

“Hmm, he don’t look like much.” The kangaroo said, peering through a small pair of binoculars at the spotted brown cat. A flash of blue caught the eye from his nose, inner ears and the pads on his palms and digits. “You sure this is the one?”

Across the globe, connected by the video call a voice let out a small irritated sigh, the owner of it hated being questioned.

“O-oh, right, boss.” The kangaroo said. His employer’s reputation was not something the ‘roo wished to experience firsthand. Especially given what he and others had been brought on to do. “We’ll be in touch when it’s done.” He turned and nodded to his company, a lithely built dragon and powerfully muscled bear.

Together they stepped from their hiding spot, crossing the rooftops as they centred in on their prey.

Marzipan, the feline they’d been viewing, hummed a catchy tune out loud, chiding himself for having that blasted song in his head *again*. He pushed his way out of the bathroom and felt a gust of air. Damn, did I leave the window open? He’d not needed to for a while though, so how-

The answer hit him with darkness, a thick feeling of some soft-lined material fell over his eyes, whoever held it was bigger than the cat, stronger too, pulling him back to bump against a shirted belly. “Ah, whahh-gnhhhnph!” His cry was cut out as a second attacker stuffed something firmly into his mouth, complete with a sleeve that covered his snout except for the nose. Pressure grew within as the stuffed item was inflated by a hand-pump, squeezed deftly to muffle him and leaving nowhere comfortable for his tongue to rest.

More hands, from a third assailant, grabbed marzipan’s belt-line, wrenching his clothing off while the other two swiftly pushed their hands along the leather straps that linked the muzzle and blindfold. They were buckled on, accompanied by a click and then as his legwear was pulled free he was dropped to the floor.

He tried to scamper blindly back, one hand on the ground while the other rose to his face, smooth pads rubbing the leather, finding the straps, feeling a cold metal padlock. “Mmmmh!” He gasped, not knowing what was going on even as the strong hands of the bear caught his legs. He tried to kick, tried to wave them away but he was casually hefted up by the bear, held upside-down with ease.

The kangaroo put on an affected growl to hide his voice. “Stop squirming if you don’t want us to get violent!” He threatened, pressing cold metal against him. Marzipan was sure it was a knife or a gun or worse.

“Mhh, n-nhh.” He stiffened and let out a quiet plea, begging them to show mercy as he hung limply.

He heard an odd creaking in the air as scaly hands closed over one of his, forcing it into a fist. A tacky tape, less potent than duct-tape, easier to remove without marring what it was spread over, was employed by the kangaroo, they wrapped Marzipan’s hands into tight fists then rolled up the wrist.

They didn’t stop there either, leather pouches- mittens were thrust over his already contained hands and zipped on. Attached cuffs pulled tight to prevent them coming loose and then the click of more locks sounded in the air.

“We’re gonna take your shirt off now, and then you’re gonna let us tie you up. Do that and we won’t dislodge a hair on your hide, got it?” The roo asked, pushing the flat of the metal crowbar against Marzipan once more. He kept the tool angled to keep the mystery of what it was. The cat let out a small sob and then nodded. The light cotton flew away from his torso as they pulled it off, catching on the mittens for a moment before stretching and falling free.

A finger ran along his toes, inspecting them, finding his claws a liability they too were sealed off with two more pouches. Marzipan’s heart was racing as they linked his ankles together at the cuffs then carried him over to his couch. They lay him on it, putting him down to work. From the exposed fur above the foot-pouches he felt more of that tape cling to him and build up.

His shins and thighs fell under it, then his belly was covered. His arms were spared until they reached his chest only to be wrestled behind his back and coated in the tape. He felt a pinch on one ear chased with a thick plug that blocked it from hearing. “Nnnhh, plhhh!” He whined.

“Relax, it’s just gonna be the one.” A different voice, that of the dragon, spoke out. The confusing fact wasn’t going to make him turn down the option to keep his other ear free, the thought of being blind *and* deaf terrified him.

With the ear plugged up the tape wrap continued, up to his chin then over the muzzle, anywhere that wasn’t covered by that was soon coated in the self-adhering tape. This was excessive for burglary yet they hadn’t made any other untoward advances on his liberties beyond manhandling him.

A zipper opened in the air, something made of light cool fabric passed against the cat’s legs then swallowed the tip of his toes. An expanding body-bag made of stretchy material matched his curves, adding pressure to the tape to help hold it on. Muffling in further panic Marzipan felt the top of his head vanish to the tape while his lower half was zipped within the fabrics. “What did we say about you letting us do this?” The kangaroo growled again.

His shoulders and arms were swallowed up yet before they shut his head away he was treated to even more gear. The pump-bulb from his muzzle-gag was unscrewed, the tube passed

through the mouth of a solid leather hood which was laced on quite securely before the pump was reattached. The bag was then pulled over his head, zipped with him lost inside.

Still they weren't finished! A lattice of harness-straps was connected, first to his shoulders and ankles, forcing him back into a hogtie, then a further web was connected over his folded legs, pinning them up. He was secured, buckled in that tight pose and then dropped for a moment.

"Aren't immortals usually a bit scarier?" The dragon asked with a derisive chuckle.

Marzipan's stomach twisted, if they knew about that curse on him then this wasn't just some random robbery.

"Doesn't matter, get ready to pack him up." The kangaroo added, only furthering Marzipan's concerned fear.

His body was lifted, twisted in the air, and then slid into a rougher, sturdier sack, barely big enough to fit his already compressed dimensions. The top of it was pulled up to his neck, then with a thrusting hand on his head pushed him the rest of the way in.

"Target secured, we're making our way out." The dragon said, from his tone he was contacting someone else remotely.

A thick swat, the kangaroo's strong tail, slapped the bagged feline. "That's for not resisting, asshole."

"Hmm." The bear mumbled, raising a questioning brow and staring at him.

"What do you mean? I wanted to have a bit of fun with him but you know the rules, if they don't fight..."

For all the terror seizing him Marzipan let out a slight sob of relief, if he'd put up a fight there's no telling what they might have thought of doing. The dragon spoke up. "Let's get him out of here, our eyes in the sky tell us if we move now there'll be zero witnesses."

The sack was scooped up, held against the bear's chest as the three kidnappers left via the front door, if anyone spied their actions they were prudent enough to keep their head down as the criminals stole into the night.

When they'd finished travelling Marzipan had been let free from the outmost sack then had his head revealed. From the echoes, he judged he was in a tiny cell of a room with no furniture worth the name.

They'd unzipped a pouch in the hood over one of his ears, unwrapping it enough to show off for the camera's that the cat was unaware of, leaving him to stew in the mystery of his

abduction. They'd offered no explanation or demands, instead forcing him to wait there. A full day passed before he received any action. The hood was zipped up once more, his bindings double checked and tightened where they'd grown a little bit loose, then they roughly thrust him back into the thinner bag before he was lifted and dropped in something new. It was something sturdier that felt like it had a padded foam outline, with a bit of squashing it he was made to fit within. It thudded softly with gentle weight around him.

From the outside the capsule looked like a suitcase, with no hint of the trapped feline within. Inside of it, Marzipan mewed in question again, he'd been good, surely that warranted something! Yet from how he only heard his own voice, and dimly at that, he realised the box he was in had been soundproofed. He couldn't hear a thing from outside even through his unblocked ear, until audio crackled through the plug in the blocked one.

"Hello." A charming voice piped up through the speaker. "I'm Gemini, your new employer and the one who purchased you. Did you know that you came with all that gear included at no extra cost? How exciting! Did you buy it yourself?" He asked with a chuckle.

The suitcase shook as Gemini made his presence known. "Here's what's happening, we're about to get on a flight, a flight that will take us well beyond sight of your home and to my wonderful club where we'll see about ... employee training." The white wolf said. "Won't that be exciting? Here's the best part, you'll be riding in the cargo hold. Going through scans that are bound to show you up! Trouble is, I've tipped a few staff quite generously to hold their tongue and ignore those scans. I guess you better hope an unvetted supervisor just happens by when you're going there or it's right back to my side you'll go."

The wolf smirked. There was no chance of the plan backfiring, yet giving 'new employees' a shred of hope to dash often made them that bit more entertaining to break later.

"I do hope you find all that gear exciting because compared to what I can put you through, this is just an appetiser. If you do hate it, better try to get loose before you're truly in my clutches!" The wolf teased before adding. "Still, we have a flight to catch, and you'll get to hear my wonderful voice throughout it. I do so look forward to seeing you face to face."

With that, Gemini fell silent, turning off the speaker. He flicked his hands, motioning for his escort to do the heavy lifting and carrying off his new purchase.