

Tell It To The Crows

Okay, welcome back. Going to change the focus a little bit this week. Not going to say much more than that to avoid smiling it. You're welcome, enjoy.

As the months flew by Jeremy became even more pleased that his natural growth spurt was continuing. By the time Celebration Day neared he had caught up with Ian and at the rate he was growing could expect to pass him. With Sam fully employed and Ian with a part time job this year's Celebration Day looked to be better than many of recent years. Money was still a constant issue but with an extra income and a half things were easing. On the eve of Celebration Day Jeremy was full of anticipation unlike any time he could remember.

That night Jeremy opened PATOMES for the first time in weeks and checked his own stats. Even after he had stopped adding to himself his normal growth had continued at a rate faster than his brothers. It was surprising but it also eased his conscience of cheating to surpass his brothers. He was still outgrowing them without the aid of PATOMES. The week long Celebration Day break from the academy was a happy one for everybody.

Eric and Ian both got a gift as did Jeremy. His was a new ten speed bike, while not the top of the line it was still a vast improvement over the old one. He'd stopped using toehold one for some time as like almost everything else he owned had been handed down through his brothers and was now too small for him.

The Sunday after Celebration Day Jeremy opened PATOMES again out of curiosity. His own average without any additions had been fluctuating between thirty and forty units a week. Checking his brothers he saw that Sam's growth had slowed as he neared the end of his growth years. His oldest brother was averaging only fifteen to twenty units a week while Eric was leaping ahead in recent months averaging almost forty. Jeremy was surprised that Eric had gained as much as he had and again added a hundred units to himself. He considered checking every week once again for a short time.

His school work continued to challenge him but he still brought home high marks. His home life was better than ever, even if his brother's envied him and tried to undermine his happiness. His parents still pressured him to apply himself more at school but not to the extent they did with his brothers.

One weekend the month after Celebration Day Jeremy was enjoying his still new bike. He was on the way back home from visiting an out of the way park when he was forced to slow and stop. Three large carnivores stood blocking the way ahead. They were far older than Jeremy, almost adults by the look of them. They stood side by side on the sidewalk watching and waiting for him. He'd seen and experienced this before. Slowing to target each of the three with PATOMES he stopped several paces from them.

"Just give us our bike kid." the bear ordered. His voice full of confident arrogance. Rightly so as he was almost twice as tall as Jeremy.

The tiger too was huge and towered over him. "Make it easy on yourself and just hand it over."

"Yeah, disobeying your betters would be the last mistake you ever make." The cheetah asserted.

Jeremy waited until there was no traffic and turned onto the street to go around them. He was on his bike and they were on foot so he got around them but the cheetah was right on his tail. He decided it

would be their last mistake. He turned toward a corner convenience and peddled to the back alley where no one could see whatever was about to happen.

The cheetah was still right behind him and pulled him from his bike even as he slowed. Shaking Jeremy to keep him off balance the cheetah pushed him up against the back wall of the convenience store. The bear and tiger ran up seconds later. The fat bear was out of breath and furious. He stood right behind the cheetah panting out "You forced me to run after you so now you're gonna fucking pay, kid."

Jeremy activated the subtraction program for him a second later. An instant later he triggered it for the cheetah and then the tiger.

The tiger was gleefully picking up Jeremy's bike as the bear stepped up next to the cheetah. A second later the bear was staring Jeremy eye to eye. He was clearly stunned at having lost his two foot plus advantage over the weasel. The cheetah too was showing signs of wanting to disengage from the now larger weasel. Jeremy had taken the opportunity of their struggle to also take hold of the cat.

He changed his grip on the cheetah as the cat's shirt was becoming too large for him. The tiger was behind his bike holding it and staring openmouthed at the scene. He hadn't yet caught on that he too was shrinking, or perhaps he had but just didn't know how to react.

The cheetah started struggling against Jeremy in desperation fighting for his freedom and drawing the other two's attention as they watched and waited for the outcome. It wasn't even a contest with Jeremy's greater new strength and size advantage. Another second and he had the cheetah turned around and gripped by the back of the neck. True to their reputation the cat stopped struggling with Jeremy griping him from the scruff of the neck.

In the few seconds that had gone by during their scuffle the bear and tiger had dropped below chest high to Jeremy. The cheetah was small and light enough for him to hold off the ground.

Looking at the tiger Jeremy promised "Keep my bike up so it doesn't get scratched any more and I'll go easy on you."

Looking at the bear he thought the ringleader was going to run, he had that look on his face. "What? Not so confident now?" Jeremy taunted the bear.

The bear chose that moment to run. He didn't get more than two steps before he stumbled over his own shorts that had fallen down around his knees. Even his shirt was large enough to trip over hanging down almost to his ankles. Looking from the bear tangled in his own clothing he saw the tiger was still holding his bike and trembling in fear. He stared at Jeremy, he eyes waist height to the weasel now. The tiger appeared panicked to immobility by Jeremy's sudden greater size.

Seconds later the tiger's head was down below the crossbeam of his bike. He was even starting to have trouble keeping the bike standing upright. Checking on the bear Jeremy saw he was fully tangled in his clothes still. His panic was not helping his escape. The cheetah had a panicked look on his face too. He had his head turned and stared at Jeremy, eye level only due to the weasel holding him up so high. Most of his clothes had fallen off of him and lay at Jeremy's feet, his shirt stayed in place only because the part of the collar was tucked in the grip he had on the cat's neck.

His bike finally toppled over pinning the tiger. The weight of his bike too much for the dwindling cat to handle. Jeremy looked at the cheetah in complete triumph. The cat's body was only as long as Jeremy's forearm. He noticed his forearm was even thicker than the cat's chest from the muscle he'd been adding to himself.

Jeremy smiled and said "I'm sick of you fucking predators pushing everyone around. You think you're the top of the heap due to you're size. Well, how do you feel now?"

The cheetah squeaked "You can't do this. It's wrong."

"I thought that too when you demanded I hand over my bike. By the way you acted I kinda think it is sort of okay if you can get away with it."

He again changed his grip on the cheetah. He had to now that the cat was only six inches long. He looked at the tiger who was now standing in the middle of his bike. It formed a good prison for the other cat. It would take too long for him to climb over or crawl under Jeremy's bike to escape. The bear was out of sight but still visible as his clothes rose and fell in his hopeless attempt to get out of them. He stepped over to his bike.

He leaned down and picked up the tiger. He was four inches long. Jeremy smirked at the thought. He wasn't even thinking in terms of height for his three attackers now. He moved over to the the bear's clothes. Toeing lightly at the clothes he prodded the bear toward the edge of his own shirt. Shaking his head he transferred the cheetah to the same hand as the tiger. They were both only two inches long and easily small enough for a single paw. His curled fingers made an adequate cage for the minuscule felines.

He searched through the bear's clothes until he found him. Now only an inch in length the bear screamed his terror as Jeremy picked him up between two fingers. Putting him with his friends Jeremy picked up the clothes scattered about the alley. He threw the discarded clothes in a handy trash dumpster. He stood his bike back up and leaned it against his side. Jeremy stared down into his paw.

All three were now only an inch in size and stood on his paw pad with room to spare.

[[EXTERNAL TRANSFER COMPLETE]]

[[ACCOUNT BALANCE 177631 UNITS]]

He made a few more selections

[[SAVE CHANGES]]

[[READY]]

He activated the save. Jeremy looked around for something to hold his captives in.

He saw an empty plastic sports drink bottle next to the dumpster. They all fit through the narrow neck of the bottle nicely. He needed time to figure out what to do with them now. He knew only that he wanted to punished them in a way that their size would be a deciding factor. Holding the bottle up to eye level he smirked at the three carnivores inside.

He realized that growing himself a little at a time was something no one would nor had really noticed as anything out of the ordinary. Shrinking three people to an inch tall could never be explained. He hadn't thought his actions through and now it was too late to undo it. The three, even if returned to normal would never keep his secret. Glancing around he was relieved that no one had seen anything.

Stuffing the drink bottle in his pocket he got back on his bike and head toward home. The park he usually visited was a slight detour and the perfect place for what came to his mind. Arriving in his favorite out of the way corner Jeremy leaned his bike against the mossy bench and pulled the bottle out. The three carnivores had been jostled around a bit and were soaked from the leftover liquid that had still been in the bottle.

Jeremy walked a few paces from the bench and set the bottle on the ground on its side. Back at the bench he climbed up to sit on the top rail and watch. As usual there were plenty of birds about. From the distance he could see the three crawl toward the opening of the bottle. So could the birds.

A crow hopped to the opening and turned its head to stare at the movement inside. A second later it leaned down and poked its beak in the neck of the bottle. All three had backed away at the sight of to them a monstrous crow. They were deep enough in the bottle that the crow couldn't reach them. The first crow was joined by another.

Jeremy knew the three predators would only be safe if they stayed in the bottle. It was obvious they couldn't stay in the bottle forever. The crows would get to them eventually. He was on his feet standing on the bench his heart beating fast. He was suddenly uncertain this was what he wanted. They had threatened him and wanted to steal his bike, but that didn't deserve what was doing to them. He knew then, with the crows clustering around the drink bottle, he couldn't do it. A second later he was on the ground racing to the crows and chasing them away.

[[SUBJECT 1909 NOT FOUND]]

Jeremy's heart sank.

[[SUBJECT 1911 NOT FOUND]]

He picked the bottle up knowing even before he looked it was empty.

[[SUBJECT 1910 NOT FOUND]]

He looked at the crows clustered together steps away and saw they were still fighting over the pieces. He closed his eyes and lowered his muzzle until the noise of the crows fighting over the scraps died.

Absently stuffing the bottle back in his pocket he got on his bike and headed home. His mind was furiously turning over what he's just done. None of his family could know of what he'd done. He could never tell anyone. He hadn't thought his first act through and then even after realizing he had acted too quickly had repeated the mistake. The second thoughtless act was far worse than the first. Predators or not Jeremy felt they hadn't deserved to die, and especially not the way they had.

Arriving home he went to the bathroom. Jeremy's brothers had taken to locking the bathroom doors when taking care of their business. Jeremy hadn't felt inclined to emulate them until the chore he had to accomplish. In the safety of a locked bathroom he cleaned out the soiled bottle and stripped the label off. Once it was clean to his satisfaction he brought it to his bedroom and filled it with a few marbles that he no longer played with.

That night the news had a short story of the disappearance of three kids that were last seen in disputed predator gang territory. The police statement didn't say it outright but by the wording it was understood only a token investigation was to be conducted. Few resources were being deployed to find the three. It was believed they'd been attacked by a rival predator gang and as such was not expected to be found alive.

No one in his family ever questioned his tendency to pause in his homework to stare at the bottle of marbles sitting on his desk.

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Got a good question last week wondering if this was placed in a country similar to one in our world. Geographically, yes. The landmarks and most of the cities are in the same place and largely the same history to a point. I haven't named to the city in the story yet because, well, how often do you say what city you're in? It is in north america, and I'll let your curiosity run wild from there.

As for culture, thats the fun part for me. I've always enjoyed most alternate history stories I've come across. For this I decided to go with the idea that a similar continental revolution happened but failed. That would leave most of North America a British Commonwealth. From there I was thinking the next big change would be the period where slavery became the big issue around the world. In Great Britain it was settled peacefully, much like in our world. With much of North America displaying the same factions as in our world it would erupt into a the same civil war.

So, since there would not have been a United States; Spain would control much of the west and Russia would still control Alaska and perhaps most of British Columbia of today. So when the war started in North America over slavery it would also drag almost every country into it. I hadn't mentioned it yet, but that period is called the Continental War in the story. It was the bloodiest in their history and no one is even close to recovered enough to consider a repeat. There's more but I want to keep these short, so that's all for now.

So, yeah, always open to questions.