

Do Unto Others...

By Renard De Fleureaux III

“Hey! Stickman!” Brock shouted across the room, aimed at the figure beneath the bench press. “Why don’t you stop hogging the press and let someone who’s serious about workin’ out actually... work out, huh?”

Ian closed his eyes, taking in a deep breath as he struggled to push himself for a few more reps. “I’m on my last set, Brock.”

The draft horse didn’t care for that response. He snorted, and stomped his way over to the press. He loomed over Ian, his broad body eclipsing the gym’s lights. “Naw. That was your last *rep*.” He grabbed the barbell with his meaty hand and slammed it back on the rack.

Ian frowned, lithely slipping off the press as Brock removed the twenty-five pound weights the gecko had loaded on to them. “Twenty seconds. That’s all it would’ve taken me to finish.” Ian was a patient sort, and it took a lot to get under his scales, but Brock had a special talent for it.

Brock puffed up his wide chest, his overdeveloped pecs hovering a mere inch in front of the gecko’s face as the muscles forced their way out of the horse’s too-small shirt. “Twenty seconds, twenty minutes. Still time when I could’ve been getting my pump on.”

The horse rolled his broad shoulders as he sat down; he was the epitome of being born lucky, from what Ian had heard. Muscle had just piled on the horse with relative ease, his growth a gym success story. However, the gains were unbalanced; Brock was a top heavy fellow, and while his arms and chest were huge, rippling with over-developed muscle, less attention had been afforded to everything else. His midsection was a bulge of flesh, sturdy, but underdeveloped and somewhat flabby with the lack of attention it got. Most egregiously were Brock’s legs; they were grossly thin, flabby, and undefined when compared to his upper body. It made Brock almost cartoonish, but telling that to the horse’s face was an incredibly efficient way to getting a flat face. Vain, arrogant, violent, and complete with a ridiculously styled mane and sunglasses he almost never took off, who wouldn’t want to look up to Brock?

The horse, for some reason, had focused on picking on the gecko, and Ian couldn’t rightfully figure out why. He was painfully thin, sure, but he wasn’t pathetic. His thin green body was well-toned for what muscle was there, and Ian worked out constantly, studying and doing every form and exercise as well as he could. Sure, he was short, but he had seen much worse cases in the gym for Brock to pick on. Not that he wished it on anyone, but why him?

Ian shrugged it off, and moved to another machine, a chest press, pushing the weight as far as he could handle. It was mostly thankless work, as the gecko, in a bid to get bigger, seemed to be the very definition of an ectomorph. He'd gotten stronger, which is always great, but there had been almost no noticeable change on his lithe form. But he enjoyed it. There was a certain exhilaration, a thrill, in working out. Painful, yes, but it wasn't going to stop Ian anytime soon.

The gecko bobbed his smooth head out from underneath the machine when he was done, keen to avoid acknowledging Brock puffing out his chest and flexing his arms up against the mirror as the horse jealously guarded the heavier dumbbells. Ian walked his way across the weight room, a bit restless and thinking of something to challenge him. His eye caught his reflection in the mirror, and Ian gave a little smile.

The gecko, while not Narcissus reborn like the horse not thirty feet away, wasn't above a little indulgence. A small smile came to his face as he gave his arm a flex, lean muscle tightening. It wasn't much, but it was all his doing. Before he could move on, Brock's braying laughter hit.

"Ha! Look at slim over there," Brock dropped the dumbbell, the weight hitting the ground with a heavy thud. "He looks like he's bending two sticks!"

Two of Brock's usual hanger-ons, two meathead dogs, joined in the laughter after exchanging looks.

Ian rolled his eyes, ignoring Brock as he grabbed some of the weights, only to look down and see that someone else had their hands on one of the pair of dumbbells.

"Oh! I'm sorry..." the other Gym member mumbled. It was a cat, shorter than Ian and rather tubby. He had truly outrageous fur, though. It was a vivid shade of aquamarine, like clear tropical water on a white, sandy beach. His clothes even matched his strange fur, his ill-fitting shirt or shorts shades of green and blue.

"Oh, hey, it's no problem. Go ahead. What're you working on?" Ian asked, offering a smile.

"Oh, uh, general... full body... just, y'know..." the cat's ears splayed, "I, uh... actually don't know what I'm doing."

"Oh. Well, I can help you out." Ian offered.

"W-what? You'd do that?" the cat grinned meekly.

"Sure! What's your name, anyways? I'm Ian." The gecko held out his hand.

"Oh, uh. Just call me, uh, Theo. Everyone who knows me does." Theo took Ian's hand.

“Psht.” Brock snorted, the horse lumbering over, his two croneys in tow. “C’mon Slim, even you should know a lost cause when you see one.”

“Go away, Brock.” Ian rolled his eyes, not even turning to face the horse.

“I-I’m just here t-to get in shape...” the cat mumbled.

“Hey, pussy, I wasn’t talking to you.” Brock laughed at his own joke, “Pussy... heh... you get it guys? Get it?!” The two dogs exchanged looks again before joining in. He pushed Ian out of the way, “You don’t belong here, Tubby. We only let people who lift in here.”

“O-oh, I didn’t know...” the cat visibly wilted.

Ian grew furious, and stepped between Theo and Brock. “Hey!” he crossed his arms, trying to look as intimidating as possible. “You can’t literally push people around, Brock. Shove off!”

“Or what, Slim? Ya gonna make me?”

“No, but I’ll get you kicked out of the gym. Now bug off!” Ian pointed his finger in the horse’s face, “You’re not important enough for the gym to lose two members because of your bullcrap.”

Brock snorted, “Fine, chill man, geez. It was a friggin’ joke. Let’s bounce, dudes. Time to get pumped! Yea!” The dogs shouted back, following Brock.

Theo looked up at Ian, “Wow... that w-was really great of you.”

Ian shrugged, “Brock’s a jerk.”

“But still, standing up for a stranger... that takes commendable courage.” Theo said, his voice changed. It was not small and stuttering, but smooth and debonair. Ian’s eyes widened.

“You... do impressions, or something, Theo?” the gecko asked.

“Well, yes, but it’s not my main line of work. I suppose you could call me a businessman of sorts. Here’s my card.” The cat handed Ian a business card. Penned in a calligraphic style in gold ink, it read “Theodosius Augustus Sebastian Renatus- Philanthropist.”

“I owe you, Ian. Such valiance ought to be rewarded handsomely.” Theo said as Ian flipped the card over, revealing a sketch of a handsome looking cat, with a well-groomed goatee and long hair. Ian nearly dropped the card as he swore the sketch winked at him.

“Oh, really, I don’t need anyth- ” Ian looked up, but Theo was gone.

Ian fumbled with the keys as he threw open the door, “Hullo Apartment! I’m home!” he announced, staggering his way to the couch and throwing himself upon it. He’d worked hard since Theo’s disappearance, wanting to take his mind off of the whole weird episode. As he rolled over, he noticed something on the coffee table.

Sitting on the table was a crystal bottle, ornate and sealed with a glass topper. It was filled with a suspicious looking, purple liquid, and a tag was tied around it with twine. Ian picked it up and read,

“A token of my appreciation. Enjoy! -T”

Ian set it down gingerly, slowly rising. “...Theo? Are you in here? Theo? Look, this isn’t cool at all, I don’t know how you found my place, but-” the gecko nearly jumped out of his scales at an unexpected noise.

It was the phone. Ian fumbled with it before accepting the call, the number one he didn’t recognize.

“...Hello?”

“Ah! Ian. Wonderful. I see you got my present, eh?” It was Theo.

“Theo! What are you’re doing? You can’t break into my home!” Ian nearly shouted.

“On the contrary, it was the bottle that broke in, not I. I don’t even know where it is.”

“Theo, seriously, is this some sort of prank? Are you with Brock or something?” Ian looked around wildly, in case the cat was still in the apartment.

“That oaf? Please, don’t insult me. I assure you, the gift is something you will enjoy immensely- trust me. Now, as they say, bottoms up!” Theo hung up.

Ian set down the phone. The sensible thing would be to call 911. He dug into his pocket to pull out Theo’s card. As he flipped the card over again, the name was gone, and merely the phrase, “Drink Me” was there in its place.

Ian set down. In retrospect, he would later realize he should never drink random liquids complete strangers gave him, but, in this situation, he almost felt compelled to.

The gecko popped off the crystal Topper, and took a small sip. There was almost no taste to it, just a slight tingling. Deciding to go by in for a penny in for a pound, Ian took a deep breath, and drank the whole thing. Ian frowned. He almost expected something more.

Then it happened. A sharp, burning pain shot through him, starting in his core and spreading out into his limbs and extremities. Ian shouted as he fell down on the ground, barely keeping conscious. What was that stuff? Was Theo so crazy he’d poisoned him?!

The burning sensation soon congealed into concentrated areas, and Ian saw what was happening- he was getting bigger! It started with his legs; his shorts split up to the waistband as his thighs exploded with growth, becoming thick, strong, and well-defined. The growth spread to his calves as they rounded out, perfectly sculpted. The gecko, still overwhelmed by the sensation, staggeringly stood up on his tree-trunk like legs, doubling over as the growth moved up to his torso.

He let out a shout as the pain concentrated on his core, thick, brick-like abs forming and pushing his torso out, as his back tripled, quadrupled in size, his massive lats pushing his arms farther apart, propping them up at an angle. He could feel the bulk soon creep up, hard as stone as his shoulder blades and neck gave way to overdeveloped traps, Ian flexing the tendons of his bullneck as he looked down, just in time for his pecs to rise like dough in the oven, growing thick and wide to the point where they skewed his view of what lay beneath.

At last came his arms, his shoulders and biceps growing thick, bulging and round like cannonballs, supported by massive triceps, and at last, diving bell shaped forearms. Ian staggered again as the sensation faded, looking himself over. The gecko had grown huge in a matter of minutes- he felt light-headed, as if he had just gotten off the wildest thrill ride of his life.

He took a few unsure steps, an audible snap drawing his attention to the tattered pieces of cloth lying at his feet. Even though he was alone, the gecko blushed, lumbering awkwardly to the bathroom, and wrapping a towel around his waist to keep decent. He stared in the mirror, the same gangly gecko's head now sitting atop a massive behemoth of a body.

Ian swerved around, his tail swishing, as he maneuvered his way to the scale; had his bathroom always been so *narrow*? He gingerly placed his feet on the scale. The gecko had to lean forward, peering beyond his pecs to see the number climb up- 350 pounds. Ian whistled low, turning to face the mirror again.

A small, elated chuckle escaped Ian's mouth as he lifted up his arm to take a look at it. The mere act of moving it caused veins beneath his scales to thicken and tense, and Ian dared to flex. His bicep was squeezed by his boulder like shoulder and his thick forearm, the muscles pushing against each other for space. His bicep finally peaked, gently brushing up against his clenched knuckles. Ian chuckled again, his grin broadening as he reached over with his other arm, patting the engorged muscle to make sure it was real.

He stomped back to the living room, and dug his hand beneath the couch, finding a good hold. With a hefting grunt, he lifted the whole three-seat couch with ease. Laughing again, Ian tossed it lightly, catching it in his firm, meaty hand before setting it down.

The gecko's grin grew mischievous as thoughts raced to the gym- he couldn't *wait* to see the look on Brock's face when he saw some real muscle.

Ian blushed again, however, when he felt the towel slip off. He needed to find some new clothes, first...

"Pfft. What're you supposed to be, tiny? Friggin' dwarf?" Brock loomed over a diminutive gym member; a rather short fox.

"I-I'm using the bench, so, if you don't mind..." he murmured,

"Nah. Me n' my boys are using the bench. You're going to the Daycare center. Right, Mini-me?" Brock had rested his meaty hand on the fox, leaning in as he tipped his sunglasses down to look the fox in the eye.

The Fox let out a meeping sound before scrambling off the bench. Brock chuckled as he pushed his glasses back.

"Hey! Brock, why don't you pick on someone your own size?" Brock gasped as he turned to see a sheer wall of green mass. Standing a full head taller than the horse, the reptile before him was a titan of strength; bulging thighs stretched a pair of spandex shorts to their limits, and the strained muscle shirt that somehow managed to wrap around massive boulder shoulders was wrung taught and frayed, showing a fair amount of his white, scaly chest that blossomed as a pair of stone slabs. "I mean, I'm probably three times your size, but I can do in a pinch..."

The gecko looked down, and as their eyes met, Brock's jaw dropped. "*Slim?*"

"No, Brock. Ian. Say it with me- Ee-yun. I've been here for a year, now, I think you could keep up."

"W-what *happened?* I just saw you yesterday when you were nothin' but a twig!" the horse stammered, his two dog cronies conspicuous by their sudden absence.

Ian grunted, taking his big hand and grabbing Brock's shirt. With a small huff, he pulled the horse off his feet, his great bicep surging with size as he kept the former Gym King suspended so they could be eye-level.

"What can I say? Hard work paid off. Also, you're overdue for a little lesson in respect." Ian let go of the shirt, letting Brock collapse on the floor.

The gecko knelt, resting one of his arms on his thick thigh, as his chest swelled, fighting for space against the rest of his upper body.

"Things are going to be a little different around here. Got it, 'Twig'?" Ian poked Brock in the chest, the mere act forcing the horse down on his back again.

"Y-yeah, yeah, whatever you say, man."

“You’re going to stop harassing people smaller than you- I hear you bullying one more gym member, forcing them out of the one place they can get stronger and healthier, you’re NOT going to like what happens.” For emphasis, Ian stood up and grabbed an empty barbell, taking each end in his hands, and with his chest and arms bulging with exertion, bent and twisted the metal into a knot. “Understand?”

“Yeah! Yeah, ‘course.” Brock gulped.

“Acknowledging me as the new top dog around here wouldn’t be so bad, either...” Ian said, smirking.

“Oh! OH yeah, ‘course big guy, ‘course. Y-you’re the strongest, th-the biggest.”

Ian grinned, bringing his arms in close to his chest, making his pecs explode with size and bounce as they jostled his engorged biceps as he dipped into a most muscular pose. “Yea? You really think so?”

“S-swear!” Brock gasped.

“And, if you behave...” Ian knelt down again, this time offering his hand, “Maybe I’ll train ya.” The gecko’s grin was friendly, and Brock gave a nervous grin back, shaking as he took Ian’s hand and stood up.

“Y-yeah. That’d be great, man.” Brock gulped, “Thanks.”

“Ah, don’t sweat it.” Ian slapped Brock’s back, sending the horse lurching forward. “Just needed to scare the jackass out of you.”

Ian looked the horse down critically, “Of course, first things first- you’re never going to be skipping leg day again.”