

Hope you lot have recovered from last week's chapter. Even if not we're going to get back to the story.

Jeremy was sitting and reading next to the washer waiting for his sheets to finish when Jenna barged in.

"Are you all right?"

"Yes." Jeremy replied, standing up from sitting on the bucket of laundry soap. "Why wouldn't I be?"

The cougar stepped to within a half pace of Jeremy. She examined him closely before stepping back and asking "Do you know who that was?"

"Sarah Greenwood. I assume she was a regular from the way she acted."

"The way she acted? The way she acted, he says." Jenna muttered. The cougar shook her head while scanning Jeremy up and down. He watched curious at her behavior.

"I apologize. I promised you wouldn't have to deal with any of our difficult clients until you had more experience. You should not have seen Miss Greenwood until you were ready. For that I'm sorry."

Jeremy stood still. He was a bit hesitant to say how he'd enjoyed the session considering how the cougar had rushed into the room. "I thought I did good considering. Did she complain?"

"Did she,—" Jenna crossed her arms over her chest and asked "Am I being pranked here? Has someone talked you into helping pull something here?"

She stared at Jeremy a moment before lowering her muzzle to his crotch. He lifted Jackson's notebook out of the way as she sniffed at him. He was in a bathrobe but also knew she'd still be able to smell the tigress on him. She stood and stared at the wall for a second. She turned toward the door and ordered "Stay right here, I'll be back in a minute."

Jeremy watched the cougar practically storm back out of the laundry. He shook his head and sat back on the bucket of laundry soap. He'd been pranked a number of time by the staff and had yet to make an effort to retaliate. Allowing Jenna to storm through the floor searching for an anonymous prankster seemed like a good beginning. He tried to get back to the notebook but thoughts of the tigress continued to intrude.

Five minutes later Jenna came back in and again stood appraising him. He stood and waited for her to say what was on her mind. She shook her head and with a soft voice muttered "What the hell have I got my hands on here."

Jeremy held his tongue not sure what he'd done to have gotten one of his mentors in such a state.

She looked at Jeremy and explained "Miss Greenwood is one of our regulars, yes. However only a few of the staff are, well capable of handling her eccentricities. Along with her sex games she's obviously also another dominant alpha. She's caused more than a few of my best people to quit on the spot." She paused and gestured at Jeremy. "And you," she continued, her voice raising, "in your first months not only take her on, but get one of the best tips she's ever handed out. And you ask if she had any complaints."

Jeremy had stepped back against the machine at the heat of her voice. He carefully considered his response as Jenna stood staring at him.

"Sorry, I thought she was just another of the regulars."

"But how did you manage to control her?"

Jeremy thought back for a few seconds before shrugging. "I really don't think I did. She pretty much took control from the first, I just did what I thought right and played along."

Jenna stared for a second before bursting out laughing. "I couldn't have given you any better advice than that."

She added "I was prepared to give you a bonus considering the screw up. As it is she gave you a large enough gratuity that it won't be necessary."

"Oh, how much was it?"

Jenna gave a wry smile and answered "Fifty over."

"Oh." Jeremy said. Sarah had tipped him half the fee Jenna charged for his services. "I should thank her in some way."

"Don't worry. She's scheduled another appointment for next month. I'll let it stand for now but you need to get more experience before then."

Jeremy fought against the eager smile trying to break free. "Okay."

Jenna smirked at him. "Okay." She said half mockingly, imitating his tone. "You don't have to hide your enthusiasm, not with me."

Jeremy grinned. "Okay." He said honestly pleased.

"Fine. Finish up here and go home." Jenna said, professional once again.

"Before you go," Jeremy said as she turned. The thought had on his mind and it seemed like the best time to ask. "I have a question."

The cougar turned back and stood waiting with eye ridges raised.

"Why don't we have someone to do the laundry here?"

Jenna tilted her head and gave him a confused look. After a second she asked "What, too good to do your own laundry?"

"No, I mean, well there's more than just laundry that they could do, right? If you had someone that could take on the laundry duties, or even do general cleaning. Perhaps they could also staff the front desk at times, that would free up a lot of time for the rest of the staff. Right?"

She stared at him for several uncomfortable moments. "What are you really getting at?"

"Okay, my brother has been looking for a job without much luck. I don't mean to ask any favors or anything like that. I did say I'd ask around."

"I'll think about it. For now get finished up." Jenna said and turned and left.

Jeremy was left standing feeling like he was back in the academy again. He sighed as he sat back down and tried to get back to Jackson's notes. After a few minutes he gave up realizing he was retaining nothing from the pages. He stared at the washer timer knob willing it to turn faster so he could get out. Its slowness felt mocking with his mind on Sarah Greenwood and her next appointment a month away. Eventually the laundry finished allowing him to finish turning his studio and go home.

Eric and Sam were both watching television when he got in. He put his pack away and brought out the notebook. He stayed in his room reading Jackson Buttons notes from the early years of the Bureau. Jeremy was fascinated as much at reading the dominant's thoughts than the history of the team as it was then thought of. Once he finished reading Jeremy went back over the notes.

Jackson had mentioned that he'd been adding to the notebook for years. Jeremy could see how his mentor had written his thoughts out over time and often gone back to write in the margins. It was clear that some of the margin notes were in handwriting much smaller than others, forced into tighter and tighter spaces. The margin notes added to issues or points, often in what was clearly different ink. Jackson had been forced to cram his progressively more detailed thoughts into smaller and smaller spaces. It was interesting to see the evidence of how his thoughts had become more focused. Jeremy felt privileged to have a sight into the evolution of his mentor's thoughts.

Finally setting the notebook aside Jeremy thought over what he'd learned. It wasn't until the notes made in recent years that the fox had come to feel that the bureau needed to be separate from Nicholson. Many of the more recent margin notes contained details and plans on how to cleanly sever ties between Nicholson and the bureau. One detail that while it was mentioned only once in Buttons' notes made it clear was essential. He wanted a dominant to lead the bureau through the exit.

Putting the notebook away he prepared to go out. Sam had gone to bed and Eric was laying on the couch still watching television. He barely glanced at his brother as passed through the living room on his way out. He felt his brother's eyes follow him watching as he left. He took to the street and started walking. He wasn't paying much attention to his surroundings. Jeremy had always felt that walking helped him think. He needed to think about the things he'd learned from Jackson's notebook. Having read Jackson's notes he'd begun feeling something that he couldn't place, there was something nagging at him.

Jeremy walked almost on autopilot. His mind was filled with the implications of what he'd read. It was shifting his priorities. He'd been balancing several issues in his life for months. Just recently he'd been forced to reevaluate his involvement in hunting predators. While Buttons had obviously meant for him to work on the separation of the bureau from Nicholson, his lending of the notebook was forcing him to reevaluate everything. If he was to follow Jackson's plans for the bureau it would take his full focus for years.

He could clear most things from his schedule, should he decide to follow the male's plans. He paused at a familiar spot and sat. Leaning back against the backrest he stared up at the sky but hardly saw the stars. Jackson had already planned everything out. It would take but a few weeks for the actual separation, but if he followed the blueprint already laid out he could possibly accomplish something that would eventually give him resources that rivaled his mentor's own status and power. His mind kept coming back to that idea. Still, he hadn't yet placed what was beginning to bother him about how he felt.

His mentor had given him the means to achieve in years the success that had taken him more than half a century. He wanted to implement Jackson's model, wanted to follow through with his mentor's map for the future. The largest problem he had was the nearness of his time of need. He now understood and

accepted that his attention would be compromised for at least the next five years. He also knew Jackson had to be aware of how close that was for him.

Jeremy looked down and in front of himself at a sound. He looked at a raccoon crouching a few yards away in the brush. He'd come to his favorite park bench out of habit. Staring at the feral raccoon he considered his current situation. His clothes wouldn't have any of the scent of his Dominic persona. Likewise he'd known to be careful in not leaving his own scent on the clothes he wore for Dominic. His PATOMES grafted coyote sense of smell assured him of that.

Still the raccoon had to have tracked him down somehow. It was staring at him as though assessing the situation as much as Jeremy was. Jeremy kept silent staring at the feral. The small male stepped closer a few paces and stopped. As he looked up at Jeremy the raccoon started pawing at the dirt with his front paws. Jeremy's heart started beating faster as the raccoon finished writing the word 'HELP' with his paws. Jeremy stared back at the raccoon for several seconds.

He had to dispose of the male now. He didn't want to expose himself though, that had been the whole point of creating the Dominic persona. Opening PATOMES he brought up the profiles of the raccoon and weasel. As he suspected the raccoon was sitting right in front of him. The weasel was half a mile away. He turned his head at the sound of something racing through the bushes.

A fox leapt into view and closed on the raccoon rapidly. Jeremy knew by his huge size the fox was his creation. PATOMES only confirmed his guess. The feral raccoon turned and tried to amble off but the large fox was too quick. Before Jeremy could react the fox had taken the raccoon by the neck and carried him off. Jeremy stood and watched the fox disappear into the brush. PATOMES let him know the raccoon was still alive as he was carried away. He stood observing their profiles displayed in his vision.

Jeremy wondered at the fox's behavior. He monitored him as he carried the raccoon several hundred yards away. As he continued to watch the fox wandered off from the position of the raccoon and left him alive. A few moments later the raccoon too made his way from where the fox had left him. Jeremy sat back down and continued to monitor the fox. He was circling around behind Jeremy's position.

Without turning his head to watch for the fox he monitored the male's approach. He was coming toward him from downwind. He had to consider the fox might just be stalking him. As Dominic he'd made him larger than normal. He would have known he was a weasel by his general scent but may not have noticed Jeremy was the size of a dominant. Even a normal weasel would be a tough proposition for the fox despite his larger size. Jeremy controlled his reaction, making sure not to even turn his ears to listen for the fox. He breathed a little easier as the fox stopped his advance and seemed to settle in to watch him.

Keeping some of his attention on the fox Jeremy tried to get his train of thought back. In reviewing his thoughts over the past half hour he suddenly understood what had been bothering him.

Jackson Buttons had been looking for a dominant to run the bureau for decades. A dominant that could be talked into separating the bureau from Nicholson. It was likely him that initiated the program scheduling mentorship meetings for young dominants at the academy. It seemed the right conclusion considering he had been the last dominant scheduled. Then when he was in place and everything seemed ready Jackson gave him the notebook. Jeremy was supposed to take it and run with the plan.

Should he follow Jackson Buttons' plans he would end up being his creature. Jeremy could end up as much under the fox's control as he had thought the feral fox had been Dominic's.

He turned his attention to the display in his vision. The fox was stationary about thirty yards behind him and a little to his left. Jeremy suspected that the male was acting on his own behalf and not watching for police activity in the park. The raccoon was still alive and slowly moving to join the fox. His

fox was now watching a witness to the raccoon asking for help. He smiled believing that the fox truly was acting in his own interests instead of Dominic's.

Jackson Buttons plan had been thought out for decades and adjusted to fit developments and advancements as the years had gone by. He seemed to still feel he needed a dominant for it to succeed. Jeremy, having witnessed the creatures of Dominic defy his instruction gave him the confidence to make a decision.

Standing from the bench Jeremy paused and smiled up at the sky. The moon had lifted up above the buildings to the east. He looked around the small clearing and seeing no one about walked toward the fox's hiding spot in the bushes. PATOMES told him he wasn't exactly facing the fox as he emptied his bladder but the direction was close enough. He finished his business and walked out of the clearing and headed back toward his apartment.

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Well that was a fun episode for me. Hope you lot liked it as much as I did. Anyway I'm thinking of starting something new here next week. Mostly because my original intent for this section has kind of fallen by the wayside. Stay tuned.