

Chapter 30

When they got to Martin's house, Denton set about making something to eat. He'd never really taken to the cooking lessons his mom had tried to give him when he was younger, but he'd picked up enough to be able to look in a fridge and make something edible with whatever was in there.

He ended making dinner for everyone. He'd never found it relaxing before, cooking was something he did to have something to eat, but this time he felt the stress of Alice's blow up slip away, the anger at his family almost dying melting, and he was able to ignore that some deranged tiger wanted him dead for some unknown reason.

By the time everything was ready, everyone except for Maximilian was home. He arrived in the middle of the meal, which Denton thought would bring it to a stop. But the cougar served himself and sat down. It wasn't until everyone was done that he asked for an update.

Martin laid it all out. The meeting with Alice, that she turned out to be church. What they found at the apartment, Zee's involvement.

Denton thought that was pretty brave of him, not to withhold anything, until he remembered Maximilian could read his mind.

Maximilian was obviously not happy about it all, but he didn't berate anyone.

After the meal, Denton lied down, he didn't take off his clothe, he wasn't planing on sleeping, just taking a break, and minutes later he had Frank and Leroy snuggled up against him, also clothed.

His break ended up lasting all night.

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Since they couldn't do anything until they heard back from Zee, everyone went to work that morning, which left only Denton and Leroy in the house. Leroy was a programmer, so he could work from anywhere.

Denton found that without his job, or guys, to keep him busy, he had no idea what to do of the day. He worked out, washed his dirty clothes, and bothered Leroy a few times. Other than practicing the few sigils Martin and Fred had shown him, he found himself pacing.

Was it really that hard to find something to keep him occupied? He went through the entertainment system. There were a few game consoles, and he tried playing a game or two. The fighting game baffled him and the other one was an adventure game that had to have been designed for children. He put the game away.

He had no life. He was a workaholic.

Right then his phone rang. It was Zee.

"Zee, I love you. Tell me you have something."

"Is something wrong dear?"

"I'm bored out of my fur."

"Really? I must say I find that difficult to believe, considering the company you were keeping yesterday."

"They're all off to work. It's just me and Leroy here."

"Leroy?"

"Errr, shit I probably shouldn't have said his name."

"Consider it forgotten. But if he's there, how are you bored?"

"We already had sex three times. I need to let him work."

"Surely there's someone you can call over."

"No. I'm dead, remember? And I can't really let anyone come here, it isn't my place. And I can't go out, since someone's after me."

"I can arrange protection, Denton, you know that."

Denton stood and walked around. "No, you can't. I know you're trying to help Zee, but all it would do is end up putting people in danger."

"How Dent? Dear, I can't imagine anything that you couldn't handle."

"Please Zee. I don't want to lie to you."

There was a sigh. "No questions. I have the results from the prints. To uphold the spirit of our agreement, I haven't looked at them. I'm told there's a name, as well as more information they were able to gather in the short time I gave them."

"Thanks, Zee."

"How do you want me to send it to you? Courier?"

"Can you mail it?" Denton ran down the stairs.

"Certainly."

Once he was in the record room he got Leroy's address and gave it to Zee.

"It's being sent now," Zee confirmed after a moment.

"Got it," Leroy said.

"Thanks, Zee."

"I'm going to ask, no I'm going to demand one thing in return, Denton. I need you to promise me that you will be careful. I don't want to have to read about your death again. Marcus wouldn't be able to take it."

"I promise, Zee. I swear to you I'll be as careful as I possibly can."

"Thanks Dent. If you need anything, anything at all, call me." Zee hung up before Denton could reply.

It took some time for Denton to be able to trust himself to say anything. "Don't open the mail."

Leroy looked at him, surprised. "Why?"

"Because if I read the information in there I'm going to rush out to go give that guy a piece of my mind, regardless of the consequences."

Leroy grabbed his shoulder and lead him out. "Let's get out of here."

"Your work?"

"That can wait, and I won't be able to do anymore, not with that file in my system. If I stay here I won't be able to resist the temptation. I'm guessing you want to wait until everyone's here."

"Yeah, I just don't know what I'm going to do in the meantime."

"We can play some games. The Game Network usually has specials on in the afternoon."

Denton laughed. "No I tried that, on one of the old consoles. Not for me."

"We can always fuck."

Denton didn't replied. When they were in the living room he looked at the horse. "What do you do when you're alone and not working?" Leroy's ears canted in curiosity. "I'm realizing that if I'm not working or having sex, I have no idea what to do. If I were at my place I'd tidy up, but then I'd invite a guy over."

"Well, after working with code all day, I like working on one of my antique puzzles."

Now it was Denton's ears that canted. He followed Leroy to his room and the horse pulled out a large, and old looking suitcase. Instead of opening normally, it unfolded to reveal legs, and became a table. He reverently took out a box that was latched under the table and emptied the contents. There was a paper with an image on it, a painting of a church with Autumn trees behind it, and a lot of small pieces that looked like they could interlock together.

"When they pieces are placed correctly they reproduce the image," Leroy explained.

"Wait, so there's an order to the pieces?"

"Yeah, they might look like they can go anywhere, but they're all a little different, so they only lock in place if they are in the right position."

"And you enjoy that?"

"It helps me relax."

Denton looked at the mess on the table dubious. There was no way this could be enjoyable, but he pulled a chair. He was going to try it, and know for sure.

He'd been right, it wasn't enjoyable. But the conversation with Leroy was nice.