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WARNING: May contain coarse language, violence, gore or sexual content. Reader discretion is advised.

Chapter 2 "Why?"

It was a quiet stroll through the town. Everything looks so big. I look over and see mom. I love her so much. She looks so thin, though - a skeleton wearing fur and dirty rags. Her face is so blurry, but I can tell she's sad. She smiles when she looks over. I smile back.

Now I feel like I'm stuck in place. Mother's swinging from a tree. She's playing without me. Some strange men are swinging her. One of the men walks toward me.

I'm lying on my right side now. Everything hurts. I can't move my arm. I'm so hungry. That mushroom looks good enough to be food.

Running...more running. Fighting. So much fighting. Swords. Spears. Arrows flying. Blood and bodies everywhere.

A child, dead on the ground. My sword in his chest. I'm so angry.

Faceless people. Bodies. More faceless people. More bodies. I put my hand up to my muzzle to catch all the teeth I just spit out.

That boy. That woman. So much fire and smoke. Their faces are melting. I ran to them. More men surround them.

Those men!

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He snapped awake and inhaled sharply. The first thing he noticed is his hands are bound with rope.

"They caught me?" He thought and sat up quickly. He did a quick sweep of the room - his heart racing and his lungs painfully drawing in breath. He took in his surroundings.

"Door on the right. Window on the left but the shutter is closed. It's day time with the amount of light coming in. Someone is next to me with a weapon," he assessed.

He leaned in and slapped the weapon from their hand.

"BUH!" They startled awake and sat up from leaning over the bed.

His vision blurred as an immense pain filled his head, but he reached out and held as tight as he could around the person's neck.

"GAH-KKK!" They choked.

"I have to take them out and leave!" He thought as he dragged the light-framed body up while turning it and drew them over his legs for more leverage.

They were thin so it was easy to do. Harder and harder he clenched as he looked at the doorway with his ears trained that way to make sure there weren't any more coming. He looked back at them as the person swung wildly at him. He barely felt those fists as they pounded his arms and face. They attempted to claw at his hands. He looked back over at the doorway.

"I'll have to break it down. But I need to find a weapon before the rest return."

He squeezed his eyes shut as the anger and the light caused the pain in his head to amplify.

"Kek...ka...nnnggg...kkeh," the figure choked out.

He swung his legs over the side of the bed and shifted over until his feet touched the floor.

He opened his eyes and leaned in to apply more force. "WHERE ARE THEY?!" He shouted at his victim. "I recognize those eyes," he thought.

"Gik..rrRAH!" They somehow shrieked.

He didn't see the hand they released from clawing at his. It struck across his muzzle with much more force than previous strikes. It felt like that one human's hammer had struck him across the head with how much pain he felt. He clenched his eyes shut and lifted the person up. He shoved with all his might causing them to slam into the window frame and wall. The limp body collapsed on the floor as one of the shutters propped open causing more light to come in the room.

He pried open his eyes as the person violently coughed and gasped for air. The room was spinning and the light burned his eyes. He squeezed his eyes shut to relieve the pain. He positioned his legs towards where he thought the door was. He used his bound hands to shove off the bed on his left side. He made it to his feet and could hear his captor still coughing and whooping for air. His vision darkened as it felt like something rushed to his head.

"I have to go," he thought as he struggled to stay upright. "It'll clear as I move."

Light slowly replaced the darkness in his eyes as tried to step forward, but couldn't. "SHIT! I didn't notice that..." he thought as the jerking motion of his right leg sent him forward at an angle to the floor. "KAH!" He blurted as he landed on his right shoulder. His head bounced off the floor by his right ear and he felt his whole body tense. His vision went black with light dancing in the darkness. His right ear squealed loudly.

"What's the matter, ASSHOLE!?" He heard a woman choke out.

He moved his eyes over to the source but still couldn't see. He heard muffled footsteps from that direction.

"I hope you enjoy that concussion!" She growled. It was with a venom in which he had rarely, if ever, heard.

He heard more muffled footsteps. Now the sound of a blade dragged against cloth. "I know I want to die, but not like this," he thought as his heart raced and he breathed with shallow breaths.

She muttered something and he heard a couple more muffled footsteps against the wood floor.

The definite sound of the dagger clanging against a wood countertop reverberated in the small room. Now it sounded like she opened a cupboard door and was shifting various glass things around. A glass jar clapped against the countertop and

a drawer was pulled open. After a brief pause in action, more footsteps landed until they ended right by his head. He could faintly smell something medicinally acidic.

"You pile of shit!" They growled and grunted.

He felt something small stab into his neck with a lot of force.

"I have to leave. When you wake up, we're having ourselves a nice, long chat."

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Something struck him across the muzzle causing him to gasp and throw open his eyes. He couldn't see anything and he strained against something holding down his neck and chest. There was something covering his eyes, but a bit of light came through the material and there was a crack of light below.

SMACK!

Again he was struck with a lot of force across the muzzle.

"Mahhff!" He tried to yell but there was something in his mouth. He couldn't budge it with his tongue to spit it out.

"Good! You're finally awake," said the woman, her voice sounding impatient.

He felt something come down on his stomach. He noticed he couldn't move his hips, thighs, or ankles and his hands and feet were pulled away from his body and tied.

"Calm down," he thought. "I'm obviously tied down, blindfolded and gagged. I seem to be on a bed - which would explain why it feels comfortable on the back and my hands and feet are pulled away as if to posts. This person is strong. Stronger than any woman outside of warriors I've met. And they..."

"I must be out of my mind," she muttered. She sighed and the weight on his stomach shifted. It made breathing difficult, but not impossible. "I'm going to ask you some questions. If you can understand me, nod. If you can't, continue looking helpless," she stated in exasperation.

"I have no choice," he thought and sighed to calm down. He slowly nodded.

"Good. Now, are you or are you not with those who burned the village?"

"Ho," he tried to say, but rocked his head back and forth with another sigh.

"Were you sent to kill me?"

"Huh?" He shook his muzzle side-to-side quickly.

He felt the weight shift. The blindfold was snapped off. "Don't lie to me, you fiend!"

The light stung as he slowly opened his eyes. His eyes adjusted bit by bit.

"You were either sent here to burn the village or to kill me. So which is it?!"

He took stock of the situation like always: Position, weapons, armor, and escape route. He could tell she was straddling his stomach upon a cot. Her left arm was by his head and, near her head, her right hand was balled in a fist and ready to strike. Her lip was curled back and her teeth were clenched in a way to clarify intent. She seemed to be wearing light brown trousers and a white button up, sleeveless blouse or tunic. Even through the fur he could tell there was a good amount of muscle behind that fist. And those eyes were beyond angry behind black rimmed glasses.

However, there was no escape. His hands and feet were bound with rope to simple bed frame ends. The leather strap he could see against his chest meant that the other points of compression were the same.

PAP!

Her fist struck his crooked nose. This caused him to grunt and squint in pain.

PAP!

Again she struck his nose. This one just pissed him off. He stared death into her eyes and curled back his own lip. She drew back both hands and lunged at his neck. She rocked her hips up and put all possible force into her arms.

"ANSWER ME, DAMMIT!!!" She screamed with bits of spit spraying his face.

Anger consumed him as he strained against his bonds. It didn't seem he could break the straps, but he might be able to free his hand. The rope dug into the flesh of his left wrist and it was pointless to struggle with his right arm. He could hear threads

popping and unraveling in the rope to the left. But, he could also feel blood pooling in the back of his throat and running down his wrist. He had to act quickly.

"So be it," she stated and curled those lips into a diabolical smile. She sat up and glanced to her right.

"Shit! Shit! Shit!" He screamed in his head as he eased his struggle. "The knife!"

She brought that familiar long dagger up with a thrusting grip over his nose so he could see it and leaned in with her left hand returning by his head.

"I should have let you die," she declared with the venom returning to her tone as she stared into his eyes.

He nodded once and raised his nose as far back as he could. "I DARE YOU!" He was saying.

He felt something press into the underside of his jaw near where it arched up just inside his back teeth. He coughed the pooling blood into the gag. It sprayed the sides of his face and her arm along with whatever else was out the sides of the gag. He coughed a few more times as once didn't clear his airway. That dagger was now piercing his skin.

"You disgusting man," she stated with hatred.

The dagger moved from his neck. She brought her right hand up and covered his nose, then forced it down to close his nostrils. She slid her hand forcefully over his nose and then began to grind her forearm into his eyes and forehead.

This was insulting, annoying and becoming painful.

She pulled back from her assault and reclaimed the dagger. His eyes followed the blade as it began to dig into his left wrist. Their eyes met as she looked side-long at him.

"Stop struggling, NOW!" She demanded.

"If I do happen to pull my arm free now, the force of pulling will drive it straight into the blade," he thought. "She saved my life so she must be a doctor. She's not just aimlessly pointing that thing around. She could have killed me instantly with the first

spot. This spot will most likely render my fingers useless. If that's the case, even if I do happen to free my wrist, I won't have the capability to free myself after dealing with her."

He eased up his struggle and relaxed his muscles, but couldn't ease the killing intent within the muscles of his face. "She's good," he thought. "But why the hell did she save me? Is she torturing me for information? I don't understand."

"Good dog," she said and brought the knife back under his jaw. "I spent too much time and resources on you for you to die without answers." She reached behind his head. "I'm going to free your mouth so we can talk. If you try to bite me, I stab. You say anything I don't like, I stab. I don't like your tone of voice," she said and leaned in. "I stab. Are we clear?"

He glanced at the knife and up to her face. Her face was relaxed, but she mimicked his look of killing intent in her eyes. He nodded even though the knife dug in as he did.

She straightened up slightly and he felt something give behind his head. The gag loosened but was still trapped behind his fangs. He felt her grab the strap against his head and pull up. The ball clacked against his fangs and finally came free. She moved her hand to the left while maintaining eye contact.

"It's her," he thought as he closed his mouth and flexed his jaw muscles. "The owner of the house that smelled nice. Even angry she's..." His thought ended as he closed his mouth and coughed, then sniffed and turned to his right. He spit a large amount of blood to the floor. The knife never left his neck. He slowly returned his gaze to hers, the knife digging in enough to pierce the skin.

"Fuh-bl-bl. Whee-kk-kk. Fuh-bl-bl. Whee-kk-kk." His nose: Ever the moment enhancer. No words were said, but every time he breathed through his nose her upper lip quivered.

"I've been captured several times, but never by a woman. Especially one this...", he thought. He mentally slapped himself. "She's still the one with the blade. Plus, it's not like you've remembered anyone's face before. Pointless...just like now."

Her lips scrunched in and she closed her eyes as she looked slightly to her left and up. She reopened her eyes with them circling down to re-meet his. She sucked in and clicked her tongue off the roof of her mouth behind the front teeth with a "Tch" sound.

She crawled back and carefully swung her right leg over his to the other side of the cot. Her eyes never left his as she gingerly reached for the floor with her left foot. Then her right followed with a nudge from her knee.

"Move and die," she warned.

She tried to flip the knife over in her palm, but he knew with it being so unbalanced...

KLANG-klk-klk! The long dagger hit the floor.

Her eye twitched several times. She quickly bent her knees and picked up the blade and stomped over to a counter against the wall.

She made a bit of racket opening a drawer, slamming something soft against the counter top, then slammed the drawer shut. She swiped the item from the counter and stomped back over to him - making sure to avoid a spot on the floor. She shoved a cloth over his nose.

"Blow," she commanded.

He could feel her anger as her hand trembled. He stared into her honey colored eyes as she blocked his breathing. He drew a short breath in from his mouth and closed his eyes. A glob of crud snaked down his nose as he blew. Another quick breath and blow is all it took for the passage to sound clear.

She pulled the cloth away and folded the cloth over in her hand. She smashed the cloth into his nose and clasped her fingers around his muzzle while twisting. She pulled her hand away and looked over at the floor. She knelt down and appeared to wipe at something. She stood up with the bloodied cloth and tossed the cloth in a bin by the door.

She grabbed another cloth from the counter and stomped over to a cabinet to the left. She opened the cabinet door and pulled out a corked bottle with a narrow neck and fat body. She uncorked the bottle and poured the contents onto the cloth. The bottle was corked, set back in the cabinet and the door slammed shut. She picked up the cloth and rubbed it along her forearm for several seconds. Whatever it was, it smelled strong like alcohol.

Satisfied, she turned and stomped over to the door to deposit the cloth in the bin. She stomped back over to the cot and leaped onto the cot and re-found her original spot upon his stomach.

She held the long dagger in the stabbing grip with her left palm against the pommel. Her fingers curled over her right hand and pressed the point into the wound near the back of his jaw. He couldn't stop his eye twitching from the pain. This brought the second smile he'd seen from her. Evil as it was, it still suited her more than the scowl in her eyes.

"Are you or are you not working with the bandits who attacked our people and burned down their homes?" She asked plainly.

"I have to remain connected to her eyes and respond quickly or I get uglier," he thought. "No," he replied.

The smile disappeared. "W-were y-ou...*Eh-hem*," she stuttered and turned her head to the side to clear her throat. She swallowed and looked back at him. "Were you sent here to kill me?"

"No."

This time her lip raised enough to reveal the bottoms of her top fangs.

The dagger dug in deeper. The blade was thin. The point was, maybe, a half inch long until the flare reached the straight edge. It felt as though that half inch was how far it was in his neck. He assumed one width of fur was all that separated the blade from an artery.

"Were you the one that killed the men - those humans - that attacked us?" She asked, her voice slightly wavering.

"Yeah."

Her eyes narrowed and her eyebrows angled in. "A dagger was found in the body of the town butcher. Was it yours? Did you kill him?" He could feel the blade quiver.

He remembered the civilian with the cleaver. "It could have been anyone," he thought. "Maybe," he said.

He saw tears pooling in her eyes, but not enough to fall.

"Did you knowingly or unknowingly kill any other villagers?" Her voice cracked on the first two g's and 'kill'.

"No."

"Did you kill the men on the path to Orinon?"

"By the river? Yes."

Her eyes closed slightly and turned down. Her lip began to quiver. The blade didn't feel quite as far in his neck, however. They remained in this state for some time, it felt. He didn't particularly care, but he thought maybe it would lighten the mood.

"Socorro okay?" He asked as politely as he could.

Her tear-filled eyes became enraged as they shot up to his. She bared her full muzzle of teeth. She pulled the blade back and pressed it lengthwise into the top of his neck enough to break the skin.

He held his breath as she leaned in and hovered over his nose.

Tears dropped onto her glasses. She hovered there long enough that the tears pooled and fell from the glasses to his cheek.

"YOU LEAVE HIS NAME OUT OF YOUR DAMN MOUTH!!!" She threatened through clenched teeth.

More tears fell onto his nose and cheek. He could almost feel the heat from her face. His eyes widened as an unfamiliar feeling strained his chest and his heart pounded. He could feel a pulsing sensation throughout his body and his arm began to tremble.

"Am I," he began to think as he looked away from her. "Is this fear? Something else? Why am I trembling? What is this feeling?"

"FRAH," she growled in anger as she quickly sat upright and pulled the knife away.

Just as quickly, she turned and left the cot much less accurately and carefully as she did before. She stomped over to the door with the beginning sounds of sobs escaping her throat. The door opened, slammed against the far wall and slammed shut.

He swallowed hard and started to breathe again. He could hear her sobbing just outside the door. It sounded as if she slid down the door and her sobbing became more muffled.

"What is this?" He thought. "What *is* this situation...these feelings...?"

He tried to look around the room. He felt something warm underneath his jaw when he turned to the left. "That wound isn't closed. Not deadly, but concerning." He tried shrugging his shoulder up and compressing the wound. "It won't stop it, but hopefully it helps."

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He wasn't sure how long she was gone, but the sobbing eventually stopped. A concerned neighbor stopped by, but she fed them some lies to get them to go away. Something about stubbing her toe and taking it out on the furniture.

"How anyone would buy that is beyond me," he thought.

The door slowly opened. She quietly stepped in and closed the door behind her. She sighed as she fell back against the door.

"You hungry?" She timidly asked.

"My neck."

"What about it?" She asked, disinterested.

"It's bleeding."

He heard what he assumed was the dagger clacking against the door and she walked into view.

"UHP!" She squeaked and brought her free hand up to her mouth.

She turned to the cupboard to the left and messed around with something on the counter top. She came back into view holding a jar he recognized. She pulled the cloth

cap and rope binding off the top and tossed it on the bed. She twirled her finger in the jar - a slightly dangerous sight to behold as she refused to let the dagger go from that hand. She stepped to him and bent over.

"Raise your head," she said politely.

He raised his head and felt a stream of blood trickle out. She carefully dabbed across, then gently pressed across the wound. She collected a bit more salve and covered the cut on his upper neck. She reached over and rubbed a bit on his wrist. She grabbed the cloth cap and returned the container to the cabinet. She used that strong alcohol and a cloth to clean off her finger. After walking over and placing the cloth in the bin, she returned to his side.

She opened the shutter to let in a bit of light. She turned and gently touched his jaw and pressed up. She seemed to be examining him.

"Her hand is really soft," he thought. "Those pads on her finger tips are nothing like mine. That smell..."

"I don't think you need suture. Looks like the bleeding stopped," she said analytically. She pulled her hand back and stepped back to close the shutter. "Made a mess of the cot. Shouldn't soak through the thin leather underneath the sheet, though," she muttered, almost pondering.

She stood there looking at him. Her glasses were smudged, her cheek fur was a mess and her eyes were slightly bloodshot and puffy. He found himself staring in her eyes, but felt it would be better to look away.

"That stuff you had is really good. Clots blood. Heals wounds quickly. Pain relief..."

He looked over as she looked down. She shifted on her feet and brought her left hand up to her right elbow. She grabbed the outside of her bicep and squeezed it toward her body.

"What is going on here?" He thought. He looked back at the ceiling and sighed.

"*Gaa*u."

His stomach did feel very empty. He could see her glaring at him from his peripheral. "She's looking at me as if I was a pig."

"Grk." His ear followed the sound to her stomach.

"Seems it's that time," she stated.

She shuffle-stepped and walked to the door. She stopped at the door with her left hand on the small vertical handle.

"I don't have much. I did take the fish out of your pack. It'll have to be dinner or it'll go bad," she said in a close-to-motherly tone. "Not that you deserve anything," she coarsely stated and left the room.

He continued to stare at the ceiling as various noises came from beyond the door. It sounded like mostly chopping. Then sounds of scraping like utensils against a pan. There was the faint smell of fish. He sighed and looked at the shutters. With the light peeking in from the cracks, it did appear as if the sun was setting. There was no looking outside. He resigned himself to staring at the ceiling.

A few clanks came from the other room. He didn't hear her until she got to the door. She was very light on her feet. She left the door open and walked to his right side.

He turned to face her but didn't look at her eyes. He looked at her hands. The knife was gone. No, not gone. It was in a sheath on her hip that extended down just to the outer edge of her thigh.

She stood with her arms crossed just under her chest. "I'm going to let you free to eat. After that, it's back here. Understand?" She kept an even tone.

He glanced up to her eyes and nodded.

Her eyes set the stern tone kept from her words. She wasn't wearing the glasses from before. They didn't have arms on them. "Can't say as I've seen glasses like that before," he thought as she stepped to her left.

She began to untie the rope before suddenly stopping. "Shoot!" She exclaimed under her breath.

It was too late as his weak arm slipped free. He looked at the free hand, then back up to her. She looked concerned as she took a step back. She looked to and from the hand as she reached for the handle of the dagger.

"It's weak," he reassured her. He slowly flexed the fingers in as far as they would go. It went as far as a crescent moon before he couldn't move his fingers any more. Below the shoulder, he could barely move anything. It was more useful with a shield attached to it.

"Maah," she gasped, bringing a hand up and touching her lips.

Her eyes scrunched as she stared at the thin fingers. Her eyes moved along the length of the tree branch before she quickly turned away and walked to the cabinet. She fiddled with what sounded like a small jar and opened a drawer, then closed it. She held up a metal syringe and plunged the air out. With how far out the plunger was, there wasn't much of whatever was in it. It didn't give off an odor like the other stuff. She walked back to his right side and knelt down. The syringe was carefully held next to his thigh.

She began to fiddle with the strap buckles as she cautioned, "I don't suggest doing anything stupid. I can't save you from this."

He felt pressure release from his ankles. Next his lower thighs. The strap around his hips and chest came next. Each time she moved she reset the needle next to his body. She was holding it to stab with her thumb in the plunger ring at the end and fingers around the tube.

She stood and started flinging the straps across the cot, ensuring the needle was hovering just above his body at each step. She loosened but didn't fully untie his feet. She moved over and undid the strap to his neck. She moved to the other side of the cot before pulling the strap over toward her.

"I don't trust you," she finally stated plainly.

"Understood," he stated.

"Keep quiet. I'm not hand feeding you. And I'm sure you may need the washroom. Take it slow getting up. You haven't moved in a little over a week so you'll feel slight atrophy when you move."

He was stunned at her words. "A week," he stated quietly and looked at the ceiling.

"I said quiet," she bluntly said. She barely fiddled with the rope as his left hand fell free. "I'll have to replace that," she muttered.

He lay there with his eyes darting across the ceiling. "Why?" He questioned under his breath.

"Hmm?"

He looked over at her, then back to the ceiling. "Nothing," he said quietly. "It doesn't make sense," he thought and swallowed despite a dry mouth.

"Move it," she instructed impatiently.

He glanced over to her and back. He rotated his wrists and ankles to a few barely audible cracks. He slowly moved his arms to his sides with wide fingers, palms up, causing his right shoulder to pop loudly. He brought a knee up one at a time with a snap coming from his left knee. He struggled a bit to sit up. His body did feel weak. He slowly moved his right leg off the side of the cot, then trailed with the left until they dangled. He felt the cool wood through his rough foot pads. He arched his back to loose a few tight spots that popped. He angled his neck left and right. He felt something press into the cot behind him.

"No good. Bad position," he cautioned as he looked over his shoulder. He hoped it was okay to mention, but he could tell she's never done this before.

"So what? One little prick and you die," she stated flatly.

He sighed. "I'll show you."

In a flash, he stood and grabbed her right wrist firmly. Her hand trembled with the needle. Her eyes grew wide enough to about see the entire eyeball. At first, she resisted as he gently pulled her arm. Her eyes didn't leave his as she crawled along the bed and carefully swung her legs under her to touch the floor.

"The right's weak. Stay behind or to the right," he informed her. "Hold this close with your weak left and the dagger in your stronger right."

"Let me go! I-I'm n-ot stupid," she struggled to say - perhaps in fear or embarrassment.

He let go of her wrist. He squeezed his eyes closed and opened them as his body began to sway.

She grabbed the needle from her right hand to her left and reached for the dagger.

When he turned toward the door, he suddenly grabbed his head and felt extremely weak. It felt like before with something rushing to his head and his vision darkening. He began to stumble forward.

"Watch it!" She yelled and put her right hand on his chest to steady him.

He felt her right hand begin to tremble with increasing vigor. "Shit," she whispered.

He looked over as his vision cleared. He saw her looking up at him with fear in her eyes. The needle was in his arm. The plunger was fully pressed by her thumb. Her shoulder was pressed against her thumb. His eyes widened a bit as he snapped them to hers. He didn't feel any different.

She looked down and back up from the needle. Her eyes were as big as saucers behind the glasses that made them even larger looking. Her whole body was shaking as she stared at him.

In a flash, she hopped back and drew the dagger. She looked as imposing as a child holding a stick.

He narrowed his eyes in annoyance. He looked down at the needle and pulled it out of his arm. He brought the end up to his nose and licked the end. "Salt water, I take it?" He asked dryly as he blinked and glanced over at her.

She was glued in place except for the tremendous amount of shaking. He spun the needle in his hand and held it out to her with the plunger facing her. He opened his hand as wide as he could with the syringe resting in his palm.

She slowly reached out with her shaky hand and snatched the needle from him. She stared at his eyes as if expecting the worst while she reached over and placed the needle on the counter.

She was much smaller than him. She was nearly a foot shorter. Her body mass was about a third of his. But he still remembered the force behind her strikes.

"I could take her out easily if I wasn't so weak from being in the bed. Should have killed her the first time I woke up. Guess I'll see where this leads," he thought.

"Gaaaaa!" His stomach protested. He sighed as he turned away from her.

"With your size, hold the dagger on the left of my spine under the bottom rib. Straight or angled up to the heart. Near-instant death," he said and glanced over his right shoulder. "Correct?"

He saw her inch closer. She finally touched his back and seemed to prod around. She pressed and poked. Pressed and poked. "Meathead," she muttered and sighed.

She ran her fingers along to his side and pressed in and up. She found her mark and ran her finger to where his side arched to the back. Then moved her finger up at an angle toward his spine. At last she pressed the point of the blade into his back. "M-move," she muttered.

He held his hands to his sides with the palms forward and fingers stretched. More so on the left side for obvious reasons. He slowly moved forward while dragging his feet. Very audible scuffing came from the friction of calloused foot pads and wood floor.

As they neared the door, he moved his hands slowly to the back and placed them just below his buttocks. "Grab my thumb, pull up toward the shoulder and wrench it hard toward the elbow. More control." He paused to see if she'd do it.

Eventually she did. "I don't understand!" She whispered.

He saw a door ahead. A possible storage closet to the right. To the left was the kitchen and dining area he saw before. Shuffling to the left revealed a slightly open door.

"Washroom?" He asked and tilted his head to the left.

"Y-yes," she confirmed.

"I have to..."

"Make it quick," she snapped, then groaned.

He shuffled the hostage train through the door. It was a bit dark, but he could see a vanity and wash basin to the left. On one side was a towel rack and a waste bin. The other side had clean cloths and towels on shelving with supplies on a lower shelf. A

large bath basin to the right. Ahead was an object he'd only seen in high-end inns and castles.

A small tank suspended from the ceiling that held water. A cord attached to a flap inside that allowed water to run down a pipe on the wall to the business end of the metal bowl. This one had both a comfort seat and a cover.

He shuffled up to the contraption. "You don't..."

"I'm a doctor. Besides," she stated and became quieter. "I've already seen everything."

"You mind?" He asked as he wiggled his thumb against the force of her grip.

"Mmm-nnn. Use the other one."

He inhaled quietly and exhaled with long groan. "Doing it might not be an issue, but undoing it," he thought as he looked down. He was still in his blood-soaked undergarments. "Moving," he said.

He rotated his right shoulder from facing back to forward and in. He rotated the whole arm until the palm was forward. He carefully bent at his knees and attempted to grab the toilet cover. It took a few tries, but he eventually got half his hand under the seat and stepped up and towards the toilet.

"Now for the next part," he thought as he moved his hand in the general area.

He shrugged up and could just reach the rope holding the undergarment in place. It took some serious concentration but he finally caught the knot on the end of one side between his fingers behind the larger knuckle. He lifted his tail and rotated his shoulder until the tie came undone. He winced as the fabric fell slightly and brushed the exposed tip of his penis. He rotated his shoulder back and caught the fabric with his thumb. He carefully rotated his shoulder down and away from his body until the majority of his penile sheath was exposed.

"Is this what 'awkward' feels like?" He pondered.

He freed his thumb and shrugged up again until his fingers met his lower stomach. He shrugged down, aiming his first two fingers on either side of his penis sheath. He continued until pressure began to expose more of his penis.

She sighed. "This is taking forever," she muttered.

He felt the blade leave his back and felt the pressure loosen on his thumb. He felt her shift and saw her hand swing around from the side. She grabbed his wrist and flung it out as she wormed her arm under his. Her soft hand slapped his stomach causing him to flinch. His body tensed instinctively as she ran her hand down until it found its target. She deftly rotated her wrist as she dragged her fingers. They gently wrapped around his penis sheath. He winced as she pulled the furry skin down his penis. He was now fully exposed and at the correct angle.

"No. This definitely must be what 'awkward' feels like," he thought as his face scrunched up. His ears burned and his face felt warm as his heart pounded. "*This* feeling is definitely new."

"N-n-now g-go," she stuttered as he felt the dagger return to his back.

He stood for a moment and breathed as his tension seemed to settle. Not missing the chance, he relaxed and the deed proceeded.

"These are actually pretty amazing, speaking from a technology standpoint," he thought, trying to take his mind off the situation - especially when her head began to press into his side. "The pipe goes down and off somewhere where it's stored in a tank until it's extracted, filtered, processed and used for fertilizer."

Sadly he couldn't think of anything else to take his mind off the fact that someone besides himself was touching his penis. "Never in twenty-seven or so years," he thought as he finished.

"I-I've never...so," she stammered and cleared her throat. "I-is th-that all?"

She was trembling and making strange noises in her throat. He noticed heat was pouring through his fur into his skin from her head.

"Shake it."

"Seriously!" She exclaimed, exasperated. He heard her groan into his fur. She very slowly shook the exposed appendage.

"That'll have to do," he thought.

"Are we done here?" She asked quickly.

"Yeah."

She let go and slid back behind him.

His penis retracted back home allowing him to clumsily pull up and retie his undergarment. He reached up and allowed water to run into the toilet basin for a few seconds. He leaned over and closed the lid. He stood upright and returned his hands behind his thighs.

"Done," he stated.

"N-now wash your filthy hands," she demanded with disgust.

He looked over to the wash basin. Even this was a bit more advanced than normal. A covered pot with a spout rest to the side. A thin piece of wood held the pot up. One uses the wrist or forearm to slide the top of the wood toward the pot to start the water, then lift up in the same way and it resets.

He spotted a soap bar on the side of the basin and a towel on a short rack just to the side. He took his time scrubbing. He had a feeling that if he didn't, he'd get stabbed. He carefully placed the towel back so it would dry properly.

"I'm starving," she said and nudged his back with the knife.

He slowly returned his hands to his thighs. He shuffled the awkward train to the dining area where he saw food on metal plates with utensils next to the closest plate of food. He continued to shuffle and stopped at the edge of the table by the closest plate.

"That's mine. Yours is," she began.

"No," he interrupted. "You on the right," he reminded her.

"I," she said and sighed, "have about had it," she growled through clenched teeth.

He felt her hand on his left shoulder.

"Sit," she commanded and pressed down.

He slowly adjusted his stance and slid onto the bench seat.

He watched as she held the dagger up against his throat. She quickly picked up the crude two-prong fork and nearly flat spoon. She slid the dagger along his neck as she moved around and tossed them next to her plate. He felt her switch hands with the dagger and stepped over the bench to his right. She scooped up the utensils and slammed them on the right side of her plate. She held onto the fork and stabbed some vegetables into her mouth.

He brought his hands from behind. He thought for a second as he heard her teeth crushing the plants and lifted his right hand to the top of the table. She stabbed several times and crammed the various vegetables in her salivating mouth.

He leaned to the left as he reached over to his right side. "Here," he said and wiggled his first two left hand fingers near the middle of his rib cage, "Or here - angled up," he said as he tapped just below his rib cage.

"PLEAF JUF FUT TE FUF UB!" She shouted through her food.

"Your arm will tire quicker."

She slammed down her fork and stood. She jammed the knife into the side of his neck just above where his trapezios ended. "Speak...one more time," she strained a warning between clenched teeth and food. "I'm tired. I'm hungry. I'm cranky. Be...quiet," she demanded.

He sat up straight and moved his hand back to the table to the left of the plate. He sat quietly as instructed.

She slowly sat. The knife remained by his neck for a moment before she seemed to reluctantly lower the blade to his torso.

He stared at his plate in thought.

"I should tell her I just washed my hands, but that's all I have to eat with," he thought. "No. She'll definitely kill me." He looked around the plate. "Maybe just lift the plate and tip it into my mouth?" He closed his eyes and internally shook his head. "No. I'll be called a filthy pig and stuck like one."

He continued to ponder his approach, his good ear drifting toward the door. He suddenly jolted upright. He turned his eyes over at her. She shoved an enormous fork of

fish into her mouth. It looked like half of it was pressing her top lip out like a squirrel carrying acorns.

"I can't stay here. I have to hide," he thought. "How do I...no time." "Someone's coming," he blurted quietly.

"Oo ma-furn!" She yelled through food. "Fut ub al...!"

"Auntie Shari!" He heard through the door. Several light knocks. "Aun-tie Shaar-eee!"

She very audibly gulped and shot a wide-eyed gaze at him. "How," she whispered and looked flustered as her eyes and muzzle darted around.

"Aundie SLAAAREEEE!!!" Socorro bellowed as he banged on the door.

"HIDE, MEATHEAD!" She hissed quietly and poked his side with the dagger. "Coming, sweetie!" She called over her shoulder.

He slid from the bench.

"*Tib tib tib tib tib tib*," his feet softly announced as he glided to the room.

"*Fuh-whee, fuh-whee, fuh...whee*," his nose sang as he quietly pulled the door to hide his body, pressing his back against the wall.

[Shari](#) belongs to [Celeste](#)