

# Fearless

By Bartan Tirix

The warm breeze passed through the heavy line of trees, gracefully flirting with many of the green leaves that have grown healthy over the spring. Now leading into summer where they could collect the sun's warmth when the clouds did not break the line of sight. But patience was their virtue, unlike the winds, which desired to keep moving and not seducing any young greens to follow this time around.

Leading them to find a new target in the long grass, gliding over it as it danced below. Each blade reaching up to give their attention to the invisible force as it moved along the greens. Until it suddenly turned into a deep purple with a much more coarse feel. Shorter too, as it covered a large dense rock. Black spikes erupted from its back, smooth, warm and almost glossy as it divided a thick row of golden grass. Like that of vibrant wheat of the late fall. Brushing up along with it and watching it dance in the same way.

Only for it to stop suddenly and come to a muzzle of a beast. Ah, yes. It wasn't a large rock or mountain, but a living titan. A behemoth of sorts, resting in what was once the shade earlier in the day. But time had shifted in giving it the warmth of an early summer sun, not that the beast seemed to mind. Resting his head on those large purple paws, crossing at the wrist to provide support as his titanic body relaxed, massaged by the warmth.

It was a perfect atmosphere for the creature, however it didn't quite last. His ear flicked upwards as instincts detected something. Eyes. Watching, but from afar. Scanning the area for several moments as the eyes didn't move. It was faint, so the predator was distant. Slowly beginning to feel... Familiar.

Ah. It was back. Some smaller creature the beast didn't recognize, but never seemed to pose a threat specifically. Everytime the purple one got up to view this thing, even so much as raising his large head, it would scurry and hide or keep far away. Somewhat colorful, so it wasn't great at hiding nor ambushing. The behemoth never knew what it wanted, but has been seeing it over the past month of him remaining in this location.

It was hard to give up such a nice spot. Wide open fields, good sunlight that wasn't as intense as the plains. A bit chilly due to that, however it was worth it to have one thing: a good

access to clean water. A couple of rivers within this territory creating barriers and converging into a couple of bodies of water. Large enough for even him to bathe in-

Those instincts suddenly alerted the behemoth that something was behind him, causing those thick yellow eyes to open up and ears to perk. Lifting his head towards the detection and instantly spotting the Navy... Bird? Resting up on an elevated rock nearby, instantly whimpering but standing still with a couple of objects in its hands. Making the beast growl a bit until he realized... It wasn't a dagger and a small shield.

"U-um... H-hi..." The small one whimpered, lightly raising their forepaws that kinda looked like wings with the objects in them. Grasping with a set of claws that birds didn't have, not even a beak. But instead... A snout? That of a lizard or a dinosaur? "I-uh... Um... W-wasn't..." The behemoth's large ear flicked but perked up. "I was just... Trying to... (does this thing even understand me?)"

No response, but no aggression from the purple titan. Just watching the theropod creature carefully as they moved the 'shield' around to reveal it was instead a notebook with a hard cover. Marked on it was a sketch, making the beast tilt his head at the shapes. "Y-you see, I was just... Trying to get a closer look at you so I could get more details, a-and..." The raptor at least noticed those large eyes shift and look at the page, and suddenly curl his neck a bit. It was... A drawing? Of the behemoth? "That's all I've been doing. I've got a few more too if you'd like to see them-"

"To what end?" The purple titan grumbled, making the feathered dino nearly yelp, but perk his crown.

"Y-you can speak...?" No response, just that heavy stare ready to pry out answers. "This... This is wonderful! Amazing news!" Not quite the reaction the purple one was expecting, and such a thing showed in a very slight shift in his expression. "It means you can be reasoned with! Oh, what a relief...!"

Silence as the smaller one looked over his gear before double taking at the large one. "F-forgive me, I'll explain. I'm a scout, hired to track and observe creatures to inform others if they're a danger to the civilians or farmers. Be it sick, ill, rabid or-"

"Violent." The behemoth nearly growled, but to his surprise it didn't seem to phase the smaller one. Watching them actually just sit back down and scribble a note. "So you could send hunters to cull me, is that it?"

"I do not make that decision, Drygg'makarr. But neither does my employer at this point." A very slight tilt in the large head and ear. "You do."

"What?"

"It is your choice if you are violent to others-"

"No, what did you call me." It was barely a question, making the smaller one double take. Then... Blush a little. "Out with it."

"O-oh, it means... W-well, Beautiful or Gorgeous Being." It struck the behemoth's mind unexpectedly, leaving the beast stunned and unresponsive for a few moments.

"...What?"

"I-I just..." The smaller one flipped through several pages. "I've... This is one of the longest jobs I've had, watching you closely over the past month from afar a-and... I've really started to grow fond of you. Your form, your uniqueness... How intimidating you look, I've never seen anything like it. S-so..."

Looking back up at the purple titan and now realized that there's a red tint in his ears. He was... Blushing a little? "...What?" Is all the large one could muster.

"Jaxi- I mean, I... I did the one thing I'm not supposed to do: I gave my target a name. A name of..." A shy whimper from the raptor. "Of endearment. Because truly you do look beautiful to me, to the point where I constantly have to see if I can get a closer and closer look. U-until... Right now."

Another awkward pause as the purple one half snorted, scanning the surrounding area and forests for a moment. "Is this some kind of ruse?"

"Ruse?"

"Are you trying to distract me for your ambush?" The small dinosaur tilted their head slightly before shaking it.

"N-no, Drygg. I work alone, and I don't get involved in the hunts." The beast narrowed his gaze, studying the raptor. Trying to intimidate the truth out of them, succeeding in getting a bit of fear from the little one but nothing else.

"Then what." Those feathered ears perked at the behemoth's demands. "What do you plan on doing with the information you've gathered. And what are you doing now." They were barely questions that just puzzled the small navy and red raptor.

"I suppose..." They started, taking a step forward. "I suppose I'm just following the flutter in my chest." A purple ear flicked upwards. "I..." A deep breath as the dino looked off to

the side. "I think you're beautiful. Ever since I first laid eyes on you, I... Felt some kind of connection. An allure of sorts, intimidating by size but there was just something else in there- and my suspicions were right! I just... I'm looking for some reason, any reason, to find that you are not a threat to others. Because the last thing I want is for people to hunt-" Their own magenta eyes finally met with the behemoths again; realizing that the large head was leaned back and gazing at the creature easily 1/20th his size in bashful confusion. "...I-..."

No response for several seconds as the area grew more and more awkward. Soon making the feathered one whimper. "...Please say something." They wined, blushing themselves. Giving the behemoth a few moments before finally snapping out of it. "Please?"

"...What?" The purple one nearly whimpered.

"L-let me start over." A deep breath from the smaller one, getting at least a little more confident around the behemoth. "My name is Jaxi, and I'm a scout. A watcher of creatures and beasts for those who do not know if something is a threat to them or not. I track them, observe them sometimes for a month at a time, and I report back my findings."

"And you've been hired to watch me."

"Yes."

"And what have you concluded?" The purple one said a bit coldly, his yellow eyes narrowing at the small raptor. Seeing them look at their sketchbook and back at the beast a bit sadly.

"...I haven't made a conclusion yet, but I can tell you what I hope for." They waddled over to a backpack and pulled out a different book; one with many notes in it and skipping through towards the end. "You're titanic, possibly unwarily so. Able to step and easily demolish most walls if given the intention. Even trees would stand no chance in your path, but perhaps an entire forest would slow you down, able for some to escape."

Those golden discs didn't lift. "But no real signs of aggression or destructive intention has been observed so far. Just... Rest. Lots and lots of rest within the sun and opened fields, along with the occasional b-bath. Unknown if the subject-"

["the Subject-"]

An immediate growl from the large one, actually interrupting Jaxi entirely. "Do not use that word." The massive beast stated sternly, keeping his ears back for a moment before returning them to a more neutral position. The words were nearly a demand, but not one presented through fear.

"...Target? Creature? S-sorry, I'm really trying not to be offensive." No response from the large creature. "U-unknown if the creature required subsistence or food & water, whereas I've never seen it hunt. With what little contact it has made with traveling merchants, even before I was hired... It's very possible that it has no ill will against any civilians, and will remain so unless they begin a conflict first." Silence as those large yellow eyes gazed over the raptor, making them a little uncomfortable. "That's... The summary of what I've learned about you."

"...I see." The behemoth finally answered. "...It pains me to admit this, but... I do not understand you. What do you want from me?"

"W-well, they would like to know if you're a threat to them-"

"I haven't decided yet." The surprisingly quick and cold answer actually made the raptor take a step back and nearly cower instead of double taking. "What is it that you want from me." The small one stuttered a little bit, but took a brave breath. Putting away the notebook with their studies written on it and showing the sketchbook again.

"I... I never got to finish many of them." The beast's head tilted a bit. "I could never get close enough to get all the details... I suppose if there's something I want, it would be-"

"To find my weakness? My vulnerable points-?"

"No!" The dino snapped actually interrupting the larger one. "I don't want to see you hurt, I just..." Jaxi's head fell, giving the purple one a very strange feeling. A pain of sorts. "Maybe I don't quite know what I want, but it's not a conflict. Between you and them or anything, I... I want to be your..."

"My what?" The large one grumbled.

"Your friend." Only to be completely stunned, unable to mask that slightly shocked expression as his own head and body started to lean back. "S-sorry to waste your time. I'll... I'll go tell my employers what you said." The feathered one mumbled and grabbed their pack, all while leaving the purple one with a sea of confused questions.

Your Friend.

The statement echoed in his head over and over, unable to understand what such a thing meant. Causing him to ponder it while treading around the forest and through the opened gap between the series of trees. A path he made so the large beast could reach the other side. Completely lost in thought by the concept ever since the raptor left a couple of hours ago, leaving the behemoth with the thoughts.

Friend. What even is that? The definition came to mind; an ally of sorts. But that entailed that there was an enemy, yes? Was that what the dinosaur's plan? To recruit the behemoth to fight a faction that opposed the feather one's livelihood or ideals?

The dino didn't even know the beast could even speak when they first met, so that couldn't be it... Could it? Or was it their employers who came up with such a plan? But then what did the navy creature want...? Stopping in place again and overlooking the grassy fields, both forwards and behind him.

I Want To Be Your Friend.

The concept was starting to frustrate him. So many unanswered questions about what it all meant, let alone why so much of that was missing from the beast's knowledge. Bringing up deep feelings about the past that nearly made the purple muzzle snarl and snort before moving forwards again. Walking faster due to being half angry and causing tremors with every step, hearing many animals and birds begin to scurry away, tugging at his attention.

But it wasn't until some strange vocal yelps from afar that really snapped his mind to focus on his surroundings. Sharply looking in the direction and spotting a wagon of sorts being pulled by a 'large' animal. Still a fraction of the behemoth's size, causing it to become frightened while the owners of such a thing nearly panicked. Detecting the fear from a distance, like a foul scent that only made the purple one angrier.

However, the behemoth only moved forwards out of sight, leaving those who were on the path behind. Submerging his consciousness into that thoughtful state as his instincts carried him across the meadows, still stuck on that damn raptor. Bringing up the same questions again and again, as well as that... Feeling.

I don't want to see you hurt.

What did they mean by that? The behemoth was a threat to them, was he not? Larger by a margin, stronger, more durable. Why were they not afraid- okay, as afraid as others? They still seemed to cower, especially when the beast got angry or annoyed, but... That little navy dino gathered some courage somehow to not flee. What was the source of such a thing? Pure interest? Desire for information? Or...

I suppose I'm just following the flutter in my chest.

The flutter in their chest... The behemoth felt something within his too during that conversation, but it didn't feel good, that's for sure. Like a strange discomfort or weight that was pulling in his powerful heart, actually making it sink a little. Was it a spell of sorts? Some kind of poison that was being tested on the beast? Maybe a form of manipulation that he didn't have a proper defense for?

Another low growl from that purple throat. Every thought and memory only brought more and more questions that tugged on his mind. One already filled to the brim with too many thoughts, yet out of all of them, a weaker one seemed to surface above all.

What if they were telling the truth?

It made the large one slow down to a stop, causing the other thoughts to fall like autumn leaves. What if the dinosaur was telling the truth, and their truth was... That they liked the Behemoth. That they really did think... What was that word? Drag-something? Meaning Gorgeous. Or Beautiful.

That feeling returned; the weight. Tugging on many areas within that muscled chest as the purple one began moving again slowly and in silence. Unable to make any sense of the statements, but just letting it echo gently in his mind. Finally calming that storm as he approached the water's edge and spotted his own reflection.

The Flutter In My Chest.

Again, the smaller one's words puzzled him. Overlooking the purple beast with the golden mane. A set of large horns thrust forward with some smaller ones behind them. A thick muzzle with powerful teeth, easily able to crush and shatter obsidian. A jacked upper body; the purple hide barely able to stretch across such muscle to protect it and causing his once fluffy coat to become spread out. Within all that were a pair of suns that pierced out of the shadow exterior... What were usually striking fear and intimidation from a distance were now just... Confused. And... hurt?

Meaning Gorgeous Or Beautiful.

No. No, the dinosaur was mistaken. They were only confused by fear and intimidation that the beast's presence omits. A walking apocalypse cannot be those things, only the opposite... Right? A long silence, both around the lake and within his mind, one that only intensified that feeling in his core. Occasionally attempting to find answers but nothing coming to mind.

...That feeling of being watched slowly returned like a glowing warmth. Taking quite a while before the beast was pried out of his own reflection and started looking around, once again spotting the navy raptor from before on the other side of the lake. Sitting up on a large rock with that notepad opened, focused on it for a little bit before looking up and double taking

at the purple one; now slightly moved and gazing at the small feathered dino. Nearly making them yelp in response, but shyly... Wave? In greeting?

They held the answers to his question, the behemoth knew that. And if he were ever going to stop that whirlwind, he would... Require their help or be driven insane chasing his own tail trying to figure it out. So with a deep breath, the large one started entering the water and moving towards the other side a bit slowly. The bed of water was actually deep enough to force the beast to swim, though making it a little harder to track where the smaller one was. Once a paw was able to take root on solid ground (still underneath the waters), the behemoth found himself a little ways off from the intended destination.

It took a moment to find the same rock, now missing its feathered sitter on top of it. Giving another sinking feeling in the large one's chest, almost of... Longing? Until some rustling was heard in the plants near said rock. "Halt!" The behemoth commanded loudly, actually getting a yelp from the raptor and confirming it was them. But the large one didn't give... Chase. Instead just walked towards it and finding the small dino almost cowering in the bushes. Now realizing just how small they were on equal grounds vs the upper hill from before. "I need to ask you something."

"W-what would that be...?" Like comedic timing, all questions that he once had vanished when now put on the spot, leaving the purple one to stare into space attempting to recall even a single one of those hundred questions. Every grasp only gave nothing or a scrambled mess of them that made no sense, leaving the large one to lowly growl while his face heated up. "Drygg'makarr?" The small one got the attention of those yellow eyes, now a little closer and looking up to the beast. "Take a deep breath."

Were... Were they trying to help him through this? Without considering his own pride, he did so. Closing his eyes and inhaling deeply before exhaling... And everything stopped moving. The questions, still sliding as if on ice but able to be grasped easier by his mind. Plucking one and reading it aloud as if observing it himself. "What did you mean... Fluttering in your chest?" That feathered crown perked a bit as the dino tilted their head. "What's wrong with me?"

"W-with you...?" The navy one asked, clearly puzzled as he looked over the behemoth. Resting magenta eyes on his very bulky chest and making the connection. "Have you been feeling it too?" The large one didn't know how to answer that, but silence spoke volumes. "Sometimes... When you find something or someone you like, your emotions get excited. Causing some good feelings in your heart area."

"Mine haven't been good though. They've been... Heavy."

"Have they?" A slow nod in response and the dino slowly approached his arm, reaching out one of their hands to ask permission to touch it. Getting a second nod, this time a little fainter before feeling contact with the small set of claws. Gentle. Almost soft against the thick purple hide, and then a flutter. Widening those yellow eyes with a bit of confusion. "And that-?"

"Was... A flutter." There was still a lot of questioning going on in that large head as the smaller one took another step back. Climbing up the rock again to be slightly easier for the behemoth to rest eyes on as he watched Jaxi sit down.

"The heavy feelings, when did they occur?" It took a moment for the beast to study the past events, but speaking bluntly before thinking.

"When I think about you." A slightly sharp whimper from the smaller one as the behemoth looked at them, all the navy and red feathers almost falling against the smaller one's form.

"When you... Think about me...?" And the weight returned, much much heavier and intensely as the yellow discs locked onto the magenta ones. The sorrow expression caught the large one off guard.

"Specifically when you look at me like that, or... When I think about you leaving." That eased the raptor's gaze up, but it was still hurt looking. "I never felt it before I met you, and I do not recognize what it is-"

"W-wait. You mean you've been feeling Guilt?" The purple beast actually stopped in place, perking his ears up and thinking. The definition came to mind easily, but didn't ever piece it together. "You've been feeling guilty? About... Hurting me or my feelings?" His heart rate started to increase, ears starting to blush, and a rapid discomfort began to build up. "That's... Kind of a good thing."

The behemoth sharply double-taked at the smaller one. "It is?"

"You know how you feel pain after doing something, yes? Like biting into stone hurts your teeth?" A puzzled look from the large one as his neck curled back, looking around and spotting a disc-like rock about the size of a car tire. Picking it up despite the dinosaur's look of horror. "N-no, no no! Don't actually-!" And the beast bit down on the rock, absolutely shattering it like that of a hard cookie and spitting out the taste of dirt and... Well, frozen magma. Studying how he felt afterwards but interrupted when a strange whine was heard from the feathered one. Spotting them... Covering their legs and belly while blushing. "M-mother of Gaia...!"

"I didn't really feel anything."

"P-please don't actively hurt yourself, Drygg." Another one of those strange whimpers, definitely not of fear but something else... Excitement? No, not quite. "Just try to imagine it instead. Regardless, it's your body telling you that something isn't right. Sometimes... It's not your body telling you, but your mind."

"I still don't understand how feeling this pain is a good thing."

"It means you have a conscience. It means you're more than just some dangerous beast that people are afraid of if you can feel sympathy for others, does it not?" That purple brow shifted to a confused sorrow, not quite getting where the small raptor was going. "I do not want to jump to conclusions just yet, what else has been causing these feelings?"

A long pause as the behemoth thought. "I... Don't really know. But you have me questioning a lot of things."

"Like what?" A bit of a sour look from the large one. "You can talk to Jaxi, they won't tell anyone what you say." The small raptor lightly played with a smile, reaching for their bag and pulling out a waterskin of sorts.

"It's not others I'm worried about offending." A noise in question from the navy one. "And the thought of you leaving makes me feel... Heavy." It didn't take long for Jaxi to put things together, eventually just making a verbal confirmation.

"I think I... Understand." That didn't get the attention of the behemoth. "But Jaxi will be here when you are ready to tell." No response. "I want to help, but it is hard for me to when you keep to yourself." Those eyes were at least shifting as the large one took another deep breath.

"I never felt this before I came here. Maybe it was there and I didn't realize it, or maybe it's because I didn't... Enjoy the company I was with."

"And you'd rather be alone than with negative company." That time they got a look from the large one, almost confirming such a thing. "So I'm guessing you left your home?"

"...You could say that. It's a change I don't regret, but the more I think about it... The more that weight started to be felt as soon as I got here. I was always under surveillance." A noise in question from the small one, making the beast double take. "Oh... Under watch?" He tried a different description.

"Oh, yes. Being..." A sharp whimper from Jaxi as they lowered their head. "A-and I've been watching you nearly an entire month, I'm so sorry! I w-was-"

"No, stop." Though the command didn't keep the raptor from whimpering again. "You did it in a different way, I know that now. If anything, I was thinking that they were still- ...That

they came back for me. Until I spotted you from afar, and I didn't recognize you."

"...And you're thinking they hired me to keep a watch on you...?" Some silence. "The people here really don't know what you are, so I doubt there is any real connection there."

"I doubt it too, but I can't be too careful." A heavy breath. "However, after seeing you this morning, I realized that you were not with them..." A low grumble was heard within that broad chest and that blushing tint returned again. "Your encounter sent me through a lot of loops. Mentally chasing thoughts around in circles." The smaller one chuckled at that. "And that feeling only intensified, I just can't figure out what it is-"

"Loneliness?" It actually stopped the behemoth in place, nearly shocked both at the idea and the possible answer. Yet... It fit in like a puzzle piece, causing those yellow eyes to slowly shift down and look at the navy raptor, smiling at him on the rock.

"...W-what?"

"Have you been lonely?" That time the beast ended up whimpering.

"N-no, that can't be it... Can it? I-I'm a solitary creature. I've been confined, that's just how I am. I shouldn't need..." As worrisome as the scattered thoughts were, Jaxi tried to keep a smile up. Though a bit saddened from what they heard. "Not to say that I don't enjoy your presence, I just..." That large head drifted down and lightly shook, keeping silent for a few moments.

"What is your name?" That got a little attention from the purple one, expecting his expression to shift between sorrow and anger. "I imagine they called you something else there-"

"Subject... 7849." A low grumble from the beast, but one that was expected. "I don't-"

"Yes, that will not do. You came here to seek a better life, yes?" The behemoth's expression was still quite mixed. "That's what I did as well. One of the first things I did was give myself a new name."

"Jaxi." It made them smile when the large one spoke it.

"What do you want to be called?" The purple creature was painted with confusion, only shrugging. "What would you like to be called?" An unusually shy whimper as he thought of something, only further expressing that red tinted blush.

"...Drygg." That feathered crown perked as the raptor's face lit up, making him feel awkward enough to look away. "T-the word you used before to describe me... As unfitting as it is for something like-" A soft landing was heard nearby before a gentle touch on the large purple

forearm, actually startling the beast a little to pull away and once again rest eyes on the smiling dinosaur a fraction of his size. Far less intimidated by the behemoth than he was of the small one at the moment.

"Nonsense. I think it fits perfectly." That flutter intensified greatly, as well as the large one's blush. And for the first time in a very very long time, the behemoth smiled instinctively. "So, for the third time today, let's try this. Hello Drygg, my name is Jaxi. And I would like to be your friend."

That time the feeling was too much, causing the large beast to place a hand on his chest to calm it down. Slightly worrying the raptor until that thick tail got their attention; tapping the ground with such energy as the behemoth attempted to regain control of his excitement. Unable to stop himself from smiling at such words. "I... I accept."

"I'm... Not sure what I'm supposed to be doing." The large purple beast sat there, trying not to move his fore paws while the small dino scribbled in their book. Occasionally needing to pause when the wind picked up, but luckily the behemoth was helping to block it.

"You're doing fine, I just need you to stand still. You'll love it, I promise." Jaxi chuckled, only looking up to see the shape of the heavy paws while lightly blushing before adding some more scribbles. "Can you clench your digits just a little?"

"Like this?"

"Perfect." As silly as it felt to pose for the small dino, it did make the behemoth shyly smile. Occasionally looking off into the lake when the breeze made the waters ripple or some fish jumped out, wondering how this would look to an outsider watching from afar... Kind of like- "Almost done."

Those large purple ears perked up and his chest got that feeling again. Not exactly as fluttery, but... Excited. To the point where Drygg started to lean forwards to sneak a look and kind of making something out. That is until that navy snout moved up to meet his large purple one, making the behemoth shyly move back away. However, they only smiled back, looking a

tad nervous about the sketch themselves.

"Let's just add a little bit more grass here and..." The raptor held the book a little closer to themselves, enough to get their muzzle past it. "I've... I'm not a professional artist by any means. I just started doing it as a hobby while I was out, and it helped people get a better understanding of the creature I was hired to watch." The behemoth tilted his large head. "S-so... Go easy on it, please?"

"I don't think I've ever seen any 'art' outside of yours, Jaxi." The blunt statement left the feathered dino with his maw open for a moment, unable to think of a proper response.

"...Huh. I suppose you probably haven't. But you have seen... Well, real life." With a deep breath, the navy one turned their sketch book and revealed the drawing to the purple beast. A drawing of the very purple beast; sitting in front of the water looking down at his own reflection. Much like Drygg was doing earlier.

It was still a bit rough in terms of linework, but it was still kind of... Flattering. Making the large one smile while looking at it. Giving a warm sensation in his heart that only further drove away that weight. "That looks..."

"L-like I said, I didn't grow up doing this. So I'm not very good-"

"-Just like me." The raptor double taked, caught in a state of shock as their muzzle released a slight whimper. Though the large one didn't notice, looking back and forth between his own body and the drawing. "I think my arms should be a little thicker, but I like it." It made the smaller one really bashful as they looked at the sketch too.

"Y-yes. Muscles are... Something I'm still getting very used to doing. I've never seen a critter with such large or defined ones u-until you. A-and not being able to get too close makes it quite hard..."

"Much like the paw details." The behemoth looked at his own hands, never thinking about just how detailed such a thing would be. "How you use tools like that ink-stick is... Impressive, really. I'm not sure if I could ever have the dexterity for it myself."

"I-it does take practice. My handwriting was never very good either, but I have gotten used to it after a year or so." They began flipping towards one end of the sketchbook. "My first ones are very very rough, as you can see." The dino showed off what appeared to be a large bird in mid-flight, very very rough in terms of linework and showing a specific 'color' pattern with many notes around it. "This one was stealing livestock, the people thought it was a fox or a wolf and hired me to find it. But I ended up spotting many chicken feathers around her nest, and... Other evidence, let's just say that."

A nod from the beast as they flipped the page to a long-necked creature, looking surprisingly noodle-y and almost silly compared to the more recent works. "Probably the worst one I've done and kept, because I was in such a rush. This thing really liked to hide too, and I still didn't get a lot of information about it at the time. It was getting too dangerous to get close to it, and its nest was actually guarded by a large spider."

"A spider?"

"It seemed to protect its eggs from other insects who would often borrow themselves through the shells. The spider would incase the eggs in silk of sorts, causing the insects to be caught while keeping the eggs safe and warm. The spider gets a meal and a bodyguard from this... Thing. I still never got a good look at it, but this is what I saw..." They looked at the picture again, themselves. "...If anyone can make it out to begin with."

"I see..." The large one looked over it and the notes; unable to actually read them. "What about the first ones of me?" A shy smile from the dino as they flipped through a dozen pages, up to one very rough drawing of Drygg sleeping. Quite blocky in terms of actual detail and almost like a series of rocks. Making that purple head tilt in puzzlement while Jaxi whimpered.

"L-let me explain. Y-you... Were by far the biggest target I had to watch, and no one else wanted to even remotely attempt getting information on you for risk of their own lives. So they hired an 'outsider' of sorts who was..." A noise in question from the behemoth as the feathered one waved the statement away. "N-nevermind. But I was also scared, so I... Spotted you from afar. A-farrrrr, with my spyglass. To the point where it was hard to make out anything aside from your pose. So I... Took a series of rocks nearby and some dirt..."

"Rocks and dirt...?"

"And made a little model of your sleeping position as a rough sketch, drawing that and thinking that I'll get the details in later. However, it started raining and I needed to take shelter, unable to afford..." Some sad discomfort from the dino again, worrying the behemoth. "N-nevermind. I didn't want to get sick, so I had to pause this drawing. By the time the rain stopped, it was dark out. And by the time the morning came... You were gone. So this one never got finished."

"And the next?" A page flip and display, nearly the same thing but with a bit more detail.

"You... Like to sleep a lot, and in open space. It made it easier to observe you."

"I don't like being confined."

"I don't blame you, I'm borderline claustrophobic myself." The raptor chuckled lightly. "But I got a little closer with this one, able to make some details here and there. Needing to start this one over and over, which is why there's a lot of rubbing out." They flipped to the next page, with even more details. "I actually got your tail in this one, as well as your horns correct. Paws are still off though-"

"Very off."

"But... I was still too afraid to get remotely close. My spyglass isn't the best of quality, so the lens isn't very clear. I couldn't tell if you had actual paws or hooves. I swear I saw hooves at the beginning, and your horns look slightly similar to other wildebeests around the area..." A nod from the purple beast as the page was flipped again. This time with a significant improvement, but still of the behemoth sleeping. "This one...!" The raptor whined.

"What?" Only another whimper was in response. "What is the matter?"

"T-this one... O-okay, I was incredibly spooked, which is why it looks more sketchy than normal." Drygg tilted his head at it, but could see the lines being... Hard and almost rushed? "I needed to go back for reporting and resupplying, which leaves me out for at least a nightfall. It took me a bit to find you again, and I swear I came across this area on my way up. B-behind the view of where this sketch was taken is a small cliff, a-and..."

"You fell down it?"

"I jumped down it." That large neck curled. "R-right. My species... We can't fly or glide, but our feathers help reduce almost all possible harm from falls. I often use it as a means of escape; just jump off a cliff where predators or aggressive creatures can't normally follow."

"And you were being chased?"

"Y-yes. By a pair of mountain lions. They only got aggressive when I approached the cliff top here, probably thinking they got me cornered. I jumped off thinking it was all clear down here, so focused on where I was landing safely that I didn't even see you until I spotted the two cougars racing down the long way- only to completely stop and scamper back out. I was hiding behind a large rock a-and... Heard you breathe loudly in your slumber." Those navy feathers puffed out as the dino shivered.

"I was sleeping."

"A-and this is the very first time I was within 30ft of you. You technically saved me without even realizing it, and my... Dumb self thought it might be a good idea to try sketching you instead of sneaking out there for my own safety..." A page flip and it showed many up-close

details; parts of the purple beast all scattered around the two pages. "I took the time to really make out everything I could, and even tried sneaking around you while you were sleeping, now able to see you with my own eyes and not that spyglass."

"I really don't remember this."

"I got out of there safely before you woke up, but I didn't get everything. Just... Enough to get the info I needed... About your form, but not your habits or habitat. So I needed to study you while you were awake and moving."

"So you kept watch on me." They started flipping through the pages, drawing after drawing. Playing around with different positions and poses like standing up or facing a different direction. Many of the unknown areas did seem off, but it was quite close.

"For a long time, often just spending my time making little sketches-" A sudden noise in question from the beast made the raptor double take at one drawing; the same behemoth laying on his back. Underside on full display but with some underside bits missing. Making Jaxi yelp loudly before closing the book. "N-nevermind that one!"

"Why? It was fine." A whimper in response as the raptor covered their face with the feathers on their arms. "Just unfinished. You were really started to get very good too." The compliment made that navy tail wag. "Would you like to finish that one?" Cue an even sharper whine in question, but also that tail wagging even faster.

"W-what?"

"Like how I let you study my paws a little for the newest drawing. Did you want to finish that one?" Those magenta eyes half peeked out of the colorful 'forest' blushing heavily at such a thought while Drygg was half looking at the closed sketchbook. Trying to picture what was missing and looking down at his own pelvis. Leading those other bright eyes down at a large sheath and plump pouch underneath. "I don't mind. How did you pose it again-?" The behemoth half spoke to himself, beginning to shift and lay on his side as the dino yelped.

"No-no-no, that's quite alright! W-we don't have to do anything like that!" A look of visible confusion from the large beast, some of which with how strange the raptor has been acting. "I-I, uh... R-really must be going anyway, my boss is expecting me to report today a-and..." They got up and began quickly packing things.

"You're leaving?"

"O-only for a little bit. They just 'expect' me to be back and report every few days and to properly pay me. If I don't show up, I... Don't get paid. No pay means no supplies or food."

Some visible confusion from those yellow eyes, but there was... At least a basic understanding within the behemoth's mind. Making the raptor smile as they donned their backpack. "I can... Be back later tonight if you'd like, Drygg."

"I would like that. But... Could I travel with you instead?" That made the small one double take and perk those crown feathers up. However, that magenta gaze grew a little worried.

"I'm... Are you sure? I'm going to the-"

"I don't want to go anywhere near the settlement, but just... Close to it. Out of sight." The smaller raptor nodded in confirmation, looking almost relieved. Watching the beast look off to the side. "I'm... Not ready to be alone with the heavy feelings again just yet." It made the dinosaur smile and nod.

"Alright, but we'll need to be quick. They're probably expecting me any minute now, and we got... A bit distracted." They pointed in a direction, across the waters of the lake and started moving to circle around. Missing the beast's double take until those large paws were not being detected, causing Jaxi to look back at the confused behemoth.

"You're going the long way around?"

"Well, paper and water do not mix, and I... Don't swim well." The navy one admitted. "Heights don't bother me in the slightest, but... Bad experiences with large bodies of water. And ships." A shutter made those feathers poof out. "Never again with ships." Another look at Drygg who gazed between the dino and the direction from afar.

"That's a long ways to walk." The smaller one just tilted his head in a shrug, barely noticing the purple beast moved close until he was towering over them. Making Jaxi a bit nervous until that large muzzle moved down and in front. Almost attempting to scoop the raptor up with his head and horns.

"W-what?"

"Get on." Drygg bluntly stated, almost commanded really. Further making the dinosaur nervous.

"No-no-no, it's fine. We can just walk-" Another attempt to lift the navy one up technically succeeded for a moment, but required the behemoth to move around to properly support the light raptor. Making them yelp loudly. "D-Drygg...!" They whimpered long and loudly as they took balance on top of the beast's head, resting in the golden mane as the purple one entered the waters. Watching the fluids ripple and raise up higher and higher from above;

past the purple elbows and 'knees'. Around the middle of the belly and stout chest, over the shoulders and up the neck. Causing nervous whine after nervous whine...

But that's as far as the water got; just under Drygg's jaw as he walked along the bottom of the lake. More towards the center he did have to walk on hind legs and paddle with the fores but the beast kept his head above water. Getting both of them over to the other side with ease. "Okay, brace yourself."

"W-what?" It was reflex to ask such a thing as Jaxi hugged one large horn tightly. Feeling the behemoth shake the water off his body and lower mane, the extra weight of the dino meaning absolutely nothing to that titan form as it performed it with ease before beginning to move forwards. "I'm... Even surprised you can swim."

"Barely. I was walking on the ground the entire time." A very long whimper from the dinosaur. "What's wrong?"

"J-just don't like deep waters, is all."

"But I just told you that it wasn't deep."

"Not to you, no!" The raptor snorted, still getting used to the movements of the purple beast's walk cycle. But the grumbling comeback actually did make the large one smile. "But... Thank you. You sure you don't want me to walk? I don't mind."

["Don't Be Late."]

"Didn't you just say you were late? Being late is... Bad, right?"

"W-well, yes, but..." The smaller one shyly whimpered, looking over the side of the horn and at the ground. "W-wow... One of your steps is like fifty of my own."

"You'll have to lead me in the direction though. I know of a few settlements around, but I don't know which one you need to go to."

"Do you remember one with some high walls? I can't remember what they called it-"

"A Garrison?" The behemoth asked, getting a double take from the one above his eyes.

"I... Think so. I'm surprised you knew that."

"...I am too. I don't think I ever heard it being spoken about."

"Then how did you know it?" The beast slowed to a stop, which was still a bit jarring to the raptor. Also being taken for a ride when Drygg attempted to avoid the curious eyes.

"I'll... The ones who created me, I'm not the first. The previous ones had very little knowledge, and well... They believed Knowledge is a form of power."

"I believe that statement, yes. But...?"

"I don't know exactly how, but they gave me a lot of knowledge of this world. Sometimes it is hard to determine... What's my own experience, and what's just been planted in my memory. Same goes for opinions: what's actually mine and what is just theirs that they forced into my brain...?" The purple one closed his eyes for some relief from the magenta gaze, then feeling a gentle pet between his eyes. Getting a little bit of a grunt until the behemoth realized what it was; a show of comfort. "...Thank you."

"Thank you too, for opening up." The large one began walking again. "I don't want to keep prying, but... I am curious, and it is my job to determine whether or not you are a threat to others." A low rumble from that broad throat.

"...What are you going to tell them?"

"That I'm still deciding, even though I'm not really. I just... Would like to spend more time studying you, if you do not mind."

"I do like your company." The behemoth bluntly stated, making the raptor smile brightly at that. "I just... Don't know how to answer that question."

"What do you mean?" No response. "I want to say that the best response would be 'if they leave you alone, you will leave them alone'." The navy one leaned over in the yellow eyesight. "But Jaxi thinks you've already thought of that, yes?" A glance in confusion from Drygg before something getting his attention through a clearing. Instantly stopping and scampering back, making the raptor yelp as they were flung forwards. Falling off the behemoth's head but landing surprisingly safely in the grass. "W-what's wrong?" They whispered at the now crouching beast before looking through the opening and spotting.

A single wagon. One with a tired horse strapped to the front and on a roadway. Further confusing the dinosaur, having to look back and forth between the carriage and the large creature 'hiding' around the line of trees. Making that feathered head perk and tilt in confusion. "That... Was there when I came around before."

"Are they hostile?" It took a moment for the purple one to shake his head. "Then what...?"

"I'm just... Uncomfortable around them at the moment." A nod from the raptor as they got up and started walking towards the wagon, making the behemoth double take and almost

whimper. Wanting to tell Jaxi to stop, but froze in place as he watched that fluffy navy tail sway with the strange waddle. Further convincing the beast to just lay low and listen in.

"Hello?" Jaxi called, getting a slight response from the mount in terms of a snort, but the raptor avoided it. "Is anyone here?"

"Hello?" A voice from inside. "Are you from Losaka?"

"Shhh! Don't Sir-! They could be a bandit!" Another whispered, causing those navy and red feathers to perk and look around.

"I was actually heading there myself. I'm a scout, not a bandit."

"See? They're here to help." The carriage door opened, despite some harsher whispers of denial. Stepping out was a rather dapper looking pelican in a suit, followed by a meerkat. "Hello there! It's nice to- oh, an Armazonian." The slight change in tone soured Jaxi's expression. "You don't have an accent, I didn't recognize you."

"I've learned to hide it."

"And you've done well to fool me, my boy!" The raptor grew more irritated. "Do you have a master around that I could talk to?"

"...No. I do not. I'm out here on my own. My name is Jaxi." A slightly awkward moment of study from the bird as they leaned closer. Picking up the meerkat's whisper after.

"(Are we sure he's not a bandit?)" That one got more of a grumble from Jaxi.

"You're very good at hiding it, I'm just surprised is all." The pelican was rather chipper in response. "Regardless, I am Lord Roye! We've been stuck for quite some time, as you see." A tap on the wagon's front wheel with a cane brought attention to a large dirt hole. "I don't believe it damaged the... Shaft thingy-"

"Axle." The navy dino quickly answered.

"Axle! That'd be it. It's nice to see a fellow feather that knows his stuff!" Jaxi's expression didn't change, smaller than the two or not. "But regardless, it is just deep enough that our horse cannot pull us free."

"And you cannot dig your way out? The dirt feels rather fine on this path."

"Dig?" The pelican abruptly spoke without really thinking, sharing a look as if such a thing didn't occur to either of them. "This is a trap, is it not? Where it would shatter the wheel-"

"Axle."

"-Of our wagon and prevent us from moving. Then all they have to do is narrow in on us from all directions! I've seen it in a play back in-"

"Actually, I think that's just a pothole." The raptor stated bluntly, getting the two suits to double take at the hole in unison. "It doesn't look dug out, but washed out."

"From what, Amazonian?"

"The... Rain, sir." The showman tilted his head at the navy one, completely oblivious about them. "Lots of water comes through these parts in the seasons. It washes out the roads."

"Ah, someone must fix these then. I'm good friends with Sir Alagore, I'll be sure to bring it up next time I see him, shant I Willbert?"

"Y-yes sir! I'll be sure to keep that in mind."

"In the meantime, we're still stuck. Your kind is good at digging holes, right?" The feathered dinosaur nearly grumbled at that, their crown raising in irritation. "Could you help dig us out? So our horse can do its job?"

"Honestly, your horse looks exhausted and on the brink of passing out. I'm not sure if he'll have the energy to-"

"Nonsense, my boy! I know the animal is new around your parts, but they are incredible beasts of power! It's gotten us through worse with less, it just needs some motivation-!" Jaxi left while the showman continued talking, moving towards the exhausted feral horse and pulling out their water bottle. Undoing some of the reins and giving the weakened mount a large drink of the entire bottle as it desperately gathered every last droplet. "My, it can really drink, can't it?"

"When was the last time he was fed?" The raptor directly asked the meerkat, making him double take at the sudden question.

"O-oh, back at the stable this morning."

"How long have you been on the road? A couple of hours?" A slightly guilty look as the servant looked between Jaxi and the Lord. "...What?"

"Oh, nevermind that. We've been on the road all morning! We came from Oull'tatha after all." A sudden head tilt from the navy one.

"The... Town about an hour away? It's mid afternoon. How could you be on the road all

morning?"

"Oh, silly me. We left and a couple of things slipped my mind. Important packages, cases--"

"A certain damsel." The meerkat grumbled.

"And we've been running back and forth all morning on our way to Losaka! This is the farthest we've gotten." A rather unimpressed look from the dinosaur as the bird finally started to look a bit intimidated by the smaller one; nearly half the pelican's size. "I-is that a problem?"

"It explains why your horse is so exhausted." Jaxi sighed and pulled out a few of his veggies, setting it in front of the mount and comforted it while the large one ate. "I can get you free, but you'll need to help push once your horse is willing to give it another try." The showman double taked.

"Pardon?"

"We will need your help, sir, to get the wagon out of the hole."

"What do you mean? Can you two not handle it?" The meerkat and raptor shared a look of near irritation. "I don't do work, Willbert. That's what I hire people for."

"We may not be able to get you out if that's..." Jaxi trailed off, grumbling in ponder as they looked over the wagon. Knowing the two wouldn't be able to push it out... Buuuut... "I'll be right back."

"W-what?" The servant whimpered.

"I'm going to see if I can get some help, but I'll only be a few minutes." Eyes of suspicion over the colorful dino. "Just get back into the wagon, I'll see what I can do."

"...What did you say your name was again, Amazonian?" Lord Roye pried, narrowing his gaze slightly more.

"It is Jaxi, Sir." The raptor stated, moving around the wagon and back towards where they came. Releasing a heated breath from their muzzle as they moved towards the treeline and spotted the behemoth, instantly perking his head up at the dinosaur's return.

"Is everything okay?" A look of social discomfort painted the smaller one's body as the beast tilted his head. "What is it?"

"They're... Stuck. That's why they haven't moved from that spot."

"So I've heard." A noise in question from Jaxi, as Drygg shifted his gaze awkwardly. "I... Heard everything."

"Do you think you can help?" Cue the world's biggest double take, enough to actually shift the surrounding trees with the help of the winds.

"W-what!?" He nearly yelped.

"You're big and strong, you can easily push the wagon free." That large neck slowly curled as those yellow eyes gazed down over the feathered one in shock. "I can just dig out of the hole, but it'll take a lot of time. If you can give the thing a push, they'll be out in seconds." That expression didn't change. "I-I thought I would at least ask before..."

["You cannot help. It is not in your instincts to help others-"]

"Y-you...?" Being stared at constantly made Jaxi whimper.

"S-sorry if this is beneath you, b-but I thought-"

"Y-you want me to...?"

"Please don't take offense by it, I'll just dig the way out-"

"Help...?" The two stared at each other for a few solid moments as the behemoth looked conflicted and confused... Which also made the dinosaur confused as well.

"I-if you wanted to, it would be very much appreciated." No response, just that same shocked stare in a state of puzzlement. "I'm sure it'll pay forwards in some way."

"I'm allowed to... Help?" How the beast said it was so... Optimistic that it once again just sent Jaxi's mind through a loop.

"Y-yes, Drygg'makarr." Finally, some blinking as the gaze shifted a little. "I-is everything okay?"

"Can I help...?" An even larger head tilt from the raptor as the behemoth nearly spoke to himself. Nearly getting shivers from it down that long mane.

"Y-yes. You can... Help them by pushing the wagon free." It was a very weird position to be in, but the navy one didn't feel any hostility from the beast. "Please?" Just a little bit of awkwardness if anything.

But the behemoth slowly stood up, still half staring into space until finally locking onto Jaxi again. "I can... Try. For you." That made the dino smile brightly, but then quickly fade to

slight irate.

"T-though be warned, the bird is obnoxious. Try not to roar his beak off if he says anything offensive or makes dumb assumptions." The raptor grumbled, double taking at the smile from the purple one.

"I think... That's the first time I've seen you angry before."

"There's not many things that do."

"It's kind of..." A noise in question as those yellow eyes shifted, unsure if he should continue. "...Cute to see something so small..." The dinosaur's neck curled as they lightly blushed and chuckled.

"Yes, yes. Jaxi is small-" They caught themselves too late, grunting but letting the language error slide. Leading the way for a moment before signaling the behemoth to stop in near mid-step. "B-best to walk as soft as you can so you don't spook the horse."

"Right..." A slightly nervous look from the purple one as Drygg took a deep breath, then a second before stepping out of his 'shelter' away from eyes. Following Jaxi's suggestion to move out to the center as the navy raptor waddled to keep ahead of the beast, giving him time to carefully place down paw after paw. However, he could not silence the entire volume and vibration of his titanic body and soon enough...

The pelican and meerkat spoke in question before moving around into the line of sight of the large purple behemoth. Instantly panicking and yelping, ignoring Jaxi's calls to them as they ran off ahead. While Drygg slowed to a soft stop, expecting this to happen but trusting the raptor will help calm things down. "No, no, no! Wait, wait, wait. He's a friend!"

Friend... The word still made the large one's heart almost glow with a comforting warmth. "T-that thing is a monster!" And that was expected, and Drygg didn't let it sour his mood. Still more shy about being near some of the smaller creatures than anything. "It's going to eat us!"

"He's not going to eat you, he's here to help push you free." Jaxi grumbled, hearing some whimpers from within the carriage where the two took shelter. Tossing their snout up and waving the two away, the raptor moved towards the rear of the wagon and studied it. Motioning the purple one to come closer. "Thank you for doing this." A slow nod from the large beast. "Okay... If you push on the top here, I think-"

"It looks like it will collapse, perhaps crushing the two inside." A series of near cries from within got the two's attention for a moment. "It'll be... Better if I try to place my horns

underneath the rear axle area and push forwards. If anything, I'll just be lifting the wagon's weight on my own." A surprised stare from those magenta eyes.

"...Hidden knowledge?"

"H-hidden knowledge, yes." Drygg admitted, getting a smile from the little one. "But it will be best if you guide me into position."

"Okay!" The raptor nearly chirped, watching the behemoth move into the road and turn around a little sharply. That large tail smacking into several trees and breaking down a couple of them onto the path as the two winced. Sharing a look both at themselves and the trees. "We'll get that later." A nod in response as the purple one lowered his head. Feeling and watching for the raptor's signal as Jaxi kept one feathered arm on the closest horn and moved it into place. "Here will be good. Let Jaxi- me get on the reins." The sharp correction made the beast almost chuckle aloud.

Quickly, the dino moved up to the almost panicking horse and attempted to calm it down a little. Placing the mouthpiece of the riding tack back into his muzzle and giving it a peaceful few whispers before getting up on the seat. "Okay buddy, try pulling it. Drygg, push on three! One, two, three-!" The behemoth only leaned forwards, getting a yelp from all three and nearly causing the horse strapped into the tack to trip forwards. Forcing the wheel to climb out of the hole, and the purple one took a half step forwards; nearly lifting the rear axle up and over the hole as it got back onto level grounds. "That should do it- that should do it!"

Drygg immediately stopped and backed up, seeing a little bit of scratches that his effort made, but a small price to pay. As the carriage slowed to a stop, Jaxi jumped off and headed towards the back to make sure everything was alright. Cheering at the success, making the large one smile- then sharply half-whine when that feathered body leapt at his snout for a quick hug. Instantly causing his heart rate to go up and that glow in that large chest to intensify, unable to keep himself from smiling. "I knew it would be near effortless with you, thank you!"

"Y-you're... You're welcome, Jaxi." That soft body took a step back as their eyes met. "I'm glad I could... Help." A bright smile as those yellow eyes shifted behind, spotting the door to the wagon open and a set of eyes peek out. Grabbing the raptor's attention too as they tapped the purple muzzle. Taking a step back, the behemoth began working on the blockade he accidentally created earlier.

"There's a few scratches, but you're now free. Get to Losaka and give that horse of yours the day off." The dino firmly instructed.

"Good show, I must say! You Armazonians are quite the workers indeed, and to tame

such a monster is... Unheard of-!" A slight glare from those yellow eyes, and somehow a more intense one from the magentas.

"He is my friend, Sir. Please show some respect." The raptor said sternly, nearly as intimidating as the beast if it wasn't for them being half the size of the Lord.

"O-of course. Thank you, to both of you. If you happen to drop by in Losaka or... Willbert, where are we going next?"

"W-we have many stops to make, sir." The meerkat answered.

"Well, whenever we see each other again, I'll be sure to reward you with something! In the meantime..." The bird began to search his pockets... Then more pockets, then looking at his servant. "Huh. I believe I left my wallet back at the previous town." And a whimper from Willbert. "No matter, I have spare in the carriage. Mind fetching some for me, please?"

"R-right away, sir!"

"W-what? You don't need to pay us, sir." Jaxi nearly whimpered.

"Nonsense! You could've taken everything we had and left us to cannibalize each other!" A sharper whimper from the meerkat and raptor, while Drygg just tilted his head in confusion while moving the trees. "I've seen it in that play, it really was a good show! Rumors were the actor actually died for the performance, it was that real!"

"I-it was just a rumor, of course." Willbert called from within, soon coming out with a pouch but stumbling a bit in the process. "I found this, sir."

"Thank you, dear Willbert!" The pelican opened the bag, only to give off a puzzled look. "And we have nothing less?"

"Y-you gave a lot of your spare change to the many street performers and such on your day out recently-"

"Oh, you are right. They were quite lovely, were they not?" With a tilting head shrug, the dapper bird pulled out several gold coins and handed it to the absolutely stunned raptor. "I'm certain you will find this most rewarding in the meantime."

"S-sir...?" Jaxi nearly whimpered as the bird nearly had to force-hand them the payment. Letting the navy one just stare at the seven coins in shock. "This... This is nearly three years of my own income in one payment."

"Three years? You must be exaggerating like everyone else. A flattering joke at my

expense." He chuckled, waving the statement away as he looked at his servant. "Shall we get going, Willbert?"

"Y-yes sir!" A solid nod from Roye before returning his gaze to the raptor; still stuck in place looking at the coins.

"You said you were heading to Losaka as well, correct? Did you need a ride?" It took a moment for Jaxi to snap out of his hypnosis, double taking at the bird for a moment to process what he said before looking back at the behemoth. Letting them share a look for a little bit before the raptor took a breath.

"I'll... I appreciate the offer, sir. But I'll... I'd like to make it there with my friend."

"Very well-"

"However." The surprise interruption was met with curiosity from the well dressed one. Watching the feathered dino look back at Drygg for another look. "Please do not tell others about him. Not yet, anyway."

"Understood, good Armazonian. Consider this beak strapped shut! Cheers!" And he entered the wagon while the meerkat got to the driver's seat. "Onwards, Willbert! Be sure to watch out for any more holes this time, eh?" The Lord chuckled, making a joke as they rode off. Leaving the other two alone once more, while those magenta eyes looked down at the coins again. Completely unaware of the beast approaching them from behind.

"Armazonian...?" Those navy feathers puffed out but only double took at the behemoth, almost losing one of the coins and putting them in their pack.

"It's... A long story."

"Armazonia is a location, is it not?" No response other than a light whimper. "A location that makes you... Talk funny?"

"Y-you heard that?" A slow nod from Drygg as he sat down on the road.

"I wanted to make sure you were... Safe. So I listened closely." The large one looked where he was hiding before. "After you left, I got this... Vision of you getting attacked by whoever or whatever was inside. And was getting prepared to charge in and gore them to the moon if I needed to."

"G-gore...!?" Another whimper from the raptor as the beast looked at them for a moment. Then slowly demonstrated in the empty space in front of him, uppercutting the air with his large horns. "Oh... I was thinking..."

"Impaling them?" The purple one said rather calmly, getting a worried whine from the small one and that discomfort in his large chest lightly pulsed. "If I had to, I would not hesitate. But it would hardly be the first thing to come to mind." That feeling grew as Jaxi looked at the large one with fear in their eyes, now allowing him to make the connection. "...That... Frightens you? Me protecting you?"

"M-more the method of how. People will be terrified from your sight alone, you would not need to..."

["Kill them."]

"Kill them?" Again, that same look from the magenta discs. "But they'll come back, yes? If they've determined that you are a threat, they will stop at nothing to ensure your demise. They will only feel safe once you have perished, will they not?" No response. "Is this not how your civilizations think?"

"...Most people don't think about or encounter it."

"But it is what the common thought process would be-" The raptor's step backwards made the behemoth stop and stare. "...This is upsetting you."

"L-less about the subject..."

"And more...?" Drygg questioned, letting that gaze move around. "I won't be mad, but I'm wondering what I am doing wrong."

"And more... How calm you are saying it." That large head was slightly taken aback, tilting in slight confusion as he pondered. "Like you're not understanding that these are people with lives and..." Some gears were turning in those yellow eyes, as the beast's own vision lowered, almost looking at his own chest again. "Let's... Drop it, but please try not to kill anyone? It will only make you look more like a threat to others." A low mutter in response as Drygg carefully laid down, offering his head towards the raptor who gave it a pet before getting on again.

"So if Armazonia is a place..." The behemoth asked, getting a light groan that made him smile. Walking as softly as he could through the grassy open fields and glad to be off the dirt road. "Does that mean Armazonian is what you are?"

"It's just where I was hatched, and people make assumptions." Jaxi grumbled. "Usually bad ones."

"How so? Like, talking funny?"

"People will find anything to make foreigners feel... Less like people, or that they don't belong. Some of it is harmless teasing-"

"Like that bird guy with the funny clothing?"

"And others... Will use it ways that are... Not friendly, let's just say." The raptor snorted, though yelping when their 'seat' tilted in puzzlement.

"...But you talk the same as him and me. What's so funny about it?"

"You're really not going to drop this, are you?"

"Unless you want me to, you did mention something about using falls as a method of escape-"

"F-figure of speech, Drygg." Jaxi whined and sighed. "I... We have our own language in Armazonia, and I had to learn this one from scratch when I moved here." A noise in confirmation, encouraging the smaller dino to continue. "Finding work around here was beyond difficult, often having to go many nights without meals in the cities and towns, or warm beds. I put a lot of effort not to at least sound like an outsider to help myself get work."

"So you mimic how they speak?"

"So that I sound easier to work with. Even then... There's still difficulties and discriminations to deal with."

"How do you normally speak then-?"

"I'm not doing it." The sudden shutdown made the behemoth chuckle. "But I admit that I do mess it up once in a while. In my native call, we don't have words like... I and Me. There is only Jaxi, or Corrli, or Drygg. So you wouldn't say, 'I like the taste of apples', you would say-"

"Drygg likes the taste of apples."

"Yes."

"You're speaking as yourself in the third person, because your language is different." A noise in confirmation from the raptor sitting on his head. "I mean... It's quirky, but how is that a bad thing?"

"Locals... Don't like people who are not of their country. They..."

"Think of them less as people and more of... Threats?"

"Not specifically to their lives, but to their own countries and lands, or their economy." Jaxi mumbled a bit sadly.

"...So, like Monsters." A slight inhale to answer, but it stunned the dino completely. "No wonder you made a connection to me, or any other creatures around here. You're nearly considered as such to other intelligence within this land."

"I... Never thought of that before."

"In a metaphorical sense, of course. People are not afraid of you tearing down their walls or specifically destroying their homes." An uncomfortable whimper from above made the purple one sigh. "I'm sorry, it's... Just how I think."

"I-I thought as much, I just find it..."

"Uncomfortable?"

"Concerning as well. It makes me wonder... Why." No response but an exhale through that large muzzle. "You don't have to tell me-" The behemoth started to slow to a stop, feeling Jaxi brace for that head to lower.

"...It's not that I don't want to. It's that..."

"You're worried about me leaving. I think that's what you said before." Those yellow eyes attempted to look at the feathered one, only able to really see a bit of red that seemed to outline them.

"I'm worried that I'll scare you away, and I do not want to lose you." Drygg looked off in the distance. "The thought of you never coming back... It hurts. Like a pain I have little defenses for, and I do not know how to... Heal it." Not much in terms of response, but a small hand did stroke one of the large horns. "If something were to happen to you... I would have a reason to destroy them."

"W-what?"

"It is... Was my..." A slightly discomforting grumble as that purple jaw stiffened, as if

battling with himself about how much he should tell the raptor. "Jaxi, I was supposed to..."

"Drygg." There was a strange sternness in the small one's voice. "...Can you let me down?" And that weight intensified in that broad chest. Part of him demanding not to follow such a request in order to keep the feathered friend in the beast's possession. That if he complied, Drygg would lose them forever... But after a few moments, the behemoth exhaled heavily. Sat down, then into a full lay. Giving into that weight and letting it fall to the ground. Resting his head in the grass nearly defeated.

It took a few moments to feel the raptor begin to move, sliding off the purple neck and onto the ground. Placing a hand across the thick hide as they moved around the large horn and in view of those yellow eyes, meeting them with their magenta ones that felt... Cautious but slightly relieved. "You're really going to let me go?" A slow blink from the large one.

["We Must Comply With Commands."]

"...I've been encaged most of my life. I do not wish imprisonment on anyone... Let alone a friend." A deep sigh as those suns looked away. "If you want to leave my presence for fear of your safety... I'll understand." Some silence as the smaller one took a breath and rested on the large purple arm.

"...Back when I was still in Armazonia..." Jaxi started, getting the beast's soft attention. "I got a... Stalker of sorts."

"Stalker...?"

"Someone who just would not leave Jaxi alone." Half a grumble from the small one as they caught their mistake again. "She followed me everywhere I went, often meeting me there 'in coincidence'. Having talks about our relationship that I didn't even know we had, wanting to have children, a home and for me to pay for it all." Those navy feathers puffed out. "I didn't have a well paying job, I could barely afford food for myself, let alone a proper shelter. She clinged to me, hard. Trying to force her way into my life to the point where I was suffocating, and no one would help or believe me..."

"So you... Left?" A nod from the dino.

"I lost my job at some point, needed work and there was a spike in labor demand outside of the country. I took it, mostly to get away from her and the rest of my unhelpful family..." A long whimper from Jaxi as they covered their eyes, not noticing the muzzle of comfort until it touched them. Giving the purple head a few pets. "Working on a ship for the first time was hard enough, there was so much to learn and so few of us who actually knew what to do. And then, I dunno what happened...! We got word that land was in view, and

something struck the ship. Causing it to sink and we barely got out alive. Some of us were so starved that they couldn't make it to land; either not having enough to eat or possibly couldn't swim. I barely can."

"Which is why you wanted to avoid the water on the lake." A noise in confirmation from the smaller one.

"Large bodies of water still make me uncomfortable. I made it back to shore, only to find out they already got the hired help and I was stuck outside of Armazonia. A blessing in disguise, really. But it was... Not a fun time to learn the language here, to find a job or work that most deem too dangerous. Most got unhealthy work in factories, cleaning chimneys while collecting black lung... Or sent out in the forests to scout for possible dangers. A foreign land without any training."

Those yellow eyes slowly blinked at them, watching the raptor take a sad breath. "The point is, I didn't stick around there. I don't know what became of them, all I know is that I needed work to live, and Jaxi wasn't going to find it there. But I also don't want..."

"To be someone's possession." A faint whimper, but the smaller one nodded. "I understand."

"S-sorry, but I had to test that. I can't... Be forced into a life that I don't want to be a part of."

"Including mine."

"No!" The raptor softly corrected him. "No, do not misunderstand, Drygg'makaar. I do want to be a part of your life, be it your friend or..." A noise in question made Jaxi begin to blush. "N-nevermind, but I just had to make sure I wasn't stepping in Relationship Quicksand." A puzzled look from the behemoth. "Metaphorically speaking. I didn't want to become trapped or sucked into someone else's fantasy of a relationship. I don't want to be-"

"Imprisoned." A slight nod from the small one. "I understand. You are... Free to leave my presence whenever you wish, Jaxi." A faint chuckle from the raptor at the rather calm statement.

"Thank you." The small one did their best to hug the beast's head. Of course finding it strange how the raptor was attempting to grapple him gently but... It gave the behemoth good feelings. To the point where he attempted to lean into it more and made the dino yelp, chuckling while they were lightly squeezed between the head and the large bicep. Nearly making them huff in a blush. "O-okay, okay. E-easy. I'm not squeeze proof." They teased.

"We're almost there." Jaxi stated, looking off to the side and spotting a series of rocks within a field. "The road is on the other side of that field. Soon you might start to see farmlands."

"I can smell them, yes." A chuckle from the raptor at the rather grumbling response.

"Yes, I've been told that they do not have the best aroma. Be it the fields or the livestock in general, I could never tell. But..." A noise in question from the behemoth, encouraging them to continue. "I used to work at one, only for a couple of days while a road was closed for being too dangerous to travel. I needed a place to sleep, and they offered a space high up in the barn. In return, I'd help out with the workload and give his pregnant wife a much needed break. Pretty simple stuff; feed the animals, wash out the troughs, so some weeding here and there and fix up the roof."

"The roof?"

"Wind or rain damage. It was just something I noticed when she mentioned leaks within the house. The soon-to-be-father did not have a ladder that wasn't already in use (like in the barn) and was afraid that he would be too heavy. So I climbed up there myself and did the repairs-" A small yelp and grip on the golden mane as Drygg bounced his head up and down.

"You are very light."

"S-says the giant nearly ten times my size." The two chuckled. "I'm also not afraid of heights, so..."

"Because you can... Slow-fall, was it?"

"Y-yes. Especially if I spread myself out but you're right on both accounts. I remember there was some visitor staying with us as well, often complaining about the smell but it never bothered me any." A noise in confirmation as the large one continued on for a little more, then

slowed to a stop. Spotting the plowed fields the raptor was talking about. "Yes, that would be one."

"...What is it like?"

"Hmm?"

"To... Work like that?" A louder noise in puzzlement only made the behemoth embarrassed about such a question.

"Well, it's... Work. Hard labor for what feels like scraps sometimes."

"Scraps?"

"As in, low payment." The purple beast attempted to look at Jaxi in question. "M-meaning: money."

"You don't do it because you want to?"

"N-no, it's work." The raptor was getting more confused with every question. "If I had the choice I wouldn't do it."

"Then why do it?"

"Because I need the money." A slow blink and head tilt. "And I need the money to survive."

"You consume it?"

"N-no, Drygg. We trade it for food and shelter." That head shifted a little further as he looked over at the buildings. "You may not require it, but we need shelter from the elements. The cold, the wet, the snow, and sometimes the heat."

"Those never bothered me."

"They can sometimes cull us though. Even just wear us down or injure us."

"Your species?"

"All the species. M-maybe not you but everyone else." A little bit of silence as the beast thought.

"And you need money for this, because you trade money with others while also working for more..." Another long look at the farm buildings in the distance, feeling a gentle pet from a feathered paw.

"...Hidden knowledge?" A slow nod.

"I... Know what a society is. I know what money is. But I do not understand how each one operates. That's something I..."

"And it's the same with Work?" A very faint nod from the large one, and the raptor took a deep breath, in and out. "Work is... Taxing. It makes you sore and exhausted, even worse if your bosses are... Not good people." They spoke the last part a bit quietly.

"What do you mean?" Drygg questioned, not quite getting an answer and then a sudden blanket of anger was felt over them. "...They've been treating you badly, haven't they." It was barely a question, but it struck fear in the smaller dino's heart.

"D-d-don't make assumptions, sir. Please."

"But they have, haven't they. You said earlier that when you came to this land, others would treat you differently. As if you were... Less than them. Much like how that bird did." There was a coldness to his voice that made Jaxi whimper. "I do not want someone to treat my friend like that."

"T-they are not all bad people, Drygg'makaar. Please don't think like that." A low rumble from that purple throat, and it didn't stop until those magenta eyes came into his view. Frightened and placing a gentle hand on that muzzle, letting the beast exhale through his muzzle and calm down. "This is... Just how the world is here. There's-"

"But why accept it?" The question stunned the little one, leaving their jaw half open but unable to speak. "Why let them treat you like this?"

"I... Can't help... I can't change that, Drygg." The raptor mumbled sadly. "Jaxi isn't strong like you. Nor intimidating. They are not..." It was a bit of a realization for the beast as well, now realizing something so small and considered an outsider by everyone likely did not have any leverage of sorts. "I can... Make it the rest of the way here on foot, that way you are not spotted." They started to climb off, only for the beast to gently sit then lay down fully. Getting a soft pet on his large muzzle as Drygg's mind kept shifting in thought about perspectives. "I'll try to be back after I get paid and get something to eat... If you want me to, that is-"

"Yes." The purple one stated very bluntly, now realizing just how needy that half sounded and making him blush a bit. "That does... Flutter me." The dino attempted to hold back their laughter at the broken language, but nodded. Giving the large one a few more pets before moving on.

The road to Losaka was quite clear and the gate in the distance was almost empty of people waiting for entry. Even then, the ones who were there seemed to lack any sort of large wagons or carriages that needed to be searched through by the guards. Just a few travelers or merchants on foot getting inspected for safety reasons, perhaps even questioned about the areas around the path as well. Any sightings of dangers, or even a certain large purple beast that's been spotted.

The behemoth... It made Jaxi's muzzle fall and lightly blush just thinking about him. Spotting rather fresh tracks of a wagon still in the dirt, likely the Lord making it to Losaka safely. Though, did the bird keep his beak shut as promised? Or was he just too excited to tell of such an adventure? What would happen if he did, and what would the others think? The soldiers, the civilians...?

What did Jaxi think of him? It was a question that was harder to answer than the raptor thought. On one hand, just thinking about talking to Drygg excited them to no end, causing flutters in their own chest. But at the same time... There was something dark within the beast, something foreboding that the feathered one could just... Feel. Fear, maybe out of instinct, but it was beyond intimidation and sheer size.

It felt like... Courting Doom personified. Just how the large one talked instinctively, as if not taught any different. Yet, there's just this... Curiosity before it that Jaxi just adored, even from the most mundane things. Showing interest in labor work, getting excited about helping someone out. It was so different than one would expect from the titan's appearance, which gave the feathered one hope that... Despite the behemoth's upbringing and instinctive thoughts, there was some good in him.

Jaxi slowed to a stop, finding themselves farther along while lost in thought. To the point where those magenta eyes could no longer see the purple beast beyond the hill. Thinking about him brought fear to the raptor's chest, but what fear was it? The idea of being abducted and forced into someone's life again? Getting too attached to Jaxi to the point where he wouldn't want to let the dino go? Or was it the sheer fact that Drygg could cull the smaller one? Be it on purpose or an accident.

"Is something wrong?" One of the guards called from afar, making the navy one double

take at the gate about 50ft away from them. Shaking that feathered head out of instinct and carrying forwards towards the garrison. "Ah, it is the scout. Returning for your pay, is it?" The gopher guard asked while the other half cursed under her breath. Puzzling the raptor but doing their best to not show it.

"Yes. I also helped out a stuck carriage on their way here. Has it come through? A Sir Willbert was driving." The two guards shared a look, then studied the smaller one for a moment.

"They... Mentioned someone else helped them out too. A 'Larger Friend'." The gopher stated, instantly getting an angry glare from the raptor.

"To be fair, the lord looked like he let something slip." The other guard added; a female ram. "Information that was supposed to be left out." And Jaxi exhaled.

"He's correct, and I did ask a friend for help. But... They're not ready for people to know right now." Puzzled looks from the two as the dino rubbed the back of their own neck. "It's... Complicated, sorry."

"That's alright. If they're helping wagons become unstuck, then they can't be all bad." That actually made the navy one smile a little. "Regardless, protocol: I need to search your bag real quick before I let you in."

"Of course." Jaxi let the gopher guard do so, having nothing to really hide- until a certain picture of a 'large friend' on display came to mind. Let alone that deep voice: ["Would you want to finish that one?"] so oblivious to what he was asking the raptor.

"Is everything okay?" The ram asked, slightly cautious. Even with the nod from the feathered one.

"Y-yes. I just... Get nervous when people go through my bags or equipment. There's been too many times where..."

"You've been accused of criminal intent due to being a foreigner." The female guard replied, getting another nod from the gopher.

"You're free to relax then, nothing in here besides hunting gear and books. It's a nice bag though." The male guard handed it back to the raptor. "We've seen you enough around here, Tabaxi, but protocol is protocol."

"Y-yes, I know. And it's, uh... Jaxi, sir." A slight whimper from the rodent as the ram chuckled. "D-don't worry, a lot of people get it wrong." (A lot of people, but not...) The sudden thought stunned the navy one for a moment before they moved inside the gate. Thoughts once

again returning back to the beast who had taken an interest in them, much like Jaxi had towards him. As scary as it was, it was also... Heartwarming in its own way. Finally finding someone in this unfamiliar land who viewed the Armazonian as more than just a kind outsider looking for work.

But what was Jaxi to the behemoth? For the longest time, Drygg didn't even notice the raptor's existence. To the point where... Jaxi nearly made up a one-sided relationship with the beast in their head. Taking a moment to groan and cover those magenta eyes, resting inbetween some buildings for the time being as they remembered back into the two's first conversation. Jaxi admitting that he nearly loved the behemoth, even before he even spoke a word to them.

...This must've been how that stalker of Jaxi's felt; somehow creating a whirlwind of emotions from neglected needs in their own head, that the raptor became so fascinated with another. Another that did not feel the same way as them... Or at least at first. It was difficult to read the large creature's expressions, especially from down low or riding on his head.

There was a difference though; the navy one didn't attempt to squeeze their own life into Drygg'makaar's. It was part of Jaxi's job to determine whether or not the purple behemoth was a threat, an answer they were still trying to figure out. But being able to reason with the subject at least nets a positive.

The Subject... Earlier this morning Drygg really seemed to snap at being called that. One of the only times the raptor got an aggressive response from him, but why exactly? A bit demeaning, that's for sure, but by the sounds of it... The Behemoth had history with the word. What history was far beyond the navy one's guess, something about being captive? Imprisoned by something and escaped?

The raptor sighed... They really should be asking Drygg about this instead of just speculating, hearing the beast out. But... Was the navy one ready? Would knowing the behemoth's past cause them to look at the purple one differently? Truth be told, Jaxi was... Scared of that result. Becoming more frightened of what the beast's purpose was, and what his intentions were. Even after observing him for the past weeks... The feathered one wasn't certain what Drygg was doing out here.

This entire day has been like attempting to stay shipboard in a storm... But they found out what the behemoth wanted now: a friend. Something Jaxi could use as well lately, finding themselves just smiling at the idea of having such a large creature as a friend. With a deep breath, the raptor got up and walked out into the slightly busy streets again, walking the semi-familiar path to the guard's headquarters. Spotting a familiar carriage in the distance, but no sign of the horse, the lord, or Willbert.

Jaxi hoped they were alright, and the mount got some much needed rest. Which reminded them; they should get some more food supplies before leaving, but being paid was priority. Spotting the building and heading inside- nearly running into some guards exiting the area as the group grumbled in frustration.

Looking inside at the desk area was a rather irked looking badger, going through some papers as the small dino moved their way inside. Instantly getting a harsh glare from those yellow eyes of hers before hearing the guard curse under her breath. "Crap... You're still alive." It even put Jaxi in an irked mood.

"Yes, I'm here for my pay-"

"Do you have a report filled out?" It was barely a question, and not kind in tone.

"I do." Another curse as the raptor took it out of their bag and placed the few papers onto the desk, watching her overlook it. Almost as if searching for something. "...You're looking for mistakes."

"I'm doing my job."

"And I've done mine. I've dealt with this every time I've come here to collect, why are you so insistent in-"

"We can't pay you." The interruption actually left the navy one struck. "We had a shipment come in and needed to use the coin to pay our employees to cover it. Things have been delayed." (So that's why the ram guard cursed earlier.) The theropod thought, stiffening their jaw. "So, I literally do not have the means to pay you today."

"But... I need that money. I need to-"

"So does everyone else. You're a hunter or gatherer or something. Go find something out in the bush to eat. I can't do anything else for you." She coldly, putting the report away. "Come back in four days, we'll have your pay then."

"F-four days...!?" Jaxi whined, but there was no use arguing. Getting them to sigh heavily and just leave out the doorway. Moving to the side of the building and leaning up against it, exhaling heavily. Taking a moment before digging through the bag and looking at the very few coins they had to exchange, clearly not enough- only to remember what the lord gave them for the assist! The raptor could still get through the week without resorting to gathering outside the walls!

A wave of relief washed over them as Jaxi got up, found a gold coin in their bag, and headed to the busy market. Picking out a few extra veggies and finally having the luxury of fruit

too, wondering if Drygg would be interested in trying some. The thought made the navy one smile, but perhaps a single slice would do fine. After all, if needed, Jaxi could always return here for some more.

Placing the large amount of food on the cashier stall and getting a surprised look from the hog tending nearby. Instantly narrowing when they spotted the navy customer and getting suspicious, more so when Jaxi placed down the gold coin in plain view. "This should cover it all, yes?" Another gaze before the hog whistled loudly and motioned some guards over, instantly making the small raptor double take between them and almost cower as three others nearly boxed them in.

The dinosaur yelped when they were instantly grabbed by the security while one looked at the hog, waiting for him to speak. "We got a thief here."

"W-what!?" Jaxi yelped. "No-no-no, I earned that!"

"No one of your pay has access to this kind of coin." The pig snorted.

"Who did you steal this from?" One guard demanded, making the dino whimper.

"I-I didn't steal it, I helped out the Lord-"

"No doubt the lord visiting the area."

"Y-yes, Jaxi helped him out on the road-! I mean, I helped him-!"

"Just take him away. You, go inform the lord of any missing coin. If he's clear, then he'll be let free." A sharp whimper from the feathered dino as they struggled a little to get free before being carried off.

Well, it's... Work.

Work... A strange concept to the beast as he stared at the farmlands in slight puzzlement. A series of plants growing in the fields, all neatly in lines, puzzling Drygg as to how they got them to do that. The forests are all a scattered abstract mess of plants, trees, and hills. How are these areas so vacant? Magic. It had to be. If the behemoth could level out entire forests, surely they

could too.

Hard labor for what feels like scraps sometimes.

Jaxi's words echoed in his head again, swearing he was understanding the concept less and less the more he tried. Almost frustrating the large purple one as he let out a long grumble. What is Work? Hard Labor? What did they mean about it being taxing? Are they harming his friend?

The thought only made the beast angrier, by the sounds of it they didn't really respect the raptor to begin with. But then, why was Jaxi even doing this? They needed money...? Scraps of... Whatever that pelican guy paid them with? Drygg barely got a look at it, but it appeared to be like a small disc. Why was it so important? The beast could just make discs, and if their society had access to them, that just means they could be made too, right?

A loud snort from that purple muzzle as the titan got up and started walking away. Half following the path from afar as he attempted to wrap his mind around this... Dumb concept. Why not just take what you need? Make what you need? Do everything yourself if you need to-

Jaxi isn't strong like you.

...Perspective was a frustrating thing. The more the beast gained, the more he wanted to just level the world as told. Exhaling a heated breath as if to release his own anger before it boiled his blood. But the question did come up; why was he suddenly angry? Drygg didn't care about their society or how it functioned. He didn't- ...He only cared for Jaxi, and their own safety. He only cared for his friend.

T-they are not all bad people, Drygg'makaar. Please don't think like that.

But they make the behemoth angry just thinking about it. How is that not a bad person? The more he attempted to argue against the raptor's points, the more confused Drygg became. The more confused, the more frustrated and angry. It made no damn sense...! All he really knew is that talking about culling them made the feathered friend sad, and that caused the heavy weight in his own chest to return.

...Damn this weight sometimes. Damn this strange curse or spell the navy one cast upon the beast, one who was perfectly content before today... Or was he? Slowing to a stop, Drygg stared at the walls of the garrison from afar. Trying to think back to when he first spotted such a place, not even just this one but a town, garrison, village in general. That damn voice in his head demanding that he destroy it.

The behemoth didn't care at that point. Just leaving it alone, some out of sheer spite against such commands. But now? Jaxi gave him a reason to do it. They've been treating his friend poorly, and they deserve to be sent off just like-

Those purple ears flicked up, swearing they heard something. A call? A familiar call... Of his name? His name... It finally sunk in that the beast had a name now- Right! Don't get distracted! That voice, was it Jaxi? Where was it coming from?

The large one perked his head up, keeping those ears opened and flicking around. Scanning the area towards the garrison where some movement in a barred window was spotted; that of a navy wing? No, a feathered arm, with a red outline-

It was Jaxi! And another call confirmed it, making the large purple one trot towards the large stone wall. The window slightly below Drygg's eye level as he spotted the small friend within. "I'm so glad to see you, Drygg'makaar." It made the behemoth smile.

"I'm... Happy to see you too. I didn't think you wanted me this close to the garrison though."

"I-I mean, I don't, but-?"

"Should I leave then?"

"N-no no, I just..." A head tilt in puzzlement from the beast as the dinosaur attempted to search for words. "I'm... In jail, Drygg."

"Jail?"

"I've been arrested, for apparently 'Stealing' the coins the Lord gave me earlier." A blank stare from those yellow eyes. "There's just been a misunderstanding, I'm sure they will work things out, but I wanted to let you know-"

"They imprisoned you?" It was barely a question, instantly making the area almost feel cold with the behemoth's tone.

"No-no-no! ...Well, yes, but do not think of it that way, please!"

"But they locked you in a room, correct? Large. White. Bright?" A bit of a puzzled look from the raptor that time.

"A-actually, the opposite: small, dark, and kinda cold."

"Let me free you then." Those large purple paws instantly started to grab the wall, making the feathered one yelp several times.

"No! Nonononono, Drygg! Please! No... Destruction!" Another clearly confused look from the behemoth as the small one took another breath. "L-look, Drygg. I'm innocent, it'll be resolved in time. I just wanted to tell you that it may be a bit before I get out here and see you

again."

"Why?"

"Because..." Another moment to think of words, taking longer than expected and making the beast begin to doubt the... 'Innocence' of the others involved. "This is just a misunderstanding. They're talking to the Lord right now-"

"The bird guy from earlier?"

"Y-yes! Him. And he'll get this straightened out in no time."

"Is there anything I can do to... Help?" The behemoth asked a bit optimistically, forepaws still on the wall. "It'll take nothing for me to just open this and get you out-"

"D-Drygg, if you do that, they'll just mark me as a fugitive or an outlaw." Another blank stare. "Letting them lock me up, or possibly exec- N-nevermind." A deep exhale from the navy one. "I-I just..."

As much as the purple beast wanted to immediately hurt the others, everytime he stated it Jaxi would get sad. Taking a deep breath for himself and letting go of the wall. Resting those paws on the ground instead. "What happened?" A sad look from those magenta eyes.

"...They didn't pay me. Used the funds they had for supplies instead or something."

"And you need that pay to survive, was it?" The large one attempted to understand, and getting a nod in response.

"Well, I was planning to use it to buy things, but since I didn't get any... I tried using some of the coin the Lord gave me for helping out earlier."

"Those gold discs."

"Y-yes. However... The merchant got immediately suspicious of me having it."

"Why?"

"Because... Foreigners don't make that kind of coin."

"He accused you of stealing it." A bit of a blunt statement, but Jaxi nodded. "And they... Put you in a room because of it."

"Until proven innocent, yes."

"So, all I have to do is prove you're innocent then." A sharp whimper from the dino as

they double taked so hard their snout hit the bars. Making them instantly whimper and hold it. "If I do that, they will let you out of the room, will they not?"

"W-well... Yes, but-"

"I'll do what I can to help, Jaxi." The behemoth nearly chirped, making the small dino whimper.

"D-Drygg...?" They got the attention of those yellow eyes. "...W-without destroying anything."

"No destruction." The behemoth confirmed. "...Unless I have to." It was a little too blunt that the raptor could not stop him. Only whimpering soon after the words were processed.

To some, it was possibly a walk of aggression, especially to those feeling the heavy steps from within the large walls. Large enough that the behemoth had to lift his head up to see over them. But to Drygg, he got a mission. A task to attempt to do! Almost having a spring in his step as he approached the main gate and heard a couple of panicked cries and curses as they scrambled to close it. Too slowly, of course, and a single purple paw in front of the heavy door was enough to completely stop its arching path.

Those large yellow eyes gazed inside as many guards retreated back, save for a couple who had lost their balance in their fear. A gopher and a ram; each having dropped their weapon and staring at the stopped beast. A lot of movement from within the walls as everyone attempted to take shelter.

But the purple creature only sat down in front of the gateway, keeping it forcefully opened and looking down at the other two... Only to completely lose track of what he was doing. Leaving a bit of an awkward silence between the behemoth and everyone else. Why was he here? What was his goal-? To free Jaxi! To free his friend. And without destroying anything- including this gate. Instantly letting go of it and rest his paw down before taking a deep breath, in and out. How would he go about saving the raptor? What was the first step-?

["Who is in command here?"]

"Who is in command here?" Drygg nearly demanded, as soon as that memory returned. Making the two yelp a little bit and the gopher scampered away, leaving the ram locking eyes

with the purple titan.

"H-he's going to get him." She whimpered, looking back in the direction the rodent fled for a moment. "...He better be going to get him." A near growl from her as she got up slowly, not going after the spear by her side and just dusting herself off. Though, unable to help but stare at such a massive creature: bulky muscles, great paws on all four limbs. Sculpted shoulders that seemed to be carved separately from the enlarged chest. A series of bulging abs leading down to a large sheath that was hidden in the shadows, instantly making her blush once the ram realized what it was.

A few moments later, a few guards came about, escorting one slightly dressed-up. Stepping forwards towards the behemoth with caution but unarmed. "I am... Ayre, captain of the guard and current command of Losaka. What business do you have here?"

"I have been named- ...Catalystro. You have imprisoned a friend of mine." The larger one half growled, keeping a rather stern tone.

"W-who might that be?"

"...A small Armazonian by the name of Jaxi."

"Tabaxi?" The gopher guard's question made both the captain and the behemoth tilt their heads at him in confusion. "Y-you're... Friends with-?"

"I am. And they are important to me. They are innocent, and I demand them to be freed." The titan slapped his tail on the ground, causing a small quake and actually denting the ground upon impact. Luckily out of the main path. Startling a few of them for a moment before some guards came up to the captain.

"I'm being told he was imprisoned because he stole some coin-"

"Jaxi was accused of stealing that coin, but that bird gave it to him as a show of thanks." The purple one grumbled. "Someone was supposed to be talking to that Lord. What did they say?" Some more whispers.

"They... Never got around to that yet."

"Why not." It was barely a question from the titan, only making one of the guards whimper. Nearly outing himself to those yellow eyes as he swore his armor was getting hotter from the intense glare.

"S-sir... Catastro, was it-?"

"Catalystro." Drygg corrected.

"P-perhaps this is just a misunderstanding-"

"Jaxi works for you, do they not?" The behemoth started to get up, slowly leaning forwards. "You hired them to study me? To keep watch? To see if I'm a threat to you and/or your kind?" A low growl from the purple throat as a large crack in the ground began to break just outside of the large forepaws. Several feet out from the large garrison walls and circling around the entire barricaded town. "Do you want me to be a threat-?"

"Yo ho!" A friendly shout from the back, breaking the tension as the dapper pelican started to step forwards. "I'm surprised to see you again, friend!" The lord addressed the behemoth, nearly making the large one a bit shocked. "Come for a visit as well? Where is your little friend?" Roye followed the yellow gaze to the captain, who stumbled on his words.

"M-my lord... Do... Do you know this creature?"

"Why yes! Willbert and I got stuck in a hole not far out on our way here. The Armazonian and this large chap ended up helping us out. Got us out of there in no time at all!" The bird looked the purple one up and down. "My, you do look quite intimidating up close."

"They imprisoned Jaxi." Drygg stated, getting a tilted head in question from the pelican.

"The Armazonian? Imprisoned? What ever for?"

"We... Thought he stole from you, sir." A noise in question as the bird looked at the guard. "He was spotted having an unusual amount of coin on him-"

"It was only seven gold pieces." The lord admitted bluntly. "I used up all my lower change on the performers in... Where was that Willbert?" A meerkat came up to his side.

"W-which time, sir?"

"Oh, it hardly matters, they were all lovely though Captain Ayre! You really must see them next time you're in the cities. Highly recommend such an experience-"

"W-wait, my lord. Are you saying that... You did give Tabaxi-?"

"Jaxi." Both the behemoth and the ram corrected him.

"Whatever, the... Coin?"

"I did, yes. As payment for helping us out and not robbing us." A puzzled look from the titan that the pelican didn't see. "It was a very deep hole."

"Very deep, yes." Willbert added. Leaving a bit of an awkward silence before the captain sighed.

"Go free him."

The gate slowly opened, though closing it in the first place wasn't really going to stop the behemoth from attempting to enter if needed. Not releasing a sigh of relief until that small feathered body was seen, allowing him to exhale as Jaxi nearly sped towards the purple snout. Diving for it as that muzzle caught them on top and between the horns, bringing the raptor down to a resting paw in an almost embrace as the small one squeezed that snout tightly. Keeping hold of the small moment they had even after the gates had long closed. "Are you okay?"

"Jaxi is fine-" A half disappointed sigh at the language error, but it just made the beast smile. "I'm fine. Just... It's been a day."

"A long day, for both of us."

"How did you even...?" A deep inhale and exhale from the behemoth as he half looked away.

"...I'll admit it. I started to get angry. Even after you told me no destroying." A noise in question from the dino as they looked around. Instantly spotting the large dent in the ground and then... A crack? "I was prepared to flip the entire garrison on its head if they didn't comply." A sharp whimper from the little one, but it wasn't out of fear again. That... Excitement? So he jokingly tried again. "Or drop the star on top of it."

"T-the star?"

"Our sun." Another long whimper and a bit of a strange shift in the raptor's lower half, making the purple beast chuckle to show he was only kidding. "But... That bird ended up butting in and well... Confirmed your innocent?"

"Proved my innocence, yes." A playful nuzzle from that large snout. "That's what that

was about. I thanked him on my way out." A large nod was felt.

"I'm glad you are safe." That made the feathered dino smile. "Did you need anything else here?"

"No... No, let's leave for the time being. I gotta come back in four days though."

"Four days is plenty of time." The behemoth got up as the raptor rested on his head, letting them ride him as Drygg began to make his way into the forests again. "Where would you like to go?"

"Someplace private, if you don't mind." Jaxi blurted out, not realizing just how that sounded and catching their own muzzle. But the statement seemed to go over the purple one's head, only getting a noise in confirmation as he continued walking. Recognizing it as 'away from eyes', which was perfectly fine for the large beast as well. Waiting for several moments of traveling before hearing the navy friend stumble on their words a bit. "D-Drygg?"

"Yes?" More stumbling, but the large one just kept walking. "What is it, Jaxi?"

"I would... Like... I mean, erm..."

"Jaxi would like...?" A little bit of a tease, attempting to bounce the smaller critter resting on his mane.

"I-if you want... I... I think I'm ready."

"Ready for what?"

"To... Know." A noise in question from that purple muzzle just before it came to mind. "Where you... Came from."

"Jaxi..." The behemoth slowed to a stop.

"I-I don't think there's anything you could say at this point, anything you could have done to scare me away." No real response, but those yellow eyes did attempt to look away. "I don't think-"

"But you could look at me differently if you knew, that's the thing." Drygg mumbled a bit sadly, taking a deep breath and walking to a nearby raised ledge. Resting his head beside it; a motion for the raptor to get off. "...If I'm telling you this, I'm looking you in the eyes." Worry cast a shadow over the smaller one's heart, taking a moment to pet the large one before hopping onto the ledge. Watching the purple beast lay down and rest, with Jaxi doing the same, before taking a deep breath. "...I'm not sure where to start."

"What... What are you?" A gaze from those yellow eyes for a moment, taking another breath before nodding in agreement.

"Jaxi... I am a weapon. Made as a last resort for if all else failed, that my creators had a Nuclear option: to destroy everything." It hurt his chest to see the sudden fear in those magenta eyes. "All traces of what they have done, any resistance that may have raised against them. I am Cataclysm Personified. I was one of many."

"M-many?" A slow nod. "H-how many?"

"None left, that I know of." The beast looked off into the distance. "Too many to really keep track of, but they all had flaws. Each and every one of them had a fault, so it was scrapped and remade anew. Some were a lack of power, not fitting their destructive wants in a weapon. Others were not aggressive enough, so they changed and tweaked the formula-" Those yellow eyes double taked at the smaller one, already starting to look at the behemoth differently. Causing him to sigh quietly and drop his own gaze a little.

"I-I... I'm just having a hard time to follow things, is all-"

"You're afraid." A whimper from the small dino, especially at the rather blunt tone. "You have every right to be, Jaxi."

"S-so... You're here to destroy the world?"

"...I don't know yet. I haven't decided." Another whimper that was only increasing the weight in that purple chest. "...They did not treat me well when I was there. They seen me as a tool, an object. Nothing more. Addressed me like one of their machines. To say I was angry at them... Furious even, was an understatement. And when I retaliated, they punished me. I fought back harder, they scheduled me for 'Reformation'."

"Re...?"

"Execution. To be scrapped and remade as another attempt. But I had something the others didn't: A will to survive. They wanted something that wouldn't give up, less about self-preservation, but would just fight on regardless of how many limbs they were missing or how many holes were in their body." A deep exhale of near anger from that large muzzle, able to nearly ignite the grass underneath. "So when I say I fought back with everything, I do mean everything, Jaxi."

"Drygg..."

"You do not have to worry. There's nothing left of that place, and I hope there's nothing left of my creators. If so, they know enough to stay away from me." The behemoth was silent for

a few moments.

"When did this happen?"

"Maybe... Half a season ago? At least two full moons." Another look off into the distance, letting the raptor do the same. "...Without them, I have no purpose. I was made to destroy their enemies, but I became their enemy. Yet, I do not want to destroy myself. I've been stuck in this loop of not knowing what to do, what I need to do. I never had this much freedom before, and all I can really do with it is just... Wander. See the world that I was made to decimate."

"...And what do you see in this world?" As the large purple muzzle turned to face the raptor again, it was caught by a feathered 'wing'. Not noticing the dino had gotten a little closer to be able to reach it, but the touch fluttered the beast's heart.

"...I see a lot of things. I see how they're treating people: fighting, stealing, or accusing one another over 'scraps' or metals. I see them making assumptions based on race and species, disregarding them as actual people because they're not the same as them. I feel their fear of everything; both the known that stand before them and the unknown that lie in the distance." A slow but deep breath as that snout leaned into the raptor's form. "But I also see good in it. Those who are willing to help out others in need, despite their wealth class- if I'm using that term correctly. I see those who would not choose the aggressive option when faced with an insurmountable possible foe."

Another breath, one not of heat, as it nearly lifted the dino in a nuzzle. "I see one taking the most daunting of tasks and trying to find the good in it instead of just writing it off as a threat. Even if it took a month's worth of study, and possibly getting hunted by mountain lions." A small chuckle from Jaxi. "I see one finding beauty in said subject, so much so they refined a creative skill of theirs. One born out of necessity for telegraphing information, blooming into something so much better from sheer affection. I see someone who has had a tough life, yet continues to help others- even living weapons, so they would not have to suffer the ways they did." Those magenta eyes began to tear up. "I feel things I never thought possible because of this... Because of your kindness, and I feel something new. Many things new after only spending half a day with you. But something very specific."

"What would that be?" The small one attempted to ask, wiping their eyes while smiling.

"Hope. For the future of others, for this world that looks better the way it is instead of endless sand and ash. And for... Me. My own future." It was too much for the small one to keep looking into those yellow eyes, needing to just squeeze that large snout in a tight embrace as the purple one growled... No. It was a different noise, that even surprised the behemoth

himself. Stopping it for a moment, but as soon as those feathered arms stroked that purple muzzle the noise, the vibration returned. It felt natural, thick and almost intimidating as it originated from that broad chest. But there was this strange warmth to it too, a happiness behind it that one could not fear.

"What is it?" The beast looked quite skeptical at the strange pear, carrying what was to him a single pawful of wood. "And where do you want these?"

"Over there is fine. I'll set them up after, but give it a try?" They cut a big slice out of the fruit and held it up to Drygg, letting the large muzzle creep close and sniff it. "It's a Sadifruit."

"A what?"

"It's a type of pear, a sweet one." The more those yellow eyes studied the small fruit, the more the raptor smiled at him. "I promise you will love it."

"I don't eat, Jaxi."

"But you can, correct?" The behemoth was on his way to shake that large head No, but stopped midway. Frozen in thought for a few moments. "Can you taste? With your tongue?"

"I can." He answered without needing to think. "But I never needed substance. You do, though, to survive."

"One slice of Sadifruit is not going to keep me from living." The navy dino chuckled, getting up from their placed bedroll and motioning that head to come close. "Offer your tongue." An uncomfortable look from the purple one but he did so; leaning down and opening that muzzle wide as Drygg felt something wet rest on the large muscle. Not quite able to see Jaxi's sudden blush seeing such a maw up close. "O-okay, close it and press the fruit against the roof of your mouth."

Upon closing those large jaws, Drygg could already sense something... Wonderful! But still following instructions; squishing the piece of fruit into a near paste with a single strong press and instantly milking all the juices out of it. A strong sense of tangy yet sweetness that he had never experienced before, giving his taste buds a lot of good feels and tingles along it. Letting it dance on his tongue as his senses were absolutely staggered with an intense flavor, even for being only a small piece. Making the behemoth purr loudly as his tongue lapped at it

again and again, until the cool fluids faded away. "That... That is..."

"It's very flavorful, isn't it?" A large slow nod from the purple one as his eyes remained closed, still able to recall such a taste even though it was long gone. Eventually opening up to the raptor's bright smile. "They are expensive though, and hard to get fresh ones out here."

"Where do they come from?"

"Some tree far far west, I believe. The lady I helped with the roof, she came from there and that's how I encountered my first one." The beast instantly looked directly west, where the feathered one pointed. "I cannot tell you just how far, but it's close enough to get a shipment here without them spoiling. Maybe a couple of days worth of travel?"

"Maybe." The purple one looked off into the distance, able to see mountains and large hills covered in forests. "I wonder if I can get one...?" Another chuckle was heard.

"Liked it that much, did you?"

"I do. I... Want more. More experiences like that." Looking around the area at the trees and stone. "What do other things taste like?"

"N-not nearly as good, Drygg. Please don't try to eat rocks again."

"I didn't even notice that taste." A long stare at a nearby rock pillar, but he decided against it. If it was good, the beast would've noticed it earlier. Returning his gaze to the small raptor who was starting to set up the sticks in a cone shape. Not quite understanding it himself, but Drygg just watched in silence. Studying the navy theropod more than what they were doing; wondering just how thin Jaxi was underneath that feathered coat. Incredibly light, that was for sure, and very quiet.

Dropping one stick by accident and bending over to pick it up accidentally flashed the behemoth with that undertail; free of any possible garments that many others were wearing, unlike the lord earlier. Though most of it was covered in navy fluff, the sight... Excited the beast. Letting out a soft purr that half got the attention of the smaller dino, seeing those yellow eyes look over them without shyness. "I-is everything okay?"

"Yes. I was just thinking." Drygg mumbled, not letting off his study. "What... Are you?"

"Hmm? Amazonian?"

"That's where you are from, though. Correct? I may not have studied the people in the villages or farms that much, but of the ones I saw, none of them... Look like you. The closest thing was that bird, but you're not quite a bird."

"O-oh, I'm not really sure. Definitely not a bird though, due to our muzzles... Well, not being Beaks." The small raptor continued. "I don't remember too much, but back in Armazonia, there were stories about our ancestors climbing and making nests in these huge redwood trees. We would glide from each one, scaling up and down them. Scavenging for insects and other small things like them."

"I don't believe I have knowledge about ancestral species like that." The behemoth shook his head slowly. "It doesn't bring anything to mind."

"That's okay. Jaxi is Jaxi now, and isn't fond of the taste of bugs." The two lightly chuckled, as the small one went back to their pack and pulled out some flint. "Now for the fun part." Half a grumble.

"Lighting it?" A nod as the raptor turned around to the fireplace, only to see it suddenly erupt in a large flame! A wave of heat rushing past the smaller dino, making them yelp loudly and take cover behind a nearby log. "That's something I can help with... Maybe I overdid it, but that was as small as I could make it." The large one half pondered, looking around at any stray sparks and 'glaring' at them until they were snuffed out. One nearby the raptor, and it felt like the temperature suddenly spiked to freezing just for a moment.

"W-wh...?" Jaxi whimpered, getting a clam look from the purple beast. "Was that... Sorcery?"

"Yes." A blunt answer was only met with confusion and a bit of fright, puzzling Drygg. "Do you not have such powers? I was told all kinds out here possess control of such things."

"W-we do not, Drygg'makaar." The raptor half whined, looking at the large flame as it was slowly adjusting to its fuel source. "Maybe in our myths or tall tales, but nothing so... Magical." Taking their pear and slowly approaching the fire now that the intense wave of heat resided, collecting some of its warmth as those navy feathers puffed out as if to do the same. "It's... Different from what I'm used to. Much hotter than a normal fire."

"It usually does take one a fair amount of energy to erupt an area into flames." The large one mumbled surprisingly calmly, resting nearby the raptor. "But... There's something comforting about doing it; about creating a sunspot in one location that is hot enough to burn through granite. One that can easily spread wildly if misused, yet being able to control such an immense power-" A sharp whimper from Jaxi made him stop, snapping his gaze out of the fire and onto the small one again. "Am I frightening you again?"

"A-a little, but..." A second one, but also more... Excited? Trying to gaze into those shy magenta eyes as they attempted to almost cover their navy body; hide their front. Taking a deep

and quick breath before facing the behemoth. "I... It's hard for me to explain this but..."

"Should I stop doing...?" A feathered paw up to softly halt the beast's thoughts as Jaxi gathered their courage.

"I've grown... Attracted to you, in more than one way." A puzzled look from the purple one. "When you talk about destroying buildings or w-when you flex your strength-"

"It brings you fear-"

"I-it makes me... Excited." A double take from the large one. "It... Makes me... Aroused." The blush on the raptor's face was absolutely immense, to the point where they couldn't face the large one anymore and had to cover up those magenta eyes.

"...Aroused?" A whimper in confirmation. "You... Like it?" A nod that time, and Drygg pondered for a few moments. "This is a good thing, right?"

"D-depends on who you ask, b-but."

"Is it a good thing for you?" The small one froze for a moment, releasing a bit of a whine as they thought.

"I-it's embarrassing."

"Embarrassing...?" The behemoth curled his neck. "How?"

"Because it's... An attraction I cannot control. E-especially in front of you." Those puzzled yellow eyes gave them no relief. "In a society, you're expected to be able to control yourself by the time you reach adulthood. Sometimes earlier."

"And by control, you mean...?"

"Manage your instincts, your wants and... Lusts." The behemoth's gaze moved a bit in ponder, not noticing the raptor cover their face again. "W-when we first met... I lost that control. Maybe it was out of fear, maybe it was out of excitement after finding out you could talk and understand Jaxi-" A whimper as another mistake fell through. "O-only to blurt out that I love you, I'm sorry- I'm sooo sorry for that!"

"I... Love you too." A sharp whine in question, as those magenta eyes met the yellow ones. "At least, I think that's what this feeling is. My definition of love, friendship, companions, it's all over the place and filled with so much... Inexperience, that I can't be certain that is what I'm feeling. But..." The beast's large purple ears blushed a bit. "What I'm feeling when I think about you, my mind is matching it with the word Love." That made Jaxi smile brightly, and Drygg

too as his gaze shifted down- double taking at something red or pink within the forest of navy feathers. "Y-you're hurt!?"

"W-what?" The dino yelped, opening up those feathered arms to spot their tool peeking through their coat. Then yelping much much louder before covering it up again. "N-n-nevermind that! Please!"

"So it's not a wound? If it is, I could cauterize it for you-"

"N-no no no! Th-that's just..." Another long whimper from the dino as they shifted to hide themselves, trying to use the shadow along with that plumage but not notice that large muzzle approach closer until the small one double taked with a yelp.

"May I... See it?" It left the raptor in shock. "It is your arousal showing, correct? I believe that was the correct term."

"F-for the most part, if not; close enough."

"And you were interested in mine earlier, yes? Because you wanted..." The behemoth shifted to show his own package, though the magenta discs attempted to look away, one small glaze completely enthralled them. Causing the navy one to stare as their tail wagged with excitement. "Jaxi?" A couple of patient calls from Drygg as the beast smiled, finally getting the attention of the raptor once more. "I would like to see you finish that drawing."

It was almost like it took a few moments to process such a thing, but it made the small one smile. Taking a deep breath while still looking at the yellow eyes... Okay, with some sneaking glances, but Jaxi nodded. Getting up and trying not to be shy about their own pensile tool sticking out as they went for their bag. Pulling out what was required and flipped to the page. "O-okay. This is... The first time- erm, only the second time I've done this, s-so."

"But you've made many of those drawings of me, yes?"

"Y-yeah, but you were not aware of me. It made it much easier when I knew I wasn't being watched." The dino lightly whimpered as they got up and showed the large one the progress so far. "Okay, you're going to need to lift that upper hip there a little bit, while moving the other under it. You're elbow more over here, and rest your other hand a bit more over..." The small paws guided the free one down the beast's up-most side, resting it over the mid-belly while giving out a shy whimper. Those magenta eyes ensnared by the surprisingly detailed muscles before them, almost wanting to touch it and spotting the large one nod. Giving permission to do so.

Carefully, that soft feathered arm brushed over the very thin coat of fur, already able to

feel just how armored that hide was. Along with how thick and excessive the muscles were built underneath, creating sections like a map of a large town. Lining out properties and farmlands while the spaces inbetween remained as roads. All while that feathered tail was going wild, nearly making the raptor do a little dance to get rid of their building up energy. "I-I may have to redo this part too, Jaxi sees a few mistakes I've made."

A very soft chuckle from the titan that made Jaxi double take, until they caught their language mistake. Lightly tossing their snout, sitting down in front of the behemoth and started sketching. Giving out a few grumbles when trying to find a good position to create the specific lines, and not notice that free purple hand wave for attention until a bit. Releasing a noise in question. "Lean back." Drygg commanded, getting a bit of a whimper before doing so, and spotting a sudden spike of rock erupting from the ground before them!

It didn't hit any part of the dino, nor did it harm the sketchbook. Only spooked Jaxi for a moment, then a shimmer of something going across before the beast lightly picked up the top half of it and tossed it. Leaving what was a very flat surface of smoothly cut earth, waiting until given the signal before the navy one approached it.

It was like... A desk or a table. A place for them to rest the sketchpad, making the feathered raptor smile as they used it with a whisper of a thank you. Finding it much much easier to make the lines and freely adjust the angle of the book when needed. Soon really getting into the trance as the muscles were connected one by one, running out of daylight for it and the fire was only so good.

Jaxi's body was heating up, specifically just from observing the beast up close and really thinking about what those muscles looked like when they were actually flexed. Causing that pink member to twitch and occasionally leak a droplet of sorts; well into the view of those yellow discs. Giving Drygg something to look at as the behemoth attempted to remain perfectly still. This felt familiar to him, but... Different, and in a good way. Being observed, drawn, and studied. This one was all that, yet also something more. It gave the large one good feelings in his chest as that large tail of his fluttered. At least having some part of his body not required to stay still.

And then that light-purple gaze moved down lower; to that large sheath. Honestly a bit swollen at this point, half getting excited from just being watched. Getting some attention after years of neglect, only because the behemoth never had the need for it. "I-I'm..." Jaxi started up, still drawing and not breaking their concentration on that. "I'm surprised... You even have these bits, h-honestly."

"Are you?" A whimpering nod in response. "They tried to make others without them, but each one lacked testosterone." That crown of feathers perked in question, getting a puzzled

glance, but only for a moment as the dino continued their work. "It is a chemical in the body that helps with many different things. But what they were most interested in was muscle growth and aggression. The ones made before me lacked a destructive nature and were overall weaker. Even though some would consider it a weak spot of sorts, the pouch and protection on display to you is not fatal if wounded or removed. So they thought it was a fair trade for their walking apocalypse-" A sharp excited whimper from the raptor made Drygg chuckle. That feathered tail going wild enough to actually fan the flames of the bonfire.

"I-I see."

"Did you understand that-?"

"-N-not in the slightest." That one made the behemoth lightly laugh. "B-but... You're talking about yourself. You're opening up, and that makes me happy."

"And excited?"

"V-very excited."

"Aroused, even?" Drygg teased, getting a whimper as those yellow eyes rested on that throbbing pink. Coated in a glistening wet while also beginning to matt the surrounding feathers in it. Understanding its function and barely knowing that it stimulates the owner in a good way, but lacking any experience of it himself. Still, it was fun to observe such a thing on a good friend as they constantly continued to huff and blush. Half wondering if the raptor was actually glowing, or was that just a halo created by the fire.

A few more whines and that magenta gaze moved down to study the behemoth's plump pouch. A bulging thing that was covered in the same dark-blond hair as his sheath, though this time mostly surrounding the package save for one large fluffy stripe that divided it. Looking a little pent up, likely from neglect, and though they were trying to concentrate on drawing, Jaxi kept thinking about how the raptor could possibly help his large friend with it.

A series of quick sketches with the pencil and the dino looked it over, instantly getting the attention of the beast for a moment before that pink-purple gaze met his. "I-it's... Not as good as the real thing, but." The large one leaned forward, finally breaking the pose and half stretching out his body from remaining still. Having the sketch book being presented to him, and watching as Drygg smiled looking over it.

He only caught a glance at it before, and the overall structure was a bit off, but it wasn't a terrible start. Done entirely by imagination, after all, aside from the very center which definitely improved in quality. Quite the stark difference between having a method of reference and not, but still. "It is very... Lovely, Jaxi." The behemoth said with a smile.

"I-it could be a lot better-"

"Considering you started this from memory, I'd say you did a great job." A shy whine in response, causing the beast to be a little puzzled.

"H-half from memory..." Only for that purple head tilted further, not recalling ever sleeping or resting in such a pose. "The night I started this... I... Couldn't sleep. T-too many... Thoughts, and I spotted some large rocks that kinda..." A long whimper from the small one as that yellow gaze shifted from the sketchbook to the navy one. "In the low light, this is what I pictured, and in order to a-actually sleep..."

"You...?"

"Needed to get it out of my system." A blank stare from Drygg. "A-as in... To... Indulge myself."

"With a drawing? I thought you were doing that regardless." A whine in question from the small one. "I suppose you were indulging your employers too with them-" An even sharper one from the dino that interrupted Drygg. "Do you mean something else-?"

"I-I mean, to relieve myself." A strange look from those yellow eyes, interrupting the behemoth before he could ask more. "-And I don't mean that! I-I mean... Have you ever gotten... Urges?"

"Urges?"

"S... Sexual ones?" A few questionable blinks from the blank stare. "From too much arousal?"

"I never even began to feel it until I met you." The beast bluntly admitted. Looking between Jaxi and the sketchbook. "So this... Helps you with that? Is there anything else I can do to help with it?" A series of bashful whines as the small one fidgeted and looked around at the private area in the woods, making sure no one else was around.

"I-I've..."

"Because I'd like to... Help again, if I can." Another whine, one that the large beast was starting to really enjoy. Making Drygg smile as he looked over the sketch again.

"I-I... Definitely would like to, it's just hard to tell..." A noise in question from that broad chest as he urged the raptor to continue. "I'm not sure what we would be able to do. You're... Over ten times my size, and I don't think you can fix that."

"Not that I know of, no."

"But..." Jaxi got up, instantly getting the near-excited attention from the beast closer to 20 times larger. "M-maybe there is something we could do? You might have to trust me on this one."

"Does it hurt? I am equipped to deal with pain."

"N-not really, or at least I hope not." Jaxi nervously mumbled. Covering themselves and looking away until that massive snout came into contact, trying to gently nudge the feathered body without knocking them into the fire. Feeling those small paws rest on that purple muzzle as the dino took a breath.

"Just tell me what I need to do." One more nervous whine and a nod.

"Can you... Lay on your back?" A noise in confirmation as the behemoth took a step back and rolled onto his side. Almost shaking the ground in the process before exposing his belly to the sky. Watching as the raptor came closer and started to climb on top of the purple body, soon getting some assistance with the large paw as well. "Okay, h-how much do you know about... Sex?" Those purple ears perked up. "I imagine you have your..."

"Hidden knowledge?" A nod from the small dino. "I do, yes. And I understand the concept well enough. Just no actual experience." Drygg replied. "You have my consent, if that's what you're after."

"W-well, that and... Okay, normally it's a male and female, r-right?"

"Correct."

"B-but males can do it too through the under-tail. B-but..."

"That could be very dangerous for you and your size." A shivering whimper from sheer excitement, as Jaxi tried to calm down. "Is there another?"

"I-I was thinking... Of maybe trying to use your sheath instead?" A questionable gaze from those yellow eyes. Shifting from the raptor, to their pink tool, and then the behemoth's own protection.

"It looks like it could fit."

"It'll probably be incredibly sensitive." Jaxi warned.

"If it will help you, then I will allow this. I do not believe there can be any permanent damage if you try."

"D-definitely not, Drygg. But I thought I would let you know..." The small one carefully walked towards the beast's package, their breaths getting deeper as they approached and looked over the protection before cupping it. Instantly getting a deep purr from the behemoth as they carefully looked for an opening. Glancing over it a few times while searching for some extra color, but recalling that the beast's tongue was dark. Perhaps his tool was as well.

Inspecting the sheath gave the dinosaur more confidence in their idea. Not only did it feel durable, but surprisingly stretchy as well, getting larger reactions and a steady deep purr from Drygg. Meeting those yellow eyes for a moment as the beast nodded slowly, Jaxi approached it closer and gently pried it more open. To the point where they could confirm they were correct.

Of course it got a deep breath from the behemoth and a wag from that tail as something was felt moving inside the thick sheath. A familiar pulse like a slow clock ticking, warning the raptor just how little time they had to attempt this. One quick breath before the navy one moved forwards, lining up their smooth pink spire towards the opening of that protection and gently sliding it inside. Using its own prehensile flexibility to almost 'swim' gently while Drygg let out a gasp and a deep growl. Leaving the raptor to whimper in concern as they looked back. "Wow...! That's sensitive, but..." A couple of huffs. "But it does feel... Good?"

A faint breath of relief from Jaxi. "A-are you sure you want me to keep going?" Though that purple muzzle was exhaling huffs of heat, Drygg did nod at the small one. Adjusting his large shoulders to rest his head against some newly reformed terra, allowing the behemoth to watch his friend play and study his titanic body. However, needing to rely on touch alone to feel the progress since a feathered butt was in the line of sight.

It was cool at first, but got warmed up very quickly within the heated protection. Feeling it slither side to side like a snake against the very beast that resided within, and what a beast it felt like. Jaxi took the time to gently study it as they rested their light body on the large pelvis, detecting those ticks over and over as the weapon within enlarged to become ready. Concerning, yet making it easier for the raptor to study it a little. Circling around a large flare with a thick tip; nearly in the shape of a ballista bolt.

Carefully, the dinosaur started to slowly thrust into the protection as it grew underneath them. Encouraging the large tool inside to come out, as well as hoping this protection could handle two weapons inside of it. But it felt amazing, both to the purring raptor and huffing beast; still a bit on the oversensitive side to the point where that large paw had to do something. Placing it directly onto Jaxi's back and pinning them in place, making the small one yelp as that purple pelvis underneath them also adjusted! Pressing up while that paw lightly pressed down, squishing the feathered dino inbetween as they whined in excitement-!

Only to squirt heavily into that protection due to it, the sudden flood of warmth shocking Drygg for a moment as he pulled back that paw. Feeling the fluids wax over his tool inside, coating it and soon dripping out from the exit. Feeling a little bit of his own soon mix in with Jaxi's, concerning the large one for a moment, but that hidden knowledge did tell him it was normal.

A small pause for the two to catch their breaths, and the behemoth to worry about his own instincts taking charge like that. Meeting those magenta eyes as the two huffed deeply, and knowing it was going to come- "C-can you...?" Jaxi started, making the beast slightly whine. "Do that again?" -Only to double take. "That... Felt really good."

"To... Be squished?" A shy whimper but nod from the dino, getting one back as the purple paw gently returned. Almost petting the small one that could easily be abducted by such a thing, getting a feel for the gentle thrusts and working with Jaxi's lead. Letting their tool slide in and out of his growing wet sheath, making the raptor start to sing as that pelvis grinded from below. The sharp gasps and whines did worry Drygg at first, but... They sounded more like the excited ones they occasionally make. Not ones of danger, but good feelings.

The protection swelled more and more with the waves of pleasure, making it much easier to feel the work that small pink dagger was putting in with each thrust. Occasionally adding more squirts within that sheath while also making it easier for it to open; to slide over the monster of a weapon within. With every pulse, Jaxi could feel it forming under them, especially while being sandwiched between the large paw and those strong hips. Getting a little stronger with every few motions, but pleasuring the small dino easily. Perhaps a little too fast, if anything, as that point of no return was starting to be felt.

Yet, every attempt at warning was interrupted by another wave of bliss, making the raptor chirp loudly instead of requesting to slow down. With the protection getting tighter, there was no helping such a thing now- but a very slight give told them why: the behemoth's flare finally slipping out! The large one was becoming enthralled with the very motions and could no longer help his instincts. Constantly grinding Jaxi into his own sheath as the pressure within them reached its maximum! Flooding that protection with thick jolt after thick jolt of the raptor's seed.

However, Drygg didn't stop. Not quite realizing what eruption of warmth really meant and just continued his constant massage. The whimpers from the dino barely changed as about 2/3rds of the way through their orgasm, that pressure began to build up again! Being pushed together and forced to thrust into that tighter protection as the pent-up dinosaur soon reached another peak. Releasing a spray inside with a lacking of pressure as they filled up that sheath with their own milk, to the point where Jaxi could almost feel it swell up with it.

But again, the behemoth did not stop! Enjoying the feeling too much as he began to push another climax out of the small one. Slowly building it up from mid-orgasm, finally getting a slight change in their vocals to that of overstimulation, but not quite recognizing it in time. Putting a little bit more strength into that paw, firmly pressing the small one into his package as Jaxi struggled to get that last one out. Causing the process to take longer and longer, but finally getting that point of no return. Trying their best to focus on thrusting and only thrusting until their body locked up entirely, releasing an irrational set of jolts after a long strained cry that finally snapped Drygg out of his trace!

The behemoth withdrew that paw as he felt his sheath lightly fill up. Soon to the point of it leaking down below after a fleshy nub slipped through. Allowing a much needed break for the navy one as they heaved over and over; sprawled over that pelvis and looked a bit rough-handled. Causing Drygg to make a face of worry. "S-sorry, I couldn't..." A lazy signal to wait made the large one whimper as he did, allowing the dino to recuperate after a few moments. "Are you... Okay?" A nod in response that time at least.

"Jaxi..." The raptor panted. "Has never..." A heave. "R-released... That much... Before..." A shy chuckle from the large one, still worried that he hurt the smaller friend.

"I-I take it that isn't normal for you then?" Just a random noise in response, one he couldn't tell if it was a yes, no, or maybe something else entirely. Instead, gently resting the other forepaw over the navy one's back- expecting the slight whimper, and trying to comfort them. "Are... you sure you're okay?"

"Y-yes... Just needed some rest." The dino shifted around under that paw before giving it a hug and a nuzzle. Cuddling with it as the appendage stroked them gently for a minute. "Okay, let's see if we can get you finished." A whimper in question from the behemoth as those ears perked up and blushed.

"What!?" He yelped, though not struggling when the raptor shifted around and gazed down at the nearly formed black spire underneath them. Somehow slightly larger than their own main body, accidentally slipping and sitting on the base of that sheath. "I-I don't know, Jaxi. You were nearly incapacitated."

"I'm fine, just needed a little bit of rest, t-though..." They stroked the thick tower underneath them gently. "I... Don't think there's going to be much I can do to help you here." The small one took some time to just study the large tool; spotting that his touch was indeed correct about the flare. Looking like a large arrowhead with an extended flare, a curved up tip to help protect the leaking exit. The main body of it though was much rounder towards the raptor's underside; looking as if the weapon itself had a large 'beer gut' to it covered in small little bumps. Nothing too sharp or threatening, but still quite firm as pulses were still felt going

through it.

However, everything still led back to that protection; rooted there and making them wonder if that's how Jaxi could help his friend finish. Trying to stroke the main tool itself with their entire body, and having somewhat success- even if occasionally getting a jolt under that feathered chin. A heavy substance, much more viscous than water, nearly matted their navy coat as it attempted to absorb such preseed. Almost slipping from all the wetness as the raptor attempted to ride on top of it.

But it wasn't quite working like they hoped. Instead, Jaxi attempted to change position; sliding underneath it. Resting inbetween the large tool and the behemoth's lower belly, with that dino muzzle aiming towards that sheath, grooming it with their tongue while embracing the large black weapon. Hearing more of a reaction from Drygg as the small dino continued to study the deep breaths, purrs, and huffs.

The tip and flare head was okay, even using that flexible tail to tickle it a little bit. The shaft... When the raptor tried to embrace it tightly and move up and down, it was effective. However, it just took too much effort. The protection, though... That's where the most pleasure seemed to reside. Pawing at it with those feathered arms, massaging it gently. Occasionally trying to squeeze that tongue inside and lap at Jaxi's own juices from before, it was like they were piloting the beast from here.

"That..." Drygg started. "That does... Feel..." A deep purr at least confirmed he was enjoying the raptor's work. Detecting a large throb and twitch from the thick tool above them as Jaxi continued to get the biggest reaction possible. Though their arms were getting a little tired, trying to push themselves to help out their new friend, but it wasn't looking very promising.

Until one long purr and a deep huff, half concerning the dino as they tried to look at the behemoth's head. Not quite able to do so and instead returning that muzzle- only to bump into that sheath. Jaxi didn't move that much, did they? No... It was swelling! A bit more with every pulse, as if something was building up inside it. Becoming more and more firm... Dense even, while trying to squeeze out of the protection-

That was it! The navy one got an idea; taking hold of as many of the furs around that sheath as they could and tried to keep that growing bulge inside of it. Hearing Drygg's purrs and heaves of pleasure soon turn into growls. His body starting to squirm and that tail flail about- knocking over a tree nearby, but nowhere near them. The knot inside grew and grew, trapped within the protection and further stimulating the large purple beast. Hearing that muzzle scrunch up as that bassful hiss slowly transformed into a deep prolonged roar, once again exciting the dinosaur trapped under the thickening weapon-!

Then a sharp sudden roar into the night sky! Complete with a heavy eruption of sprays that powered through the black tool! An immense pressure and show of strength right over top of Jaxi as they let go of the furs and just tried to embrace that large shaft! Keeping it still as it nearly lifted them while flexing; absolutely hosing down Drygg's upper body into an explosion of murky white. One not only from being pent up, but knotting his own sheath, causing the behemoth to climax for what seemed like several dozen seconds straight before slowing down.

Before the weapon stopped twitching, Jaxi let go and bared witness to an absolutely soaked behemoth; panting heavily while leaning up against that hill of grass he summoned. Maw wide open, tongue lolling out and the dumbest of smiles on that muzzle. Not caring in the slightest that he just showered himself with his own release, nor that some of it was dripping from that maw. A few more jerks from that body as it seemed that the large one had lost some motor control. Needing to wait a bit longer before being able to move.

However, Jaxi could almost read those hazy yellow eyes. Sliding off the large body and waddling over to that opened purple paw- almost having struggles moving themselves. Resting in it again, getting some butterflies in their stomach when the dino was lifted and pinned closer to the beast's upper chest. Still covered in the behemoth's seed, but it only made the navy one chuckle. Embracing that paw the best they could as the two took a deep breath together. Wondering what the future would bring to two unexpected friends. But living in a world so scared of foreigners and monsters... Jaxi was going to do their best to be fearless. After all...

*Look what one brave action brought them.*