

Ten. Agent of Reality

Lukan found it damn near impossible to hide his shock and horror as he saw his mother's face looking at the both of them. "M-m--!" he breathed, unable to say even a single word.

His mother's eyes were narrowed slightly, exposing more of the dark fur of her mask. She seemed to be smirking. A small smile was on her face. "Well, Lukey, you never told me you're gay! I guess I know that now!" she finally said, after a few brief moments more of one of the most awkward silences Lukan had ever experienced. Lukan's heart felt as though it were doomed to fall into cardiac arrest any second now...

"I uh... Uhhh..." Lukan wanted to say that he could explain, but he knew he could. He was caught, red pawed, stark naked and on top of the otter, who was also in his own birthday suit. And on top of that, Lukan was in the middle of one of the most lewd and obvious acts of homosexuality there is! There was absolutely nothing Lukan could say in his defense. Yes, Sarah Benka was the opposite of a homophobe, but Lukan still wanted to keep his relationship a secret. Great... his mother was never going to leave him alone about this was she?

"How long, if I may ask?" Sarah pressed, looking thoroughly happy.

"S-since the beginning of last month," Klaus answered shakily. His face was almost just as red as Lukan's.

She giggled. "I think I may have seen more than I was bargaining for, but... I am more than happy for you, Lukey. You boys have fun now," she giggled again before closing the door behind her. Lukan found it somewhat awkward for her forty-four year old mother to be acting as such, but he knew that that was going to happen if she were to find out. And now she found out.

The raccoon and otter looked at each other, mouths somewhat agape, and blushing deeper than any shade of red conceivable. The otter was the first to speak. "So uh... th-that just happened."

Lukan realized even further what that discovery would entail. "Oh she is never gonna let me live this down! I-I just know it!"

"I-it's more embarrassing knowing how she found out about us!" Klaus breathed. "If that were MY mom, she'd uh... Uh..." Klaus trailed off but picked himself up seconds later. "Well, she wouldn't do anything really bad, but she would NOT like it. I at least am glad I don't live with my uncle anymore or with someone like Platt's family."

Lukan was flustered. "Y-yeah. S-seeing what we were doing m-must have uh..." and now Lukan trailed off, but he wasn't sure how to pick himself back up.

"Think it's too awkward for us to finish what we were doing?" Klaus smirked. "You felt really good, you know?"

Lukan was even more flustered. "I-I was worried I wasn't doing good..." he looked at the otter's now half masted pole. It was wet from Lukan's salivary liquid.

Klaus ran his fingers through Lukan's tail. "You were doing great, hon. Would you like to finish what you started?"

Lukan couldn't help but hold the otterhood close to himself. "I-I would love too," he said before slowly inserting the otter's peg back into his own open muzzle.

And it seemed that it was back to a pleasurable bliss for the pair of them, even after the awkward interrupting intrusion via Lukan's mother. Klaus' was fully solid within just seconds and was gifting Lukan's ears with sweet moans of happiness.

Lukan just couldn't believe what he was doing at this moment. Nor could he believe that he could conceivably enjoy such an activity, but he did! Lukan closed his eyes again and let his instinct take over. He was vaguely aware of just how much he was drooling over the otter. He wondered how much the otter minded that this was happening. But only vaguely. All he could focus on was making sure that he pleased his boyfriend as much as he could, all the while taking as much of what made him who he was as much as he possibly could. That was his mission now. No qualms, or quarrels over what made him wary of the idea of this mission before. None of that was to get in his way now. He wanted Klaus Richtors above all else!

Klaus was gasping and shuddering slightly, his tail twitching, causing his piercing to jangle lightly. "O-oh Lukan! I-I think I'm about to--!"

But Klaus didn't even get to finish his exclamation. Lukan felt it twitching against his muzzle. And only a second later, he felt the inside of his mouth grow wetter and wetter. A strong, salty taste hit his tongue. Lukan only hummed as the otter reached his climax, knowing that he had reached the end of his mission and that it was a resounding success. Lukan gulped, shuddering at the unusual feeling it had. It wasn't anything Lukan was used to, but the thought that it belonged to his beloved otter was all he needed to thoroughly enjoy it. He felt the otter pulling back, blushing brightly.

"S-so...?" he stammered. Lukan knew firsthand how much Klaus enjoyed performing the same deeds on him. It seemed the idea of the tables turning flustered the otter. Perhaps they weren't quite as different as Lukan first thought.

"I would love to do this more often," Lukan admitted.

Klaus giggled. "I would gladly accept the idea of that! Now it's your turn, you dirty, dirty raccoon!" And before Lukan knew it, the otter had pounced on him, forcing a loud yelp from him as the otter immediately proceeded to mirror the actions that Lukan had just taken upon the otter just moments ago.

Once their romp was finished, the pair of them lay next to each other, panting softly from their efforts. Lukan had no doubts that that was one of their best ones yet. And he looked forward to more in the future. It was late. Already on the verge of Lukan's birthday ending. Neither of them were tired enough to go to sleep despite all the circumstances saying that they should be. Lukan briefly looked out the window, and failed to suppress an exclamation of disgust. "Ew! It's starting to snow!"

Klaus sat up and watched as well. "Well it is nearly winter now," he pointed out. "Already." He added in disappointment. "Ya know, times moves so fast. I can't believe it's been practically three weeks since we last saw Aero!"

Lukan felt himself internally groaning at what the otter was segwaying into now. "Are you really still worried about that?" It felt odd to him. Why was Klaus so hung up about this, but Lukan himself wasn't? Lukan always saw himself as the nervous wreck, but now... Now Klaus seemed to have taken that title. Why the sudden change? Lukan could only theorize that it was due to Klaus' encouragement that made Lukan less afraid, and that it was this snow leopard being more involved in the otter's life than the raccoon's. Still, Lukan had to wonder...

"Well of course I am! All this time, it makes me wonder what they're plotting..." Klaus said.

"N-no one is plotting anything!" Lukan exclaimed. Even Lukan was surprised at his brashness. There was no warranting it. Where did it come from? Lukan immediately regretted it when he saw the look on his boyfriend's face. "I-I'm sorry Klaus, I... I just really don't think it's a really big deal. Aero pretty much said that as long as we stick together, we'll be fine, right?" Well, he knew that Aero did not say that per se, but it was implied.

Klaus took a deep breath. "M-maybe you're right. Maybe I am just letting the thought that Platt has a new boy to ruin get to me a little too much. I-I can be.. Jealous," Klaus stated.

"O-of what!? Y-you have me now, s-so...!" Lukan was beginning to wonder just what was on the otter's mind. There was no conceivably good way that the otter could be thinking these thoughts! Lukan just knew it! What... what was going on here?

Klaus shook his head. "No. Jealous isn't the right word. But I really just hate the idea so much... I want to know what's going on. And I want to know now!" That was just as esoteric as before! Klaus used to talk about Lukan's strange behavior freaking him out. But is vice versa really okay?!

"K-Klaus... Y-you need to focus on what you have now. Not what others do, o-okay? It can't be good for you to think like that!" Lukan breathed.

But Klaus seemed to ignore the words that Lukan had said to him. "I-I swear I will get to the bottom of this... I won't let anyone hurt each other again."

Lukan just shook his head, not even sure what to say to that anymore. In fact, after that point, raccoon and otter spoke no more to each other for the remainder of the night. The snow outside was becoming heavier, forebodingly gifting Lilac Grove a precursor of the season soon to come. And Lukan felt that it was going to be rough more than just the weather. Does the otter possibly have a point here?

Klaus' truck would not start when it was just about time for Lukan to go to work the following day. The snow had piled up higher than anyone was expecting, painting the town a blinding bright white. So bright that Lukan found himself squinting the entire time he was ever outside. "Oh come on...!" Klaus growled. The engine sputtered, but refused to turn over for the fiftieth time. "Fuck!" he cursed, thoroughly upset. Klaus slammed a fist on the dashboard. Lukan sat next to him, not sure what to say or do about the situation. He knew that even if they started walking now, they were going to be late for work. Klaus let out a sigh of frustration as he pulled the key from the ignition. "Well. My truck has finally taken its last shit! For now, I hope."

"So..." Lukan approached the situation cautiously. "What should we do now?"

Klaus shivered. "I dunno, but sitting in this cold ass truck won't help. I guess we start walking?"

Lukan jumped before he even knew why. It was as if his body had an instantaneous and brief premonition of something out of the ordinary and prematurely reacted before he knew why. But a split second after he jumped in his seat, he saw why.

A snow leopard was standing outside their truck. A dull, grayish blue snow leopard covered in mostly crescent shaped spots, sporting piercing and intensely bright cyan colored eyes. And there were spots on his wrists. Heart shaped ones. It was Will, the snow leopard that Aero had warned them about.

Lukan almost did not want to exit the truck or interact with that creature and bide the time it took for him to go away. He exchanged mildly panicked looks with Klaus. The otter's eyes shone brightly, filled with emotions. Many of them Lukan could not discern. A sad part of Lukan knew that he was going to have to face him sooner or later, so he gathered his willpower, and opened the door to the otter's truck.

Will spoke almost immediately. "I see you guys are having some problems with your truck?" he spoke in earnest kindness. If it was a facade, it was a damn convincing one. Lukan almost felt taken aback. However, despite this, Lukan proceeded with the utmost of caution, as he usually did with any stranger.

"Y-yeah. It won't start," Lukan replied slowly, not taking his eyes off the creature. Will nodded in understanding. "Where are you both going, if I may ask?"

Lukan was trying to discern what the snow leopard's intentions were. He could not do so yet. "To work," he answered simply. "We are going to be late if we can't get there now!" he added somewhat fretfully.

The spotted feline nodded again. "Well, I'm no mechanic. I can't help you fix this truck. I can, however, help you get to work, if you want?" the creature's offer seemed genuine. His smile was warm. Inviting. Legitimately kind. Lukan was trying to search for red flags that would justify Aero's suspicion of this creature. But he found none. Not even his own natural distrusting nature was allowing him to feel suspicious. Was Aero wrong or...?

"No thank you." The voice was bone chillingly low and firm. Lukan looked to his left to see the otter looking straight down at his steering wheel, his emotions appearing to be intense yet, forcefully subdued by the otter's own self control.

Will raised an eyebrow. "Are you sure now...?"

Lukan nudged the otter with his elbow. "Hey Klaus, we're going to be late for work if we can't drive there right now! I think we should!"

Klaus shook his head. "A-are you nuts!?" he hissed. "D-do you know--!?" he stopped himself. It seemed that even Klaus did not want to openly express suspicion of the snow leopard. Instead he shook his head. "I'd rather take an attendance point," he replied.

"Why?" Will chimed in before Lukan could respond.

Klaus seemed to hate being addressed by the feline again. "Haven't you heard of stranger danger?"

"That's for children!" Will countered, speaking exactly what Lukan was wanting to say. "I ain't going to hurt anybody," Will promised, sounding convincingly and sincerely. Klaus, however, was not buying it.

"I said no thank you," Klaus was losing his self control. Lukan was hating that despite what Aero said, he was not giving the snow leopard the benefit of the doubt and giving him a chance.

Will's eyes flashed and Lukan could not even guess why. "I-I see. Well uh... Good luck to you two then." And without another word, the snow leopard strode away, effortlessly treading through the accumulated snow.

Klaus shuddered slightly in his seat when Lukan could no longer see Will. "Wh-why the fuck did you just suggest we go with him, despite what Aero said about him?" Klaus demanded. His voice was soft. Ominously so. Lukan could barely believe that the otter was getting mad at him for this.

"We're as good as late for work right now, that's why," Lukan replied, trying to keep his voice even. "I-is Aero even right about him?"

Klaus shook his head violently. "Please... Don't try to confuse me even more Lukan; I thought you were trying to dispel my worries..." he said monotonously.

Lukan looked down. He was failing in that goal, that's for sure. But even so, he couldn't just jump to conclusions! "He seemed so nice, though..." He wasn't sure where he was going with that.

"I'm sure those people you lived with in Bright seemed really nice at first too though, huh?" Wow. That was a low blow. Lukan felt tears welling in his eyes from that statement. But he knew that the otter had a point. Still, Lukan wanted to stop automatically assuming all creatures were bad. Klaus himself had given him that lesson! And Lukan wanted to put what he learned to use, despite everything Aero said.

"K-Klaus..." Lukan did not know what to try and say to the otter now. "Alright, fine, let's start walking in the cold, when we could have gotten a quick ride there." Whoa. Where on Earth did that passive aggressiveness even come from? Wherever it did, Lukan did not like it. Lukan jumped out of the truck, and immediately starting walking in the direction of work, without checking if Klaus would follow.

Klaus did not show up to work for a while that day. Lukan was growing increasingly worried about him, and even more worried about the fact that he had made him upset. Lukan understood why Klaus was being the way he was, but he wished the otter would be more reasonable.

Worst of all for that day though, was Eira's trademark irritating nosiness. She would not stop asking Lukan about Klaus. Where he was. What happened to him. Why he wasn't there. Anything and everything in between. As well as why Lukan was late. Lukan was already in a bad mood from earlier, and then there was this? Lukan could not believe that he did not snap at her again like some days before.

The day also dragged on forever, it seemed. Time slowed. Stopped. Could swear it even reversed. It was like Father Time desired nothing more than to toy with Lukan's sanity. Lukan tried to keep himself busy. Sweeping the same spots of the store more than once. Circling it, checking for tasks that needed to be completed. Evading Eira, and his supervisor and managers. Trying his best to help out customers with their esoteric requests, even though he had no ideas on how to. It was what he did every day. But today it felt like he did so way, way more than he should have in the allotted time in his schedule.

When there was an hour left of his shift, that was when he saw the otter walk in, over three hours late. The otter kept his head down, and he looked like he wanted to be anywhere else in the world but where his two paws were planted. He went to work with the other unloaders and stockers, even though they had already finished the first part of their jobs. Lukan wasn't even sure he wanted to go and greet the otter for fear that he would not be positive in response. Lukan sadly sighed, and went back to his duties.

"Did I uh... Cause a problem between you two?"

The voice that Lukan had heard hours earlier made him jump a mile in the air. William was back. Lukan sighed, not looking in the direction of the creature. "Um... Sorta." Half lie. Will absolutely did, but he did not want the cat to feel responsible for anything.

"Are you two friends?" Will queried, not reacting at Lukan's response.

"More than that," Lukan muttered, immediately regretting doing so. Why would he though? Will more than likely knew that they were from Platt! But if he did, why would he ask?

"I see..." Will enigmatically replied. "So you love him, don't you?" he continued more questions that Lukan knew the answers to, but did not want to explicitly state them.

"Well..." Lukan started, but Will detected his hesitance and reacted before Lukan could reply.

"You're not certain. I can sense it in your voice," Will said. "Love is a weird thing. An emotion that often tricks the mind. Makes you unsure of what you want. Clouds your judgment and makes you do what you wouldn't normally. Can say that it's the most potent and dangerous drug ever conceived. To think it wasn't made by any creature's paws makes it even more of a wonder, don't you think?" Okay, now Will was starting to speak weirdly, just as Klaus had said weeks ago when they had met. Lukan did not even follow what he even said either.

"I-I am certain though!" Lukan countered, trying to sound as if he meant it.

"Or are you just happy that you aren't lonely anymore? Are you sure it is love you feel, and not something else entirely? How do you know what love actually feels like?"

Aargh, these questions were making Lukan's head hurt. How could he possibly answer them!? "I-I just do!" Genius. Absolutely brilliant. Award winning! Actually no, that was atrocious. But then he wondered for a moment, how Will actually did feel about Platt since the two of them were dating. But he did not want to directly segway into something like that without being too awkward. God Lukan was so bad at socializing.

"You just... do." Will echoed simply.

"Wh-who are you anyways?" Lukan asked, trying to get more of an idea of just that and failing.

"I'm what I like to call... an agent of reality," Will replied. "This world is filled with creatures filled with delusions and influenced by illusions. Stuff that pretends to be one thing, but really in reality is something else entirely. My only desire is to blow a way these clouds that have spawned from such trickery. Are you aware that some creatures fabricate such filth, because it is in their nature?"

Wait what? Now what was he talking about? Lukan just wanted to say goodbye to this creature now. He was starting to see why Aero found him a problem... Was this what he had said to the otter weeks ago too? Lukan did not respond. So Will went on anyways.

"Be wary of those creatures, raccoon. I think you know about whom I talk about, right?" Will queried.

"N-no I don't actually." Now Lukan was trying to keep his annoyance under control. God, why do some creatures do this to him!? And some may wonder why he was a misanthropist.

"There are many," Will started. "But one of the worst, are foxes. You've read about them in mythological stories and folklore haven't you? Deceitful. Conniving. Untrustworthy all around. 'Course all creatures can be. Which is why I ask... Who do you trust, coon?"

Lukan immediately knew where this was going now. The second he mentioned foxes, he knew. Will was going to tell him not to trust Aero, wasn't he? Great... This was all he needed right now. "I trust Klaus."

"Trust can be a powerful, yet devastating thing. Don't misuse it," Will said. And before Lukan could even try and figure out what the snow leopard was even saying anymore, the cat just walked off without another word. No farewell, no closure on anything. Completely left Lukan hanging. The raccoon's mind was buzzing with what he had just said. Well, he was wrong about Will telling him to distrust Aero, but Lukan knew for a fact that implication was there. Did Will know that he, Klaus, and Aero all met already and were told not to trust him? Just what was going on anymore!?

Once work was over and done, Lukan debated on trying to catch the otter on his break or not and tell him what he had just discussed with the arcane snow leopard. Part of him wanted Klaus to know, but another part of him didn't even want to be in his company if the otter was still mad at him. In the end, Lukan shook his head and began to walk home, in the bitterly cold, by himself.

It felt odd doing so now. He hadn't had much time to himself within the past nearly two months. He had almost always been in the comfort of the otter's presence. To be alone now felt strangely, lonely. No, this wasn't solitude anymore. This was loneliness. What was going on...? Lukan never really felt lonely before. He always felt that he never needed no one in his life! Then the otter came and turned that around. And now that the otter wasn't with him at that moment, everything felt different. Lukan hated this feeling. He hated it so much. He never thought he'd see the day that him being alone would haunt him. It made no sense to him! He wanted to go back and try to reconcile with the otter, but something kept him from doing so.

He also had to think of what the snow leopard had said to him. Love is a drug? What illusions? Who to trust? Just what did that all mean? Then Lukan remembered what the cat had allegedly said to Klaus. Controlling himself. How he perceived things. Did they all mean something together? Maybe it was time to console Aero and tell him everything that Will told them both. That had to have been the best idea, in Lukan's mind. But all he hoped for, for the time being, was that he and Klaus would still be okay.