

## THIRTY

Blossom entered her room and found Moselyn in her hammock curled-up and sobbing. Blossom went straight over to her. “What’s wrong, Moselyn?”

Moselyn looked up at her roommate with tear-filled eyes. “My parents...” she sobbed some more. “They are more upset then I expected over my learning to climb. I can only go home for Winter Solstice break if I cut my claws and promise not to climb again.”

Blossom’s tail lashed about as she pulled her flatpanel off her fur and called-up the parental agreement for attending the senior school. She scrolled through it, paused and held the panel where Moselyn could see the screen.

*By applying our pawscan to this agreement, we, the parents of this student, grant shared guardianship of our young adult child with the teaching body of Rock City Senior School.*

Blossom scrolled further down.

*By applying our pawscan to this agreement, we understand that our young adult child may explore other lifestyles and will not interfere in that exploration, trusting that the teaching body of Rock City Senior School will keep our young adult child safe in that exploration.*

Her tail continue to lash about in her anger as she asked Moselyn, “Did your parents fail to read the school agreement before accepting it?”

Moselyn sniffled. “If they did, I don’t think they care.” She fell silent for a moment.

There was a scratching at the door and then Sanie entered as both Moselyn and Blossom had reprogrammed the door to grant him automatic access. He still gave warning before entering by scratching lightly, per custom. He saw Moselyn’s distressed look and concern filled his muzzle.

“What’s wrong?”

Both of them filled him in on what had happened. Now Sanie’s tail thrashed about.

Sanie took Moselyn’s forepaws into his. “I’m going to call my mother. I want you to speak to her.”

Moselyn hesitated briefly. “How will that help?”

“Trust me in this.”

She nodded slightly. “Okay.”

Saniel placed the call through his flatpanel. It didn't take long for Carulin to answer.

"Saniel! This is an unusual time for you to call. Is there something wrong?" There was motherly concern in the tone of her voice.

Saniel turned around his flatpanel so the camera would allow his mother to see Blossom and Moselyn.

"Yes, but not for me. I can't wait to be home for Winter Solstice break in three weeks. I'm in Blossom's room with her roommate, Moselyn. Moselyn, this is my mom, Carulin."

They exchanged greetings.

"We've been three-way dating, Mom. Moselyn has grown-out her claws and I've been teaching her how to climb."

Carulin smiled. "What do you think of climbing, Moselyn?"

Moselyn hesitated a moment. "My claws ached the first time and I was a bit scared and a bit dizzy once we were twelve mits up. I've gotten good at it and the school counts it as physical ed. As to what I think of it? I'm not really sure yet." She paused a moment and glanced at Saniel. "I've been learning it in order to impress Saniel."

"Twelve mits on your first try?" Carulin responded with her tail showing briefly on screen behind her. "Wow! I couldn't do half that height when Jessophat, my husband and Saniel's father, started teaching me to climb. You're much braver than I was on your first try."

"Mom, Moselyn needs to talk to you." Saniel lowered his voice. "Her parents are acting like your parents I never met."

Carulin's eyes narrowed and her tone became very serious. "Transfer this call to her flatpanel and then I want you and Blossom to give us some privacy."

Moselyn wigwagged her tail nervously as she pulled her flatpanel off her fur so Saniel could transfer the call.

"You'll be fine," Saniel reassured her as he tucked his flatpanel back onto her fur. Blossom gave her a reassuring paw squeeze and followed Saniel out of the room.

"Start from the beginning, Moselyn," Carulin encouraged after she heard the door close.

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Saniel and Blossom spent time studying in his room. Drexle was slightly startled when he came in 50 ceclicks later not expecting to see his roommate in their room as he seemed to spend most of his time in Blossom's and Moselyn's including most nights.

“Welcome home, stranger,” Drexle joked at him. “Hello Blossom. Roommate issue?”

“Parent trouble,” both of them said in near unison.

“Moselyn needs some privacy,” Blossom added.

Drexle nodded as he got into his hammock. He got comfortable on his stomach, pulled out his flatpanel, and like them started studying.

Another 50 ceclicks went by. Saniel’s panel chirped indicating an incoming call. He quickly answered.

“Hi, Mom. I’m in my room with my roommate, Drexle, and Blossom. What’s up? Do you need this to be private?”

“No need to ask them to leave. Briefly, Moselyn might be coming home with you and Blossom at the end of the semester. I’ve already reached out briefly to Schoolmaster Pekan. Moselyn should be on her way to meet with him right now. She can fill you in as she wishes after that meeting.”

“Understood. Thank you, Mom. Love you!”

“Love you too, hun. Gotta go. The Schoolmaster is calling me back, probably to discuss my offer in more detail with Moselyn.” Carulin ended the call.

Drexle whistled. “That level of serious parent problems, huh?”

Both the squirrels drooped their tails. “You could say that. Her folks are upset she’s learned to climb.”

“What?! But that’s what your species is great at! I’ll admit I’m a bit jealous. I’m not a bad climber myself going up, but it’s slow going climbing back down backwards as I can’t turn my feet backwards like you.”

“Even so, they’re threatening to not let her come home unless she immediately stops.”

“But that’s in violation of the school agreement.”

Saniel and Blossom nodded.

Drexle drooped his tail. “Thank you for sharing. I promise I won’t discuss the issue with her unless she offers to share first.”