this situation before," he confessed, "but... but I kinda like it..." he breathed.

Klaus then took Lukan's hands into his own. "You do...? I mean...Do you think... we might have a chance to be..." he trails off again, not keeping eye contact with Lukan.

"W-wait... y-you want to go out with me o-or something?" Lukan finished.

"I. Yeah..." Klaus shuddered out.

Lukan nods firmly. "Sure... I-I'd like to give it a shot," Lukan wasn't even thinking anymore... there was no worry. No hesitation. Deep in his mind, he knew he wasn't sure, but that doubt was clouded by the force of Klaus's conviction. There was no way his mind could will itself to deny Klaus. Somehow, Lukan felt that someone like Klaus was what was missing from his life. What was keeping it from being perfect...

"Y-you will!?" Klaus squealed incredulously. "Yes! Okay... so... what do you want to do?" he asked curiously.

Lukan shrugged. "I dunno! I uh... I never dated anyone before! I don't think it's even legal!"

"What do you mean?" Klaus stated, confused.

"You're 18. An adult now... I'm still 16... Isn't that considered pedophilia or some shit?" Lukan fretted.

"You're literally two years younger... and you're the age of consent here right? And it isn't pedophilia unless we have sex, but again. Age of consent. Among other things," Klaus tried to justify. Lukan still wasn't sure. "Age is but a number, Lukan... What matters is how we feel."

"Th-that may be but... the big bad government won't care."

"Lukan, I know why they say that. I mean yeah, no one like some 60 year old dude and a 10 year old girl or some shit claiming they love each other. But would we be that extreme?" Klaus stuck out his tongue at Lukan. It's as if he didn't worry or care at all. Lukan wished he could be that way... but he KNEW that there was some sort of infraction somewhere. Why did he say yes again? The lapse in judgment Klaus had given to him was fading. But for some reason, a part of him just did not care.

"I suppose you're right, Klaus. Something just feels off about it, that's all," Lukan replied.

Klaus nodded slowly. "Yeah I kinda understand why. But at the same time, why should we care what anyone else would think?"

"Because the big bad government will arrest you and put on a sex offender's list," Luka pointed out with a hint of humor in his voice.

"Let them try. I don't give a shit. I really like you Lukan... I want us to do the best we can for each other and make everything in life okay again..." Klaus replied, holding Lukan's hands.

Lukan looked into the otter's gleaming emerald eyes. He could feel their determination, their passion, their will slice right into his heart and fill it with the same

feelings. Lukan did not understand what that feeling was. Was it love? Whatever it was... Lukan felt all but compelled to nod firmly and reply. "Yes. Let's do it. Together..."