

## Chapter 1 ~ The Invitation ~

Sept 19<sup>th</sup> - 4:00pm

"I don't know what to do Ben, it's been almost a month since we had last seen her. She hasn't gone back to her storage unit either, Ewe-haul said she locked up like usual and hasn't been back" Jude currently had his head down, pressed to the top of the desk. Benjamin for his part, wasn't entirely sure what to say for once.

"Well Jude, you could try her residence. Surely, we have something on file for her, I mean you did pull her tax info once" Ben's words caused a groan from the smaller rabbit, rolling his head to slightly look at the cheetah.

"I did that, for an ongoing Investigation. We found Otterton, he was on a business trip that his wife had forgotten about. No cell service where he was, remember I got in trouble for pulling those forms, and blackmailing Nicky" slowly lifting his head further, Jude ran his paws over his face as his mind worked.

To his credit, he was both concerned for the vixen, but didn't have anything to go on that she was in danger. No one had reported her missing, he hadn't heard one thing that might have come across as fishy. He had even taken to expanding Wolfard and his patrol area, heck he had pried information from Weasilton at one point but still nothing.

"Wolfard was right, I should have gotten her number a few weeks ago, But all I could do was sit there, and stutter about like a fool. Why had he been so nervous, it wasn't as if he hadn't ever asked anyone out or for their number before.

"Seriously what am I going to do, Bogo said the Officers Ball is coming up. I can't go stag, that would just be bad form for such an event" Panic once more in his eyes, Jude looked to Ben again pleadingly.

"Why don't you ask out a Bunny? We have a few cu..." Ben cutting himself off quickly, almost having used the forbidden word seeing Jude's new scowl. "Look I wish I could help, I haven't met this Nicky, but you seem to really like her, I'll keep an ear out for anything I can alright?"

Ben's own comforting look drew a sigh from his lips, Jude hopping down from the desk. He needed to get back out on patrol, before he could make it far he ran into a familiar grey wolf. "Oof, Hey there Wolfard, I was on my way back out" Stepping back a bit, he smiled looking up at his partner.

"Oh I'm certain you were, you're still pining for your missing vixen hrmm" Jude glanced down a bit, not ready for a new round of teasing from the larger mammal. He'd look back up to give him a few of his own thoughts, but cut off as a small piece of paper dangled before his eyes.

He looked past the paper to the greyish paw holding it, his eyes searching Wolfard's own blues a moment. "What's this?"

"A certain russet furred vixen's number" Jude's eyes going as wide as saucers, his mouth falling open at Wolfard's casual tone. His paws grabbing for it quickly, only to find the small paper tugged out of his reach quickly. "Ah Ah Ah, you 100% certain you're ready to pursue her finally?"

Jude paused as his thoughts seemed to slam into a brick wall, his muzzle still hanging open somewhat but his paws dropping a bit. Was he certain, was he really settled in his mind that he wanted to date her. Even as he stood in thought, Wolfard's gaze and grin were not lost on himself. "Y..Yes I am, but how did you get her number?"

"She gave it to me, in case a certain rabbit finally wanted to contact her" The grin on the grey wolfs muzzle was genuine, he wasn't taunting his friend and partner this time. Jude's eyes reading every little twitch in the wolfs form, but there was nothing to say he was lying.

"You two are both conspiring against me, I can see it in your eyes" If Jude could have growled as gruffly as his partner, he would have bared his teeth and all, instead he tapped his foot a few times with arms crossed. Drawing a smirk from Wolfard, as well as Ben just behind his desk.

With the slip of paper in paw, Jude wandered away from his friends at the desk. His eyes looking over the numbers written on it, burning them into his brain as best he could. His heartbeat quickening a bit, he pulled out his phone, eyes darting from the paper to the screen. Bringing the keypad up, he punched the number in, paw's stopping as a digit hovered over the green call button.

He wasn't entirely sure how long he stood there, but it was long enough to Wolfard at the very least. Feeling the larger paw of the wolf, he glanced up from his phone with concern in his eyes. "What if she really doesn't want me to call her?" Looking up at his friend, his ears falling to droop along his back.

"Look Jude, if she didn't want you too, she wouldn't have told me to make sure you got that paper. But worry about all your what if's later, we need to get on patrol" Wolfards words taken to heart, Jude turned and headed of across the Precincts Lobby, Himself and Wolfard heading to the parking garage and their cruiser.

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Sept 19<sup>th</sup> – 8:00pm

Wolfard had checked on Jude at least a hundred times, the lack of conversation between them all because of the phone. The same phone that Jude continued to pull out, and stare at the number on the screen every 2 minutes.

It had been hours, upon hours, of Jude sitting there pining for a vixen, some hours of him not just making the call. Hell, not even a text had been sent, nothing he just sat watching out the window, then pulling out the phone and letting a digit hover over the call button before slipping it away.

An Idea did cross the wolfs mind, sitting there listening to music the whole time. When they stopped he brought out his own phone, making a simple music purchase, at least for this situation it was an interesting idea to himself.

Connecting to the radio, Wolfard prepared himself to sing along and pester Jude further. The slightly maniacal thought had to be pure genius, of all the songs in the world, why not something by The Beavers. When the light changed, and he pressed the gas, he also pressed play on his phone as the music broke over the radio.

*“Hey Jude, don’t make it bad. Take a sad song and make it better, Remember, to let her into your heart, then you can start to make it better!!”* Wolfard glancing to Jude, seeing his ears perk quickly at the song as well as his singing. But he wouldn’t stop, despite wanting to laugh at the irony of the song and situation.

*“Hey Jude, don’t be afraid! You were made to!! Go out and get her, the minute you let her under your skin, then you begin to!! make it better”* No Longer looking at Jude, he knew the glare he was getting from the rabbit beside himself.

*“And anytime you feel the pain, hey Jude, refrain. Don’t carry the world upon your shoulders, for well, you know, that it’s a fool who plays it cool, by making his world a little colder!”* Tapping his Grey paws on the steering wheel, Wolfard would reach to the volume and crank the sound higher.

*“Hey Jude, don’t let me down. You have found her, now go, and get her! (Let it out and let it in, Hey Jude) Remember to let her into your heart, then you can start to make it better”* He took notice of Jude looking at his phone once more, smirking as he continued to sing to the song. It wasn’t often, but running with the windows down, music blaring to the world. Something about it always felt, well soothing really.

*“So, let it out and let it in, hey Jude begin, you’re waiting for someone to perform with. And don’t you know, that it’s just you hey Jude, you’ll do the movement you need is on your shoulder”* He could see his partner, far more heavily debating his thoughts, but also he probably could hear the rabbits’ heartbeat even over the loud music.

*“Hey Jude, don’t make it bad. Take a sad song and make it better, remember to let her under your skin, then you’ll begin to make it Better better better better better better, oooohhhh!”* Finally he laughed a bit, watching as Jude’s paw moved, Wolfard grinned as the volume was turned down quickly. It cut off the na na na’s but the message was clear.

Another few stop lights later, he felt joy for his friend. Watching the phone’s call button pressed, seeing it brought to those long rabbit ears. He tried not to be very nosy, hearing the ringing from the device as he turned his attention back to the world outside of the cruiser.

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Sept 19<sup>th</sup> – 8:30pm

“Hello This is Nichole, may I ask who’s calling?” Nicky had started at the phone when it rang, the number on the screen was unfamiliar. Whoever it was though hadn’t hung up after the first three rings, and it was a strange time to call to begin with.

She made a slight scowl, listening as she only heard some light breathing on the other end of the device. “I Said Hello, May I ask who this is?”

“N...Nicky, this is Officer Hopps... Jude, JUDE! It’s Jude! I uhh I’m sorry for calling so late, but.. I h.. had a question to.. to.... ask you” Sitting there on her tiny sofa, she felt the flesh inside her ears darken a bit, fighting off a small laugh though from how nervous he sounded. She let him ramble for a minute though, enjoying how cute he sounded in those moments.

“Alright then Jude, what would you like to ask?” her voice as calm as she could keep it, curling her tail around her side and running her other paw through the fur.

“ Well... I was wondering, if you didn’t have any plans on the 30<sup>th</sup>. If you would, ac..accompany me to the.. Officers Ball!!” She had to pause her thoughts, hearing the words that came from her phone. She thought about it and her schedule, knowing full well she was already free that night.

“hrmm I would love to go! But this isn’t some trick, you’re not planning to get me there and put me in cuffs are you Officer Hopps?” Nicky couldn’t help herself, the words flowing out as she poked the nervous rabbit a little.

“It’s not a trick, I just... I really would like to take you out.. TAKE YOU TO THE BALL! Ahh I’ll.. er.. call you again later. H. Have a goodnight N..Nicky” The sudden click filled her ear, bringing the phone to her eyes as the call had been ended. She smiled, probably more than she had in a while.

“Dumb Bunny, you don’t have to be so nervous. I already like you, just be yourself” She tapped a few settings, saving the number in her phone before setting it down. Pulling her tail into a firm snuggle, she could only assume her grin was big enough to be seen from space, even if her words were lost to the air.