

Chapter 69

Abigail pulled the university van into the parking lot at the Canaan Bowl-o-Rama. Furry club members emptied out of the van and entered the bowling alley. Rick and Abigail lingered at the van briefly to make sure it was locked before following them.

“I’m still surprised you wanted to come tonight, hon.”

“Why? I wouldn’t want to miss a chance to attend a furry club event on a night when I’m actually free.” He drooped his tail. “It’s one of the drawbacks of my new position, hon. It’s been hard to make any of the furry club happenings. Besides, I love the pizza, here.”

“I was concerned this anniversary would bother you.”

“Why would it bother me?” He asked wigwagging his tail. “Provided, I should have died here a year ago, but it all worked out for the better. At least to me, it has. I love the new me. I know it’s been awkward at times for you. I really appreciate how you’ve stood by me through this and for you stepping up to take my place as club advisor.” He stood-up and hugged her tightly a moment, before letting go and turning back towards the door. “I’m happy to embrace this new bod...” he trailed off as she opened the door for him. They both looked puzzled as things were dark beyond the doorway. Rick shrugged. “Maybe it’s a power outage, again.”

He scampered in and the lights were suddenly thrown on revealing well over seventy-five people packed within the small bowling alley. All yelled, “SURPRISE!” Rick turned and nearly bolted, except Abigail was behind him, blocking his way. His tail whipped about in fear. Then he saw the large banner against the far wall above the lanes:

HAPPY FURTHDAY, PISTACHIO!!!!

Rick glanced at his wife as he quickly calmed down.

“Thanks for not running me over, hon. I had nothing to do with this, honest. I’m as surprised as you are. I guess this is why the students were very insistent I make sure you came with us tonight.”

Rick glanced over at the owner, Bud Armstrong, behind the shoe rental counter. He raised his hands in a blocking gesture. “Don’t look at me, I simply agreed to rent-out the whole center to the group. And, honestly, I love it when you show-up. You always attract a crowd, which is good for business.”

A student in a purple raccoon fursuit stepped forward and removed her head, revealing, Josie, the student fur club’s newly elected president.

Rick’s face brightend-up. “You got a suit, Josie! It looks wonderful!” He pointed to the sign with his tail. “Happy Furthday?” Rick asked raising his tail briefly in a question mark gesture.

“Thanks! I bought the head but made the suit with a little help. It still needs some work, but I love it. As for the sign, several past and present members of the club got together over the summer and plotted this recognition event for you, Stash. It wasn’t intentional at first to put it on the anniversary of the accident that triggered your transformation. That just turned-out to be the date that was available.” She shrugged. “So, that’s why we went with the banner we did. You’ve shown such resiliency in how you’ve handled your transformation. After a group discussion, we made-up the term Furthday to mark the event. Your furry rebirth day. So, we combined fur with birth and came up with furth.” She paused a moment and then added. “I hope we haven’t upset you with this.”

Stash smiled and hugged her. “No, not at all. I love it.” He turned to the crowd. “Thank you, all,” he called out. “I’m overwhelmed with this surprise ‘furthday’ event! I hope there’s plenty of pizza! Let’s have some fun!” The crowd cheered again.