

Chapter One

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Neil cracked an eye and immediately closed it. His phone, leaning against the lamp on his bedside table, told him he might as well get up now since his alarm was about to go off anyway, but he wasn't doing it.

He wished he could tell the coach to go fuck himself. He'd spent last night studying hard for his coming history exam, and he was entitled to sleep in and now worry about football training for one—

The door slapped open. "Up and about!" a man yelled.

"Fuck," Neil complained. His alarm hadn't even—his alarm went off at the same time as Coach Horgar flicked the light on.

"Time's a-wasting," the bear called. Then the door to another room was being violently opened and Niel sat.

On the other side of the room, a cougar with bleary, barely opened eyes looked back at him. "If I go back to sleep, will you tell him I died in the night?"

"If you aren't at practice," Niel replied, "I'm not going to have to tell him anything. He's going to come here and kill you himself."

The cougar groaned. "And he's going to make me suffer for bothering him." He got out of bed. "Dibs on the bathroom."

Niel nodded. He needed the two minutes that gave him to finish waking up himself.

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"Come on!" the bear yelled. "What is this, summer camp? You aren't in high school anymore. How are you going to be picked by the NFL if this is the kind of energy you put in training?"

Niel grunted as the lion impacted against him, but didn't move.

"I haven't been in high school for years," the senior grumbled as he kept pushing, trying to force Niel to yield. "And how the fuck am I going to play for the NFL when you spend your time trying to kill

me?” He looked at Niel and grinned. “Aren’t you happy you decided to join us, coon?”

Niel twisted, giving the impression the lion had unbalanced him, then placed a foot in the lion’s path as he tried to bolt and ended up face-first in the grass. Too bad for him, shoulder pads were all the coach had them wear for this.

“Coon’s derogatory,” Niel told the lion as he spat out grass.

“Leslie, that’s a foul!” the coach yelled. “Next time I don’t want to be able to tell you tripped him. Chunho, how come he was able to trip you? Weren’t you paying attention? You’re the Senior, he’s the Freshman, you should have him eating grass, not the other way around. Go again!”

“Yes, Coach,” the lion replied as Niel took position again. “You’re not going to get a second time, coon.” The lion grinned.

The raccoon grinned back, “I’ll just have to think of something else, like bringing a razor and shaving that oh so pretty mane of yours.”

“You wouldn’t dare, Niel.”

Niel grinned. “Call me coon one more time and find out.”

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“Alright,” the coach called to the undressing players. “That wasn’t exactly horrible. Maybe some of you have a chance at doing this pro, but don’t hold your breath if this is all you’re going to bring to the game.”

“Come on!” someone whined. “We have exams, give us a break.”

“Herley, if that’s the attitude you have, I want you outside and give me four laps around the field. Now, Herley!” Cursing, the hedgehog threw a jacket on and ran out of the locker room to the snickers of players. “Oh? Am I hearing volunteers to run by his side?” Silence fell. “I thought so.” The bear glared at everyone there before turning and walking out.

Activities resumed and Niel enjoyed the show.

“People are going to get ideas the way you’re looking at the naked guys,” the lion said.

“So long as it’s that I enjoy what I’m seeing, they can get all the ideas they like.”

“Hey, Leslie!” a cheetah called from the other before gyrating his hips and causing his cock to bounce.

“Call me with your girlfriend dumps you, Sampson, not before.”

“One of these days,” the wolf next to the cheetah said, “someone’s going to object to you leering at them.”

Niel rolled his eyes. “I wasn’t leering.” He looked the wolf up slowly and licked his lips. “This is leering,” he said as the wolf’s ears went back and he covered the growing erection with a towel.

The lion shook his head. “I don’t think I’ve ever known a guy so openly comfortable with his sexuality.”

Niel shrugged. “What’s the point with having a problem being who you are?” especially when he remembered always being comfortable with it, on top of remembering not knowing if he even cared about girls or guys. Having some crazy guy screw with his memories just because he wanted the guys on the team to be playmates for Roland had been weird, not to say of the rest of the stuff Niel had learned about in the process of getting his original memories back, but it had accelerated his sexual awakening.

Niel turned to put grab his shower kit and in the mirror in the door he caught the wolf looking him up. Niel smiled as they locked eyes, and the wolf nodded toward the shower before heading there.

The raccoon smiled at the lion, who rolled his eyes, and headed to join the wolf. Was he going to top or bottom this time? It wasn't like Niel was picky, so long as it was fun.

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"You coming to the club on Friday?" the lion asked once they were done dressing.

"Got plans," Niel replied.

"Oh, got yourself a guy to get laid with?"

"Guys, plural. I'm going to the Sigma Theta Gamma party."

"Fuck, really? Are they as intense as the stories say?"

"Why?" Niel grinned. "Curious to experience one of them?"

"Come on, you heard the rumors. They're some sort of mafia safe house they were even raided a couple of years ago."

Niel fought to not react. He was lucky not to have been at the frat on that day, but he'd been there the day before, he and half the high school football team, to celebrate a victory. The coach had fucked each of them, as was the 'tradition'.

He'd heard of the assault, and things had been explained afterward, once he had his memories restored. There had also been the stereotypical cover-up. The one that every movie dealing with the supernatural existing with reality claimed needed to be there so people wouldn't go insane. It had kept the incident from making the news, but stories had circulated, and as far as Niel was concerned, the truth would have been easier to explain.

"Really, a bunch of international students in a frat equates the mob?" He forced a chuckle.

"Don't you find it weird they're all gay?"

"No." After all, there was a god of gay men. "They have money. They're not going to settle for a frat where they have to worry what the guy in the next room thinks of them banging one in their room." Or on the kitchen table, in the couch, or the shower, or the... Maybe Niel had spent too much time there while under that bat's control, but it had been where Roland had been a lot of the time. And the bat had their friendship a lot tighter than it had been before.

"Still, you be careful there."

Niel grinned. "I will be." His phone buzzed, and he took it out. Chi-con's Eatery was calling him. "I have to take this." Niel hurried out of the locker, then answered.

"It's almost here!" the caller exclaimed. (the time frame for Roland's birthday is a tad nebulous because of changes that happened in the writing of book 1. We can still adjust things in that book if needed. I wrote this chapter with it taking place around mid-terms, because that was mentioned as a comment in the outline. Peeking ahead, there's something with Halloween, so I don't think mid-term will work. I think the initial plan was for this to take place close to the start of the year. It's easy enough to adjust that way too. Regardless of how far or close Roland's birthday is, I see him having the same level of excitement at finally reaching his ceremony of dominance.)

"Hey Rol," Niel answered, chuckling.

"I so can't wait to be eighteen."

"You just want the superpower that comes with it."

"Wouldn't you want that? Maybe I'll be like Thomas, or better yet, you need to meet Juam, the things he can make you feel with just a touch, and he isn't getting in your mind, you aren't imagining it, he can actually get you to—"

“Should you be talking about that over the phone?”

“How else am I going to tell you about that since you aren’t here?”

“Yeah, but you know who could be listening in.”

“Nah, they had that magic chick do something to the phone I mailed you that makes it impossible for that rat to trace the call. We’re fine.”

“And you aren’t worried about calling the person who can make it so that your call magically originates from a Vietnamese restaurant in downtown Minneapolis, the ‘magic chick’?”

“Why would she be listening to my call? It’s not like I’m anyone important. I’m not Thomas or anything.”

Niel shook his head. His best friend had lost a lot of the serious brooding attitude when he’d accepted he wanted his brother carnally, but he’d also gained a level of *laissez-faire* that worried Niel at times. It was like being magic was the answer to all the problems he could have.

That or being rich, well living among rich people.

“What are you doing to prepare?”

“It’s more me who’s being done. They know I’m about to turn top and they are making sure to squeeze in all the time with me they can.”

“Aren’t they worried you’re going to make them pay for all that?”

“Worried? They’re fucking hoping I will. You have looked at the video I sent you, right? I’ve grown over the last two years.”

“Oh yeah, you have.”

“How about you? How did you celebrate your eighteenth birthday?”

“I haven’t yet.”

“What? How come? It was over a month ago. If I’d known you weren’t going to do anything, I would have had Thomas take me to your place.”

“Oh yeah, like you and him appearing in my bedroom would have gone over so well with my dad. He doesn’t much, remember? (actually, I can’t recall if we ever establish what Steward knows about what happened to Niel and the football team, so if what I’m putting doesn’t work, feel free to change it) there was a sex drug dumped in the team’s water cooler and we went at it for like a week. He doesn’t know about the, you know what.”

“Magic. It’s not a curse word or anything.”

“Well, I’m standing in the middle of Mundania, so it’s not a word I can say without care. Anyway, I didn’t celebrate turning eighteen then because I already had plans to celebrate it this Friday, at Sigma Theta Gamma.”

“Oh, you are going to have so much fun. Blow Olavo for me.”

“Which one is he?”

“The capybara; dresses well, great cock, and knows what to do with it.”

“All the guys in that frat know what to do with theirs.”

“Oh? You’ve already tried some of them?”

Niel laughed. “I have been at Uni since late August. Gilbert found me and made sure I was still okay. We met up a few times after that, then there’s this fox from China.”

“Okay, so you haven’t been celibate.”

“Me, Celibate? I might not need the sex the way you do, but I definitely make sure I get some.”

“Make sure you save some for when you’re at my birthday celebration.”

Niel snorted. “That isn’t going to be a problem. Since by then all you will really need is my ass, right?”

“Come on Niel. You aren’t like other boys. You, I’ll take in his entirety even after my ceremony.”

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