

“So, I signed this?” The tiger sat at the middle of an ornate long table with in an even more ornate dining room. The baroque detail of the walls, furniture, and tapestries pinging the migraine currently holding his brain like a vice and making him blink and wince as he looked around. He groaned, holding his head. The dragoness opposite him nodded as she pored another cup of peppermint scented tea, sliding it toward him.

“That is your signature, is it not?” She poored a cup for her self. Her eyes never left him, darting over his features, over the white bristles of his nose and chin, around black that ringed his yellow eyes and struck strikingly as lines through the orange of his head, cheeks, and nose. Her nostrils flared subtly as she inhaled the scent of him, the perfume of her sheets lingering and mingled with the faint cologne of his own faintly heady fragrance. He was marvelous, she thought, the point of a smile just barely peaking up at the corners of her mouth.

He sighed, roving over the letter, reading the body of it once more. Ownership, servitude, bondage, and faithfulness were all capitalized and written in bold italics. “Yes, but it’s sloppy. I was obviously drunk. Look, that’s a wine stain there on the corner. You can’t obviously expect this to hold up?”

She shook her head, “But I can, it will. Inebriation is no excuse here. You hold some one responsible should they run another down in a vehicle while intoxicated. Haven't you ever been taught not to sign something while drunk?”

The dragoness laced her fingers in front of her, resting her hands on the table. The light filtering in through the curtains reflecting off her orange skin was as glaring as the day itself, he squinted and took a sip of the tea and sighed once more. He wasn’t in Tession where such a preposterous thing was even possible, let alone legal. Draconia had it’s own laws, and many a lack there of in comparison to Tession. Which is what made it such a popular vacation spot for many of the furred races.

Benjamin held the paper up, waving it loosely. “Look, I’m not really into...this sort of thing. I was just here with some friends and-”

“And looking to have some fun. I understand, and that-” Kelsura gestured at the slip “-is a ticket to all the fun you could ever want here, legally, with little to no legal repercussions to you. All responsibility falls to the owner, being myself, and their house. Besides,” she smiled, chuckling as she slid him a tea tray laden with biscuits and a small bowl of jam. “You were certainly into it last night when you were bent over my knee.”

He blushed, fuming as he crumpled the paper and threw it across the room. She made no move to stop him, instead looking to the maid to her right. The lioness made her way around the table, picking up the ball of paper off the floor and smoothed it back out on the table before returning to her place by Kelsura’s side, bowing softly and standing back to attention.

A silence hung in the air between the two seated. Kelsura never broke eye contact, staring the tiger down until his own attention turned away with another blush “I win.” She said sweetly, chuckling softly as she pulled the contract in front of her. She sighed as she held out a hand to her maid who produced a pen as ornate as everything else he had seen so far. Kelsura signed her name in long swooping curls.

“Please don’t run.” She said as Ben pushed himself up from the table. “You may make it to the front door but you won’t make it beyond the mansion grounds.” She said, popping the cap back over the pen

with a snap. She sighed once more as he bolted, flinging his cup and the tray at them. She never moved from her seat, simply looking down as her white day dress stained with tea and jam. She dusted crumbs from her chest and lap while her maid fetched the tray from the floor and set it back on the table. She looked up to the lioness “Give the boy a ten second head start.” She ordered calmly before poring her self one more cup of tea before sending the maid off.

Benjamin ran, legs pumping him forward as the claws of his feet tore at the plush carpet for traction. All he had wanted was a night of fun. Dragons weren’t exactly a reserved people. Even the crème de la crème like Kelsura were open to mingling with the ‘lesser races’ as they were some time derogatorily called. A night of uninhibited fun with the locals. Some drinks, some flirting, he hadn’t expected it to actually go so far that he’d end up back in her bedroom. It had been a sweet night. Bottles of wine more expensive than his apartment, a now ruined bed that cost more than he could make in half a lifetime, he could only vaguely recall some of the things they did but was sure a handful were illegal in accordance with Tession morality laws. All done with, to, and from a dragon no less. He woke convinced it had all been a dream. Convinced until he was called down to a private meeting suite and a wine stained paper set in front of him. The words written in that contract only applied here in Draconia. He wished he had taken that slip of paper with him. If he could just get one foot on the other side of the boarder, he could wipe his ass with it as soon as he did.

He turned the corner past the main stairway, bolting under the arms of a goat in a suit and diving over kangaroo in another maid uniform. Curiously, but with no desire to question why, he passed a mountain of a mutt crammed so tightly into his three piece suit that his neck bulged around the collar of his shirt. He was holding the front doors open for him, bowing as he passed and sending him off with a rough bark.

“Not going to make it off the mansion grounds’ my stripes.” Benjamin growled as he sprinted down the paved front drive, shooting a look over his shoulder and whooping as none who had tried to stop him made to give chase. Kelsura and her lioness maid watched him from a third floor balcony. He gave them both a rather rude gesture before he felt a hard sting on the right of his lower back. He snatched at it with out slowing and studied the object in his hand with a shocked and widening expression.

“3. 2. 1.” Kelsura closed the face of her pocket watch with a click, the rifle held by the lioness giving a soft, quick hiss as the gas capsule was emptied. She watched as the tiger pulled the dart from his back, his sprint slowing to a run before dropping to a jog and then stopping to fall over on his side. She turned to the lioness, “I’ll collect him, have a chip programmed and ready. Assuming he’s still coherent I’m going to have a few more words with him before I return.”

“Yes Ma’am.” the lioness shouldered the tranq rifle and turned with her, moving in the opposite direction as Kelsura leisurely made her way down to the ground floor.

Benjamin couldn’t move his arms or legs. Even his tail laid limp and useless down to his side. His whole body was numb, a fog rolling in over his thoughts making it hard to concentrate. He was barely even aware of the clawed orange feet that stopped in front of him.

Kelsura scooped the back of her dress under her legs as she sat down on the cleanly manicured grass in front of the tiger. “I did say you wouldn’t make it past the mansion grounds.” She picked at several blades of grass and sprinkled them over his silver hair.

“Dirt...” he mumbled passed his sagging tongue.

“No, just some grass. I’d hate to mussy those beautiful locks of yours. Well, out here at least.” she chortled.

“Nuh...dirt...dirt eh muh bakk. Yuh shut muh.” He could barely mumble, and had to fight to even find the simplest words for what he was saying.

“Hmm?” She leaned forward, turning her ear to listen. His words were faint. She had expected him to still be awake, barely coherent, but was surprised he could even speak. She had ordered the use of a larger dose than what was considered normal, given his size and musculature. “Oh! Dart! No, no it was Vi who shot you, though I did order it so I suppose by proxy, yes. I did shoot you with a dart.” She let out a contented sound as she pet through his hair. “Are you understanding me, by the way? That was a fairly large dose she hit you with. Are you fighting it?”

“Chired...shtay...awake.” He mumbled.

“Oh...” she cooed, standing and pulling him over her shoulder by an arm, supporting him as she began to shoulder him and carry him back up to the mansion. “Go to sleep pretty kitty. We’ll get you a nice, warm bath and some clean bed clothes on while you sleep it off. We’ll talk more when you’re awake.” She smiled as the fins of her ears twitched as his labored breathing grew more steady and deeper.

Benjamin awoke, his head still turning from the tranquilizers. With difficulty he pushed himself up and regretted it as his stomach turned. Planting his feet on the floor he bent forward and took several deep breaths, blinking several times to clear the haze from his vision. He looked around, sitting in a small room with little more than a bed large enough for a single occupant and a night stand with no windows.

He stumbled trying to stand up, catching himself on the nightstand with a groan. There was a letter on it, and a small tin pail next to a pitcher of water.

You might need these. ~ Kel

“Damn it...” He sighed shoulders slumping. He emptied his stomach into the bucket a moment later, clutching it as he slumped to the floor, heaving several more times.

“Damn it...” He gurgled, wiping his chin and reaching up for the pitcher. He didn’t look for a cup or glass and drank from the directly from it, swallowing deep gulps and regretting it as every ounce was heaved back up onto his bare lap, missing the bucket.

“Small sips, please.” The kangaroo from the entry way stepped through the door to Benjamin’s room. “You’re going to need another bath, then, before meeting with Mistress. Follow me.”

“Why am I naked?” He mumbled, remaining on the floor and lacking the strength to care if he was sitting in a small puddle of his own sick.

“When you ran, several of us attempted to grab you. Then there was the fact you weren’t exactly concerned with your self at the time. You tore your clothes. I was told to bring you replacements when you woke, but...” She eyed him and then turned, gesturing for him to follow.

Benjamin groaned, the queasy spinning in his stomach rising as he slowly moved to his feet, leaning with a hand on the wall to steady himself. He pushed the kangaroo away when she attempted to shoulder him. "Dont!" He snarled, taking a breath and then lowered his voice. "...just don't touch me." Who ever she was, she was only trying to help him.

"Very well. This way please." She was patient, letting him stop to clear his head but keeping her distance.

"I'm sorry." He said, stopping once more to catch his breath. "That dart..."

She paused a moment. "I understand." She said. "I went through something similar."

Benjamin looked up as she stepped toward him, offering a hand.

"My name is Juno. The ram from before is Walter and the dog who held the door open is Claudius."

He blinked, looking down at her offered hand before shrugging as he took it. "Benjamin."

She yanked him forward, turning and pulling his arm over her shoulders. "I know. We can get to the pools much faster this way." Juno carried him the rest of the way.

Benjamin had only seen Kelsura's bedroom and part of the front of the mansion. "She has her own indoor swimming pool?" He half laughed at the sight of the in-door pool and series of hot tubs. Of course she did. The rest of the mansion was huge, ostentatious to the point of gaudy. Of course she would have something like this.

"This isn't for swimming. This is for bathing. Though I suppose you could swim in the deeper ends." Juno walked Benjamin over to a semi-circle of bubbling water, easing him down at the edge and shaking her head. "Much too hot." She sighed, putting a finger to a touch screen on the floor and adjusting the temperature.

Benjamin pushed himself up, starting to feel better and watched as Juno made her way around to a free standing shelf and empty a bag from it into the water, tossing in a fist sized ball as well that bubbled and foamed. She continued adding oils before retrieving a large wooden paddle and stirring the water as he looked around.

The pools were, as she said, for bathing. A series of half circles like the one he sat before dotted the out side of a much larger rectangular basin of water., each sided with it's own shelf of what he deduced were salts and bathing oils coming from the smell now rising from the one he sat next to. The pool they surrounded was as large as an Olympic pool, and all just for bathing? He laughed. Such a gratuitous use of wealth. What was more, the central pool sat below a massive fountain crafted into the shape of a mountain with a glacier carved to look as though it were melting. Water fell from out of the bottom of the glacier down the massive structure of stone through a depiction of a forest fire where steam rose. A heater, he deduced, that heated the water before it fell into the main body.

"You can climb in now, it may still be a bit overly hot but Mistress was expecting you some time ago." Juno said, wiping her brow and putting the paddle away. "Please?" She gestured to the water

Benjamin slid in with a hiss. It was indeed still quite hot but not beyond intolerable, and his body adjusted with time as he sat and let his fur slowly soak completely through. The water had been softened by the salts and the oils had scented it with a floral perfume of lilac and lavender.

“All of this wasn’t necessary...” he said “Some water and soup is all I needed.”

Juno shook her head. “Absolutely not. Kelsura wants your fur as soft as it can be, and the oils are her favored scents. Just wash the bile from your fur and dry, I’ll get your clothes.” She made to leave and then suddenly stopped.

“Please, don’t try to run again.” Her voice was serious, a razors edge to her words “If you do, Mistress has given us, all of us here, the permission to use any non-deadly force to stop you.”

Benjamin stared

“I honestly don’t want to hurt you.” Juno’s voice sounded genuine.

“Okay.” He said quietly, nodding slowly.

Juno smiled. “Good, enjoy your bath. I’ll be back.”

Benjamin eased himself down to his neck as she left, sighing and staring up at the ornately painted ceiling. He squinted at the massive fresco, it’s images radiating out from the center creating a visual narrative depicting dragons in ancient styles of armor fighting massive and frightening looking insectoid creatures. Furs that were obviously slaves by their collars and leashes bordered the major images, circling outward depicting important changes in history. The destruction of the insect threat, the second migration of furs back to the old world, the war that erupted shortly there after between the furs and dragons over slavery.

He clicked his tongue, that war had ended the dragons raiding the furry territories. With the old continent recovered and another discovered across the ocean after the leviathans ceased attacking ships, the furs had ceded their temporary home to the dragons. An agreement was signed, an official recognition that any legal adult who willingly entered into a Bonded Contract would not be pursued and no dragon would be held responsible so long as any agreement did not end in their death. He frowned. Many bonded were sent to work in labor farms to till the land on the continent to the south of Draconia, or mine for jewels and precious metals in thier rough, mountainous home land. Slavery didn’t exist in Draconia in the typical fashion for certain, but servitude was still servitude. It made the newly formed Draconia safe to travel, though. So long as you didn’t sign any papers without thoroughly reading them first, you were safe.

Dragons treated everyone as an equal, to an extent. They still harbored personal reservations, seeing themselves as superior. Without a philosophical view point, there was no mistaking such was true. They were physically stronger, many of them held a mental acuity that could surpass that of any fur, and as far as the limited amount of mages still existing in the world, the majority of the most powerful were divided between them and the elves. Despite being so much smaller than the other races and nations combined, they held an economy so much more stable and far richer.

“Almost a thousand years later and they’re still taking what they want.” He held his breath and slid completely under the water. He couldn’t run, that didn’t mean there wasn’t a way out. He thought that if he just stayed there, waited for the world to fade, that would be satisfying in a way. He exhaled and

prepared to take a lung full of the water when a hand shot through the surface and hauled him out and over the edge.

Juno heaved a sigh of relief. "That was foolish" she growled, grabbing the tiger by his scruff and dragging him still further from the water.

Benjamin slapped a wet hand on the tiled floor. "Why? Because your mistress would be angry with me?"

Juno dropped a towel on his face. "Because you'd be dead."

She handed him a simple collared white shirt and a loose legged pair of black pants once he was sufficiently dry. His still damp fur partially soaked through the fabric. Preferably he should have been given more time to dry, but they were already running well behind what time she knew Kelsura had expected of them to take in order to get from his temporary room to her private office.

"Can you walk on your own?" The frustration in her voice had been replaced with her previous concern.

"I don't need you to carry me." He grumbled as he pulled at the shirt, sticking to his back and chaffing at his fur.

"If you're certain. We need to get going, it would be embarrassing to wear out her good grace only on your second day." She nodded, leading him away and ignoring his continued grumbling.

"Wait," He hurried after her. "Wait you said second day? How long was I asleep?"

"You slept the rest of yesterday and through the night, now please for the last time we need to move. We're well over an hour late." She stepped behind him, pushing him, batting his hand away as he attempted to turn and grab at her. She pushed him once more, nearly knocking him over. "Move!" she ordered.

"Okay, okay! I'm going."

The halls glowed with a soft warmth as the morning sun crested the trees surrounding the open grounds of Kelsura's private estate. More than once Juno had to push Benjamin ahead, the tiger stopping every now and then to look out one of the tall windows. Glassy golden eyes would gaze longingly toward the large iron gate off in the distance or scan the wood line, no walls separating the clean cut grass from the thick, healthy pines. Juno understood. His situation wasn't the most unique. Many of Kelsura's staff had come under similar circumstances. In the dragon's defense, she didn't make it a habit of manipulating drunk cats, or desperate kangaroos.

Juno pulled on his shoulder once they arrived at a set of double doors, halting him so that she could move to tug his collar straight and push his hair flat. He would bat at her hands, she jabbed him in the ribs and he growled. Her hand closed around his snout, her eyes narrowing.

"No. None of that. Not here." She growled back, yanking his head down by the nose, level with her own. "I'm trying to help you, to make this easier for you. You didn't exactly make a good impression

before, if you don't want to end up cleaning toilets or scrubbing oven grit with a tooth brush the rest of your life I suggest you try and make this one count." She let him go with a snap.

The door opened, the same maid as before greeted them both, ushering them in. The room existed in stark contrast to the rest of the mansion. Kelsura's private office was constructed in plain architecture and colored in subdued browns and soft reds. Kelsura herself sat behind a stately desk, fingers steepled before her and looking to them both with a stolid expression.

"You were expected," Kelsura paused to look at the clock ticking away on her desk. "Forty-five minutes ago. Explain."

Benjamin made to open his mouth, he ceased as the words caught in his throat with the raising of a finger.

"Not you." Kelsura looked to Juno, her head tilting and her brows raising in expectation.

"A small complication Ma'am. I take responsibility. Benjamin became sick soon after he woke up and unfortunately we were forced to make a detour to the bathes in order to keep him presentable." Juno explained apologetically, head lowered.

Kelsura's eyes darted to Benjamin and over the damp spots of his shirt and pants. She seemed to relax a bit with the explanation, her hands folding at rest on the desk top and shoulders relaxing, expression softening some what. Her nose flared when she turned to regard the tiger fully. "And I'm assuming you took the extra time to make it was a scented bath?"

"Yes Ma'am." Juno shot a side ways glance to the tiger.

"She was just making sure I was-" Benjamin had begun to half whisper, stopping when Kelsura held up her finger toward him.

"Very well Juno, your tardiness is excused. Ensure word is passed along should you find your self running behind again. Now, as for you." She rose, attention now fully on the tiger, rounding her desk and moving to lean back on it's edge. "One more chance." She said calmly. "You get one more chance to talk about your contract. You have concerns, objections, and questions? If you think you can voice them without attitude, with maturity like an adult, then have a seat." She gestured to one of the chairs in front of her desk. "We can talk."

Benjamin sat down with a show and a huff, grumbling quietly as he leaned back. Kelsura returned to her seat and pushed the same crinkled slip of paper from the previous morning toward him. Benjamin eyed it, eyed her, the sound of the door behind him locking with a sharp snap made his ears twitch. He opened his mouth and then closed it again with the sharp look the dragon gave him. He sighed, taking the contract, his eyes jumping to the whine stains and roaming over the creases still left from Kelsura smoothing it out.

Once more he read the contents and heaved a heavy sigh. There was no arguing the legality, not that he felt there was nothing to argue as the whole idea was preposterous to him. He rubbed at his temple "In perpetuity?"

Kelsura nodded. "Means permanent."

“It means no fixed date, permanent means an unspecified or unlimited time. It means this...contract can be voided at any time at the holders behest.”

Kelsura canted her head ever so slightly. “The words have a similar meaning when deconstructed, but when used in the context present in this fashion that word means forever, just with a flowery touch.” She smiled “We can discuss the semantics in perpetuity and a day but at the end of that day the result remains unchanged. You are mine.”

He grimaced, setting the paper down and leaned forward, collecting his thoughts. “Can we discuss that bit?”

“What’s there to discuss? I did insist. After all you-”

“I insisted? There is no way I would-”

Kelsure slapped her hand on her desk, Benjamin jumped. Both Juno and the lioness moved forward.

“Do not interrupt when someone is talking, especially a dragon.” Kelsura took a calming breath and pushed her hair back. “It’s rude. And, as I was explaining, after all you said it would be preferable to a life of sub mediocrity.”

“Sub medi- My life’s not bad. I own my own car, I’m renting a decent apartment. My job pays well.”

“You drive a ‘piece of shit’ your apartment is a studio that shares a bathroom with two other studios and your job recently demoted you to give your position to the manager’s fiancée.”

He stared at her, gripping the arms of his chair and swallowed. “I was drunk.”

She nodded “You did drink, yes. My cellar is missing some of it’s better bottles. Is any of it a lie, though? Answer honestly Ben. Is any thing you said, regardless of your inebriation, false?”

He sunk into his seat, letting out a hiss between his teeth and rubbed at his forehead. “No.” He admitted “No, it’s not. But how is this,” he stabbed a finger at the paper. “How is it any better?”

Kelsura chuckled, smiling softly as she leaned forward and picked up the contract, opening a drawer in her desk and filing it away. “You’ve seen your new home, part of it at least. The baths, the food, the clothing you’ll wear.”

“I’m not one for a tux...”

“A suit, then. Tailored. It’ll be the most comfortable clothing you’ll ever wear.”

“That’s not...” He had begun to growl. Kelsura hadn’t even had time to so much as narrow her eyes when he took a breath. “That’s not the point.” he said calmly.

“Then what is?”

“My family, my friends, I have a cat...”

She giggled. A strikingly girlish sound for some one who had so far come across as calm, collected, and bereft of such immaturities. “Oh don’t give me that look. You don’t see the humor in a tiger owning a cat?”

Ben rolled his eyes.

“Your family will be informed with in the week, your friends?” She shrugged “They’re not really a priority, but I assume that when you don’t return home with that group of people you were with they’ll be able to put it together themselves.”

“But my job, my home?”

“I have a job in mind for you. It’ll be far more glamorous and rewarding than what you were doing before. Honestly Ben, you’re made for better things than sitting in gray box the rest of your life plugging away at numbers until your head is pounding and you’re on your second bottle of aspirin.”

He rested his head in a hand, chewing at the inside of his cheek. “Okay.... Okay. What do you have in mind for me?”

She smiled, her eyes brightening as she let out a long euphoric breath. “Finally you ask the important question.” She sounded almost giddy, just short of rubbing her hands as her shoulders wiggled. “It all depends on you, Benjamin. What you want to do, what you’re not only good at but where you excel. Typically I look for hobbies, pass times. Some one who likes to read I put in the library. Camping, fishing, hunting I put on grounds detail. I own a good swath of the woods too, you know. What do you like to do, Benjamin?”

“So you run this mansion like a fiefdom, with you as the Duchess?” He chuffed.

She shook her head, leaning forward on her arms. The gleam in her eyes sparkling brighter. She was so close to the root of it all, that little fire of acceptance. “No. Not Dutchess. I’ve always preferred the title of Mistress, if I need one. Answer the question Ben, what do you like to do? What brought you the most joy in life.”

He shook his head. “I like getting home and feeding my cat.”

She shook her head in turn. “Be honest. No smart-ass remarks.”

He thought. He did love getting home after spending eight head ache inducing hours in front of a computer screen. Charlie, his cat, would sit in his lap and purr while he watched the evening news and what ever shows were on. He didn’t have too many favorites. Camping and fishing weren't something he did often, he read only what interested him at the time, as much as he loved computers the thought of sitting in front of one the rest of his life made him feel ill.

The rest of his life. He was actually coming to think of it like that. If he ran he would just be tranquilized again. He had tried suicide and thinking about earlier disturbed him, how easily he had fell into the mind set. He didn’t want to die, not yet. He turned in his seat to look back at Juno, turning again to look at the lioness. Finally he turned back to Kelsura. “I like to fight.”

She nodded slowly. "Go on. You certainly don't mean that alley stuff. You don't seem like the type to just pick on someone to start a brawl."

"I loved martial arts, when I was young I took classes. I kept up with them until a few years ago when I had to stop because I wasn't making enough to pay for them and the bills too. I still try and practice what I remember."

"It keeps you calm, helps you find your center. It's like meditation to you." Kelsura smiled, pulling another sheet of paper and a pen from her desk, setting both in front of him.

"We've already had this conversation before, haven't we?"

She nodded "You're a chatty drunk, Ben. You insisted on this, you broached the subject. Honestly I had just planned to fuck your brains out then send you back to your hotel after breakfast. You wanted this though, insisted I write up a contract. You wanted a reason to leave your life and a wall to keep you from going back. You said something about 'sober me will thank drunk me.'"

Benjamin rolled his eyes "Drunk me's never been that smart."

"I'd say he's smarter than you give him credit." She tapped on the paper in front of him "Read."

Benjamin looked at the paper, expecting a new, clean copy of the contract. Instead, as he began to read through it, it was the outline for an agreement for accommodations in return for employment. He would be given a room, food, run of the mansion and grounds at any hour of the day he wasn't working. Additionally, he would be allowed one pet of his choosing and would be held personally responsible for it's care, maintenance, and cleaning. The fine print listed any 'extra curricular' would be tended to upon direction with out question.

"Extra curricular?" He asked allowed, eyes furrowed. When he looked up at her, she was leaned forward, a feral grin spread across her lips. He stared back, transfixed, breath caught in his through. "Ah." he said.

"So...so I sign this and...what? You keep me, here, as some sort of indentured servant?"

"This isn't indentured servitude. I keep you either way, sign or no. It's a work contract. By agreement and obligation I provide to you every thing listed there in returned for you working an assigned job and...keeping me happy."

"Sex." He said flatly.

"Among other things." She grinned.

He lifted the pen, Kelsura leaned forward, then frowned when he tossed it over his shoulder.

"No. I humored you. If you're keeping me regardless of this agreement I'd rather be chained on my feet than live on my knees."

Kelsura rapped her fingers on the desk, leaning back and letting out a long sigh. "I was going to overlook it, but you know there's the matter of my dress, the silverware, the damage to my carpet,

you're injuries to my staff." She hissed when he opened his mouth to speak. Her voice now spoken through grit teeth. "The absolute and utter disrespect shown to us all who made you comfortable. I *slept* with you, the things I let you do...while enjoyable would have you in a prison in your own country--"

"And in exchange you want me to serve you the rest of my--" He was nearly knocked side ways out of his chair when she reached across the desk and smacked him. Her claws left welts, weeping and already starting to swell across his cheek.

"Interrupt me again. Interrupt me one more time I'll wear you like a fur coat."

As he sat back up, clutching his cheek, he looked her in the eyes and laughed. "You can't. You can't kill me, and I doubt some one as well off as you have been, even for a dragon, would think they could get away with breaking international agreements."

She sat back, lacing her fingers in her lap, letting him continue. When he moved to get up she shot a look to Juno. With out uttering a word to the kangaroo Juno strode forward and pushed Benjamin back down. "Put your hand on the desk." Kelsura said calmly

"No." Benjamin bit back.

Juno grabbed him by his wrist, hauling his arm forward and slamming his palm to the desk. Kelsura stood, straining her hair once more back between her horns. "Hmmm..." he began counting his fingers, index to pinky and back. She smirked, "Ennie...Meenie...Minnie..." She paused, wrapping her hand around his index finger. "Demmy, help Juno hold him down."

The Lioness moved from her spot, a hand on both shoulders and pushed pushed him firmly down into the chair, Kelsura's grip tightening as she suddenly yanked. There was a sickening pop and Benjamin roared with pain as she dislocated his pointer finger. His roar turned to a cry, he shook and fought trying to break free from the two holding him in place. Kelsura held his finger, her wrist giving a sudden twist followed by another pop.

Benjamin grunted, heaving as the pain brought on a sickness, sending his stomach spinning, stars winking at the edge of his vision while he fought to keep from passing out. "You...can't..." He panted.

"No, you're right. I can't kill, dismember, or maim you. But I *can* bring you pain, and I know how to bring a lot of it. Last chance." She held to his right while pushing the pen into his left. "Sign."

His signature was a chicken scratched scrawling mess of ink. Twice the tip of the ornate calligraphy point split too far and spurt over the paper. When signed, she nodded. Juno and Demmy stood back, Kelsura kept his hand still.

"Demmy get some ice and grab Rune and Nikita. Have them bring what ever they needs for a dislocated finger. Juno have Vi prepare a new room in the servant's wing. Benjamin will be staying with us indefinitely." Finally she let him go.

He reeled back, clutching his hand and gasping. It felt like a knife had been driven between the two knuckles and then twisted. He jumped when Kelsura knelt down in front of him, her expression even

and emotionless. He shook his head, shuddering violently when she reached up and under his silver hair.

“Stop squirming.” She commanded softly, gripping the nape of his neck and tugging. His body suddenly relaxed against his will. Just like his mother used to do when he was being an unreasonable kit, Kelsura tugged at him to force compliance and calm. She held him as she took hold of his injured hand softly, raising it level with his chest. “Hold it there, don’t move it until Rune and Nikita gets here.”

“Who are they?” Grimacing through the lingering pain, blinking away tears and gritting his teeth, Benjamin pulled his hand back slowly. He inhaled a sharp gasp as his hand was yanked back into position.

“A pair of medical professionals I keep on staff.”

“Maids, butlers, you’re own doctors, but you can’t let me go?” His hand twitched, the finger swelling like a grape and nearly the same shade of deep purple. All through the pain he maintained his impudent sarcasm. Kelsura smirked, scruffing his neck tighter, and kissing his forehead as he feel almost completely limp.

“Bark’s worse than your bite, kitten.” She chuckled.

He only managed to roll his eyes when the door opened once more. Juno and Demmy having returned with two more in tow, a snow leopard sauntered through, hands in the pockets of his white medical coat and wearing a pair of jeans and a t-shirt with some band name on it. He some how looked simultaneously bored and entertained at the same time. Behind him, easily three times his height followed a large horse, golden furred with streaks of cerulean blue. She dressed just as casually in a pair of farm suspenders and a stained tank top. She looked like she was looking some where else.

“Nikkita, Rune. Thank you. Demmy, if you would?” The lioness moved forward behind Benjamin, taking up his neck in Kelsura’s place while the dragon stepped back. To his own confusion the lioness began stroking his head, fingers lacing through his hair.

“Well what do we have, being rough with your toys again?” Nikkita stepped forward, palming the underside of Benjamin’s hand gently to have a closer look. “Wow Kelly, aren’t you a little old to be ripping the limbs off your dolls. You know there’s a healthier way to deal with that teenage angst?”

Kelsura waved her hand. “A lesson needed to be learned.”

Rune set a first aid-kit down on the desk, opening it and pulling out a simple finger splint. “Was it a good lesson?” She asked, having to kneel down to work. Her eight feet of height was impressive, imposing even but made it harder for her to work.

“I assume it was a biology class, *hands* on.” Nikkita chuckled as he gave the tiger’s index finger a pull, a muffled pop followed. Demmy held her free hand over the tigers mouth yowled he yowled, cooing sweetly as she nuzzled the back of his head. “Didn’t set it right, Kelly. Thankfully he won’t need surgery. Just some ice for a few days and a light work load as long as he’s wearing the splint.” He handed the ice pack to the lioness, who held it over the now bound digit and contined holding Benjamin still.

“Any thing else?” Rune asked, closing up the case and standing. “I need more practice for my degree.”

“I’ll call you if there is.” Kelsura said, thanking them both for the hurried response.

“Come on, Rune. I got something you can help with.” Nikkita smiled, giving the mare’s knee a playful slap.

“I need to study neurological symptoms” Rune said, waving his hand away.

“Oh, I have just the thing. I’m working on a set of neural diodes. We can start at theory, work our way to practice.” The leopard chuckled, waving a hand back to Kelsura as he lead the large horse out.

Kelsura simply eyes Benjamin, the room quite save for the crowing cooing from the lioness who’s petting began to grow heavier. “Demmy,” she said, jerking her chin softly at Juno. “Benjamin’s going to need some rest now. Why don’t you go with Juno and show him to his new room.” She eyed the lioness, smirking at the way her eyes brightened at the suggestion. “Make sure he’s comfortable.”

Demmy let out a little squee of a gasp, and half dragged the tiger out of the chair. Her sudden excitement confusing and startling Ben who attempted to pull away. He was pushed back into her arms by Kelsura, who held to him as she leaned down, whispering softly “Be a good boy, do your job, and I promise you *will* learn to like it here.”

She held the smirk, watching as he was half carried half pulled by the lioness.