

# THE BIG HEIST

The mouse looked left and right as he entered the room, it was hard to see in the dark, but the rodent's eyes were great to view through even the dimmest of areas. He moved forward cautiously noting that there seemed to be nobody around to spot him.

The room was rather messy, vials, bottles, flasks, and countless other containers full, empty, and anywhere in between were spread around on various shelves and tables. Bruxton glanced over to the central workbench in the room, that had to be where his target would be.

The mouse was used to oddball requests, his sly and discreet nature made him a well-known thief for those who had risky or unconventional jobs, but this one was likely the weirdest. He still pondered if it was worth the hefty price in gold, but what he was tasked to snatch was certainly picking his curiosity.

The reminiscing of what it was the mouse had to get coincided with his gaze coming over the two Erlenmeyer flasks on the edge of the bench. Taking out a small flashlight, the rodent verified that it matched the description, with one flask with red liquid, and the other with blue. Bruxton snorted silently, it was hard to believe, but the size altering serums he'd been told to steal were indeed real.

That was a boon, surely, as much as the money was alluring, the rodent had his own plan if it turned out to be real, besides, he thought, how could they know they kept some for himself, he could both get rich enough to retire, and grow larger to shove around even the predator species that tended to try and make him a plaything.

Of course, to make it harder, there was a warning that there was also a shrinking one being worked on by the lab, and he would need to ensure he took the right one. There was a set of labels on the glass that brought the hope up it would be easy, only to shatter when seeing the nonsensical glyphs on the white strips, 𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅, 𐄆𐄇𐄈𐄉, the mouse was groaning in annoyance.

No matter, Bruxton would just try a tiny little bit of one and if it wasn't the right one, could just drink a bit more of the other to grow back. The rodent grabbed a chair to climb up and snatch the blue flask, the color inspired confidence in getting bigger, like plans growing with blue water, where they would be destroyed by red fire, just seemed logic.

He popped the glass plug off and cautiously sipped a gulp worth of the liquid, plopping the flask back down before jumping off the chair, expecting to lose balance if staying up there. The rodent definitely felt something happening through his body, a sort of warmth that felt promising, so was the feeling of dizziness, at least so the hope made him think.

That is until Bruxton noticed that the chair was taller than the table was. In fact, the mouse was stunned as his hopes were shattered. He tried to climb back onto the chair but by the time he stepped over to it, he couldn't reach the top anymore. The rodent reached to the horizontal bars holding the chair legs together, barely getting a grasp of the lower one before it got out of reach, realizing just how fast he was dwindling as he just dangled there.

Struggling to hold onto the thick metal rod, Bruxton pulled himself up with all his might, balancing himself on his feet as finally, he seemed to have stopped shrinking further. He looked up at the chair's sit and reached up, barely managing to grab onto the edge when, snap.

Blinded, the mouse squinted at the sudden flood of light, panic rose into distress as he heard heavy footsteps vibrating the metal he held and stood on. With a deep breath, he hauled himself onto the sit just in time for it to be pulled back. The mouse sized mouse looked up at the shadow brought upon him, having no time to even squeak as he suddenly was smothered under the rough jean material squishing in, as the seat cushioning compressed below to keep him pinned in place.

A grunt of frustration rumbled through the muffling of the two surfaces, the distinct cling of glass against glass, and idle shifting of the weight above him until... Silence, and stillness. The muffled voice came up, with a rather insisted on wiggle of the rear pressing down on him, and a rather notable foreign accent "Well, looks like you wanted to be an early tester for my new product. Should have just asked if you wanted to bring your stature down, I would have happily helped... Let's see what subject we got here."

The weight lifted off of the rodent, he took a deep breath and coughed up as he tried to sit back up. Eyes took a moment to adapt to the cold light in the room, the shape standing to his left becoming clearer, a towering feline looking raccoon was looming over, arms crossed. As the blur vanished off, he could see the sharp gaze piercing into his being, even behind the green tint of glasses.

The raccoon hybrid squinted as silence reigned, then they adjusted their glasses and grabbed the rodent in their right hand, bringing him up to their face before asking, "Well, aren't we a shy one? Fine by me, I like discreet «assistants», but let's start by breaking the ice, I'm Nomaxice Khajbear, just call me Noma, I'll be your new boss now... What your name?"

Nervous, the mouse cleared its throat in a tiny, high-pitched squeak, "I... Well, I'm Bruxton. Please... Don't hurt me, I didn't mean anything bad I just wanted to try the growth stuff so I wouldn't be made fun of anymore, I'll even tell you who hired me to steal from you!"

Noma grinned, shaking his head while closing their hand around the rodent tighter, "Brux, alright, well I already know who, they've been a great source of new test subject you know, first time he sent a mouse though. Shame for you, I don't plan to test the growth one just yet, but you'll still be very useful... After testing, we can call it even, if you're still in good shape, you might even be able to get a sip of the growth stuff to get back to... How tall did you say you were?"

Bruxton swallowed hard at the «if», but tempted fate to get his wish fulfilled trying to declare with confidence, "Well, uh, I was... 7 feet tall! Yeah!"

Though the lie was obvious and got a smirk out of the raccynx, they nodded and played along, "Alright, sure, I'll aim for that, more or less, shorty, might be able to at least get to look at me in the chest then, but, first, we'll have to test a few things, starting with taste. Well, after proper sanitary procedures."

The hybrid sat down, considering the rodent over, then tilted him back and snatched a cloth to wipe over their prey, adding a bit of purified water to help the rubbing. Bruxton yelped and struggled as the raccoon washed him head to toes, not that he could really stop it, being left with moist fur and a dizzying shake in an attempt to dry him off.

While still trying to break out the light nausea, the mouse suddenly felt a wet warmth press and spread over his body. Bruxton blinked quickly, left to stare at the gaping jaws filling his view and pushing at the raspy flesh of the tongue dragging over his body.

The tip of the tongue finally slurped over the rodent's face, with a deep, satisfied sigh from the hybrid, who hummed along a little tune before commenting, "Well not too bad, I heard mice tasted great, guess I can confirm this theory, I'll be sure to take notes, just hold on a minute."

With that, Noma flung the mouse right into their jaws, sitting down at the bench and pulling a notepad to write away. All the while, Bruxton was wrestled by the tongue that tastes tested him moments ago. Not only that, but the mouse was dangerously shoved around, getting close and personal with those pointed, sharp teeth.

Thankfully, Bruxton was no stranger to evasive moves, being a veritable escape artist allowed him to only feel the pearly white rub against him. Alas even while able to diminish risks, despite his best attempts the rodent was still mostly unable to fight back and get a hold of the wet snake, getting exhausted by the time the lips part away and light shines in the cavernous maw.

Without a second to think of jumping out, a pair of white furred and black padded fingers swiftly snatched the shrunken rodent and flicked him down onto the bench. Bruxton could only roll onto his back, trying to catch his breath, staring up at the looming face of his tormentor.

"Now then." The raccynx spoke up, "I need to do a durability test, but for this, I need you at a more... Convenient size. Open up Brux! Or don't, won't change much for you..."

Bruxton swallowed nervously watching the raccoon's left hand move over and grab the serum vial, almost missing the right hand moving to grab a dropper. The mouse builds up the strength to get up and start slowly walking back, trying to find a way out where he wouldn't get caught, train of thoughts lost when he bumped back into... Something.

Turning around, the mouse was facing the tip of a wide, fluffy tail, blocking his view, and any way to escape away from the hybrid with any chance of success. Further aggravating was the smile forming on the wall of tail, teeth just as pointy and sharp, and somehow even bigger than those of the maw.

Braxton's heart raced as the deep voice snatched his ears' attention, "Now, now, watch where you're going, wouldn't want to lose you to Artyom, it gets hungry when I'm working."

The mouse slowly walked back from the grinning tail, back towards the raccynx, ready to flee when shot with a stream of liquid, quickly turning around yet again, mind racing with all the surrounding threats. Bruxton was forced to close his eyes and hold his breath, feeling the taste of the serum even trying to keep his lips shut together.

Once the shower was over, the mouse sputtered and coughed, rubbing his eyes to try and dry off the liquid and finally look back to the oversized scientist. His neck craned up, and up, and up, eyes going wide at the sight of an even larger raccynx before him.

Noma was squinting, struggling to make out their little subject, truly a speck now, and raised an eyebrow at the unintelligible squeaking. "Hold your breath, I can't understand you as good as my ears are... Plus you'll need it for what's coming next anyway."

The hybrid pulled off one of their boots and set it down on the table inches away from the mouse, who instantly fell over from the felt quake. Noma licked over their finger and carefully pressed it over the minute rodent, rolling the finger pad from side to side to make sure he stuck to it.

Once certain he would stick, they swiftly lifted their finger up and over the opening of the boot, using a claw to dexterously flick the rodent down onto the insole. Making sure he was indeed there, Noma chuckled and put on the boot once more, leaving Bruxton pinned under the fully padded sole as Noma stood up and walked off, the last words the mouse heard before the pounding of the next step making it hard to focus, "I'll see you in a while to get the results!"