

## Better in Black and Tan

“This is your last chance to pussy out if you don’t want to go through with this, Ally. I can’t promise I won’t tease you for dragging me out here in the middle of the night but I promise not more than that. So are you absolutely sure you want to do this?” Laura asked her best friend standing right beside her. Laura had pried open one of the ‘Keep Out’ doors on the outer construction site and decided to give her shy friend a chance to back out.

Clearly nervous, Ally nodded. “I do. We’ve come this far and I leave tomorrow, so not going to get another chance at this,” relented the mousy woman. Then as she squeezed through the opening she added, “I wouldn’t be able to do this alone though.”

“Yeah, I know,” Laura grunted. Once Ally was through Laura, the bigger and stronger of the two, had to keep the door open as she squeezed her own body through. She got through but was breathing hard for the effort. “No way you’re getting in that way without a second person. You can’t even open a pickle jar,” she joked.

“I meant more for moral support. Maybe I could have found some tight spot to squeeze into and gotten in but I would have never had the courage to try without you,” Ally remarked while making sure they were as alone as they thought. All was clear and quiet except for the occasional echo of some wild animal or another. But that was to be expected, so near to a zoo.

Laura patted Ally on the back abruptly, almost knocking her petite friend over. “Always happy to help you out, Ally. Even if that includes breaking and entering a zoo before it officially opens. Course you’re going to owe me for this when you come back in a couple years,” Laura pointed out as the two made their way through the construction zone towards the larger complete portion.

“Knowing your memory, good chance you forget after two years,” Ally shrugged.

“Wow. You’d take advantage of your friend’s ditziness? I’m both shocked and impressed. Some of my underhandedness is rubbing off on you,” Laura boasted while nudging Ally with her elbow.

“You might be right since you’ve got me trespassing now too. I really hope they don’t have any cameras up and running yet,” Ally fretted as they went.

“Doubt since it’s still another two weeks until they officially open the doors. Besides, we’re already here and don’t have criminal records so we’ll be in and out without anyone noticing. Probably,” assured Laura.

The pair had been friends since elementary school, and now in their mid-twenties were still as tight-knit as ever. It’s why when Ally asked Laura for a wild favor on her last night in town before two years on the other side of the world for job training. Ally’s love for animals was the reason for both her training at a wildlife preserve that would take two years and her need to sneak into an unfinished zoo. The latter should have opened over a year prior but delays pushed it back to a little over two weeks from that night. Knowing this, there was no way Laura was going to turn down her friend’s last request. No matter how potentially illegal.

Laura was a tall, fit, good natured person who never lacked confidence or bold decisiveness. Thinking things through was never the blonde's strong suit but it didn't dampen her enthusiasm or drive any. That night she was wearing just sneakers, running shorts, a tank-top and sports bra like she just came from the gym. Ally on the other hand was shorter and curvier with dark hair, darker skin, and blue eyes the same color as Laura. The similarity was what had girls first excited to talk to each other at age five. A more thoughtful, considerate, and usually cautious person, Ally had her moments of brashness. Most often shown when she entrusted herself to Laura's scheming. She had on sneakers, jeans, a tee, a light jacket, and her purple rimmed glasses.

The construction site made up the space of a new exhibit hall while much of the rest of the zoo was predominantly finished. Some signage, a final coat of paint, and tidying up was all it really needed to be ready for the public at large. While not all the animals had been transported in just yet there had been new articles and announcements about the arrival of some of the zoo's residents. Notably a large collection of the big cats, marsupials, and other mammals related to African plains and tropical rainforests. Of particular interest to Ally were the larger cats; panthers, leopards, cougars, and lions; while Laura was up for anything since her favorite, the elephants, weren't going to arrive until just before opening.

Their creeping got the pair across the construction area without issue. Getting into the zoo itself was no more difficult than pushing aside some tarp and hopping a waist high fence. They found themselves on a wide cobblestone avenue that looked freshly laid amongst some large, impressively done garden areas that were made to look like a North American Prairie. As they looked beyond where they were they saw the grandest, most extraordinary zoo they'd ever laid eyes on. Cleverly hidden light poles and lamps in the ground were

"I thought all the promotional talk about 'transporting you to where the animals call home' was just talk but damn. This place must have cost a fortune," an awed Laura stated. She'd never cared for zoos ever before but was beyond dazzled by the spare-no-expense feel of it all.

"I don't care what it cost, it was worth it! Look at it all! I can see the safari exhibit from here and it looks like they plucked a couple of acres of Kenya down here. I think I'm in love," Ally swooned. Unlike Laura she'd been to zoos all over the country and world but had never done anything like this. Any doubts she had about sneaking in were blown away.

"We gotta check out more of this place. Which way do you wanna go first?" Laura asked. Knowing she would want to pick.

"Okay, ummm, hard to choose..." In addition to the safari area Ally saw two other paths that led to apparent rainforests. She was spoiled for choice and she loved it. "If they had signs up this would be easier. I guess safari since that looks closer anyway. Come on!" she shouted while walking that way.

"I see someone is excited!" laughed Laura as she jogged after her friend.

"How could I not be? This place looks awesome! So glad some of the lights are on. Was worried we'd be creeping in the dark more," Ally commented with her not trying to contain her excitement.

"I noticed that. Was thinking more that we should watch out for security prowling around," Laura warned. Normally she wasn't the cautious one but while Ally was focused on finding the nearest exhibit Laura's head was on a swivel.

“It seems clear to me. Oh! Look, look, look! I see lions!” It was like Ally became a kid again as she skipped over to another waist high fence. This one had a short row of bushes followed by a moat filled with fresh looking water. On the other side of that was a three and a half acre island of savanna complete with acacia trees, long grass, and a prominent central mountain of boulders. Most striking of course were the lions themselves. Ally was counting off the nine she could see napping in a pile until she heard Laura catch up. “Isn’t it awesome? I’ve never, ever seen a zoo like this.”

“You and I both. More impressive coming from you though,” Laura remarked.

“You have no idea how authentic this looks. I’ve been there and it even has the same smell, Laura. How did they do that?”

“Probably like Disney and pumps in the scent. Guess they did their homework. Must have cost a fortune, huh?” Laura said followed by an impressed whistle.

“Tons,” was all Ally could answer. She was taken by the grandeur of it all but also the well-fed, well cared for lions that were cuddled together in blissful slumber. Some were sprawled on their backs while atop three others who didn’t mind.

“That’s a forbidden bean bag if I’ve ever seen one,” Laura joked of the lion mound. “Correct me if I’m wrong but I’m only seeing girl lions in there. None of them have a, what are they called, ummm, oh! A mane. Am I wrong?” she asked Ally.

“No, you’re right. At least from what I count, it’s nine lionesses. Course I can’t see the other side of the rocks or in all the grass. Could be a male hiding somewhere. Anywhere,” suggested Ally.

“Ohhh, you’re right. Lions are a sneaky sort when they hunt. Don’t imagine they do much hunting here. Probably eat better than most people. Definitely eat better than me,” Laura said as she leaned forward on the railing. “And whatever dude lion is in there is getting more action than me too I bet,” she self-deprecated.

“That’s because you’re too picky,” a coy Ally replied.

“Picky? I’m not picky. It’s just called having some standards,” Laura huffed back.

“Yeah, yeah. Whatever you say. It’s fine to be jealous of the lions here. They probably are living the life,” Ally said with a wistful sigh. “I guess it’s too late to cancel my job training and apply here, huh?”

Laura laughed loudly then patted her friend on the back. “Having second thoughts are we? Could always cancel that plane ticket...”

“Stooooop. It would be so irresponsible. My colleagues would kill me and I’d probably never work anywhere worthwhile again. Breaking into an unopened zoo is one thing but I’m not that nuts, Laura,” insisted Ally, who wanted to quash any teasing from her friend early.

“I know but sometimes you gotta make wild choices to get ahead. But I won’t badger you too much about it. I’ll just say this: you should totally do it and fuck the consequences!” Laura encouraged purely to harass.

Ally made a show of rolling her eyes. “That’s how it is, huh? All fuck this and fuck that and-”

“Crikey! You ladies sure do enjoy your cussin’!” interrupted a surly, craggy voice from behind the two girls.

“What the fuck?!” they screamed in unison before turning and seeing an old man.

“Again with the cussin’,” he croaked, throwing his hands up. He was fresh looking in khakis and shorts, with white socks pulled high to his wrinkled knees. The actual man was no taller than Ally, thin but not frail with a short crop of thinly spaced white hairs on his head. While initially alarming he was anything but threatening in look or manner. Which helped the two girls calm down quickly.

“Yikes. You scared the crap out of us,” Laura said once she could speak again.

“I scared you? You’re the ones I was surprised to see gawking at the lions. We ain’t open yet and even if we were these ain’t exactly hours of operation neither,” he pointed out, moving his hands to his hips.

“Uhhh, we were...” Ally began but stalled out.

“We were... doing a test run of the ‘sleepover at the zoo’ program?” Laura jokingly suggested.

The answer gave the man a moment of pause. “Hmmm, I don’t remember seeing anything about that on the schedule. But then again things have been so hustle and bustle around here lately with new faces all the time you could be right,” the old man mused. Rubbing his chin in serious thought. “Who is you all’s admin contact? That should sort things out.”

“Admin contact? Oh, it’s... uhhh, I think Laura might remember better I was, filling... out paper... work,” explained Ally clumsily.

“Oh, thanks, Ally. You forget I’m better with faces than names. She had red hair though? Younger woman, always talking like we kids these days do,” Laura deflected carefully.

The old man thought hard again. “Hmm, redhead... Ohhh, I think I know who you mean. Always wears tight tops. Thought she was in payroll but what do I know? I take care of animals, not papers,” the old man guffawed.

“Heh, yeah. They said that things were a little hectic around here. It’s no problem, sir,” grinned Laura as she dialed up her buxom, young innocence. Hoping it would warm the old man’s heart past the point of seeing through their flimsy lie.

Ally could only smile and try to hide her dread.

The old man mulled the idea over until he had what he felt was a good grasp of the situation. “Seems I may have been in the wrong, ladies. Sorry to startle you like that. Still shouldn’t be using language like that in public,” he told them, his posture relaxing.

“Sorry,” Ally apologized.

“Yeah, sorry. In our defense there aren’t really a lot of people around right now,” Laura pointed out. Earning a jab from Ally for pushing their luck.

“That may be but it’s becoming of a lady to have a tongue like that,” advised the man, who was still gathering his senses.

“I dunno, I’ve dated some girls who didn’t mind,” Laura joked, making Ally blush while confounding the man.

“Well, I don’t know much about that, I suppose. Anyway, I take it ya’ll got full access to everything with your arrangement or no? I don’t see any badges or tags on ya,” the old man pointed out. Causing the two girls to think he’d caught them only for the man to dig into his pocket and pull out two colored rubber wristbands. One black and the other tan. Laura took the tan while Ally gravitated towards the black. “These are the only ones I got on me so they’ll have to do.”

“And what are these?” Ally asked as she slid it onto her right wrist.

“Heck if I can remember the name the marketing folks are trying today. Us keepers call ’em friendly bracelets. Each of those well let you walk into a certain animal enclosure and be seen by the animals in there as just another one of them. Pretty darn clever no matter what they call it,” explained the man, scratching his chin again.

“Wow, really? That sounds like a scam to get us mauled by some lions or bears or prairie dogs,” Laura sarcastically mentioned while modeling her tan wristband.

“No scam or tricks about it. Just works. Plenty remarkable and a real lifesaver around here. That black one there will get you in with the black jaguars in that yonder enclosure with the tropical forest theme. And yours, dear, is right here with the lions if recollection serves me properly like it sometimes does.” As explained the man pointed to either enclosure passively. He then checked his wristwatch and scoffed. “Perfect. Now I’m off my schedule. You girls are all set so just try not to get lost. They still haven’t gotten around to puttin’ up any signs or maps in this place. Gets me confused half the time.”

“Totally understand. Thank you for your understanding, sir,” Laura said politely for once.

“Wait, how do these things work? How close can we get to the animals? Are there any procedures to be aware of?” Ally asked in rapid fire succession. Her interest was so piqued by the simple wristband’s supposed capabilities. So much so that Ally was ready to give chase after the departing old man.

“And where do we get in the enclosures anyway?” added Laura,

“Just follow the fence around the enclosure until you find a labeled access gate. Wave your wrist at the panel kajiggy-thing and you’ll get right in. As for the rest, you’ll figure it out. I gotta go feed some hippos so you two stay out of trouble,” the old man shouted over his shoulder as he shuffled away down the path.

Once the man was out of sight the two friends could breathe a lot easier. Laura immediately jabbed Ally in the arm. “He was about to go and then you’re asking him all those questions? We were in the clear and almost had him coming back,” Laura playfully told Ally.

“You weren’t any better with some of your comments to him either. My questions were at least important,” remarked Ally in her defense. While at the same time closely inspecting her wristband.

“I was just deflecting his attention. It was all strategy that, mind you, worked. Super worked if you consider we got some free swag out of it,” touted Laura. She was giving the lion enclosure a second look. Especially around the lengthy perimeter. “So you wanna try them out? I doubt they’d just invite us to get killed. Even if we broke in and trespassed it’s a bit much to feed us to the lions.”

“Feed you to the lions. Feed me to the jaguars,” Ally specified. Her excitement was palpable with her attention swinging between the band and the tropical enclosure some one hundred yards down and on the other side of the path. “It’s not good for their diets so it can’t be a trick. Right? Sounds too good to be true but I’m really intrigued now.”

“How about we find the entrance to the lions here and we’ll see if I die or not. Come on,” Laura invited as she hurried clockwise around the lion enclosure.

“Whoa! Wait up!” Ally shouted after her friend as she gave chase.

The two had to run around half of the fence to find something like the old man mentioned. A section of the fence bent into the enclosure with its height rising to ten feet where there was a magnetically locked gate. A temporary sign on the door reading ‘True Lion Experience’ was the only signage of any kind. To the right of the door was a black square encased on black plastic that both girls reasoned correctly was where they’d scan their bands. So Laura stepped up first and waved her wrist over the pad. The door then swung open into the enclosure where a small bridge over the moat led right into dusty, rocky savanna soil.

“So far, so good. Dare I enter?” Laura asked with a touch of nerves in her voice.

“Maybe take it slow? I’m not sure how to test it that doesn’t get you, ya know, cut to ribbons,” answered Ally, herself nervous but also anxiously excited that it would work as promised.

“Thanks for the vote of confidence,” Laura acknowledged. After shaking off what stress she could, Laura took a few steps through the door and onto the bridge. The moment she passed through the door it swung shut and locked behind her, startling both women. Laura found the pad on the other side, confirmed it could unlock the door, then headed back towards the enclosure with Ally locking the door for her own safety. “Take it slow and try not sneak up on any of them. They don’t like that,” warned Ally.

“Does anyone like being snuck up on? All I know is I’m back through the gate if so much as one looks at me like an evening snack,” declared Laura as she warily stepped forward.

Ally knew there wasn’t much chance of outrunning any lion but was too interested in seeing if these bands were the real deal to think it was worth telling Laura in the moment. She watched Laura cross the bridge and step into the enclosure proper.

Believing things were going well, Laura was planning a route to where she’d seen the sleeping lionesses that wouldn’t come off as too aggressive to them. Neither her or Ally had been aware they’d been tracked the whole time. Because less than ten feet from the bridge, a sly lioness crept up through the grass undetected and emerged behind Laura. Ally stifled a yelp that got Laura’s attention enough to see there was a lioness sniffing her shorts.

“Uhhhh, Ally! Are you seeing this?” a jittery Laura asked as she froze in place.

“I have eyes don’t I? Just don’t move and let her do her thing. Just, stay calm.”

“Easy for *you* to say.” Laura watched the lioness thoroughly scrutinize her.

The large cat sniffed around the frightened woman’s left side and to the front in slow, lumbering steps. There she scrutinized with pointed, close, and awkward Laura’s crotch. Then kept circling to come back behind the woman, having nuzzled the tan wristband on Laura’s right wrist along the way. The lioness then sat and gave a snarling but non threatening roar. Seconds later several other lioness heads popped up in the high grass. As a further three lionesses trotted out from the grass while the first lioness affectionately nuzzled Laura’s right hand.

Stunned, Laura petted the lioness on the head and down her back. Much to the lioness’s delight. “Well shit, I think this wristband actually works. She seems like she’s not about to- oh! Ow! Ow, o-okay. *They* seem like they don’t want to eat me. Unless they’re just toying with me.”

“This is remarkable! They’ve never met before and they’re treating you like part of their pride! Do you know how totally crazy that is?” Ally asked out while still flabbergasted by the sight.

“Long as they’re not eating me I’m not too picky. Hi, girls. Nice to meet you all. You’re not planning to kill and eat me, are you? I eat junk food so I don’t think I’d taste very good,” Laura said to the lionesses as they sniffed, licked, and started competing for head pats. This helped Laura’s distress and she was even enjoying herself. Even as she was knocked around by their rubbing and scenting. “Ally, this is totally badass. Thank you for convincing me to break-in.”

Ally was all smiles. “I’m much better at being a bad influence than you. Your bad influence just ends with us hungover or locked out of my apartment. This is way, way cooler. Makes me wanna try mine out,” she confided.

“Then why don’t you go and do that?” Laura suggested as she struggled to stay upright from all the loving attention.

“You sure? I was going to wait for you so you could come with me.” Ally wanted to sound considerate but her fluttering heart was closer to her true feelings.

“Positive! I don’t know how long these girls will keep me. Don’t want you just stuck watching. Especially when I know you like I know you, Ally,” assured Laura.

Ally blushed and bit her lower lip before replying, “Okay then! You have fun with your new girlfriends!”

“And you have fun- and she’s gone already,” Laura’s voice slumped when Ally took off running towards the jaguar exhibit. Turning back to the lionesses she found two more approaching. “So how’s everyone doing? Friendly and full in the belly I hope, heh,” she laughed.

As the lioness enveloped Laura, Ally reached the tropical forest enclosure with all her speed. Like for the lions this space was large and as if moved from somewhere in South America. Only the designed openness of the enclosure gave it away as something man made. Another rock formation served as the centerpiece but also worked as a waterfall for several streams that flowed through to the moat that circled the whole thing. There were many large trees with long boughs and overstretching branches that Ally knew were the places a jaguar would lay. However there wasn’t any leopard to be seen. Nor did she spot one while circling the enclosure to find the way in.

'He said it was a black jaguar so it's hard to find at night. It can probably see me though so be ready for anything,' Ally reassured herself mentally. Not long after she found the gate she was looking for. This one was at the end of a small corridor that was fenced on the sides and top. She read the 'True Jaguar Experience' sign on the door as she held her wrist to her chest to help quell her racing heart.

"You'll be fine, Ally. This is going to be awesome and not the death of you," she reassured herself. With a swipe of her wrist the door unlocked. Sighing with relief, Ally was pulling the door open when from a palm bush just the other side of the gate, a large male black jaguar appeared, its eyes fixed on the woman in the open doorway. "Oh crap," Ally said with a shiver.

The steely amber gaze of the black jaguar met the trembling blues of Ally then traced their way down the rest of her. That's all it took for the wary big cat to relax and step back from the gate where he politely sat facing her. When Ally saw him open his mouth, yawn, and passively lick one of his paws she knew the body language wasn't threatening. So with a tentative hand she opened the gate and stepped in while under the passive watch of the male.

"Hi there, beautiful boy. I'm Ally. I don't mean any harm. I got my wristband and everything," Ally greeted like she would any person. She waved her wrist so the jaguar could see but he was still bathing his paw and didn't notice. When the gate closed and locked it startled the girl with how on edge she was. Earning a sideways look from the cat. Ally calmed herself and tried to replicate Laura's success by moving nearer the jaguar. "Do you mind if I get closer? Are you all alone in here, beautiful boy, or do you have some friends hiding to pounce on me?" she asked warily.

The jaguar lowered his paw and looked again to Ally who was edging nearer. Rather than wait the animal stood and immediately stood directly in front of her. So close his nose was right there at her thighs to start sniffing her jeans. Ally got the same all over sniffing treatment that Laura received from the lioness with the male licking a few places in particular. Those being her crotch and ass. Either time the unexpected bathing made the woman oddly heated under the collar. When the jaguar finished his inspection he turned and prowled down a foot worn path, his head and body language indicating for her to follow.

'Take it as a good sign. He's probably taking you somewhere he's more comfortable. He's probably not leading you into an ambush. Animals have always loved you so no reason to think that's changed today,' Ally reassured herself mentally as she followed the jaguar.

It was about fifty yards through increasingly dense trees and foliage until reaching part of the rocky outcrop that centered the enclosure. Ally hadn't realized how big it was until up close. As were the wide tree boughs, one of which the male jumped to after scaling some protruding stones. This put him about fifteen feet above the ground and put him above where Ally was still standing. He gave a low, non-threatening roar as he flopped down on his stomach, legging his limbs dangle over the side facing Ally.

"Sure looks comfy up there but I'm not sure I could make it. Climbing was never really my strongest suit," admitted Ally after seeing the heights involved.

The jaguar snarled gently in reply, its tail flicking, before again motioning with its head for her to follow.

"Okay, okay. I can try. Just don't be judgmental when I fall," Ally warned the jaguar. She carefully made her way over to the rocks she'd have to climb to reach the branch.



The climb up the rocks took all of Ally's strength and attention to manage without crashing down like she predicted. Slowly but surely Ally impressed herself by getting up to where she had to jump onto the tree bough. This was made difficult with a rocky hangover that forces Ally to crouch down. It's from that cramped spot she had to leap onto the branch over a small gap. A gap easily stepped across but with the space she had Ally would have to pounce onto it not unlike how the male got there. So Ally concentrated on making the jump and was trying to catch her breath following the trying climb.

With her attention solely on the task, Ally ignored any strange or unfamiliar twitching or cramping in some joints. But more than just discomfort was coming over the woman as she went along. Parts of her body were undergoing the early stages of a physical transformation, as seen in the elongating tips of her ears which were massing and curling her skin painlessly. It still causes the flesh of either ear to steadily swell up flush red. A swollen upper lip, sprouting black hairs on the back of her neck, and a protruding tailbone were signs that Ally was acclimating to her surroundings in ways she couldn't have suspected.

Ally wavered at the jump at first for a few minutes. She ignored the weird sensations as another kind, a feral drive of sorts, brewed in her chest. It dared her to make the jump and without a countdown she made the leap. The landing was perfect with Ally twisting her body mid-air so she landed length-wise on the branch. Putting her a few feet back from the male's hindquarters.

"Well that wasn't so bad, was it?" a smiling Ally said aloud to herself. Her body was wobbling a little because her hands and sneakers weren't as good at jaguar paws at digging in. Ally's balance came back better than it had been allowing her to lay almost as comfortably as the male. Catching her breath the woman looked at the male again only to find herself having confusing, conflicting sensations in her brain and loins. Neither made sense until the male shifted onto his side and his furry testicles along with sheath were easy to see. And proved hard for Ally to look away from. "He looks... healthy," were the only words she muttered during the respite.

Meanwhile Ally's jumbled thoughts were about how handsome, attractive, and downright sexy the male black jaguar was in repose. None of them coherent enough to be a complete sentence and were just a mixture of feelings, conflicting wants, new desires, and Ally trying to understand it all through a human perspective. The trance was broken when her gums began throbbing. Drawing attention to an even more prominent throbbing of her tailbone. Ally sat up with her knees on the flat top of the branch and looked back down at herself not sure what to expect.

"What in the world? I've got something in my- oooOOOOH shit! That's attached to me? What in the heck is that?!" Ally's blasé attitude spiked when she glimpsed a protruding tailbone along with three inches of a sweaty, newly formed flesh. She dumbly thought it got stuck to her so grabbed it to yank off and ended up roaring in pain. Feeling those few inches continuing to lengthen, growing thicker as new bones germinate from her spine to grow her new tail. It's then the swollen tips of her ears, her upper lips, and her gums were poking or groping by her hands, revealing the growing extent of what was happening to her. "It's not attached, it's growing! And the rest of my face? What is- I don't- I've got to find Laura and-"

Ally's brain was going all over the place. The male was able to more deftly turn and be there when the panicked woman turned around. That had stopped her mid-sentence and left her again at the male's mercy. This time meeting at the same eye level. Ally was unnerved to have him almost nose to nose. He sniffed, licked her glasses off, and nuzzled affectionately cheek to cheek.

“Please, there’s something wrong with me. I-I have to get out of here,” Ally told the male in a shaky voice.

The jaguar responded by dipping his head down and sniffing around the area of Ally’s crotch. Mixed emotions of wanting him to stop but being unable for fear of getting snapped at or pushed off the branch kept Ally from doing much else but letting the male have his way. That left her desperately trying to understand what was happening and coming up blank.

“Laura! Laura! If you can hear me, help! Help!” Ally cried out to her friend in a swallowed voice. It would barely carry out of the enclosure, let alone to the savanna exhibit where Laura was distracted by changes of her own.

The mass of nine lionesses moved as a unit with Laura kept in its center and nudged along. She played along in a similar spirit to Ally by trying to please her new friends. They brought her to the rocky area and in particular one more secluded from prying viewers by a curtain wall of boulders. In this spot there was soft savanna soil to lay on or any one of a few rain weathered rocks. Some bones, some ruined cardboard boxes, and sticks were also here where the lionesses finally spread out. Most found their preferred place around Laura and got comfortable.

Laura was going along with things without issue when it struck her that where eight of the lionesses were laying effectively encircled her. Two blocked the only opening to the area in particular which did make Laura suspicious. Forceful nuzzling from the one remaining lioness against her legs, the same one that Laura had first encountered, she took as a hint to sit herself. Doing down to her knees in the soft, tan soil. There the lioness gives Laura’s whole face a careful, loving face bath.

Laughing, Laura was relieved when the lioness’s tongue moved to her hair so she could wipe the saliva off her cheeks and mouth. “Never knew lions were so friendly. This hunk of rubber on my wrist must smell like lion catnip or something,” she joked amid more licks.

The lioness’s licking moved all over Laura’s face and head, leaving the woman frazzled, aching in places, but overall feeling welcomed by the pride. The tenderness of the moment did the same job of distracting Laura from what was really happening to her that a climb did. Larger, swollen, curling ears, fat upper lip, shedding human hair, and even the tail when it sprouted thanks to a new development. Having gone over the whole of Laura, even legs and feet, the lioness didn’t hesitate to stick its pink nose between the woman’s legs.

“Whoa, girl. Don’t- ohhhh, what in the world? What did you awaken down there?” moaned Laura at the lioness while weakly trying to push her away. The intrusive lioness couldn’t be dissuaded though, and was soon licking and nuzzling something bulging in Laura’s shorts. Laura couldn’t see what was happening in her crotch but an arousing warmth there was sending foreign notions to the woman’s brain. Giving her desires more masculine than she was naturally. And rather than disgust her, Laura was glowing with a thin smile. “Something’s not quite... right. Getting hot all of a sudden. Forehead is drenched with spit and sweat. Thanks for that, babe,” she told the lioness.

The next thing Laura knew the lioness was carefully biting down on the fabric of her shorts, followed by a hard yank that ripped off the whole front of Laura’s shorts. Startling her onto her back in a cloud of dust on her butt. Coughing, she was sitting up when the lioness did the same with Laura’s cotton undies. Laura was in the process of screaming from embarrassment when a more shocking reveal left her speechless.

There where her unshaven pussy used to be protruded a three inch, pink, fleshy stalk about an inch thick with a pointed tip. Below it her slit was sealing and some of the flesh of her labia had swollen and distended outward. The horrific sight was dulled by further tender affections from the lioness that Laura couldn't be bothered to protest. With a pained face she reluctantly allowed the lioness to continue her affections. Every passing second brought more changes and more aches and pains to all over Laura's body. She resisted the urge to lay flat on her back to keep watching her mutating genitals. Then fleshy barbs formed on the new lengthening shaft and her cunt sealed, leaving only a fleshy sack which looked very much like testicles. It didn't take Ally's level of expertise for Laura to recognize a feline cock and sheath when their form was all but set. She then laid flat back and let all of the air out of her.

"Am I fucking dreaming? This feels real but it can't be..." Laura refused to believe, her voice huskier. When the initial shock of her change in gender fading, Laura noticed those other changes to her that she'd missed. Feeling the shape of her ears, the budding whiskers on her upper lips, and being able to wiggle the five inches of tail growing under her set let her know something drastic was happening to her. She needed help and it's possible Ally would too. "Okay, ladies. I don't know what's going on but I think I have to go see my friend- ah! My toof! What happened to- ow! And another? What ish going on?"

Laura had been stopped mid speech when one of her molars felt like it was forced out of its sockets and was now rattling around her mouth. Several more teeth followed. She gagged and coughed them up along with specks of blood and lots of saliva. Opening her mouth wider and one tooth after another plopped out to be hacked or spat out by Laura on her hands and knees. Reaching in with a shaky hand she could feel new, sharper teeth already growing into the empty spaces. A feeling like her jaw and nose were being manhandled forward drew out both slightly, leaving Laura with a short muzzle on her face. Leaving the transforming woman panting on her hands and knees trying to figure out what was happening and how to stop it.

"Have to find, Ally. She'll, she'll know what to do. Or how to help. Or anything," a worried Laura told herself in a ragged, raspy voice.

The lioness returned and this time it was Laura's tank-top and bra that bit and ripped off. This time taking more tries despite Laura's chest barreling forward more. It was relieved by the lioness all the same, leaving Laura as she managed to push herself to all fours. The plan was to then stand but intense shifting in her pelvis and shoulders as well as realignment of her spine made that all but impossible. Laura was effectively frozen due to growing bones and underdeveloped muscles catching up, with any control she had used to keep her upright.

The vivid and disconcerting sounds of popping and cracking bones, taut skin, and Laura's increasingly loud panting and coughing echoed off the rocks around them. All those other lionesses were unflinching as they watched and waited. Most excited by what they saw coming together in front of them.

'I'm either having a vivid drug trip right now or I think I might be turning into a lion, like them. Well, not entirely like them. This thing between my legs... why?' Laura wondered to herself midst her hindquarters becoming more quadrupedal. A troublesome experience that bobbed her furry scrotum and balls around while doing much the same with the four inches of barbed feline penis that kept extending while the furring sheath at its base grew in. Spreading ass cheeks proved a surreal experience; the shifting of tail, asshole, and genitals into place; and brought unsteady movement on arms and legs still human. Except for some patches of itching white and tan fur. 'Whatever this is, it's not stopping. Can feel it getting into my knees and ankles and my wrists... I'm not sure I can move. I

gotta get Ally's attention somehow. Otherwise I don't know how this is going to end,' she fretted, knowing full well where her changes were headed.

Circling Laura the whole time was the lioness, her golden eyes never leaving the changing woman's body. As her wrists were locked under a tingling trickling into her hands and fingers. Constant tension kept Laura from looking down to see what was happening to herself. She could only peer low enough to see the lionesses own furry paws padding by. There Laura glimpsed by chance something hidden in the fur of the lioness right foreleg. Staring at it she recognized it as one of the tan rubber wristbands they'd been given by the old zookeeper. The one that was firmly squeezed around Laura's swollen wrist and above her bulging hand.

'Damn that old coot! I have to shake mine off or end up like her! Only with, *balls*,' Laura bashfully admitted in her head. She tried in vain to so much as lift her hand but her shrinking, plumping fingers and general stiffness made it impossible. Laura's thoughts went immediately to her friend what state she could be in. There was a chance she hadn't gone in the jaguar enclosure yet so Laura gathered what she could of her voice.

"ROOOOAAARRY!" roared Laura before coughing and hacking up more spittle. She tried to call her friend's name or simply for help but only husky, hollow sounding roars came out. Each one ending in hacking fits.

A worry of what was happening to Ally would persist for Laura but her own changes, the sensations, needs, and wants that came with swelling to take up most of the former female's concern. Laura strained to keep her human thoughts coherent but her pinking nose with the curved feline nostrils was beginning to function like it would for any male lion. The scents of herself, the soil, the stone, the air, and most distinctly, all of the lionesses. Making it difficult to always be wondering what Ally was dealing with at the same time.

"Ow! Watch it! Not so close! Try- Hey! Sensible tugs or- ack!" Ally tried to instruct when she felt moist fangs grazing her skin. The jaguar was having trouble removing the woman's pants after having similar issues with her sneakers. Her socks had been no trouble and were already torn open thanks to new claws. However her tight pants were not as easily removed by the jaguar's teeth. Ally was seized up on all fours on the branch and had her ass highest in the air, making the jaguar's work more difficult. But he persisted and never drew a drop as he ended up just biting chunks out and ripping out the rest. Her panties came off with two careful nips then fluttered down under her. Looking back at herself made Ally quiver with excitement. "That's me? For real?" she asked out of continued disbelief.

The initial sprouting of her tail and discovery of other changes had initially gotten Ally panicked that she was dying. Soothing company from the male jaguar helped ease the woman's fears when he licked her face to stop her shouting for help. His calm demeanor and sympathetic closeness made Ally see him as not the enemy. It's then she noticed the wristband the male black jaguar wore on his right front legs and made the connection to the one she had. Unlike Laura though Ally had control of her hands and fingers so she could possibly put an end to it. But rather than act she hesitated and kept hesitating until the window shut and she had both hands flat on the branch as every finger underwent transfiguration to beefy leopard paws.

Next came the itchiness of growing fur, making Ally's clothing more trouble than it was worth. It was making her perspire more which led to panting. The male took the hint and started on Ally's shoes while she lost all of her teeth and sprouted whiskers. By the time he was pulling and shredding her jacket, shirt, and bra off Ally's hands and feet were shifting into jaguar paws replete with retractable claws and a thin coat of sable colored fur. The further up her forearm it traveled the more

distinct jaguar rosettes formed in the fur. Around her feet, as they elongated and morphed to feline rear paws, a similar fur coat and pattern was steadily prickling its way up her body.

“So amazing! My senses feel morrrroar. Mry sensch... Mry vroich ish going,” admitted Ally followed by a coughing fit. Her tongue, jaw, and throat weren’t what they used to be and talking with sharp teeth was also causing unnecessary pain so Ally ditched speech.

There was plenty to distract her from what she lost when her pelvic realigned in the same way that Laura’s were at much the same time. Both were locked on all fours but it was there that their new bodies found the most natural stance. Ally’s genitals remained female but felt the feline influence like the rest of her. Leading to hormones and thoughts that made the male jaguar tugging at her sports bra appear the most handsome man to ever take an interest in Ally.

While ogling the other jaguar’s backside again Ally noticed her vision changing subtly. Becoming sharper and less colorful in the lower light of the evening. Bringing the male into sharper focus as her other senses came to match the heightened abilities of a jaguar. Pink and black coloring covered her otherwise feline nose as her sense of smell made the air, and male particularly, more robust and appealing. Sharper ears were able to pick up strange cries that Ally didn’t know were Laura’s desperate roars. But there was plenty for Ally right where she was so she gave no more thought to listening to anything but what was in her immediate vicinity.

When the male jaguar bit off the last of Ally’s bra and tossed it away the sight of her revealed pleased them both. Her sizable bust had shrunk away while several new rows of nipples sprouted on her stomach. The constant shifting of muscles, organs, and fat made for frequent unpleasantness for Ally that she made herself endure. Scary and unexpected as it all was, Ally was now exhilarated by the coming transformation. The more fur spread, the closer her frame got to complete, the more Ally willed her changes to their inevitable conclusion.

Her acceptance came when she saw her male jaguar companion as the human-turned-animal he was under it all. Seeing him move, operate, and act assured Ally that some of his humanity had remained. Ally’s thoughts were certainly tinged with a female jaguar’s instincts and needs but though dulled she still knew who was. She still remembered Laura and hoped she was taking things as well as her.

‘She’ll love being a lioness for sure,’ Ally reassured herself in thought as her optimal size and weight was reached. More fur coverage and thicker laying were all that Ally lacked for a complete transformation. Ally felt the male’s tongue at her sides, licking those spots where the fur was still slow to fill in. ‘Mmmm, he sure does know how to use that tongue. He’ll have to teach me some tricks,’ mused Ally.

Across the way and hidden from prying eyes a nearly full sized male lion was relieved of uncomfortable tension when its bones needed no more adjustments. Weight and more tan-gold fur were needed for him to take on a full size but those were moving to complete too. The hair is thickest and longest billowing from under the neck and down over the chest. It covered the shoulders and more of the shoulder area while new hairs were growing up the nape of the neck and beyond. Some thinner strands up on top of the head between the ears were further behind but like so much else it would come sooner rather than later.

‘I really hope I look more regal than ragged when this is done. If I’m going to be a male lion I want to be kingly,’ thought Laura who’d been coming around to her form like Ally had. Though hers was less about all the lionesses being former humans and knowing what that meant for her. For Laura

the surge of strength and courage that came as she neared the latter stages of her transformation overrode her concerns for herself. She was even able to worry less about what was going on with her friend. 'I'm sure she's fine. She's into wild animals more than me. Though I'm beginning to understand the appeal,' Laura conceded.

Her admission came as her senses not only were working properly for a lion's but were in tune with her male instincts. That sweet, warm, wet aroma in the air was a lioness in heat without Laura exactly sure how she knew that. She figured it was the one circling her given how close she's stayed through the whole ordeal. Laura was gratuitous in her peeking and cheeking of the lioness's backside when she made another pass to confirm her suspicions.

'Bingo,' Laura thought. Having only recently acquired a cock its throbbing need was already something she had to sate.

Laura attempted to follow the lioness but got a whack on the nose from her instead for the effort. Then went back to circling him. Sending the message to Laura to wait until the transformation ran its course. It pained Laura to hold back but she did. Focusing instead on somehow forcing the rest of her mane out along with any other fur or adjustments that needed doing before she saw what mounting and breeding a female was like. She'd never had the interest before but now Laura needed to do it and it took every ounce of control to not give in.

Without even trying, the two women managed to complete their transformations at almost the same time. Both had wanted it to end so that they could be the cats their bodies were telling them they were. Laura crowned the moment with a triumphant roar and mounting the lioness who had been close by her whole transformation. Ally could have cried with joy when the changes completed but gave herself over to bestial lust once the male jaguar did the mounting in her enclosure. Mating roars filled the enclosures as Laura and Ally enjoyed their big cat experiences to their absolute fullest.

For Laura this entailed a sampling of the many other lovely smelling lionesses that crowded around her. They each were patient in waiting their turn and when their time came with the lion Laura got to know them on an intimate level. She got very used to the mounting, the thrusting, and came to adore the delicious orgasmic high from dumping her seed in another willing recipient. Seeing a tan armband on each other lionesses went a long way to explain why they were all so respectful throughout. They'd all lay around while Laura and the chosen lioness fucked their hearts out. Laura was aware that the same magic that had changed her was also enhancing her virility and her ability to quickly recharge for the next lioness that came growling and presenting.

Ally experienced a similar potency from her new mate and lover. The male and her would mate and screw to their heart's content then the male would lead Ally to a new place where they would lay down and relax together. She came to know the inside of the enclosure over the course of the night through their sexy jaunt. When it slowly dawned on Ally that they were alone in the enclosure it only brought her closer to the male who must have been waiting for company like this. Company she was happy to provide as every time he took her it was a heated, thoroughly satisfying experience that Ally thought couldn't be topped. Then they'd fuck again and she'd find a new peak. Ally became just as completely enamored with the male just as much as she. Every time he'd climax they'd roar their pleasure loud as they could. Getting an impressed lion roan in reply from time to time.

Leaning against the fence outside the savanna enclosure listening to the new male lion discover all the lionesses with it were in heat was the old man zookeeper as well as a younger, taller keeper in the same khaki uniform. The old man fiddled with his watch while the younger one filled out forms on a clipboard.

“Just snuck in, you said? And you somehow talked them into going in there all by themselves?” the younger man asked the older one as he scribbled.

“What? Surprised? Heh, I’ve still got some tricks up my sleeve, sonny boy. Just made them think they tricked me and handed them the few spares in my pockets. You boys were lookin’ for a boy lion and another black jag at least and now you got ’em both. And by the sounds of it they don’t mind at all!” he explained, ending with a cackle of laughter. “You be sure to tell the bosses about this. I want some compensation for this, ya know.”

“Don’t worry, I already radioed it in and the warden was so thrilled I’m sure you could have two bonuses for this one,” suggested the man with a smile.

The old man whooped and slapped his hip. “Double bonus? Crikey!”

The two zookeepers eventually wandered off still discussing the potential size of the old man’s reward for filling such important positions this near to opening. Behind them the two former women had no trouble accepting their bodies, lives, or homes which within a few hours felt more natural to them than a house or bed. Ally and her jaguar mate curled up and slept in the same tree they had repeated loud sex in earlier. Sleeping among the aromas pleased both black jaguars in the same way Laura the lion felt a king sleeping at the center of a pile of lionesses- all of which stunk from sex with the lion.

Both were content and happy in their minds with how things had turned out. There was no regret from Ally when her flight was missed the next day or fussing from Laura when she was late for work. They were exactly where they wanted to be. Their enclosures were close enough that they could see the other from a distance, safe and happy. A pregnant Ally could relax high up in a tree and could look across the scores of visitors to where the regal lion Laura lounged with a gaggle of lionesses. The only thing they wished they could do was to tell the other how great they looked in black or tan.