

Spying on a Mark

by Maven Treecat

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Content warning: Gender transformation, oral and anal vore, digestion, implied disposal, reformation, and snooping.

It began with a quiet hum, a suspenseful tune provided by a would-be snoop. Two pointed ears peeked into the dark bedroom, and two mischievous green eyes peeked in soon after behind a pair of glasses. A wuff nose twitched against the edge of the door and sniffed curiously. Then, a full muzzle slid around the wood, a silly grin stretched across it and backlit by the apartment's common room lights. "Double-owo-seven reporting...I'm in," he snickered quietly to himself, immediately resuming the humming of his own spy theme. Slipping in, Forest closed the door behind him and quietly flicked the empty room's light switch.

A dim overhead lamp illuminated a number of eye-catching things. There was, of course, the bed; the wuff was somewhat surprised at its unkempt state, five or six different pillows of different sizes and shapes scattered about the head while the multiple blankets and sheet layers were crumpled lopsided near the foot. The dresser's drawers weren't much better, each lopsidedly open with half the laundry in each folded and half less so. The closet, at least, had all those slightly formal and fancy outfits neatly hung. The computer desk was a bit of a mess, scattered notepads, books, snacks, and papers strewn about, story ideas mixed with short poem seeds crossed with puzzle game notes among assorted unartistic sketched ideas. On the opposite side of the computer was a bookshelf only a quarter-filled with books—mostly fantasy and academic including one black-bound thesis—and otherwise filled with games, trinkets, plushies, toys, buttons, and art all particularly posed and grouped to some museological narrative the wuff couldn't quite figure out. Finally, all along the walls hung various framed posters, scenic photographs, and paintings, very little of the plain-colored wall left undecorated.

"Wow, that's a lot of stuff," Forest whistled, stepping past the papasan chair and lamp to marvel at the glimpse into his friend's psyche. "They're so particular outside, but they don't make their own bed?" His eyes caught on the top shelf of the decorative bookcase, three plushies of Toriel, Niko, and Mimkyu standing out in particular. "Hee. That's cute~"

Tail wagging as his gaze swiveled downwards, Forest took note of the various interests on display. RPGs, dinosaurs, world cultures, wizards, social networks, museums, fables, castles, research, music...a mishmash of different items, all on display in a straight view of the computer's webcam or for the intrepid snoop.

A glint on the shelf caught the wuff's eye. "Hmm, what's this?" A single finger was all that took to unhook the unlabeled book from the shelf, its strange faux-jewels and faux-gold filigree catching in the room's overhead light. Forest flicked the magnetic flap over the book's front

cover and flipped to the page. The margins were filled with idle doodles, but the body...the body of each page started with a date, and a familiar intro: "Dear diary..."

The corners of the already all-smiles pseudo-spy's mouth stretched into a wide, mischievous grin. The only reason the curious wuff had slipped in and away from the friendly gathering was because someone had told him that Maven was busy in the bathroom and the slightly ajar door had been so inviting, but... "...well, they wouldn't write it if it wasn't meant to be read, right?" The curiosity was too strong to resist.

With a fwump, Forest dropped into the papasan chair, letting his wagging tail sink into the suspended fabric and dangling his feet over the edge of the metal rim. One lick of his fingers later, the pages started turning...

Dear Diary,

I finally met Danny in person. I thought, since he'd approached me from behind and saw my long hair, that he'd been confused and was flattering me. "Pretty" was never a term people meant as a compliment when I was growing up, but he genuinely meant it! I didn't take offense, either...it felt good, and I've never particularly cared about being "a man". Just being a squirrel-cat is fine.

But my return home has revealed something I hadn't expected: my body has changed! It was subtle from the outside, but it was enough that I'm sure that it was what Danny noticed. It's not an unwelcome change, but...well, I wouldn't be me if I didn't want to try and understand why. And how. I am pretty sure I woke up without breasts and with...well, the other type of "endowment". So the change must have occurred either shortly before or soon after meeting my friend...and I didn't even notice.

The only other change I've found is a small mark on my neck. It goes all the way to the skin, a wavy sort of shape. The only thing it reminds me of is the silhouette of the vanes in a cat's eye marble. Its color is strange for purely being a birthmark, and if it were one...why would it only appear today? I will have to do some research.

-Maven Treecat

"Their neck mark, huh?" Forest hummed to himself, picturing the pale symbol on the neck of his friend. Sure enough, in the margins, was a crude doodle of the mark...hardly perfect, but the squirrel-cat wasn't exactly a trained artist. Thoughtfully, the wuff flipped the page. "Wonder if they figured it out...?"

Dear Diary,

I figured it out!

“Oh! Well, I suppose they did!”

The change occurs based on perception! And the mark definitely has something to do with it. It began with my meet-up with Sefra. I turned back male, and this time, because I bothered to pay attention to my own body, I noticed the change. It began almost immediately after he saw me, and the change only took a couple of minutes. I briefly met Danny later, only to be confused as to why another change didn't occur. It was only late that night that I got my answer: I'd put on a scarf due to the growing chill on the air...I'd covered the mark.

That night, I looked at myself in the mirror and, for a brief moment, I regretted losing the slightly more feminine aspects of my body. And, in that moment, the change began. I wasn't entirely at the whims of others, it seemed: instead to be based on an observer's perception of me and their being able to see my mark! Sefra saw me as more male, while Danny saw me more female. I, not having strong preference, could simply change myself in the mirror. However, this does suggest that others have priority...or is it simply the last person to see it?

This will require more experimentation. It still doesn't answer the question of why I can do this, though...but so far I'm quite enjoying this.

-Maven Treecat

Forest slumped further into the chair, tapping his chin thoughtfully. Maven had always seemed more feminine to him, personally. But there were times the squirrel-cat came across more boyish, such as among the small gathering for games and company they were hosting today. How often were they changed? Did he ever witness it and not notice? What a peculiar mark. Surely the next entry would answer it.

Dear Diary,

I'm back. I admittedly don't know how, but I am. To my surprise, Sefra sent me on an unexpected vacation...an all-expenses-paid tour of his digestive tract. He said he was hungry, said he wanted me, and then...down I went.

Forest's ears twitched, a slight blush rising to his cheeks as he grinned and his stomach gave the tiniest of jealous *glrps* around some assorted pretzels, popcorn, and other party snacks. "Wow...this is getting steamy."

As soon as he figured out just how flustered and squirmy I got, he just ramped up the teasing. I could hardly get a word in edgewise. He just churned me up without the slightest bit of guilt—I could tell given what was grinding on me from outside—and, well...I guess I was food. All the normal stuff followed.

"Aww, come on, cutie. You can share more details than that!" the wuff pouted at the page. It wasn't entirely impossible that people came back, but, from the sounds of it, the squirrel-cat enjoyed it far more than they were willing to admit...and that usually led to permanent absences—tasty, blushy, for-keeps absences.

But I woke up in my bed. Intact. Sefra seemed pleasantly surprised, too. I guess no harm was done, so...no hard feelings. And...it was...really hot.

"Hee. There ya go, squirrel-cat!" Forest cheered with a snicker at the page.

I'd been gone a week, apparently. And I'd reappeared the morning after Sefra had apparently offered an excuse to our Pathfinder group...and been promptly called out for what had really happened. (Damien knows better at this point, I guess.) Something about the interaction, perhaps? Sefra's being his usual tight-lipped self. Except when he occasionally licks his lips at me now.

-Maven Treecat

Forest glanced over his shoulder at the still closed bedroom door. He'd been in here for a while, or so he thought; was Maven not done in the bathroom yet? But the mystery of Maven's mark continued to grow, and the wuff knew he wouldn't have a better opportunity than this...unless someone was nice enough to let him know the next time the squirrel-cat went on "vacation". Shifting anxiously in the comfy borrowed seat, the wuff turned the page and buried his nose in the diary once more.

Dear Diary,

The clue was in Sefra's (embarrassingly-hot) selfie on my phone. I couldn't have been too far gone in his gut when it was taken, but, sure enough, there was a marble's eye mark on his neck in the same place as it is on mine. If my mark's abilities were based on perception, it didn't seem too much a stretch to believe that it and perception also affected this surprising return of mine.

Unfortunately, testing this required, well...me to be eaten again. And ideally by someone who was more reliably going to want me back.

I didn't really get the chance to choose the perfect circumstances. Hadn't even decided on the words to use to ask. (How do you even do that? "Hi, I'd like to test and see if, even despite not having the force of will to reform myself as many do, this weird mark on my neck is saving my butt; would you mind eating and digesting me and thinking really hard about what a nice friend I am in, oh, five days?") Turns out Oji was jealous of Sefra and, in a brief moment of distraction, shoved me firmly up fox butt.

It made for a far slower process altogether, but once he'd gotten off and had his say, things went far quicker. From how he was talking, I was pretty sure I was a goner. It was far less for any excuse of hunger, and I think my attempts to explain things only came across like desperate pleas...which he very distinctly enjoyed. I was quite completely ruined.

A week and a half later, and I was back. Oji, unlike Sefra, was fine with confirming he'd had the mark on his neck and quite happy to explain his thoughts during the day prior to my return when asked. An idle moment of regret he'd not get to play my Pathfinder campaign again, a tiny twinge of guilt that I was fun to shoot playful ideas back and forth with...he didn't seem to regret it for long, given how happy he was to show off what he'd made me into, but...I think it's enough proof for a theory.

I believe the mark is something born at least partly of my strong desire not to disappoint people. I do not have strong wants for my own gender...and I am apparently easily convinced into a squirmy state at the idea of being..."used" or "ruined"...so, wherever I would not have preference, the mark gives that preference to someone else. Wherever the mark is, those around it have command of anything I lack strong will towards deciding for myself.

If my theory is correct, then I can hypothesize how this would work in larger-scale situations. The majority or strongest will, when my mark is exposed, should determine my gender. And, if ever I disappear into a predator or otherwise among a group, my return depends on the majority or strongest will believing I should return in at least one moment.

Given how much I liked friends...enjoying me, I believe this might be one of the best gifts I could have subconsciously developed. But...how open should I be with this information? To share it is to reveal how I may be knowingly manipulated, returned, or permanently destroyed. I will have to think about this as I experiment further...I have friends coming over soon, after all.

-Maven Treecat

Forest flipped through the remaining diary pages as he stood up, tail wagging as he looked over quick jots of information from further encounters. The full diary entries seemed to dry up into blank pages, and slowly a moment of realization dawned on the wuff's face. "Ooh...we're the friends who were coming over, weren't we?"

Twitching, the pointy wuff ears caught the sound of a flush and the sound of a running faucet muffled by a wall. Quickly, he slid the faux-jeweled book back into its spot on the shelves and made two long strides towards the door. "What a peculiar little secret the squirrel-cat was keeping," he mused aloud, thoughts racing through his head of how he or others might make further mischief and silliness with such knowledge and causing his goofy smile to stay stretched on his muzzle. Then, in one graceful motion, the snoop pulled the door open, slipped out, and closed it behind him.

"Ooph!"

Forest collided with the soft belly that'd emerged from the adjacent bathroom. His heart jumped in embarrassed alarm, mouth already moving to make some excuse. However, the bespectacled wuff's eyes focused on the belly they'd run into...white? Plump? A little bit sloshy? These weren't the traits of a squirrel-cat.

"Hey wuff, what's the rush?" the snow leopard purred, looking quite pleased with herself.

"Oh! Sarah, hi. No rush at all! Just was looking for Maven. Heard they were busy...in there." He pointed towards the open bathroom.

The snow leopard's smile didn't budge, patting her exposed midriff. "Oh, she was. But she's finished now," she replied. "I just helped her on her way."

Blinking, the wolf thought for a moment. Ordinarily, he might've missed it, but his snooping mission's bounty came to mind. Her? Well, if Sarah got Maven in private... Slowly, his eyes left the steady blue of Sarah's and drifted to her neck. He couldn't be *entirely* sure that Sarah didn't have a pale spot there before, but it did look an awful lot like that shape sketched in the margins of those early diary pages.

"...ah, I see!" he said, still looking at the mark. "Well, I suppose the get together was wrapping up soon anyway."

"Mm," she agreed. "I wouldn't mind jogging home. Got some leftovers to burn off."

“Well, it was nice to get to do this!” Forest nodded. “Good friends, good games...weirdly random music playlists? I really look forward to Maven inviting us over again.”

Sarah paused, looking at the genuinely cheery wuff. A brief wave of conflict washed over her face, her breath stalling in her chest. She glanced to the freshly cleared game table, and she glanced briefly back to the bathroom. Forest’s eyes narrowed slightly, the mark on the snow leopard’s white neck giving a faint glow. “I...well, we’ll see.” Slowly, Sarah’s sly, comfortable expression returned, her confidence reemerged, and her tail resumed its steady, content swish. “She was quite wiped after today. Have a good night, Forest.”

The wuff watched his friend slip towards the apartment door, giving playful smiles to the others preparing to leave, none the wiser given how thoroughly and quickly she’d snuck her snack. He felt just the slightest bit bad playing on Sarah’s emotions, but...well, the least he could do for Maven after his “double-owo-sevening” was help confirm a theory. Besides, he really did want Maven back!

Forest licked over his lips. “It’d be...*disappointing* if I didn’t get to have a taste, squirrel-cat,” he rumbled to himself. “And you don’t want to disappoint your favorite wuff, right cutie?”

He hit the lights for the common room as he closed the door behind him. The last thing the apartment heard for the night was the final few bars of that silly improvised spy theme and the soft whooshing of a wuff tail wagging to the beat.