

“Yes!” the naked monkey exclaimed, running into the suite’s dining area. “We’ll succeed!”

Thomas caught the plate the puma dropped as she squealed and moved to cover her eyes.

“Oh, food!” Limbani took the plate from Thomas and began eating the sausage.

“What’s with the running off?” the barely awake, naked panda said, exiting the same room.

The puma squealed again, and Thomas readied to catch another plate, but she had been in the process of reaching for the cart with the food this time. She didn’t cover her eyes, ogling the hard panda.

“Maybe you two should get dressed?” Thomas suggested, and the inside of the puma’s ears turned crimson as she finally covered her eyes and looked away.

Yating looked down at himself, then muttered something Thomas couldn’t make out, but he didn’t leave. Limbani’s replied was longer, but no more understandable because of the food he was shoving his in mouth.

That surprised Thomas since the monkey was known to hold conversations while having a cock in there.

Thomas received a glance from Gilbert and nothing more. When he tilted an ear to get the armadillo to do something, he looked at the hotel waiter.

“Thank you. We can handle the rest ourselves.” He handed her a hundred-dollar bill, and she bowed, thinking him profusely as she left. Thomas wondered if the size of the tip would make her talk about that instead of the two naked guys seated at the table.

The Marriot wouldn’t have been Thomas’s first choice as a place to stay while they readied themselves for rescuing Madoc. Even as a chain renowned for being affordable, they were more than he’d consider spending on lodging. He’d thought the snickering from the other two had been because Gilbert was slumming it when he picked it, but the suite they were in was high-end enough, it would make even Felix happy.

“I thought you weren’t seeing anything?” Gilbert said.

“In two days,” Limbani said after swallowing, “we’re driving out of the city along the I-80 and Madoc is in the van with us.”

“How do we do it?” Yating asked, then gave a jaw breaking yawn as he pulled the cart to him.

“No idea.” The monkey leaned onto the panda as he reached for the plate of toasts and eggs and somehow didn’t inconvenience Yating as he forked a steak onto his plate.

“That’s the moment my vision kicks back in.”

Thomas watched as the monkey put a slice oh ham, one of tomato and a poached egg onto a toast, then rolled it before putting it to his lips, winking at the rat, and pushing the whole thing into his muzzle.

Thomas went back to eating, ignoring the image Limbani had given him with that. The question tried to force its way out the entire time he finished his scrambled eggs and ham. He wanted one of them to say it, but they were all busy also eating. Limbani more like inhaling.

“You guys think I’m ready?” Thomas finally asked as he stared at the empty place.

“You’re familiar with the room,” Gilbert said casually, “enough you jumped from the park across the road to it and didn’t die.” He closed his eyes and sipped his coffee, letting out a sigh of enjoyment that felt over the top to Thomas.

“That’s because Limbani was there to fuck me,” Thomas pointed out, slightly perturbed by the casual way that wasn’t even commented on by the armadillo.

“And I’m going to be there this time, too.” The monkey said, smiling.

“You,” Thomas stated, “are enjoying this too much.”

“Your ass, my cock.” The smile turned lewd. “What’s not to enjoy?”

“Madoc’s going to be there too.” Yating filled his cup from the carafe of green tea. “I wasn’t affected by the teleportation, so he’ll be able to fuck you, too. The problem might be getting him to stop, since whatever they’ve given him will still be in his system.”

“How is that a problem?” Limbani asked.

“I’m not interested in ending up looking like a roid abuser,” Thomas said, “or have you forgotten they’re using that to get him to use his power on them?”

“Getting you functional won’t be enough to cause that,” Yating said. “It’s the equivalent of a week of solid working out.”

“I don’t think one week’s training would have caused that fox to burst the seam of his shirt like that,” Thomas pointed out.

“Madoc can fuck someone more than once in an hour,” Gilbert replied.

“And how many does it take to do what that fox showed?”

The armadillo shrugged. “It’s not like I’ve ever run tests of his power.”

“If I can’t stop him,” Thomas said, “I’m counting on you to pull him out of me when I say so,” he told the monkey. “I hope he doesn’t get it in his head that he can turn me into a Mister Universe, now that he won’t have to hide what his fucking does around me.”

Thomas pointedly ignored the looks they gave him as he stole toasts from the monkey and built himself a breakfast sandwich. There might be doubts about who’s version of the memories were correct—Thomas’s, as far as he was concerned—but what was certain was that he’d didn’t want to get into this even slightly hungry. The week of training had showed him that on top of draining his magical reserves, it was just plain exhausting.

It had started when, after the conversation with Shila, Gilbert had quizzed Thomas about the limitation of his teleportation.

What did line-of-sight mean? How much weight could he carry? Could he still do it if, after looking at his target location, he closed his eyes? How much did each jump drain him? Why had he ended up in a grotto a full state away when he’d teleported with the kangaroo? Why had it drained him just as much as teleporting from the kitchen in the frat to his bedroom with Yating had?

When Thomas hadn’t had answers, or at least nothing to satisfy the armadillo, Gilbert had set up a series of experiment-training exercises to answer them.

They had discovered that yes, Thomas needed to actively look at his target arrival point to get there and remain standing. [if this needs to be changed, just let me know. I can’t recall a point where this comes into play] He could carry someone with no noticeable extra

drain. And, after what felt like an unending session of twenty questions, Gilbert had worked out what Thomas needed to set an unseen location as his arrival point.

It had come after he asked the rat why a grotto in the middle of nowhere.

* * * * *

The opening in the hill nearly made him cry with joy, but he didn't. Thomas wasn't a baby. Babies didn't get asked to come hunting his GrandPa Magnus, dad and Victor.

He hadn't meant to lose track of the others, but he'd been so surprised to see the quad raccoon he hadn't been able to stop himself from chasing after it. It would have been so funny when he brought it to little Roland and said this was what had become of Niel the Neighbor.

Only now it wasn't funny anymore, because the quad had just vanished, and when Thomas had retraced his steps, he hadn't ended up this is family or at the house, but lost.

He hadn't cried.

He'd decided where Grandpa Magnus's house was and set out in that direction. He'd get there before it got too cold. It was always cold when they came to visit Grandpa Magnus. Thomas had decided that Montana was where Winter went when it wasn't busy making Minnesota white.

It got colder and colder as he walked, and somehow the house wasn't there.

He hadn't cried.

But he had gotten scared.

And now, there was the opening in the hill, out of the building wind.

And once inside, it was warm. So warm could be inside by the door, just after his mother came in with Roland and his baby brother fussed and kept her from closing the door. Roland cried a lot.

Roland was still a baby.

It was magic, Thomas decided, that made the grotto so warm. Magic put there just for him because he was getting too cold. They needed to visit Grandpa Magnus when winter was busy elsewhere next time.

He'd sat at the back of the grotto, as far from the cold as he could. There was even a stone bench there, just for him to sit on. He pulled his knees to himself and wished his father would find him already. He wished he's stayed in the house. He wished they hadn't come here to celebrate Christmas this year.

He wished he wasn't alone right now.

He wanted to cry.

If he was still a baby, he wouldn't be lost right now. He'd be in his mother's arm, fussing and she's laughed, call him silly and rock him.

The warmed wasn't as much as he'd thought of initially. But it was enough that as the light faded, and closed his eyes in emotional exhaustion, he felt safe here.

* * * * *

Thomas was on hand and knees with Limbani pounding into him. He tried to focus on the cock slamming in and the panda's mouth wrapped around his erection, but as his orgasm approached, all he could think about was the color of the wallpaper, its texture. The smell in

the air, the way the bed cover felt in his hands. How the room made him feel.

His orgasm hit, and Thomas was the room. He knew it in all intimate details, the scratch on the bed's footing, the one on the left. The dresser and how the varnish was peeling at the back of it. Thomas had given birth to this room.

"So?" Gilbert asked, as Thomas returned to himself.

This was the third time the armadillo and written something in cum on the patch of skin he'd shaved of Thomas's upper back, and then had had him fucked and made to orgasm.

The previous two had given Thomas a sharper sense of the bedroom, but he hadn't become it.

"How again, did you think to make this... *phrase*?" it was weird putting the inflection in the word that turned it from what it meant to something that meant magic.

"I needed to study the particulate distribution under decompression expansion."

"He wanted to see something blow up better," Yating said, then licked Thomas's still hard cock.

Thomas nodded. Same answer as the previous two times he'd asked. "But you need to cum at the right time. Otherwise you miss it."

"Gilbert and things going kaboom," the monkey said. "Not hard for him to time an orgasm to that."

"But it can't be him just jerking off, right? It has to be sex."

"Yes," the panda replied.

"So, who fucks him next to the explosion?"

"You mean who hasn't fucked him next to an explosion?" Limbani said.

"You guys are all insane."

"You seemed eager enough when you did it," Gilbert said.

Thomas stared at him. "I didn't."

He hadn't. He couldn't.

He would remember doing something that utterly stupid.

Right?

* * * * *

"I'm waiting?" Limbani called from the other side of the door.

"This isn't working," Thomas said, eyes closed. "Again."

"Are you focusing on the sense of the room you gained?"

"I'm trying, but this makes no sense. Don't—" too late.

"Look," Gilbert started explaining again. "The thing the grotto, your bedroom at the frat have in common, is that you build an emotional sense of the place. The bedroom because you lived there for months and had a lot of sex in it, the grotto because it was your oasis in a moment of childhood crisis. I suspect that once you explore your power, you'll find other locations like that. Your bedroom in your parent's house is likely a possibility. Since you don't have the time to build that emotional sense of this hotel bedroom, my phrase has let you gain an actual sense of it, so intimate it should let you use it."

"Except it didn't work before."

“But before, you didn’t get that strong reaction you did this time. Feel that.”

“Be the fucking room,” Thomas muttered under his breath. And the crazy part was that he could be. He remembered what it felt like being the room, with the three guys fucking on the bed. The way the light shining in from the crack in the curtain felt on the textured wallpaper.

But he was still standing here on this side of the door with a monkey eager to fuck him on the other side. That alone should be enough to make him appear there, but here he was. It had been easier to grab onto Grant and take him to the grotto than...

No, that hadn’t been easier.

He’d been surprised by the flash of light. He’d been terrified they were about to die.

He’d been terrified.

He squeezed his chest, tightened his ‘heart’ until the shiver ran down his spine.

Then, he was tipping forward to the yells of joys of a monkey next to him, and an armadillo, on the other side of a door.

Then he was unconscious.