

The Roommate
by Havoc

“Women made us lose paradise, but, ah, how frequently we find it again in their arms.”
-De Finod

Light streaming in through open blinds woke Mark up from the pleasant dream he had been having. He opened his eyes, blinked several times, and almost went into a panic before he remembered that it was Saturday, it was summer vacation, and he had the weekend off from work. With his heart slowing down, he found that the only thing amiss was that Kitsune wasn't lying in bed with him. But there was a note on the pillow next to him, so he picked it up and read it.

Mark,

*Gone shopping. Didn't want to wake
you. Be back around lunch.*

- XO Kat

Mark smiled and set the note back down on the pillow. He looked at the alarm clock on the bedside table, and saw that it was already 11:27 AM. Probably a good idea if he was awake when Kitsune got back to the apartment, or he'd be made fun of for being lazy. He got out of bed and made sure he was decent before leaving the bedroom and crossing the hall to the bathroom. Mark wasn't sure if the other occupant of the apartment was around, and he would like to avoid parading about naked in front of her if he could.

Once in the bathroom, he took a look at his appearance. Underneath his brown hair and green eyes, his face was covered in whiskers. He hadn't shaved in a few days, and Kitsune was getting on him about it. Sighing, he opened the medicine cabinet and took out his razor, and set about scraping the hairs from his cheeks and chin. Just one of those things that came with being human. With that done, he brushed his teeth, took a quick shower, and went back to the bedroom to put on some clothes. Being that it was late in the summer near the North Carolina coast, he went extremely casual with a pair of shorts and a T-shirt; anything more would have been pure torture, even indoors.

Mark went out to the living room, and found that he had company after all. The gray tabby fur lying on the sofa looked his way when he walked in, her face breaking into

a cheeky grin.

“Finally awake,” she said. “I thought you might be dead, until I heard the snoring.”

“Oh, you’re one to talk, Tai,” Mark said. “You sleep all day.”

“I’m not sleeping now.”

“Wonder of wonders.”

Tai was a rising Senior at Greenstone University, the small college on the North Carolina coast that both Mark and Kitsune attended. She was a Nuclear Engineering major and had been Kitsune’s roommate for the past two years, so when Mark and Kitsune decided to get an apartment together after the last school year, she had come along to help with the rent. The trio had a two-bedroom apartment together, and with three people chipping in to pay for it the costs were very manageable.

The gray tabby was a good roommate, too. Apart from being on time (usually) with her share of the rent, she was friendly and respectful of Mark and Kitsune’s privacy. And she knew how to cook, which the other two were terrible at, so she was a lifesaver whenever they didn’t feel like ordering out for food, which was most of the time.

Tai brushed back her long, black hair. “You’re just jealous because I can relax so thoroughly and still manage to be successful.”

“Yeah, sure, that’s it,” Mark said, rolling his eyes. He went into the kitchen and looked around for something that he could cobble together into lunch. In the refrigerator, he scared up some bread and ham, and put together an acceptable sandwich with some sliced cheese. He put the sandwich on a plate with some chips and carried it out into the living room, taking a seat in one of the recliners that they’d salvaged from the side of the road. After he started eating, he noticed that Tai had already fallen asleep again.

He was about halfway through his lunch when the apartment door opened, and a young tigress walked in, loaded down with several bags. Despite being a tiger, she had brown fur rather than the expected orange, the product of having a fox for a father. Her hair was an interesting abnormality as well. Cut short, it was a bright magenta, dyed from her natural golden-brown.

“Hey, Kat,” Mark said. “Need some help?”

“No, I’ve got it.” Kitsune kicked the door closed and took the bags into the

kitchen. “Have a good morning, baby?”

“Yep. All fifteen minutes of it.”

Kitsune laughed as she began unpacking the groceries she’d carried in. “Never change, Mark.”

Mark set his plate down on the armrest of his chair and walked into the kitchen. “Find everything okay?”

“You know I did,” Kitsune said. “This isn’t the first time I’ve done this, after all.”

“Just checking,” Mark said. “Anyway, Dasha said they’d be here around one, so I might as well go ahead and pack everything up.” He went to the back of the kitchen and pulled out a big cooler. Setting it on the floor in front of the kitchen counter, he opened the freezer compartment on the fridge and withdrew several large bags of ice, which he emptied into the cooler. Next, he dug around in the bags that Kitsune had carried in and took out all of the perishables, placing them in the cooler among the ice. Now their food would remain fresh until they could get it into the fridge down at the beach. “Alright. As soon as they get here, we can go.”

“Good.” Kitsune put her arms around his neck and kissed him. Her long, fluffy tail curled its way around one of his legs. Mark let his hands find her waist, and leaned her back against the kitchen counter. “You know, we’ve got enough time before Craig and Dasha arrive. You could do me right here, if you want.”

“Mmm, sounds nice,” Mark said. He bent his head down and kissed her neck. “But I don’t think Tai would appreciate us having sex on the counter.”

“Who says she’s going to find out?” Kitsune asked, reaching down to unzip Mark’s pants.

“Well, she’s on the couch, and I don’t think even she could sleep through that.”

Kitsune’s eyes went so wide she thought her eyeballs would fall out. “What?” She twisted her head around, and saw Tai lying on the couch in the living room. The tabby was awake now, and she waved a hand merrily at her friend. Kitsune turned back to Mark, her ears laid low on her head. “You weren’t going to say anything, were you?”

“Kat, I couldn’t,” Mark said, deadpan. “It was just too funny.”

Kitsune rolled her eyes and pushed him away. “Tai, what are you doing here?” she asked, walking out into the living room. “You told me your engineering club was going

on a trip this weekend.”

“We were.” Tai sat up, sighing. “We were gonna go to Black Mountain and do some hiking, but the guy who rented the cabin we were supposed to stay at came down sick. And the owner won’t let us stay without him being there, so we had to cancel.” She leaned back against the couch cushions. “So, now I’ve got a weekend with nowhere to go and nothing to do.”

Mark and Kitsune exchanged glances. “Well...,” Mark said. “Wanna come to the beach with us?”

“Oh, I don’t want to be a fifth wheel.”

“Don’t be silly,” Kitsune said. “We’d all be glad to have you along.”

Tai broke into a smile. “Why not, then? I’ll just throw my bathing suit into my bag. Instant packing for the beach!”

An hour later, Craig and Dasha arrived at their apartment building. Craig honked the horn on his Jeep to let them know they’d arrived, and Mark, Kitsune, and Tai carried their things downstairs and out to the parking lot. Craig and Dasha were a little surprised to see a third person coming out of the building and walking to their vehicle, but when Kitsune explained the story behind Tai’s cancelled hiking trip, they welcomed her to come along.

“The more the merrier!” Dasha proclaimed.

Craig grinned. “Yeah, besides, we have an extra bedroom at the beach house.” He threw a sly look at Mark and Kitsune. “Ever since two of our usual beach crew started sharing a bed, at least.”

At Greenstone University, Mark and Kitsune had become good friends with Craig and Dasha, two humans who were brother and sister. Craig, the older of the siblings at 22, had graduated at the end of the spring semester and was working as a programmer for SAS Institute Inc. in Cary. Dasha, a year and a half younger than him, was getting ready for her senior year at Greenstone, and was studying Sociology in preparation for graduate school. Their family lived in Charlotte, but owned a beach house in Emerald Isle. The group of four had made a tradition of going to the beach house whenever good weather coincided with breaks at the school.

When all of their stuff was loaded into the back of the Jeep, Mark, Kitsune, and Tai piled into the backseat, and Craig pulled out of the parking lot and headed back to the main road. A short time later, they were on NC 58, heading for Emerald Isle. The drive from the apartment building didn't take very long; they were only an hour or so away from Emerald Isle, and traffic was relatively light, since most people made the drive to the beach on Friday instead of Saturday. Once they crossed over the Intracoastal Waterway, though, traffic got a little bit heavier. They pulled into the driveway of the beach house at around two thirty.

"Okay," Craig said, shutting the vehicle off. "Here we are. Unload the stuff and let's go on inside. The beach awaits!"

The whole process of bringing their belongings into the beach house took about half an hour. Tai seemed enamored of the place from the first moment she set eyes on it, and Mark couldn't blame her because he had been the same way on the first beach trip he'd been on. The three-story house was right on the beach, and a walkway from the back porch led onto the sand. The first floor had a kitchen, a small living room, and a bedroom, which was traditionally Kitsune's. On the second floor were two bedrooms, the ones that Dasha and Craig usually took, and the third floor, which was about half as big as the second and first, was composed almost entirely of the bedroom that Mark used. Kitsune showed Tai to the first floor bedroom, since she was now sharing the third floor with Mark, and then went upstairs to find Mark unpacking their clothes.

"You know, I just realized I've never actually been in this room before now," she said, moving to help Mark. She looked around. "It's a bit bigger than the room on the first floor."

"We have our own bathroom, too," Mark said, pointing to the door across the hall from the bedroom door. The floor was situated so that at the left of the top of the stairs was the bedroom and at the right was a bathroom. "Another plus."

Kitsune put away a stack of her shorts. "I'm really glad you asked Tai to come along," she said. "I think she appreciated being included in the group. And I know she would have been miserable if she'd had to stay alone back at the apartment."

"Yeah, well, don't read too much into it," Mark said. "She would've spent the whole time lying on the couch and it would have been a real hassle to vacuum up all that

fur.” Kitsune laughed and threw a pile of underwear at his head.

When all of their unpacking was done, Kitsune went to the window and looked out. “Great view,” she said. The window was on the rear of the house, towards the beach. From it, they could see up and down the beach and out to the Atlantic Ocean. Humans and furs alike were on the beach, and there were people enjoying every activity that could be enjoyed on the sand.

“Yeah,” Mark said. He came up and wrapped his arms around her from behind, resting his chin on the top of her head. “Can’t wait to get out there.”

Kitsune twisted around. “I think I could wait a little bit longer.” She leaned against Mark just enough to send him a little off balance. He hopped back a ways, and the backs of his knees came into contact with the edge of the bed. Not above taking revenge, he held on tight to Kitsune, bringing her down with him. As their bodies settled on the bed, she kissed him. “We still have some unfinished business from earlier today, you see.”

“I’ve never been one to leave a job uncompleted,” Mark said. He started stroking the base of Kitsune’s tail, poking out from the hole that had been sewn into the seat of her shorts. She began to purr, lightly clawing his shoulders through the fabric of his shirt.

“Hey!” Dasha’s voice came up the stairs, disturbing the lovers’ moment. “Hurry up, you guys! We’ve still got time before dinner, so we can go out to the beach for a few hours.”

Mark sighed. “Looks like we’ll have to take a rain check until later,” he said. Kitsune rubbed her cheek against his briefly, and then they got up and went back downstairs.

The group stayed on the beach until about six o’clock, when the sun was starting to set. They’d spent most of the time just walking along the sand, and hadn’t even changed into their swimsuits. The plan was to save the intense activities for Sunday, when the beach would be mostly clear for the morning and early afternoon. After returning to the house, Craig went out in his Jeep and drove down the road until he found a roadside fish stand. He came back with two pounds of fresh shrimp, which Tai and Dasha boiled and mixed up with pasta. Everyone went to bed early, so they could wake up at sunrise and enjoy a full day of fun.

In the morning, the smell of something cooking in the kitchen coaxed Mark and Kitsune out of bed. They groggily pulled on clothes and went downstairs, and found Craig standing over the stove, frying strips of bacon and heaping them on a platter. A huge pan of scrambled eggs was cooking next to the bacon, and the wonderful smell woke them up more than any alarm clock ever could have. Tai and Dasha joined them shortly, and everyone enjoyed the breakfast that Craig had made. He could be a pretty good cook whenever he got it in him to do so.

When the dishes were all done, everyone went back to their rooms to change into their beach clothes. They threw on shorts and t-shirts over their swimsuits and then gathered back in the living room before making the walk to Craig and Dasha's favorite spot, a half of a mile down the beach from the house. They got to the spot around nine o'clock. Once there, Mark helped Craig set out their towels and put up a huge beach umbrella. The weather for the day was amazing; bright and hot, with nothing in the sky except for the occasional Harrier jet roaring overhead on a training flight from Cherry Point. Almost nobody was on the beach at this point, and they had the place pretty much to themselves, although that would start to change around noon.

Their spot all set up, the group undressed down to their swimsuits so they could enjoy the water before more swimmer started to show up. Mark felt a little thrill go through his body as he saw Kitsune's swimsuit. It was the suit that had first attracted him to her, a black one-piece with a cutout over her stomach that stopped just short of her breasts, and a similar cutout on her back. Perhaps being so excited over that swimsuit didn't make much sense, due to the fact that he saw her naked so often. But there was just something about seeing her creamy belly fur shown off, with her breasts tantalizingly out of sight, which really got him going.

Then his eyes involuntarily turned over to Tai, who was also down to her swimsuit. Tai had a fuller figure than Kitsune, with more curves than the tigress' trim runner's body. Her gray fur was a touch longer than Kitsune's, as well, which gave her a very fluffy appearance. She was wearing a fire engine red bikini, which looked about a half a size too small for her. From the way she was wearing it, though, Mark got the distinct impression that the size of the suit was quite intentional. His eyes tracked her as

she ran down to the water with Kitsune and Dasha.

“Yo, Mark, buddy,” Craig said, waving a hand in front of Mark’s face. “Coming?”

“What?”

“The ocean, man,” Craig said. “You know, the whole reason we’re here at the beach?”

Mark blinked. “Yeah, right,” he said. He kicked off his flip flops and started off to the water. Craig shook his head, a smile on his face.

The day was really fun, at least until the beach started to swarm with other beachgoers. While they still had their spot to themselves, the five friends played around in the surf and on the sand. Dasha had brought a beach ball, and they had a good time with that, even when Craig took a dive face first into sand while going for the ball. The whole time, Mark’s eyes just seemed to fall on Tai a little more often than could be attributed to chance.

Unbeknownst to him, Kitsune was taking notice. She saw that Mark was having trouble keeping his eyes off of Tai, and thought that she also saw Tai looking at Mark. She couldn’t help but laugh a little bit to herself. *So, Mark’s got a bit of a wandering eye, does he?* she thought.

When the beach started getting more crowded, they all went back to where their towels and umbrella were set up to take a break from playing. While Mark, Craig, and Dasha sat down on the towels, Kitsune and Tai went a little ways away to a hot dog stand to get something cold to drink. While they were away, the human trio talked about school and their plans for the coming year. Then Dasha cleverly steered the conversation in another direction.

“So, Mark,” she said, turning her head to look at him. “How are things going with Kat? Coming up on one year, aren’t you?”

“Yeah, that’s right,” Mark said. “In one month.”

“Have any plans for when you graduate?” Dasha prodded him. “You gonna marry her?”

Mark glanced over towards where Kitsune and Tai were standing. “Haven’t thought about that, really,” he said. “Kat graduates in December, and I still have a semester to go after that. She’s going to law school, though. She’s applying to Greenstone

again once the semester starts up.”

“Dasha just wants to be in a wedding,” Craig joked. “And it will never be her own, so it might as well be yours.” Dasha slugged him in the arm, and he winced, rubbing the spot where she’d hit him.

Dasha looked past Mark, to where the two female furs were enjoying their drinks. “Don’t look now, Mark,” she said. “But it looks like Kat and Tai are getting chatted up by a couple of guys.”

“Oh, yeah, I noticed,” Mark said in an offhand manner. He’d seen the two tiger males approach the girls about ten minutes ago, and had been observing through his peripheral vision.

“You’re not bothered by it?”

Mark shook his head. “I’ve learned a thing or two about feline body language in the last year,” he said. “Neither of them is interested in those guys.”

“How can you tell?” Craig asked, watching the interaction between the two pairs of furs. “They look like they’re listening to them to me.”

“Oh, they’re listening, all right. But look at their ears. Both Kat and Tai have their ears turned back. That should be a subtle hint to those guys that they’re not in the mood, but it looks like they haven’t gotten the message yet.” While he was talking, Kat batted the male in front of her across the legs with her tail, and turned her back to him. A moment later, Tai followed suit with the other male. “See that? That’s like saying ‘fuck off’ for a feline. Those guys would do well to back off now, or something bad might happen.” Sure enough, both males abruptly walked away from Kat and Tai, apparently quite disappointed. “Told you. Nothing to worry about.”

Dasha and Craig watched the rejected disappear into the beach crowd. “So, you live with both of them, huh?” Craig said. He looked at Mark, a mischievous smile on his face. “Have you ever thought about...you know.”

“Craig!” Dasha said reprovingly.

“No,” Mark said quickly. “Not...seriously.”

“*Mark!*” Dasha exclaimed, even more shocked. “Don’t joke about that.”

Mark shrugged. “I’d be lying if I said the thought never crossed my mind. But like I said, not seriously.” He looked back at the girls, and Tai in particular. She happened

to look up at the same minute. The gray tabby waved, and Kitsune turned her eyes his way, smiling. Mark quickly waved back and let his gaze drift away to the ocean, where he could pretend to be interested in watching all of the people in the water. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw Kitsune lean over and whisper something to Tai, who laughed and nodded. He wondered what that was about for a moment before Craig started talking again, and then the curiosity slipped his mind.

They stayed at the beach for most of the rest of the day, until after sunset. People began slowly migrating off of the sand starting around five o'clock, and by seven the beach was largely empty. Mark and the others started packing up when the air began to cool down. While they were packing up, Tai excused herself and went down to the water to try to wash some of the sand out of her fur.

Mark and Craig rolled up the towels and took down the umbrella, while Kitsune and Dasha cleaned up the trash they had around their area. "Good day," Mark said. "Good trip."

"Yeah," Kitsune agreed. "But I never like the end. It means we have to go home, and back to work and stuff."

"That's not so bad," Mark said. "After all, there's-" He looked up as a scream tore through the air, coming from the direction of the water. Everyone looked and saw Tai stumbling to the sand in the shallows, clutching her leg. Kitsune ran down to her, with Mark, Craig, and Dasha close behind.

"I think something bit me!" Tai cried, her face screwed up in intense pain. "It burns..." She had her hands clamped down tight over her leg, and Mark could see blood starting to leak between her fingers.

Mark took her hands and pried them off. "Let me see," he said. Tai resisted, but he overpowered her grip and got her hands away from herself. There was a small gash in her leg just above the ankle, and blood was streaming from the wound. He scanned the water, and saw a streaked, sandy cloud just below the surface that told him everything he needed to know. "Looks like you stepped on a stingray."

"What do we do?" Kitsune asked. There was no lifeguard force for this beach, and they hadn't seen any beach patrol officers in hours. "We didn't bring our phones with us."

They might have been unable to call for help, but Mark hadn't grown up near the

coast for nothing. "Craig, run back to the house," he said. "Go to the bathroom and put a bucket or something underneath the faucet in the tub. Turn the water on as hot as it can go, and keep the bucket underneath the water. Put a stool in the tub in front of the bucket." Mark got his arms underneath Tai and picked her up. He had to strain, and remembered that his New Year's resolution had been to go to the gym more, which he hadn't. "I'll be right behind you. You're gonna be okay, Tai, just hang on."

Mark carried Tai into the beach house just in time to see Craig emerge from Tai's room. "Everything's set up like you said," Craig informed him. Mark walked past him into the bedroom, and then into the attached bathroom. Inside the tub sat a stool and a bucket, and steaming water was flowing into the bucket, with the overflow spilling out and down the drain.

"How's it feeling, Tai?" Mark asked.

"I can't feel my toes," Tai answered, tears streaming down her face. "My leg feels like it's on fire."

Mark put her down so that she was sitting on the stool. "This is going to hurt," he warned her. "But it's the best thing for your injury, so you're going to have to grit your teeth and bear it." He lifted her wounded leg and placed it into the bucket of hot water. Tai gasped and recoiled from the intense heat, but Mark held her leg down. She grabbed the edges of the stool and squeezed hard, her eyes closed.

Craig came into the bathroom. "Need any towels or anything?" he asked.

"No," Mark said. "Got everything we need right here."

"What are you doing?"

"The burning and the numbness in her toes are being caused by the venom from the stingray's barb," Mark explained. "Heat breaks down the venom, so soaking the wound in hot water will neutralize it."

"It's...really...hot..." Tai managed.

"I know, but you have to keep your leg in the water," Mark said. "It'll be safe to take out when the bleeding starts to slack off." Tai nodded, and Mark slowly took his hands off of her leg. She was shaking with pain, but kept her wound submerged.

The front door opened, and Mark heard Kitsune and Dasha come into the house.

Craig left the bathroom to help them with the things they'd brought back from the beach. A few minutes later, Kitsune walked into the bathroom.

"How is it?" she asked, sitting on the rim of the tub.

"She'll be fine," Mark said with confidence. "Can you feel your toes yet, Tai?"

Tai nodded. "Okay, then we can turn the heat down a little bit." He twisted the temperature control knob about an eighth of a full turn, and Tai relaxed as the water cooled off somewhat.

An hour later, the bleeding from Tai's stingray wound had slowed to a trickle. Mark turned the water off and told Tai to remove her leg from the bucket, and then cleaned and dried the area. With a first aid kit that Craig found in the kitchen, he disinfected the injury and bandaged it. The pain that Tai had been feeling since being stung had dulled to a light ache immediately around the puncture mark. While Mark had been tending to Tai, Craig and Dasha had made dinner, and once Tai had gotten back into regular clothes and limped into the kitchen they all ate together. Tai even felt better enough to laugh about the incident, once she calmed down.

Later that night, Mark lay with Kitsune in bed, listening through the open window to the sound of waves crashing against the shore. Kitsune was reading a book she had brought with her, and Mark was leaning back against the pillows with his eyes closed, breathing the salt air. They were tired from the full and exciting day they'd had, and were enjoying the peace and quiet of their shared room.

"You know, Mark, you were pretty great today," Kitsune said, not looking up from her book. "You really saved Tai."

Mark shook his head. "It wasn't anything special," he said. "It was just basic first aid. It's not like I saved her life, or anything."

"Maybe not, but she really appreciated it, all the same." Kitsune closed her book, setting it down in her lap. "Mark, how do you feel about Tai?"

Mark turned his head, surprise evident in his expression. "Where did that come from?" he asked.

"It's not that I'm suspicious or anything," Kitsune said carefully. "I just noticed you two looking at each other pretty frequently today."

“So that means I’m attracted to her?” Mark asked, feeling his discomfort growing. “That’s not fair, Kat. Can you just drop this?”

Kitsune shrugged. “Fine, I’ll drop it.” She moved her book to the bedside table, and turned out the light. The room went dark, except for a little bit of light from outside drifting through the window.

Mark reached over and put a hand on her shoulder, ruffling the fur there. “You know I’d never do anything to hurt you,” he said softly.

“I know, baby.” Kitsune hugged him, rubbing her cheek against his neck. “And that’s why I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

On Monday, everyone was slow to wake up and get dressed. This was partly because they were tired from the day before, but mostly because they knew that getting up meant they would have to start packing up in preparation for going back home. They finally all got moving late in the morning, around ten o’clock. Tai was walking a lot better, although her legs were still a little bit sore. She helped Craig make breakfast, and when they were all through eating, they crammed their clothes and things back into their bags and loaded them into the Jeep. After one last walk along the beach, they climbed into the Jeep and started the journey home.

Upon arrival back at their apartment building, Mark, Kitsune, and Tai bid goodbye to Craig and Dasha, and watched as the Jeep drove off down the road. Then they went up to their apartment and entered, setting their bags down by the door, leaving the unpacking for some time when they weren’t as tired. Tai went to her room to get off of her leg, and Mark and Kitsune lounged around in the living room, just taking it easy and milking their time off from work for all it was worth, knowing that they each would have to start again on Tuesday.

The afternoon slipped by fast, and before any of them knew it, dinner was over and it was getting late. While Tai went to take a shower and get the last stubborn bits of sand out of her fur, Mark and Kitsune retired to their room. They both undressed, and Mark climbed onto the bed while the tigress sat in front of the mirror and brushed out her hair. Mark watched her idly, taking in the view of her body. She looked at him in the

mirror and smiled at him, her tail waving gently, enjoying the attention.

After she finished with her hair, Kitsune turned around and looked at Mark.
“Mark, I need to ask you a question, and this time I want you to answer it,” she said.
“How do you feel about Tai?”

Mark was wary, even though, strangely enough for the question, her face wasn't accusing or angry. “Are we really going to talk about this?”

“Yes, Mark,” Kitsune said. “It's very important. Please be honest.”

“Well...,” Mark said. He took a deep breath. “She's a nice person, and a good friend. Tai's fun to be around, and I guess I like her.”

Kitsune nodded, her expression still genial. “Do you think she's pretty?”

“Okay, what's going on here? Why are you-”

“It's just a question,” Kitsune interrupted. “And I just want an honest answer.”

Mark dropped his eyes to the bed. “Then if we're being totally honest...” He looked back up at Kitsune. “Yeah, I think she's kind of cute.”

His tigress girlfriend of almost a year nodded, and rose from her chair, crossing the room to the bed. “Thanks for being honest.” She got onto the bed, and cuddled up to Mark. A few minutes went by, and then she spoke again. “Mark, do you know much about feline society?”

“Not really...,” Mark said. “I've picked up on some of your body language over time, but other than that...”

“Then what do you know about the concept of a harem?”

Mark looked down at her face. “I know what it is,” he said. “What does it have to do with anything?”

“I just...feel like sharing some information with you, that's all.” Kitsune smiled.
“Sometimes, felines will engage in polygynous relationships.”

“Uh-huh,” Mark said, looking at her curiously. “Why are you telling me about-” A soft knock at the bedroom door forestalled the rest of his question.

Kitsune smiled and leaned in, kissing him. “Just go with it,” she whispered in his ear. Turning to the door, she called, “Come in.”

The door opened, and Tai walked in, wrapped in a towel and brushing her still-damp hair back. She advanced into the room, standing before the bed. Mark was

transfixed by her eyes, and a jolt went up his spine when he saw the look in her eyes. Her stare was fierce and hungry, like a predator staring down prey.

“Hello, Mark,” Tai said, her voice breathy.

Mark looked between the two females. “What is this?” He reached for the sheets to cover himself up, but Kitsune grabbed his hands, preventing him from doing so. “Kat, what-”

Kitsune shushed him, placing a finger over his lips. “Hush,” she said. “Don’t say anything.”

“But why?”

“I noticed what you were doing while we were at the beach,” Tai said. “Looking at me and trying to pretend you weren’t. I could tell you thought I was attractive. That you wanted me.” She flicked her eyes down, and Mark felt his face warm as he realized she was looking at his body. “I think you’re pretty nice as well.”

Mark turned his head to Kitsune, to protest what Tai had just said, but she silenced him with another kiss. “It was my idea,” she assured him, licking his nose tenderly. “Tai just happens to be amicable to the idea.”

“Your idea?” Mark asked. Kitsune nodded. She kissed him one more time, and then rose from the bed, brushing his cheek with her hand as she went. Mark watched her cross the room and go to the chair that she had been sitting in minutes earlier. She pulled it across the floor so that it was against the wall perpendicular to the wall the bed was set against, and she sat down. Mark kept his eyes on the tigress until he felt the end of the bed sink a little lower. He looked and saw that Tai had crawled on, and was moving on all fours towards him. She crept along over his body until she was straddling his waist.

“There’s no commitment tonight, Mark,” Tai said. She bent down and softly touched her lips to his. She straightened back up, smiling down at him. “Unless you want there to be, after you’ve given it a try.” The gray tabby’s tail was curling sensuously through the air, and her body was trembling slightly. Out of excitement or anxiety, Mark couldn’t tell for sure.

Mark looked back over at Kitsune. She was just watching, her posture in the chair relaxed and unconcerned, lazily stroking her creamy belly fur with one hand. Feeling like he was in a dream, Mark turned his attention back to Tai. He reached up and took hold of

the loose flap of her towel, tugging on it until it fell open and away from her body. Her full, voluptuous figure, covered in silky gray fur, was exposed to his eyes. Tai flipped her tail once, and the towel slipped off of the bed. He could feel her fur, which retained just a bare hint of water from the shower, against his skin.

“How long have you two been planning this?” Mark inquired.

“Since yesterday afternoon,” Tai said. She leaned back down, so that her breasts were pressed against his chest. She put her face close to his, and he could feel her breath on his cheeks. Tai spoke again in a voice so quiet that Mark was sure Kitsune could not hear the words. “But I’ve been thinking about this for a long time.”

She kissed him, and Mark wrapped his arms around her body, running his hands up and down her back. He brushed his hands against the grain of her fur, and she made a growling purr in the back of her throat. One hand skimmed down to her rump, and he squeezed. She cocked her head back, her breath quickening.

Tai pulled her body back up, and braced her arms on Mark’s body. She began sawing her hips back and forth, grinding her sex on his now raging erection. She was making small, high-pitched whines, so different from the noises that Kitsune made during sex, but every bit as alluring. Mark looked over at Kitsune, and saw that she was now sitting with her legs splayed, stroking her pussy while she watched her best friend and her lover together. Her eyes were half-lidded, and her mouth was open, just a hint of her tongue extending as she panted. Even from across the room, he could hear the thunderous roar of her purr. He looked back at Tai. The tabby was gritting her teeth, her eyes closed, her hips gyrating madly. Mark reached up and placed his hands on her breasts, feeling their satisfying weight in his palms. He squeezed them, massaging the furry orbs.

“Ah!” Tai gasped. “Oh, Goooooooooooooooood!” She threw her head back, her hips ceasing their movements. Mark felt a gentle rush of warm liquid squirt against his groin, and saw the muscles in Tai’s legs twitching at an incredible speed. Then all at once, every part of her body relaxed, and she sat back on her haunches, breathing heavily.

Kitsune got up from the chair and crossed the room to the bed. She climbed onto it, on her knees, and moved up beside Tai. Mark watched as Tai turned her head, and then the two feline females kissed deeply. Kitsune dropped a hand down, and Mark took it, clasping briefly. Then she released his hand, and moved it to his penis, gripping him and

teasing him for a moment or two. Her fingers slipped over Tai's fluids clinging to his skin. The two furs broke apart, and by some unspoken command, Tai repositioned herself over Mark. Kitsune's free hand moved to her rear, and she pushed gently, coaxing Tai to raise herself up ever so slightly.

"Come on now," she whispered to both of them. "Let's finish it." The tigress placed the tip of Mark's erection just inside the entrance to Tai's vagina, and then took her hand away. She lay back on the bed, right next to Mark, and took his hand again. She kissed him, pressing her body against his side. "I love you, baby."

"I love you, too, Kat," Mark said.

With those words spoken, Tai eased herself down, engulfing Mark's cock within her body. Both of them breathed in deeply as they felt the sensations of being joined together. Tai dropped forward, and locked her lips with Mark's for a long minute. Then she rose back up, perched on his waist.

Mark made the first move, pushing his hips up so that he pressed even deeper into Tai. She made a tiny mewl of pleasure, and rose up, sliding him out of her body. When she came back down, he thrust into her again. They soon found a common tempo, and began fucking in earnest, moving against each other to satisfy their carnal needs. Kitsune wrapped her arms around Mark's torso, pressing her body against his.

Not content to leave her like that, Mark drew enough of his attention away from Tai to slide a hand down Kitsune's front. He eased in between her thighs, and with two fingers he penetrated her sex. Kitsune moaned and clamped her jaws on his shoulder, giving him the sort of love bite that she knew drove him wild. Mark slid his fingers in and out of her vagina, making her give a throaty growl of delight. She released her jaws and began rubbing her face all over his chest, purring madly.

Tai began making her high-pitched whining sounds again, and Mark could feel her inner walls starting to contract around him. He sped up his thrusts into her, and she started yowling, making loud, screeching mating noises. At the same time, Kitsune started to spasm around Mark's fingers, and he heard rough growling sounds begin to issue from deep in her throat, the prelude to the full-on scream that he knew was coming.

She didn't disappoint, either. Like a wild animal in the throes of a mating ritual, his tigress let loose a roar of unbridled passion. Mark's fingers were propelled out of her

body by the force of her orgasm. Nearly simultaneously, Tai squeezed her eyes shut and howled, throwing herself down on top of Mark's body. Mark wrapped one arm around each of his girls, and pushed one last time into Tai before he felt his own climax wash over him. His seed spurted from him, flooding into the gray tabby and spilling deep into her womb.

Exhausted, and satisfied beyond any feeling of satiation that any of them had ever felt before, the trio lay together. They all felt warm, and Mark thought he would go deaf from the combined sound of the felines' purring. Tai put her arms around Mark, hugging herself to him, and Kitsune snuggled up next to him, rubbing her cheek against his shoulder.

"Well, Mark," Kitsune said, her voice weary. "How was my little culture lesson? Good?"

Mark breathed deeply. "I love learning."

Tai kissed him. "We should go to the beach more often," she said.

"Definitely," Mark agreed. He looked around for a moment. "But first, I think we're going to need to buy a bigger bed."

Kitsune and Tai both smiled and nodded.