

A Routine Mail Check

By: A.X. Bueno

It's a quiet day in the house of Sid and Darren. That is till Darren jumps the last few steps of the house's massive staircase with a naturally giant sized boom. This makes Sid fall over on his small spot on the armrest of the macro sized couch right into a big pile of mail also on the armrest and Darren notices this right away.

Darren: "Oh hey Sid, sorry about startling you. I didn't notice you there at first, what are you up to with all that mail?"

Sid: "I'm sorting through all of it and throwing some of the older stuff out. We need to go through our mail more because look at this!"

Sid passes Darren an open letter that says September 23rd, 1535 A.M.C.S* on it

Darren: Wow! This letter is a month past being as old as our first anniversary together" there's a pause "hard to believe it's been six years since we first meet" Darren whispers under his breath.

Sid: "That's exactly why I'm going through our mail. Some of it predates when this house started being built and there's a few of these letters that even go back to before I first met you back in the cave you used to crash in. Really should have done this sooner too. I mean have a look at this letter for instance, it's for you and is trying to sell you a better energy plan for your home. It's from two years ago back when this house just started being built by the city and we were staying in that massive tent in the meantime. It's kind of funny how they were trying to sell you home stuff before this home even existed. Right, Darren? Ummm... Darren, you good big guy?"

Darren was distracted thinking about where the time has gone as well as flashing back to his previous home and more importantly back to his first meeting with Sid back when he still lived in a cave. He snaps back to reality.

Darren: "Uh-huh... wait, what? My bad I got lost in thought for a minute there. What were you saying?"

Sid: "I was saying how funny it is that they sent letters trying to sell you stuff for a home you didn't even have yet."

Darren: "Hahaha! Yeah that is funny. Umm... say that's a lot of mail, why don't I help you out with sorting it?" Darren says after thinking some more

Sid: “Oh, THANK GOODNESS! I was about to ask you actually because jeez is this a lot. I may be strong enough to lift all your mail and everything but man can sorting through it become such a chore. Sit down and help me with it... please hon?”

Sid says after giving a sigh of exhaustion before then pointing to a distant for him spot on the couch before patting the spot of couch headrest that he’s on and pleading with his big amber eyes. Darren proceeds to sit down on a couch cushion and grab an envelope tearing it open with a flick of his retractable cat claws.

Darren: “Of course my handsome bull. Let me sit down and start opening these with you.”

Darren sits down at the spot Sid gestured at earlier and makes a small pile of letters to be opened for himself. For the next hour the two sit and occasionally chat while sorting the mail just handling this chore in the loving and tranquil company of each other. Everything is quiet until Sid with his orange furred fingers picks up a giant letter different from the rest in that its date is only two days ago. It’s unopened and has a glossy crimson flourish on it’s edges. It’s addressed to Darren directly so Sid hands it to him and Darren takes it, opens it and reads it before his whiskers droop and a frown forms on his jaguar face. He turns to look at Sid.

Darren: “H-HERE! Take this back and toss it in with the trash, I DON’T WANT IT!”

Darren is nervous and shivering slightly for a good few seconds. Sid catches this and questions what’s going on with his boyfriend.

Sid: “Why? What did it say? Let me see.”

The bull tries to jump into Darren’s golden paw to grab the letter but the big cat moves before he makes it there instead colliding face first with the Jaguar’s fluffy chest(luckily for the both of them not horns first) and this makes Darren lets out a small oof but is otherwise unfazed catching Sid in the paw without the letter in it.

Sid: “Come on now, don’t be difficult about this. Just show me it, you can trust me. Whatever’s in there I’m not gonna think any less of you for being scared by it or whatever it’s making you feel, after all I love you.”

Darren: “Fineeeee! I’m gonna hold you to that though.”

Darren huffs then hands over the red flourished letter with reluctance and Sid moves his eyes across it reading it quickly then turns to Darren with a grin.

Sid: “Oohhh this is an invitation from Stefan! That big stygian owl friend of yours asking to hang out, why would you be scared by this exactly?”

Darren: “Don’t you remember where he lives and what I’d need to cross to get there? That’s why?”

Sid: “He lives in Springflow City and you’d need to cross... ohhh I see now. You’re scared of crossing Last Corner Canyon, is that it?”

Darren: “**OF Course That’s It!**” Darren shouts with a nervous yell.

Darren: “Have you ever seen it up close?! That place is creepy as all get out. Plus that’s where the last battle of the macro cataclysms happened. Do ***You Know*** what that means?!”

Darren’s voice is now booming and full of fear and worry. Sid merely looks at him confused and tries to actually understand the source of his boyfriend’s panic.

Sid: “That it’s a valuable and ancient historical site? That you don’t want to approach it because of an important battle?”

Darren: “So you haven’t seen it up close then.” Darren mutters under his breath

Sid: “What?”

Darren: “Nothing, but to answer your questions technically it’s both but neither. Don’t you understand?! It’s not just the site of **some** important battle. It’s the site of **THE** Battle of Last Corner Canyon. The gruesome final battle of the Great Macro Cataclysms, where hundreds maybe thousands died on both sides of the conflict before everything ended with the Cornered Armistice which stopped the violence and officially allowed for macro protectors like me. How did you not learn this in school or something?”

Sid: “I don’t know. For us smaller folks we just learn the prelude to the Great Macro Cataclysms, then we get into brief summaries of the multiple Cataclysms themselves and then skip to all the aftermath stuff. We don’t really get into the specifics of the Cataclysms through the years or the specifics of all the battles. I know you macros learn differently than we do, I suppose I should have asked you sooner about it or something.”

Darren: “Maybe you should have but that’s not the point I was trying to make by bringing that all up. My point was that that canyon is practically a graveyard from that climatic battle. Full of broken and discarded and a whole bunch of skeletons especially giant ones! To get to Springflow

I have to cross that and that's scary. Some of those skeletons look five seconds from rising up and attacking me. I'm not going, it's too scary and dangerous."

Darren folds his arms and pouts and Sid puts a hand over his mouth and then Darren looks at his face and realizes the bull is holding in laughter making Darren frown a little.

Darren: "What'd I say? Why are you trying not to laugh at me, my darling?"

Sid: "I'm...*heh*, I'm sorry. It's just...amusing to me that someone who fights for a living would be scared of a bunch of skeletons *snork*"

Darren: "Well it's **not** funny. It would be a serious and possibly DANGEROUS trip which is why I'm going to politely turn Stefan down and stay hom-"

Sid: "I really think you should reconsider and go."

Darren: "What?! Why?"

Sid: "Well firstly this is a good friend inviting you to their city to hang out and I think you should respect that especially since it's not like you see each other that often. Secondly it's been dull around here for a few weeks and I've noticed you've been going a bit stir crazy with nothing to do in Rosettburg and it's starting to worry me a little. Thirdly, it's been a long enough time since you've traveled anywhere that I legitimately can't remember the last time you did, you could use the trip plus it'll help you get over a fear so that's a bonus."

Darren: "Pfft I'm not going stir crazy and also the last time I left this city was just months ago. It wasn't that long ago so yeah I don't wanna go. End of discussion."

Darren tries to fold his arms even harder in protest but can't so just eases up and scowls instead.

Sid: "Oh stop being such a fussy cub! I'm telling you it would be good for you to go plus you'd be meeting up with a friend and you've definitely complained to me before about how you don't do that enough."

Darren: "You may have a point but I can't believe you'd call me a fussy cub for not wanting to cross a former battlefield to see a friend. Also it's not just that there's also something else, something that makes me not want to go... I've been meaning to tell you but just haven't been able to until now I guess."

Darren rubs a gold pawpad down his other arm as he talks but before he can get back to confessing Sid interrupts him.

Sid: "If you're going to tell me about that small incident in Springflow Forest Stefan told me himself and I understand. I don't hold it against you and I'm not jealous, I know how much fighting...excites you."

Darren: "Oh what a relief. I've been worried about that for almost a year now. I should have told you myself though I just didn't, I'm sorry."

Darren's head hangs a little lower now but then Sid reaches over and rubs his speckled snout reassuringly and he perks back up a little.

Sid: "It's okay goldeneyes, just try to communicate with me better. Remember that you can tell me anything and try not to keep secrets like that since it usually leads to stress and that's no good. But anyway, are you ready to stop being such a fussy cub now and go visit Stefan?"

Darren: "Hmpph, of course you had to bring it back to that after reassuring me so well. I could eat you, you know that right?"

Sid: "Yeah I do and I know you won't"

Darren: "But I could"

Sid: "But you won't"

Darren: "I love you"

Sid: "I love you too. Let's get back to this mail now since that invite is meant for two days from now anyway. When you do go, don't forget to bring a shirt. A long sleeve one since it gets cold there... and also some pants."

Darren: " Alright, I'll dress for the weather this Saturday don't you worry. In the meantime yeah let's get back to sorting mail since there's still a few piles left to go through."

The two spend the next few hours sorting through all the remaining mail, eventually putting the trash in plastic bags to be thrown out later and the important mail is read or stored for later. After they finish they kiss and then go on to do other things to finish off their day.

*A.M.C.S stands for After Macro Cataclysms