

Jeremy/Dominic has a busy day in store and he also answers a riddle.

Jeremy woke to the smell of cooking again. While occasionally waking to the smell of Sam's cooking early had become normal, listening to a conversation wasn't. He sat up on the side of the bed and opened PATOMES. Checking his three spies he frowned. Two, the fox and bobcat, were in the park where he'd left them. The newly minted lynx was much closer, he was in the back alley of his apartment building.

Jeremy understood the apparent affection from the night before much better. The cat had marked him with his scent and had used that to track him. This was a crafty and dangerous male he was dealing with. He'd made him deadly by granting him enormous size. A size large enough to easily kill the Dominic persona in an ambush. If he hadn't been curious about how well he was adjusting and checked their positions with PATOMES he just might have succeeded.

He closed the program and slipped on a pair of shorts. He'd rather not have his brother staring at him in attempting to compare size. He snorted his amusement that he was suddenly self-conscious around one of his brothers.

Coming out to the living area he saw Eric sitting at the breakfast bar watching Sam. Eric had his back to him and while he was talking with Sam. Jeremy paused at the entry from the hallway listening. It sounded as though his brother was telling of an incident at the gym he worked at. To Jeremy it seemed as though Sam wasn't really listening, he seemed more focused on his cooking.

Jeremy walked over and sat next to his brother and leaned over to see Sam was making waffles. They had always been Eric's favorite. He sat back to see Eric looking him over with a smirk on his face.

"Anyway, as I was telling Sam, this guy was working out and got an erection right in the middle of the free weight section." He glanced at Sam but he was busy pulling out the first waffle. "Anyway, we made so much fun of him that he hasn't been back since." He finished and laughed.

Eric's expression of humor only stopped when Sam placed the first plated waffle in front of Jeremy. He looked down at the plate. Jeremy had never liked waffles, or anything overly sweet for breakfast for that matter. With a sigh he pushed it to Eric and said "I'm not really hungry yet."

As Jeremy stood from the stool his brother centered the plate in front of himself and started pouring syrup all over the waffle. Seeing his brother's habit of drowning his breakfast in sugar almost turned his already sour stomach. He went to his room and put on a shirt to work out in. The feral-bodied cat could wait. He obviously wasn't going to leave until his mission was accomplished.

Passing through the living room on his way out he caught a glimpse of Sam. Jeremy could see his brother was unhappy, worse yet Eric seemed to be either ignoring him or was indifferent to his mood. He went down to the exercise room with his brothers on his mind.

When he came back Eric had left for work and Sam was reading on the couch again. He showered quickly and dressed. On his way back out Sam put the book down and asked "Going out?" The tone of his voice was plainly asking for companionship.

Jeremy explained. "I have something that can't wait for too long. I'll be back as soon as I can. We can go out then, I'll treat."

Sam smiled and nodded, picking up the book again. As he closed the door he stopped with it all but closed watching his brother. Sam had closed his eyes and was sighing with his head down. He looked defeated. Jeremy felt bad for his brother. It was Celebration Day weekend and he was forced to once again sit at home with nothing to celebrate. To add to his misery Eric was also back in the picture. Jeremy began to wonder if that was any of Sam's doing. Their mother had always had a soft spot for Eric, his brother had always exploited that to his advantage.

Jeremy headed toward the elevator doing his best to keep his brother's problems from his mind. He understood Sam's wish to make his own way but at the same time felt he could have come up with a better solution than letting his brother back into the picture.

Jeremy left through the front entrance of the building and walked a block down the street. He rounded the block and started making his way back to his apartment building and turned into an alley half a block away. He managed to make his change to Dominic without being seen and continued. As he neared he opened PATOMES and prepared the command. He slowed to a stop and stood looking into the alley behind his building.

He knew the lynx was inside waiting. He walked a few paces down the alley to be away from any prying eyes. "Come on out."

Dominic heard the growl before he saw him. The great lynx stepped out of the shadows with his head low and eyes staring death at him. Even knowing he'd been caught the male stalked him with determination. Dominic activated the command and walked toward the huge cat. The male made a dash at him but Dominic had programmed the change with his intent in mind.

The lynx made it half the distance to Dominic before he was too small to have any hope of harming the now much larger rat. He turned toward the side of the alley but Dominic was on him too fast. Plucking the five inch tall and still shrinking Jaguar from the ground he lifted him up and gazed at him.

"That was a nice try, but you should have known if I could track you down I would know when you stalked me, yes?"

He didn't listen to the male's shouts, he'd heard them before. He simply dropped him in a waiting spice container. Looking through the glass he added "Now you'll provide an excellent warning to the others."

With the jaguar concealed in his backpack Dominic made his way to the storage facility. Inside his storage unit he slid the deadbolt and turned to his captives. The troubles of his brothers could wait. He had an experiment to conduct. Setting the jaguar's spice container on the table he arranged the other two next to him. He gave them a moment to get a good look at each other.

Lifting the spice container he dumped the feline out on the tabletop. Dominic brought out one of the large cake displays and placed it over the jaguar. The male was trapped inside but had plenty of room and enough air to last for hours at his size.

"Officers, meet one of my earlier victims. He just tried to harm me after I did him a huge favor."

The raccoon and weasel looked over at the cat but said nothing. Dominic activated the first change. The jaguar grew a bit in size as he changed back to a small lynx. When it had finished he was in a feral body that stood at three inches tall at the shoulder. Ignoring the stunned stares of the two cops Dominic asked "Can you speak now?"

The lynx looked up at him and in a rough gravelly voice said "Horrr raww ruckk khan-" The surprise of the cat was obvious. Dominic smiled and after a few seconds asked "How about now?"

The cat could only growl and make a coughing yowl. Still smiling Dominic again ordered "Try now."

"You fucker. I should have killed you last night."

"Well, you missed your chance, as if you ever had one." Dominic said as the cat started getting smaller. He turned to the raccoon and weasel. Picking up the raccoon's container Dominic started to place him in with the jaguar but seizing the opportunity the cat made a break for the side of the table. Slamming the raccoon's empty container down over him to stop his escape attempt he slid it to the center of the table. He quickly added the weasel to the center of the table and placed the display dome over everyone.

Dominic smiled down at the scene. The jaguar was trapped inside the upside down spice container while the two former police stood next to the improvised prison under the larger glass dome. He leaned down and settled his chin on the table to stare at the three intimidatingly close.

"I'm going to leave you three in here for a while, but first, a few changes."

Openly staring at the raccoon he watched as after a few seconds the male started changing. He morphed to a feral body that grew to two inches at the shoulder. He was for a moment larger than the other two captives. Soon the weasel too grew and continued until he was a shade over two inches high. Dominic stood and asked "Can either of you speak?"

He smiled as both were able to say something to him. "Good, enough." He said as they continued shouting the same thing he had heard every time. It took them several seconds to fall silent and stare up at him.

"I'll be back later. For now, keep the cat under there, unless you want to share his fate." Dominic said as he stood and made his way to the door. With a glance back as he shut the door he saw all three were watching him. He left the light on since he intended to be back later that night.

As Dominic made his way toward the apartment he was stopped on the street for a moment by another rat. She only stepped in front of him long enough to hand him a page of paper. Dominic barely looked at it, it was a regular piece of paper that had printing on it. A few paces past the female he stepped next to a trash receptacle intending to throw it away. Like everyone else in the city he had been handed flyers for one event or another. Glancing at it just before disposing of it he stopped at the single word displayed across the front. Dominic turned it over to see there was a simple short statement on the other side.

Shocked he looked back and watched as the female stopped another rat and handed him a flyer as well. She then let several people walk past her until she stopped another rat. He looked down and reread the bulletin.

'Authorities are searching for a male going by the name Dominic. They are forcing us from parks and other public areas to intimidate and pressure cooperation. They've accused him of being involved in the disappearance of several predators without proof. The harassment and intimidation must end. Now is the time. Rise up. Pass the word. And help end the status-quo.'

He looked up watching the rat. He noticed her glance to the other side of the street where a male was watching her. Her male watcher had turned his attention to him. Looking around he saw that the other rat that had accepted her flyer had stopped as he had. Looking back at the male he added his profile to PATOMES and then the female. Dominic stuffed the flyer in a pocket and walked away.

He wasn't ready to confront anyone on their terms. If they were cooperating with police he'd be trapped and likely end in a hail of bullets. PATOMES could only protect him so much. Another thought occurred to him. Opening PATOMES he searched through some still unfamiliar commands. He'd had until then only used a few of the available functions. It was clearly time to explore its full potential.

He'd noticed early in using PATOMES that once opened it passively scanned his surroundings. Dominic used that ubiquitous function to watch for anyone following him. It became difficult to suppress the grin as he walked toward his apartment building.

He reached his building and made his way in through the back. He could be certain no one had followed him from where the female rat was handing out the bulletins. He'd not had to go through the trouble of targeting everyone that crossed paths with him to know none had shown any interest in Dominic's activities. Back in his own weasel body and apartment he smiled at Sam sitting on the couch.

"Hey, that didn't take long." Sam said smiling back at him.

"No, it was just a small errand I had to do. How do you want to spend the rest of the day?" Jeremy asked as he passed through the living room. Entering his bedroom he threw his backpack in the back of the closet and came back out.

"Nothing special, maybe a movie if you're willing to spend that much." Sam looked at him abashedly as he finished.

"Not at all. About the only chance I get to see a movie is when you talk me into going." Jeremy answered.

Sam stood after setting the book aside. "Well we have plenty of time before the show. You always like walking anyway."

Jeremy watched his brother step to the door. "Alright."

It had been some time since he'd seen his brother act this way. Jeremy followed wondering what had happened since the last time they'd talked. Sam said nothing as they rode down in the elevator and kept his silence even after they were on the street.

"So, is something wrong?" Jeremy asked looking at his brother.

Sam glanced at him. "No, not really. Its just that Eric was being his typical self this morning."

"Well, I know you expected that. Whats really bothering you?"

Sam looked up at him with a determined look and after a few paces said "Sorry, I'd rather not talk about it."

Jeremy replied "If there's anything I can do just say the word."

Sam nodded while staring straight ahead. They arrived at the theater without saying anything further. Once they'd taken their seats and were waiting for the show to start Sam lightened up a little and started chatting with his brother. Once the movie ended they left and stopped at a small eatery. Sam was much more animated, acting almost his normal self again.

When they arrived back at the apartment Eric was still out. Jeremy would have rather read one of his books but he felt his brother needed the companionship more. They both spent a few hours watching

television and occasionally chatting until their brother got home. On arriving Eric immediately went to the kitchen and started rummaging through the fridge.

"Have you even bought anything to put in there yet?" Jeremy asked from the couch.

Eric stood from leaning into the fridge and said "Here we go again."

Jeremy heard the tone and knew it was one of his brother's attempts to make him angry and get in a argument. It had become his favorite tactic in avoiding responsibility by getting everyone emotional and leading them off in a tangent. "Nope, not going to argue. I'm just pointing out what you agreed to."

Eric stood staring out of the kitchen at him for a few seconds. "Yeah, I know. I'll get something tomorrow." He kept looking out of the kitchen but neither Jeremy or Sam said anything more or even looked his way. After a while he leaned down to continue looking through the fridge.

Jeremy eyed his brother sitting next to him and saw he was looking back at him with a satisfied smirk on his face. He smiled back. Looking back at Eric he updated his profile in PATOMES out of curiosity. As he stood on the other side of the bar eating Jeremy compared him against his six month old profile. He hadn't grown any taller but had continued to gain weight, but it was all fat. His muscle mass hadn't changed a single pound.

Closing the program Jeremy stood and excused himself. It was late enough for his return to the storage facility. Leaving the accustomed way and passing through the alley as Dominic he made his way by a different route. He'd realized after the incident with the lynx and the two handing out bulletins he'd become a bit careless. using the passive scan of PATOMES helped settle his nerves but he was still unaccountably on edge.

In the storage unit he returned all three to an inch tall and transferred them to spice containers for traveling. With them stuffed in his pack he left making sure no one was watching. He made it to the park without any sign of interest from anyone. Alone in his favorite spot he set the three spice containers on the bench seat next to him and waited. It was almost an hour before the fox made an appearance.

Dominic looked at the male feral as he activated the alterations to his body. After a few seconds he asked "How's that? Can you speak now?"

The fox tilted his head a fraction and muttered "Speak?" He straightened and added "What? Oh, yes, I can speak again. Oh, nice." The fox's voice managed to be a little gravely and squeaky at the same time.

"Good, have you seen anything?"

"Uh, no, nothing unusual, but it hasn't been more than a couple days."

"Right. So, I have a gift for you." Dominic said as he took the spice container of the jaguar and dumped him on the ground in front of the bench. The tiny jaguar got up and started running under the bench. "Leave it for now." he told the fox. The fox had stood and looked about to chase after the tiny feline.

He dropped the other two in the same place and watched as they stood and looked up at the comparatively huge fox. Dominic activated the change for the jaguar first. Putting the containers back in his pack he looked behind the bench to see the newly minted fox female standing just three feet away. She'd stopped and was looking herself over.

Dominic turned back to the fox male. "She's yours, if you can make her yours. Reward for you and punishment for her."

The fox licked his chops as he looked at the female. Looking up to the rat he said "Thanks, boss."

"You're welcome. I'm only going to give you the ability to speak for when I need to communicate with you."

The fox started saying "I Underrick-ic-ick-ik." He looked at the ground in front of himself for a moment. Looking back up he nodded and looked back to where the female had been.

"These other two I have no use for. So, to make it sporting leave them be while I'm still in the park." Dominic said as he activated their change.

In seconds they grew larger and changed to feral bodies. Soon a feral bodied raccoon and weasel stood in front of the bench. Both were visibly undersized for their species and staring terrified at the fox.

"Didn't you hear me? You only have immunity while I'm still here."

The raccoon looked up at him as he spoke but the weasel ran under the bench and to disappeared under the nearest brush. Seconds later the raccoon ambled off as well, racing in the opposite direction.

Smiling at the fox he said "That's all for now. Keep watch. I'll be back after a few days to check on you."

The male stood and with a short yap bounded off in the direction of the female.

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Now you lot knows what the fox says. Oh shut it.