

If the larger squirrels and their strange language hadn't been enough of a clue for Aldin, the hovercraft they rode in to the hospital/clinic was the final proof. As their Fudd allies would say back home, he wasn't in Maine anymore. Somewhere in the far back of his mind through this, he worried what would happen to him in this world as it obviously wasn't his world. He knew he wasn't going to get far unless he learned the language. It was frustrating trying to communicate in (chitter)speak with Orlan as intermediary. He already had picked up a couple of words, but he had a long way to go. Fortunately, he was a quick study like his father and grandfather before him. Hopefully, that would be of help to him now.

He was only partially caught off guard when a raccoon wheeled out a wheelchair for him to ride in. It was proportionally larger in size to his two companions. There was an assortment of other species in the clinic, both patients waiting to be seen and those who worked there. Most were bipedal and bigger than him. Though the others stared a little, they quickly remembered themselves and went back about their business, especially if Aldin glanced their way. Aldin was wheeled out back into an exam room that looked similar to those at home and didn't need Orlan to explain he needed to get up on the table.

"I do as others yearn best I can," he chittered to Orlan.

Two orderlies poked and prodded. They took his blood pressure, his temperature, weighed him, measured him, and took a blood sample. All the normal sort of tests one would go through at home. Then they wheeled in what he assumed was a portable x-ray and aimed it at his broken arm.

"Good we eat first," he confided to both Orlan and Aouphril after all the testing.

The doctor on duty, an older rabbit, came in soon after. Before he could say anything, Aldin scrambled as far back on the bed as he could drag his injured self, chirling an alarm and thrashing his tail about. "Predator!" he screeched in (chitter)speak.

Both Aouphril and Orlan stared at Aldin as he cried out. Both fought down panic themselves over that warning cry.

The rabbit turned to Orlan and Aouphril, "Your son is afraid of me."

"He's not our son, Dr..."

"Hanter."

"Dr. Hanter, it's a long story," Orlan replied. "First let me see if I can calm him down." Orlan turned to Aldin and in a calm tone asked in (chitter)speak, "What mean predator," raising his tail in a brief questionmark. (curiousflick)

Dr. Hanter glared in indignation. “Is this some kind of a joke? We don’t treat wild animals here.”

Aouphril responded, “Please, give him a moment, doctor.”

Aldin forced himself to calm a bit. “Sorry” he responded in (chitter)speak, drooping his tail. “My home rabbit fight squirrel. Squirrel fight rabbit. Not normal rabbit. Demon rabbit predator. Squirrel prey.”

Orlan stared at him a moment and turned to Dr. Hanter. “Doctor. As I said, he’s not our son. And he’s not a wild cousin though he looks like one. When was the last time you saw a wild squirrel around here? He is a stranger come among us from far away. Apparently, where he comes from his kind and what he calls ‘demon rabbits’ are at war with each other. You look like a demon rabbit.”

The rabbit doctor stared at Orlan a moment. “Okay, so my patient isn’t just injured. He and possibly you are mentally unstable. There hasn’t been a war in centuries.”

“Like I said, he’s from far away. It’s a long story, and I doubt you have time for it.”

Dr. Hanter drooped his ears. “No, I don’t. You saw the waiting room. It’s been a busy evening.”

Aldin chittered at Orlan. He pointed to Dr. Hanter’s fingertips and then his own. He then moved his hand back and forth from the tip of the claw out to about 3 times the length. He uttered a ‘snick’ sound while pantomiming this.

“He said, he realizes you’re not a demon rabbit. They can extend their claws. You can’t.”

“I’m a rabbit, not a cat,” Dr. Hanter quipped. He didn’t have time for this nonsense. “Are you sure he’s mentally stable?”

Orlan repeated the question best he could in (chitter)speak. Aldin looked Dr. Hanter in the eye and spoke in English, “I’m not crazy. I’m sorry for my behavior.” And then continued in the local language, “Dock-ter Hand-ter.” He repeated it best he could in (chitter)speak for Orlan to repeat in the local language.

Dr. Hanter stared a moment. “What kind of gibberish is that?” He shrugged. “Anyway, whoever set his broken bone did a good job of it,” he said as he looked at the x-ray on a handheld flat panel screen. “Fortunately, it was a clean break. I won’t need to do more than to put a cast on it. Before I do that, let’s look at that tail...”

An hour later they were back out front. The receptionist asked who was paying. Orlan translated and Aldin drooped his tail. “I owe you and Ohfril.” Orlan placed his hand on the reader to cover payment out of his account.