Savage Days Season 1: Welcome to the Jungle

by LordKraus

Summary

Approximately six months after Officer Nicholas Wilde graduated from the ZPD Academy, Officers Hopps and Wilde find themselves on routine patrol. After a shooting a deeper relationship between two partners starts to be formed and a case that will shake them to the core.

Notes

We are working to improve the early chapters of this so please be patient.

The police codes I used are found at in the endnotes.
Episode 1: 10-00 Officer Down

Chapter Notes

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank the authors whose work has inspired this. Starfangs_Secrets, Kulkum, Yeah_JSmith, DrekkDeina, Selaxes, Harkonnen, Alps_Sarsis, midnightophelliac, your fanfictions that have either directly or indirectly inspired this work. I mean no disrespect to you in borrowing themes or ideas from your fics. It's your guys and gals works that have inspired and given me the courage even to put this out here for anyone to read at all.

Last but not least I would I would like to Acknowledge my wife, who loves my little story about a fox and bunny far more than I ever imagined she would. Thank you, babe, I sincerely hope you keep enjoying this till the end.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Episode 1: 10-00 Officer Down

“One day I’ll face the Hell inside me
Someday I’ll accept what I have done
Sometime I’ll leave the past behind me
For now I accept who I’ve become”
~ I Apologize, Five Finger Death Punch

“Dumb fox,” Judy said.

Yeah, that joke was pretty horrible, Nick admitted to himself, and gave the female rabbit a sly grin. “You know you love me.”

They’d had this exchange at least once a day since he’d become her partner.

“Do I know that?” Judy asked, cocking her head to one side. “Yes, yes I do.”

Nick turned his attention back outside of the patrol car, watching the street as she made a right-hand turn.
“Any plans for after this shift is over?” Nick asked.

“Not really, you?”

“Was thinking of ordering pizza and a crappy movie; you game?”

“Ohhhh… I’d love to, but I think Jack wanted to do something tonight. Sorry.”

It was fairly easy for Nick to keep the disappointment off of his face after years of hiding his emotions as a street hustler.

“It’s okay Fluff. Maybe another time.”

“Yeah, sure.”

Nick turned his head, taking in a quick read of her body language; he could tell there was something wrong with his partner.

“Everything okay with Jack?”

“Yeah, everything is great.” He watched as her nose twitched and one of her ears fell forward slightly.

“Doesn’t sound great.”

His eyes went back to a black sedan that they had been following for a while.

“Trust me everything is fine…”
“I do trust you.”

Nick pulled up the car’s computer and ran the plates for the black sedan. While the computer was pulling up the information he continued to watch the sedan.

_Did the trunk just bulge up?_ he asked himself.

“Hey, Carrots?”

“Yes, Nick?”

“Notice anything strange about that sedan?”

“Uh...not really; do you want to pull it over?”

Nick watched as the metal skin of the trunk bulged up again.

“Yeah, we should. I think there’s someone in the trunk.”

“Call it in,” Judy said, pulling behind the sedan and flipping on the lights and sirens.

Nick picked up the radio. “Zulu 2-4-0 to Dispatch, over.”

“Go ahead Zulu 2-4-0, over,” came back Clawhauser’s overly cheerful voice.

“Initiating traffic stop on 11-54; request 10-28 on Papa, Indigo, Tango, Alpha1-1-3. Vehicle is a black Mecury Lemur. The computer is being slow; standby for driver ID. Zulu 2-4-0 out.”

The radio went silent as the two cars came to a stop. Nick reached for the seat belt buckle with one paw while flipping his aviator sunglasses down off of his forehead with the other.
“Nick?”

Nick turned and looked at her as he opened the door of the cruiser.

“Be careful.”

He just nodded at her as he exited the cruiser. Then he slowly cut between the vehicles, paying close attention to the trunk as it bowed up and settled back down again.

Nick's eyes narrowed behind his aviators; his right paw settled on his service weapon and unsnapping the holster’s safety strap as he approached the driver side window. He could make out muffled voices coming from the trunk of the car.

“Zulu 2-4-0, that plate doesn't belong on that make and model of car. Proceed with caution.”

Judy’s eyes snapped from the radio back to where the timber wolf was emerging from the car, seemingly obeying her partner's orders. Time then slowed to a crawl for Judy as the timber wolf suddenly spun around, drawing a weapon and firing four shots into Nick, who crumpled to the ground. She ducked down, grabbing the car’s radio microphone.

“SHOTS FIRED, 10-00, WILDE IS DOWN!” she shouted into the microphone as rounds started impacting the bullet resistant front windshield.

She was unbuckling her seat belt and moving across the cruiser, being unsure which side the wolf was approaching, when she heard three rapid-fire shots and the impacts of the bullets against the bullet-resistant glass of the cruiser.

After several seconds she heard a microphone key once, then twice, before a labored voice spoke up. “Suspect down.”

Judy scrambled back across the cruiser and hit the trunk release before opening the driver side door. She could hear the approaching sirens, signaling that backup wasn’t very far away. She looked down, seeing the timber wolf’s immobile body only a few feet away from the driver side door and hopped out of the police cruiser, clearing both the body and the slowly expanding pool of blood.
around it. She rushed to the back of the cruiser, hopped up onto the bumper, lifted the trunk open, and quickly found the first aid kit. Grabbing it, she hurried toward her partner.

Nick was slumped against the driver side rear wheel of the black sedan. High pitched voices could be heard yelling for help from the trunk as Judy approached.

“NICK!” Judy yelled as she skidded to a stop beside him. “Talk to me, Nick!”

She ripped open his uniform shirt to look at his bulletproof vest and heard two rounds clink to the pavement; his left side was soaked with blood.

“Hey, Fluff,” he said weakly.

“Dumb fox,” she replied just as weakly. “Where does it hurt?”

“Shoulder…hard to breathe.”

She started to undo the straps for his second chance vest and pulled it aside to look under it, sighing in relief.

“Lucky dumb fox.”

She rolled his shoulder gently forward to see if the round had gone all the way through. Sweet cheese and crackers, she thought, opening the first aid kit and grabbing two packages of gauze.

“Judy…” she heard him say weakly; his breathing sounded ragged in his chest.

“I’m here Nick.”

“Don’t…go out…with…Jack.” He turned his head to look at her, his emerald green eyes glazing over. “Not…good…enough.”
“And you’re?” she asked a little more tersely than she meant to.

“No…but I’ll try to be.”

“Today’s top headline, Officer Nicholas P. Wilde was injured in action during a routine traffic stop. Officer Wilde is credited with saving the lives of two young female rabbits, whose names are being withheld due to their age, as well as the life of his partner Officer Judith Hopps, who just nine months ago uncovered the plot by then-Mayor Dawn Bellwether to infect every predator in Zootopia with Night Howler serum. Officer Wilde is listed as being in stable but critical condition after suffering multiple gunshot wounds,” ZNN’s female leopard news anchor Fabienne Growley reported.

Judy sat in the dimly lit hospital room and listened to the ventilator helping Nick breathe and the quiet beeping of his heart rate monitor. She stared down at her paws. While she had washed them many times over the last week, she still felt like they were covered in his blood.

“I’ll try to be.” His words kept echoing loudly in her head. Stupid dumb emotional fox, she thought to herself.

She looked up at him, his face calm as he slept, while she remembered what the doctor had told her. “He lost a lot of blood. While the vest stopped three of the four rounds shot into him, several ribs were broken in the process, and one of those punctured his lung. The surgery to repair his lung has been successful, but we’ve put him in a medically induced coma to allow it time to heal.”

She looked at the time on her phone; seeing it was still early in the evening, she opened her messenger app, as she had noticed several missed messages from her mother.

Mom: How are you holding up?

Mom: Jack called saying you ended things with him why?
Mom: How is the fox doing?

Judy started to type a message to her mother.

Judy: Nick is doing better. Doctors say they should be able to bring him out of coma tomorrow morning. Jack is an asshole.

Mom: What did he do.

Judy: Don’t want to talk about it.

Mom: Call?

Judy stared down at her phone. They liked Jack, and I can understand why. He’s smart and successful, but arrogant. He tried to use the shooting to get me to quit, and when that didn't work he tried to say how the shooting was all Nick's fault. Jack’s primary concern was always for Jack and his image. Dating me was probably a huge ego and social boost.

Judy pressed the call button, against her better judgment. Probably better to get it over with now.

“Hey, Judes! Just voice, no video this time?” Judy's mother asked.

“Sorry Mom, you wouldn’t see much right now anyway; they’re keeping the lights really low in Nick's room.”

“Oh, so Jack was right….”

“What did he say?”

“He said you were cheating on him with the fox…”
“Nick.”

“What?”

“My partner’s name; you know, the mammal credited with saving the lives of two kits, not to mention my own. His name is Nick.”

“Right, Nick… Sorry Judes. it's just…”

“You’d rather believe some asshole over your daughter?”

“You’ve dated Jack for the last three months. What happened?”

Judy sighed. “He showed his true colors, Mom.”

“He said…”

“Argh! Mom, listen to me. Jack tried to paint the shooting as Nick’s fault. When he tried to go to the press with the story, Bogo was forced to release the body cam footage that’s been running this past week. The cam footage shows Nick's actions from the time he got out of the cruiser right up to him getting shot. You can hear the damn kits in the trunk on the cam, Mom! Jack is an asshole who's just trying to get into my pants and get me to quit my job.”

“Well if…” her mother started, but Judy looked up to see Nick’s eyes open and looking at her.

“I got to go, Mom,” Judy said as she hung up the phone.

Judy quickly pressed the call button for the nurse as she grabbed Nick’s paw with both of her own.
The first thing he became aware of was the breathing tube shoved down his muzzle; it half blocked his sense of smell.

“No…. but I'll try to be.” He remembered wanting to kiss her after saying that, but couldn’t remember anything else. The next thing he became acutely aware of was the pain in his shoulder and chest.

Well, I'm not dead, he dryly thought to himself. Because if this is death, then it’s highly overrated.

He could hear words being spoken, but couldn't quite comprehend their meaning yet. More importantly, though, he detected a familiar scent in the room. Even with half his sense of smell blocked he would be able to register that scent anywhere. Judy, he thought to himself.

He slowly opened his eyes and turned his head toward the scent, his eyes locking onto hers. They must have me on some really good meds, he thought to himself. I can't understand a word she’s saying right now, but she's here with me.

He smiled weakly when she hung up the phone and grabbed his paw.

Nick took a deep breath and opened his mouth in an attempt to talk, but she pressed a finger to his lips to stop him.

“You're on a ventilator. One of your ribs shattered and punctured a hole in one of your lungs; you’ve been in a coma for about a week now,” she said to him softly.

He squeezed her paw once.

“Can you understand me?” she asked, looking up at him.

He lifted his paw and rocked it to side to side.

“Kinda?” she asked.
He nodded his head weakly.

There was a brief light knock on the door as a nurse stepped in.

“Is there a problem Miss Hopps?” the nurse asked. Nick was still too far gone to see what kind of mammal the nurse was, as his eyes refused to focus across the room.

“Nick woke up,” she answered

“I see,” said the nurse. “I’ll see if Doctor Kiger is available.”

Judy nodded but her eyes didn’t leave Nick's.

“I left Jack,” she said after a few minutes of silence between them.

Nick squeezed her paw and smiled at her.

Nick's eyes moved to the door as it opened to admit the doctor.

“Hello Officer Wilde, I’m Doctor Kiger. It’s good to see you awake,” she said, walking up to his bedside.

Nick's eyes focused on her a tan cougar, maybe in her late 30s early 40s, dressed in khaki slacks with a white shirt and white lab coat.

She took the stethoscope from around her neck, placing the ear tips into her ears and pressing the cold metal of the diaphragm against his chest.

“Just breathe please,” she said, listening as his breathing moved the diaphragm around.

“Good. You sound better than when I checked on you this afternoon; I think we can remove the
breathing tube. You probably have questions for your….” She cast a glance at Judy. “Partner, if I’m not mistaken.”

“This is going to feel strange. It’s better if I just pull it out and get it done all at once.” She undid the tape holding it in place before pulling it out in one solid and swift motion.

"Gah!” Nick exclaimed as she handed him some tissue.

“Blow out the lube,” Dr. Kiger ordered.

Nick started blowing his nose.

“I’m not going to lie to you Officer Wilde, it was touch and go with you for a little while. You have two broken ribs on your left side, one of which punctured your left lung. The ribs that didn't break are all bruised. Your left shoulder wound is tissue damage that should heal within the next few weeks; we were able to stitch it up well enough that the scarring should be minimal. Thankfully the bullet passed through and didn't hit anything vital. Your broken ribs are currently held together with pins. Pain management is going to be a very high priority for you; you're going to need as much help as you can get.”

“How long am I going to be off duty?” Nick asked quietly.

“One month at least before you can return to light duty. I'd say closer to two months before you can return to full duty.”

“Oh…” Nick said, his ears falling flat against his head.

“I'll have the nurse bring in some water for you, and perhaps some food if you feel up for it.”

“Thanks.” Nick croaks

“Get some more rest, Officer Wilde, I'll check on you in the morning, then we'll see about getting you out of here.
Nick nodded at the doctor before turning his attention back to Judy.

“How are those kits?” he asked, using the controls of the bed so he could comfortably sit up.

“They’re back at home now. They hadn’t even been reported missing yet. Nick, you have no idea how lucky we got.”

Nick nodded.

“You scared me. Nick,” Judy interrupted.

Judy looked up at him, her deep amethyst eyes staring up transfixed into his emerald ones.

“I almost died without getting to truly live. So I feel that I've been given a second chance, a chance to correct a mistake that I've been making every day for almost six months. I won't live in fear any more Judy, fear of myself, fear of what others will think, fear of even you. I love you, Judith Hopps. I'm not afraid to admit it anymore.”

The silence that stretched between them was thick with emotion.

“I haven't left your side in a week. Clawhauser brought me some clothes. The staff here said I was your emergency contact on your insurance paperwork so I was allowed to stay. I've been worried and torn, and I had a fight with Jack down in the cafeteria.” She sniffed, barely holding back the tears gathering under her eyes. “He wanted to go on a date the day after you were shot. He said you were just a useless pelt and I could find another to sucker into being my partner if that's what I really wanted. I've no idea how we went three months without me seeing the amount of hate he has for you. I took him to meet my parents Nick.”
Nick nodded listening to her.

“Jack tried to run a smear campaign against you, saying the wolf only shot you because you made threatening remarks or gestures. The media was so hungry for information that they just started to eat up his lies. The chief released the footage from the cruiser’s dash cam and your body cam. I thought I was going to die in that car. He started shooting at me, and then he stopped, and I could hear him reloading. Then I heard your weapon fire. I have no idea how you did it; the pain must have been horrible. My only thought after that was to help you.”

“Come here,” Nick said softly, patting the bed beside him.

He watched as she pulled herself up on to the bed and then pulled her into his right side so that her head was resting on the right side of his chest. He winced slightly as she jostled the bruised ribs on that side, but he held her, brushing back her ears with his right paw. She closed her eyes and cried against his chest as his right paw softly stroking her ears.

“Nick?”

“Yeah Fluff?”

"Did you mean it?"

“Mean what?”

“That you would try to be good enough for me.”

“I don't know if you’ve noticed this Judy, but you make me want to be a better fox every day. No one else has been able to do that, to make me want to change. You’re like this force of nature that sees the best in me and draws it out.”

Nick stopped talking for a few minutes, his right arm tightening around her.
“I go to bed at night thinking of you and I wake up in the morning looking forward to spending that day with you, riding around in our cruiser telling bad jokes helping mammals and getting the bad guys.”

Nick looked down at her.

“I thought I was happy just being your friend and partner, with just being close to you, but then you started to date Jack and I realized that I was lying to myself. I enjoyed our movie nights and the nights we went out to dinner. I loved just spending time with you but that got less and less as time went on. We still spent countless hours together at work and I thought I could be just content with that, but again I was lying to myself. I thought I could move on but I couldn’t. I watched you seemingly be happy with Jack, but I also noticed it starting to sour over the last couple of weeks.”

Nick sighed, feeling her tremble against the side of his chest.

“I’ve missed spending the extra time with you as well,” she all but whispered. “It won’t be easy you know?”

Nick smiled. “Nothing worthwhile ever is, sweetheart.”

“My parents…”

“Don’t need to know right away. But yeah, I know how your parents will likely feel about you dating me.”

“How?”

“I met them at my graduation, remember?”

“Oh right…”

_Saying Judy's father was less than thrilled at the idea of his daughter riding around in a police car with a fox all day is like saying my fur is red, Nick thought to himself as his paw kept stroking her ears lightly._
“So how about pizza and a bad movie at my place when I get out of here tomorrow?”

“Sounds good, Slick.” She smiled. “I’ll need to get some things from my apartment if I’m going to stay at your place though.”

His tail thumped happily against the bed.

“Don’t get your hopes too far up; someone has to watch you while you’re drugged out of your mind on pain meds.”

Nick's tail kept thumping happily against the bed.

She smiled and shook her head, watching as his breathing slowly evened out and his head drooped down to let his muzzle rest just above her head, his warm breath softly washing over her.

Judy reached over and adjusted the bed so he was laying down again then curled herself back up in the crook of his right arm, listening to him sleep.

Judy sighed contently, listening to his rhythmic breathing and thinking back over the last week. *I dumped an emotionally abusive asshole and gained a fox.* She looked up at his sleeping face. *At least he doesn’t look half dead anymore. Oh Serendipity, my parents are going to kill me when they find out.*

Judy’s eyes slowly came open with the rising of the sun. Her vision was filled with the russet and cream colored fur of her partner. Her sense of smell was flooded with the smell of him, not that he smelled bad. *Kinda like blueberries, cinnamon, with a metallic tint to it. At least he doesn’t smell like the fish he eats so much of.* She smiled, listening to the strong beating of his heart.

*“I love you, Judith Hopps. I’m not afraid to admit it anymore,”* she heard him in her head. *How do I feel about him though? Can I love a fox? Not a fox can I love Nick?* She sighed quietly.
He changed for you.

Her mind went back to the Nick she first met, the one who left her standing in a slab of slowly drying concrete, telling her she’d never be anything but a dumb bunny. She weighed that Nick against the Nick who went to the police academy and just a week prior shot and killed a wolf.

I at least like this Nick over that asshole he tried to portray himself to be, she thought to herself. I am proud of him though. He’s come a long way since the day he scammed me for a jumbo pop.

Judy let her eyes roam up to his sleeping face.

He is a predator though.

You’ve always had a thing for sharp teeth and claws after Gideon clawed you.

I’ve only dated rabbits though.

Maybe that’s been the problem…

Meaning what?

What do those rabbits usually want?

A mate.

That what?

Stays at home pregnant…

And is that what you want?
Not right now…

Did any of them support you on wanting to be a cop?

Well, Jack….

Has done everything he can to undermine your dreams while appearing supportive to the press, and he's given you flack ever since he found your stash of fox and bunny romance novels.

But Nick….

Yes, Nick was an asshole, but he stood up to Bogo for you, AND he forgave your mistake at that stupid press conference, AND he helped you hustle the hell out of Bellwether. If it wasn’t for Nick's fast thinking you would have never got a confession out of her and would’ve ended up back at the farm, or worse, dead.

And he joined the force for me.

And let's not forget you trust Nick with your life.

Judy’s inner dialog stopped at that point as she looked down over the expanse of his slowly rising chest to his left paw resting lightly on his stomach. She reached out with her right paw and placed it on his much larger one.

It won’t be easy.

Neither was taking down Dawn Bellwether.

But I had…

And in this, you'll have his help too …
Ok, then I’ll try.

All he wants is for you to try.

She smiled at that point, remembering something she’d said right after she’d gotten clawed. “I don’t know when to quit.”

Judy smiled as Nick slowly woke up. She could hear the change in his heartbeat and breathing going from slow and steady to a more substantial pace.

The beating of his heart had become music to her ears. It had stopped twice: the first time when he drowned in his own blood, the second time from blood loss. They had removed the heart rate monitor yesterday, and then he’d woken up early yesterday evening on his own. She was amazed at his inner strength; it was like he’d clawed his way out of unconsciousness just to tell her how he felt.

She watched his face and smiled as it went from resting slack to smug.

“Good morning Nick.”

“Yes, yes it is,” Nick said smugly.

“Why is that?”

“I got something this morning I thought I'd never get.”

“What's that?”

“Waking up with you.”
Judy smiled and giggled softly. “That is so corny.”

He smiled, his eyes still closed. “Yeah, but you liked it.”

“Maybe. But who knew that Nicholas Wilde could be such a cheesy romantic?”

He started to chuckle at her, but then winced in pain at the jostling of his ribs.

Judy looked up at him, her joyful expression quickly replaced by one of pure concern. “Are you okay Nick?”

“Just hurts. Did the nurses bring my meds yet?”

“Not yet; do you want me to call the nurse?”

“Please…”

She gently got up and pressed the call button on the bedside control.

Nick opened his eyes slowly, looking up at her; she could clearly see the pain written in them, but something else as well.

“Are you okay Nick?”

“No, but I will be.”

“Good morning officers, how are you this morning?” the nurse said as she entered the room.

“Nick is in pain this morning,” Judy said, looking from Nick to the gnu nurse.
Nick looked at the nurse with a smug expression, since his bunny partner was trying to take care of him.

“Well, he did miss his dose of painkillers last night; the doctor wanted to move him from IV pain management to pills, since he'll be going home today,” the nurse started to explain.

“Will he need to be woken up for nightly doses? What’s the dosage? What medications is he going to be on? What kind of pain management will he be on?” Judy started to rapid-fire questions at the nurse.

Nick started to chuckle at the suddenly over concerned bunny, but winced in pain again.

“I'll be back with his meds and will try to answer your questions then, Miss Hopps.”

Nick captured one of her paws in his right paw, not really wanting to move his left arm at all. The sudden move surprised her and she looked down to see his thumb softly stroking the fur of her knuckles.

“I'll be okay, Fluff.”

“I ju….” she started to reply.

“I know, just relax, please. Any bunny courting practices I should be aware of?”

“Umm wha…” she started, before realizing what he was talking about. “Well, you're supposed to ask my father for permission to date me.”

Nick smiled.

“Flowers are big for us as well. There are entire meanings behind the flowers chosen for a bouquet.”
Nick nods listening to her.

“What's important to you?”

Judy looks at him surprised.

Nick sighs. “Let me guess, no male has ever asked you that?”

“Not really, no.”

“Think about that for a while then.”

“Why…”

“Listen, Carrots, I don’t have an interest in bunnies. I have an interest in you, Judy Hopps; not your sisters, not your mom, not the city bunny down the hall. You and only you. If the courting traditions of your species are important to you then I’ll try to learn them, but what I want is you and no one else.”

Nick closed his eyes, the pain in his chest and shoulder firing.

“Oh, Nick…” he heard her whisper.

“Ahh, here we go, Officer Wilde,” the nurse said as she stepped back into the room, carrying a white paper cup with a pair of pills and a plastic cup of water.

Nick took the pills with a long drink of water, sighing as he settled back into the bed and waited for them to start working.

“Now, Miss Hopps, I take it you're going to be the one watching over him for the next few weeks?”
Judy nodded.

“How often can he take the pain medication?”

“Every four to six hours. It’s really to help manage the pain of his ribs so he can breathe well. If he can’t breathe overly well, then complications can arise.”

Judy nodded, listening to the nurse.

“Now, you’ll need to help him with anything that he does with his left paw for a while. The shoulder injury is still healing and we don’t want him moving his left arm too much for a bit.”

“Why are you sending him home then?”

“Historically, foxes don’t fare well in the hospital; they prefer quiet dark places without a lot of strangers coming and going from their space.”

“Oh…”

“I think you’ll be fine… He seems comfortable with you in his space.”

Nick nodded as the painkillers started to kick in.

“Carrots is always welcome in my space,” he remarked.

“The doctor will be in shortly to check his stitches and answer any last minute questions. After that you should be able to take him home,” the nurse said, ignoring the fox.
Judy shot him a glare. “Well at least the painkillers seem to be working. Will he be able to walk or will we need to pour him into a cab?”

“He should be able to walk, but we’ll wheel him out of the hospital anyway.”

As the nurse left the room, Nick's smug grin slowly spread back across his face while he looked over his bunny partner.

“Well, that's a better look on you, Slick.”

“Feeling better Fluff. Feeling a lot better.”

“So, um, any important fox dating traditions?”

“There are, but, well, for the most part, they wouldn't matter at this point.”

“Why is that Slick?”

“Well to start with, my family is…deceased.”

“Oh…. that's right.” Her ears fell back behind her head, looking down at her paws.

“It’s okay though, Carrots.”

"Why’s that?”

“Mom liked you. It was part of the reason I flirted so much with you up until you met Jack.”

Judy looked at him, surprised. “She knew?”
“Of course she did, she was my mother; we may have been estranged for years, but she would still be able to tell if I liked someone.”

“So do you have any family?”

“I have an uncle, and last I heard he had married a lovely vixen up in New Rayford, but he’s cut all ties with me.”

“Why Nick?”

“Same reason Mom and I were estranged for so long I guess. Didn’t approve of the choices I made, didn’t want me to be an influence on his own kits…”

“But you’ve changed…”

“It’s okay Judy.”

“But…”

Nick gave her a smile, not the smug one but a rare honest smile. “Judy, it’ll be okay. You’ve already infected me with your hopeless optimism, so I’m sure it’ll all work out.”

She giggled at him, causing him to smile larger, and cocked her head slightly, studying him. While his smile had gotten larger, it looked like he was taking great care not to show her his teeth.

“Anyway…” Nick began. “The big things for canidae is being good providers. It goes back to even before we evolved. I'm not sure how it is for others, but for vulpines the male would bring food to the den for the female so she wouldn't have to leave the kits or expose herself to dangers. That continued even after we evolved; our kits still have a high mortality rate either due to illnesses or… fighting. Even to this day, our kits have a well above average mortality rate due to lack of affordable health care. Because of this, most families only choose to have one maybe two kits max.”

Judy sat transfixed. “But what about insurance?”
“Insurance companies are legally allowed to discriminate against us. They use our kit mortality rates as leverage, saying that since we’re more likely to need health insurance we should pay higher premiums. The premiums are now so high that it's just as cost effective to pay the doctors directly for whatever procedure we need instead of paying the premium and the copay most companies still leverage onto us. I’m honestly surprised that the city let the Chief hire me; they must be paying out of the nose for my health insurance.”

“I never knew…” Judy whispered, her ears becoming droopy.

“Most don’t, and the ones that do either can’t do anything about it or don’t care.” Nick sighed. “We are just sly, shifty, foxes after all.”

“So what does being a good provider mean to vulpines?”

“Our courtship revolves around showing we can provide food, clothing, and shelter, but there’s more to it than that.”

“Oh?”

“Well…” Nick rubbed the back of his head with his right paw. “I was taught that the food shouldn’t just be bought, that it means more if you cook it yourself.”

Judy smiled at him. “Are you telling me, Mr. Wilde, that you can cook?”

Nick nodded. “Mom taught me some things, but most I picked up working odd jobs at places.”

Judy’s smile brightened. “Then why haven’t you cooked for me in the past? Our movie nights have always been take out.”

Nick looked away, embarrassed. “Food is a big part of our culture, and cooking for someone outside of your family has huge implications for us. If I was to cook you dinner without courting you, it would be like saying you can’t provide for yourself, or your mate can’t provide for you.”
“Oh…”

“In a lot of ways it could be seen as me challenging your mate for you.”

Judy giggled. “So you would have a cook-off.”

Nick chuckled at her. “Unfortunately no, those challenges are typically settled rather violently. It’s rare these days, since we’re supposed to be more civilized, but it still happens.”

“Oh…” Judy said looking away. “Wouldn’t have been an overly fair competition anyway; Jack is more about what his money could provide than himself.”

Nick smiled at her and chuckled. “Honestly Carrots, even with his being a movie star he still doesn’t hold a candle to how awesome I am.”

“Oh really? Well, I’ll just have to be the judge of that myself, Mr. Fox.”

Nick smiled at her knowingly. “Fluff…” Nick started as he looked up at her, his smile matched in his emerald green eyes. “Challenge accepted.”

“Hopps! Wilde!” Bogo bellowed as he entered the room, causing Judy to hop off the bed and stand at attention; even her ears were ramrod straight. Nick winced at the sudden movements and just glared at the Cape buffalo.

“Glad to see you're back among the conscious Wilde,” the chief said, much more subdued.


“Can it, Wilde.” The chief eyed Nick with a snort before turning his attention back to Judy. “Hopps, are you going to be okay taking care of your partner for the foreseeable future?”

“He’s just a big kit sir, I shouldn’t have any problems,” Judy answered. “Besides, right now a good poke in the ribs will set him straight.”
“Make sure he lives Hopps, I have city hall breathing down my neck over his well being.” Chief Bogo turned his attention back to Nick. “With all kidding aside Wilde, good job.”

“Hopps, your assignment is to make sure Wilde doesn't further injure himself. When he can do light duty then the pair of you can come back to the office. Seems Wilde doesn't have any family we can reliably pawn him off on.”

“Thanks, Chief,” Nick said.

“Don’t mention it,” Chief Bogo said as he made his way back out the door.

Nick watched the bunny doe out of the corner of his eye. She hadn’t been to his apartment since before his mother had passed; the look of surprise on her face when he gave the address to a much more upscale neighborhood rather than the dingy basement that he had lived in was well worth the wait.

“Nick, how….” she started.

“Mom was heavily into real estate; instead of my childhood home, she left me this place in her will. My childhood home she left to the daughter of a friend of hers, which was fine with me, as I didn’t want to move out to the Meadowlands district anyway.”

The front door of the place opened onto a hallway. To the left of the door was the living room and what appeared to be a dining area. The hallway to the right of the door, had three doors, which were closed at the moment.

“When did you move in here?” she asked, leaving her bag beside the front door.

“The weekend that you took Jack to meet your parents.”
“But your mom passed away months ago Nick.”

Nick smiled. “So, let's show you around, shall we?”

“What else have I missed?”

“Don’t worry about it Carrots. Now, mi casa es tu casa, or my home is your home.”

“Did you have a housewarming party?” Judy asked, following him down the hall.

“I did. This first door is the second bathroom, I don't use it much other than for the laundry.” Nick explained, opening the door to show her. “There are towels in the closet behind the door.

“I don’t remember it,” she said, looking into the bathroom.

“This second door is the guest bedroom,” Nick said, opening the door for her to show a room with a bed, nightstand, and dresser.

“Nick…”

“Jack took you somewhere. The last door is the master bedroom,” Nick said, opening it to show a room dominated by a rather large bed tiredly made in blue and green. “It even has an en suite bathroom, so we won't have to share the shower, unless you want to, that is,” he said giving her a wink and causing her to blush.

“Anyway, the kitchen is off the living room, but we’re ordering pizza and a crappy B rated movie tonight,” he said, heading back down the hall to the living room.

“Nick….”

“Yeah, Fluff? Want something to drink?”
“Nick, how …”

He stopped just as he entered the living room, his ears pulling back as he looked down at the floor. “Can I just let it go?” he asked quietly.

“Yeah…” Judy said as she moved around to stand in front of him, wearing a faded red flannel shirt and jeans.

Nick slowly knelt down on the floor in front of her, looking deep into her amethyst eyes. “What would it change for me to be angry about it Judy? It wouldn’t make me feel better, and it wouldn’t take away the pain of the last months. It would just be pointless anger.”

“Nick…”

“Were you happy?”

“I...I thought I was.”

“When did that change?”

“Remember a few weeks ago, when I got all dressed up after our shift?”

“Yeah, I remember it.” The image of Judy in a purple low cut dress flashed before his eyes.

“Jack invited me to his apartment, said he had something important to tell me. I thought he was going…. That's not important.. But when I got there he wasn't alone. He’d been using me to cover up his relationship with one of his co-stars; he said if I wanted him I'd to accept her too.” She started to cry. “I… was so ashamed. I didn’t know what to do....”

Nick wrapped his right arm around her and pulled her tight to his chest, lifting his left arm in its sling to hold her tightly.

“I hadn’t spoken with him again until after the shooting....”
“But you didn’t come to movie night….”

“I didn’t want to talk about it. I just cried in my apartment.” He felt her bury her face in the fur of his neck. He softly stroked her back and ears, running his right paw down her back.

“It’s okay, Fluff.” He felt her arms wrap tightly around his neck.

He closed his eyes as he rested his muzzle on top of her head.

“How can you say that?” she whispered, her small paws gripping the fur at the back of his neck.

Nick ran his paw pads over her ears, marveling at how soft they were. He inhaled deeply, taking in her flowery scent. “Because you're here now with me.”

Judy sat on the bed, watching Nick's chest rise and fall in the afternoon sun. The pain medication that he took made him pass out. Which was fine with her; she liked to watch him breathe while he was asleep.

*How will life with him even work?* she asked herself.

*Meaning?*

*What does he want?*

*Why don't you ask him?*

*What am I supposed to say? “Hey Nick what are you hoping to get out of this relationship?”*
Why not?

*Because that's not how this is supposed to work!*

*How what is supposed to work, a fox and bunny relationship?*

Her eyes roamed over the sleeping fox; his head was turned slightly away from the window, his left arm was still in the sling to hold it still, and his right was thrown over his eyes.

*He’s supposed to tell me what he wants….*

*GAH! Are you really that big of a dumb bunny?*

*Because?*

*Nick is a FOX!*

*So court him like a fox?*

*Yes!*

*But how….*

*Zoogle?*

Judy quietly slid off of the edge of the bed and made her way down the hall to her bag.

*Nick said showing that he could be a good provider is important in fox culture.*
She grabbed her bag and started walking down the hall, pausing outside the open door to the spare bedroom. She gazed into the room, seeing the well-made bed with a light blue comforter.

*He said this is the spare room, not that you had to sleep here.*

*Where else would I sleep?*

Judy turned her head and looked down the hall at Nick’s room, the inner portion of her ears heating up.

*You slept with him last night....*

*Yeah, but he was drugged up on painkillers.*

*Still is and will be for a while.*

She only paused for a moment before moving decisively down the hall with her bag in tow. She placed her bag down on the floor in front of the nightstand on the left side of the bed before pulling out her phone.

Judy hopped up onto the bed. It was a little taller than the one in her own apartment but it wasn’t too bad. The mattress was comfortable and seemed to be of decent quality. The blue and green comforter was soft to the touch.

She watched Nick’s chest rise and fall a few more times before unlocking her phone and pulling up her browser. She looked at the cursor blinking in the Zoole search bar.

*What should I search for?*

*Courting foxes?*

She sighed, looking over at Nick, and typed in “courting foxes” before hitting search. The number of results was disappointing. She sighed and tried something else, typing into the search bar “Vulpine
culture”. Her eyes widened at the number of articles that came up, along with a few links to videos on EweTube.

She looked over at Nick's still slumbering form once again, watching him snooze. She crawled over to him; grabbing a pillow and placing it beside him, she curled up on his right side, her head resting on the pillow and her back pressed against his side.

Clicking on a promising article, she began to read; most of it made sense to her, having spent months in a patrol car with Nick. “Vulpines have a culture of pranking and believe that some of the more…..creative pranks are earned by the prankee. At the heart of the culture is the goddess Karma.

*Karma dictates that for every deed there is a consequence that could, in many cases, come back at the perpetrator threefold. Good or evil, all things must balance.*

*Because of the pranking, with some pranks being planned and executed over decades, they have earned their sly, cunning, and devious reputation.*”

Judy smiled, remembering when Chief Bogo’s horns were somehow painted pink. Nick never admitted to doing it and was at a school with her talking to kits when it happened. But they had been moved back to regular patrol instead of visiting the numerous schools around the city.

Judy frowned and started skimming the rest of the article at that point, looking for anything dealing with courtship. She found that the vixen typically asks the mother for permission to date or court the tod, a custom which hearkened back to when the females tended the crops while the males hunted or fought in conflicts. She found some vague references to vows and promises, but no mention of anything either the male or the female was supposed to do.

She frowned at her phone, feeling as if she’d learned something but not fully what she wanted to find out. She opened a new tab in the browser and typed in a new search, “Vulpine Mating Culture”.

Judy clicked the first link without even reading it, watching as the page loaded and seeing it was a video.

Judy’s eyes widened as the movie started; the volume was turned up since she had been listening to music the last time she’d used her phone, so she quickly had to mute the volume, having left her headphones in her bag.
She watched transfixed as the male fox on the screen kissed the female fox passionately, his paws roaming over her. He started nipping along her jawline and down her neck, causing the female’s eyes to close in what Judy assumed was pleasure. Judy’s eyes widened as the male used his claws to shred the female's shirt right off her body before pushing her back onto a bed.

Judy watched as the male stalked the female. When the vixen started to move, the tod grabbed one of her legs and pulled her back into the center of the bed. He crawled up the bed, his eyes fixed on the female who struggled for but a moment before settling down. He straddled her hips and pushed the her paws over her head, bending down and saying something in her ear that Judy couldn’t hear.

Judy paused the video and scooted over to the edge of the bed, putting her phone down as she hopped down to dig around in the outer pocket of her bag for her headphones. She hopped back up onto the bed picked up her phone. She scooted back up against Nick's side and listened to his breathing for a moment before putting on her earbuds and plugging them into her phone.

She turned the volume back up and backed the video up to the moment the male straddled the female’s hips. Her eyes widened with surprise as she watched the tod dragging the vixen’s petals back up over her head. Then she heard him almost growl into the her ear. “Be a good girl and don’t move.”

Judy watched as the male dragged his paws down the female's arms, his claws extending enough to gently scrape along the skin under her fur. Judy’s hips shook slightly as she rubbed her thighs together, watching him lower his muzzle to the vixen’s left breast and nibbling on the soft-furred flesh around the her nipple. The female whined plaintively and arched her back up, trying to get the male to pay attention to her other nipple. The male grinned and shifted his focus to her right breast, once again nibbling on the soft white fur around her nipple. Judy watched as the tod’s claws moved down the vixen’s side; the female shook slightly under the male and moaned.

He pushed himself between the her legs causing her to spread her thighs to accommodate him, causing the female’s obscenely short skirt to ride up her thighs and expose her white panties to the camera. Judy gasped as the male hooked his claws into the female’s panties and pulled, ripping through the fabric.

_I need to stop watching this_, she thought to herself.

The tod knelt down between the vixen’s spread thighs, nipping lightly on them as he tossed the ruined remains of the her panties aside. Judy groaned as quietly as she could when she heard the female plead with her lover. “Please…..” the female pleaded in Judy's ears. The male grinned and nipped the vixen’s other thigh a little harder, enticing a small yelp from her.
Judy glanced over her shoulder at Nick to see if he was still asleep, then her eyes were dragged back to the screen of her phone as she heard the female moan in delight. Judy watched entranced as the tod’s long broad tongue licked at the vixen’s sex. The camera had moved closer and the male had spread the female's thighs wider apart, pushing them back to give him access to her sex and the camera an unobstructed view.

Judy’s free paw moved down her stomach to the button of her blue jeans; she groaned; feeling herself becoming aroused. Would Nick do that to me? The tod’s tongue licked from the vixen’s entrance all the way up and over her clit; every few licks he’s stop to lightly nibble one of the lips of the her sex or her clit directly. Judy unbuttoned her pants and lowered the zipper, her eyes not leaving the screen. She watched as the male's tongue pushed its way into the female's body, the camera zooming out as the female arched her back and moaned.

Judy tried to imagine what the female on the screen was feeling. Her eyes went wide as the female moaned out, “OH GOD!” She watched as the her arms flexed but didn't move from where they were placed on the bed by the male; it was as if they were held by his willpower alone. Judy's paw slid into her carrot print panties as she watched and listened to the female fox on the screen have what Judy assumed was a massive orgasm as she shook; her thighs tightened against the tod’s paws but he held them spread wide.

Judy slowly slid a finger up and down her wet slit as the male slowly pulled his tongue from the vixen’s sex; he snaked his tongue out of her in a way that caused it to drag back up and over the her clit before returning to his mouth. Is Nick's tongue that long? she wondered to herself as the male on the screen stood and removed his boxers, revealing his long red shaft.

Judy’s eyes went wide as she saw a fox’s cock for the first time. Is that big for a fox? Is Nick’s larger or smaller than that? Will it even fit in me? she thought rapidly as she watched the male run the tip of his cock up and down the female’s slit, getting it wet with her secretions.

Judy watched as the male slowly slid the head of his cock into the female; when he moved his paw, her eyes went wide with her first view of his knot. What tha…. She watched, entranced as the male slid his shaft into the female up to his knot. The female moaned as she moved her ankles up onto the male’s shoulders, allowing the male to slide deeper into her. He bent down, kissing and nipping the female's neck as he started to thrust into her.

Judy’s finger slowly started to slide in and out of her own sex in time with the his thrusts.

Need to stop…. Judy thought to herself.
Judy’s eyes closed as she bit into the comforter to stifle her moan, listening as the fox’s thrusts increased. Judy’s finger moved into herself in time with his thrusts, her palm grinding against her clit. Her mind filled with thoughts of what it would be like with Nick.

Judy’s eyes snapped open as she heard the female on the video start to beg the male. “Please, please let me cum,” she heard her whine. “No,” was his response. Judy watched as the camera angle shifted to between the pair’s legs; she watched transfixed as the males knot started to slip into the female with each thrust.

The camera angle shifted again as the male latched his maw around the female’s throat; his sharp canine teeth pressed into either side of the female’s neck and he could be heard growling the word, “Cum.”

Judy watched as the vixen’s eyes rolled back up into her head, her body jerking under the tod as he held down her shoulders, his thrusting coming to an end as he growled out his own release.

Judy’s eyes closed as she imagined Nick’s teeth pressed into the sides of her throat as she shuddered with her own release, pressing her face against the comforter of the bed in an attempt to stifle her moan.

Nick slowly became aware of a new scent in the room. Interesting…. he thought to himself. It smells like Judy but…stronger.

His eyes slowly opened and he looked around the room. He could hear the shower going in the bathroom connected to his room and smiled. He could see the sun had gone down below the buildings, as it wasn’t shining as bright in his room anymore.

He reached over to his nightstand and picked up his phone before calling out to Judy. “Hey Fluff, still prefer vegetarian pizza from Lamar’s?”

“Yes please!” came the response from the bathroom.
He smiled as he unlocked his phone and scrolled through his contacts list, then tapped the contact for Judy’s favorite pizza place. In the past, he’d had to go pick it up before heading over to her place, but now he lived within its delivery area.

“Lamar’s Pizzeria, how can I help you?”

“Yes, I’d like to order a medium mammal large half vegetarian half barbecue chicken and mushroom and a six pack of lime soda please.”

“Okay, will that be for delivery or take out?”

“Delivery please.”

“Address?”

“6137 Chevrolet Apartment 454.”

“Name?”

“Nicholas Wilde.”

“How will you be paying?”

“Is cash at the door okay?”

“That’s fine. It should be about 30 to 45 minutes.”

“Thanks, have a nice night.”
Nick smiled as he hung up his phone and looked up at the ceiling. The scent of Judy hung heavily in the room in an intoxicating blend of bunny and something he couldn't quite place yet. *I've smelled this scent a few times.* He thought back to when he’d first smelled it. *The natural history museum maybe?*

Nick smiled, letting the memory run through his mind. He thought of pretending to go savage and chasing Judy though the exhibit. He chuckled at the memory of tearing the stuffed dear apart. The flash of memories slowed down.

Nick crouched low on all fours as he stalked forward through the fake grass of the exhibit. His lips curled back in a vicious snarl. He ignored the psycho sheep monologuing like a bad Bond villain above them; his focus was on Judy and playing the part of the savage fox about to kill.

*I can't believe this is working,* he thought to himself. His eyes drifted momentarily to the carrot pen in Judy's left paw recording the sheep's words before snapping back to Judy's eyes.

He stalked forward, his head emerging from the grass and a vicious sounding growl emerging from his throat. His nose was even with Judy's knees.

A rich heady scent filled his lungs on the next intake of breath to fuel the growl.

*I'd thought it was fear…* Nick thought to himself. *What if it was something else? She's not afraid of me, I've worked with her; hell, she slept with me last night…* 

“HEY FLUFF! Pizza will be here in about 30 minutes,” Nick called out as he slowly sat up, swinging his legs off the bed.

He heard the water shut off.

*What if teeth excite her?* Nick grinned at the thought. *I can have some fun with that. But how to find*
Nick’s grin widened as an idea started to form, but his thoughts turned to Judy as the bathroom door opened.

“I have to say Slick, your water pressure is impressive here.” She paused in the doorway, wearing one of his ZPD work out shirts that on her ended up coming down to her mid-thigh.

“I have to say Fluff, you make that shirt look far better than I could, and that’s saying something,” he said with a smile.

Judy blushed, and he could see the inner part of her ears turn bright red before they flopped down her back.

“Have fun this afternoon Carrots?”

“Uhh…. Yeah, I did.” Nick saw her look away from him as she answered.

“I feel like I might have missed out on something.”

“Na, I was just doing some research on my phone…”

Nick stood, stretching his right arm up over his head.

“Give any thought to what you want to watch tonight Fluff?”

“I was wondering if you’d be willing to have a talk instead?”

“What do you want to talk about?”

“Well, I was trying to do some research while you were asleep…”
“So what sort of criminal enterprise are you researching now?”

“The foxy kind.”

“I don’t know of any pure vulpine criminal organizations, Fluff. Even if there was after the war, I’m pretty sure it would get stomped out pretty fast.”

“It’s not a criminal organization that I want to talk about…” She fidgeted with her paws in front of her for a moment, looking down at them before looking up at him with her bright amethyst eyes.

"I'd like to talk about fox courtship customs….” She blushed looking back down again.

Nick smiled as he walked out of the bedroom and down the hall to the living room, with Judy trailing in his wake. “Is that what you were researching, or at least trying to?”

“Yeah. There isn’t a lot of information about fox dating customs on the internet, though there is a lot about pretty much anything else dealing with foxes, from your pranks to your involvement in almost everything. But dating? It’s like all the information got sucked into a black hole.”

Nick let his eyes roam over her as he thought about what she wanted to discuss.

“Nick, I….” She was interrupted by a loud knock at the door.

“That would be our dinner,” Nick said as he got up, reaching into his pocket to retrieve his wallet and fishing out the few bills he kept in there.

“I’ll get it, Nick.”

“You sure?”

“Yeah.”
“Ok here, let them have the rest as tip.”

“Ok.” Nick sat back down and watched Judy head to the door. As his eyes moved down, he realized that the shirt had gotten caught on her tail and he got his first look at her bottom. He was intrigued; he had wondered if the white had gone all the way down, and now he knew not only that but that it also continued all the way up to the back side of her tail. He watched her tail twitch slightly as she dealt with the pizza delivery mammal.

_I wonder if she knows she's giving me a show?_ he pondered to himself as he watched her.

Judy took a step back before pushing the door closed with her foot and turning around.

Nick forced his eyes to move up to hers and grinned, seeing the playful sparkle in them.

“Did ya see something you liked there Slick?” Judy asked playfully.

Nick grinned and responded as he went into the kitchen to get them some plates. “You are a very beautiful, sly bunny, Judy.”

Nick sat the plates down on the counter as Judy placed the pizza box down and handed him the six pack of lime soda. He placed the soda in the fridge to chill before turning around again.

“Help yourself Carrots; it's half barbecue chicken and mushroom, half vegetarian.”

“Don’t think for one minute that food is going to get you out of this conversation, Slick.”

“Wouldn’t dream of it Fluff, but it really does depend on what kind of foxy secrets you're after.”

Nick watched as Judy got a couple pieces of pizza on her plate and went back into the living room area.
Nick got a couple of pizza slices as well and went back into the living room with Judy.

“So, fox dating really starts when a tod finds a vixen, or in our case a doe, he likes,” Nick said before taking a big bite of his pizza.

“He flirts relentlessly, in the hope that the vixen will talk with the tod's mother about dating. If the tod's mother approves of the vixen, then she’ll tell the tod and he’ll ask the vixen out for a date,” Nick continued after swallowing his bite of pizza. “This, by the way, doesn't count; well it would have if I'd taken the time to cook you a meal, but buying you a meal that we eat in our pajamas? Yeah, that doesn't count by vulpine standards.”

“What would count then Slick?”

“If I don't make the meal myself?”

“Yeah.”

“Say, dinner at The Whisper and a walk through The Watering Hole square,” Nick said, smiling before taking another large bite of his pizza and being careful not to flash his sharper teeth at Judy.

“What's The Whisper?” Judy asked, taking another bite of her own food.

“Jack didn’t take you?” Nick asked raising an eyebrow. “Wait, no, I take that back, of course he wouldn’t take you there.”

“What does that mean?”

“I'd rather not spoil the surprise Fluff; needless to say, I’m taking you there as soon as I can use my left paw again.”

“Why would you need your left paw for a date, Slick?”

Nick grinned, deliberately ignoring the question. “Anyway, fox dates have a custom to them; the first
date is a meal with something romantic following, set up by the tod. The second date is set up by the
vixen; I know very little about that one, as Mom deemed it unimportant to tell me. The third date, if
they make it that far, is something that the two like to do together.”

“So three dates to make a relationship?”

“Well, it was explained to me that there are dates, and then there are outings and just generally
hanging out. The dates are supposed to be big memorable things, stories we would pass down to our
kits. The outings are like your typical dinner and a movie sort of affair.”

“So is that our first date then?” Judy asked, looking up at him with bright purple eyes.

Nick looked thoughtful for a moment. “Yeah, I think it is; the doc said I’d be out of the sling in what,
a week?”

“Yeah, if you don’t aggravate it too much.”

Nick smiled. “Good, that gives me time to arrange everything then.”

“Wait, you said it all starts when the tod flirts with the female, or in our case doe, right?”

“Right.”

“You flirted with me every day…”

“Relentlessly since my academy graduation.”

“Until…”

“You met Jack, yes.”
Judy’s brow furrowed while she thought. “But you started again after about a month into my relationship with Jack….”

“That I did.”

“Why?”

“You never smelt like him,” Nick looked down at her.

“Oh….” Judy looked down at her paws.

“Scent marks are important to canidae.”

Judy nodded. “They’re important to rabbits as well,” she all but whispered.

"So after six weeks…”

Judy nodded. “I think I get the picture. How do foxes treat their mates?”

“Depends on the fox I guess, like every species…”

Nick stacked the empty plates and took them into the kitchen.

"And you?”

Nick smiled at her.
Judy lay pensively on the bed, curled up on her side. She had left her stuffed bunnies at her apartment, as at the time she had fully planned on cuddling up to the fox.

*What am I doing here?*

*You’re supposed to be cuddling with warm fox right now …*

*But I don’t want to seem too forward.*

*Honey, that ship done sailed when you put your bag in his room.*

*And wore his shirt.*

*And that.*


Her eyes darted around the dark room. Her eyesight, while keen in the daylight, was rather poor at night.

*And now you’ve kept him awake.*

She slowly scooted back until she couldn’t move any further. Her head rested softly on his right shoulder as his arm wrapped possessively around her.

“Relax, Judy,” she heard Nick murmur.

She closed her eyes and smiled, feeling safe and secure with his strong arm wrapped around her, and slowly slipped away into sleep.
10-00 Officer Down
10-28 Registration request
11-54 Suspicious vehicle

Chapter End Notes

10-00 Officer Down
10-28 Registration request
11-54 Suspicious vehicle

6/18/2019 My editor lilwashu76 has completed the edits for this chapter.
Episode 2: Closer

Chapter Notes

This chapter is almost 99.98% pure fluff. Do no sue me if you get cavities from it.

I used two songs in this chapter I claim absolutely no credit for them.
If Tomorrow Never Comes is by Garth Brooks
Tangled Up In You is by Staind

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Episode 2: Closer

“Desperado, oh, you ain't gettin' no younger
Your pain and your hunger, they're drivin' you home
And freedom, oh freedom, well that's just some people talkin'
Your prison is walking through this world all alone”
~Desperado - Eagles

Judy’s blinked a few times. The warmth and security that was offered by her bed partner was doing more to keep her in the land of dreams than her stuffed bunnies had ever done. Judy smiled and buried her face in Nick's russet and cream colored fur the way she had for the past week. His tail draped over her like a second blanket, her paws gripping it gently.

Judy blushed as she thought back to the apprehension of her first night in his bed. Sweet cheese and crackers, I showed him my rear and when his pain meds started to kick in I clammed right up.

She felt the weight of his large paw shift slightly on her hip and smiled.

It's not just the comfort though...

We’ve had some long talks. Judy smiled. The fact that he doesn't want me to change for him means a lot to me.
He’s changed for you.

Judy blinked at the thought. Has he?

He was a street hustler and deities only know what else.

Judy peeked up at the face of the sleeping fox. Her nose twitched back and forth while she thought about it.

But now he’s a good cop.

She felt a sense of pride wash over her as she ducked her face back into the cream and russet nest of his side.

One thing’s for sure, no bunny could ever hope to hold you like this…

Judy smiled as she listened to his breathing change; it was one of the first things that happened when he started to wake up. She could still hear the slight creak of his ribs but it wasn't nearly as bad as it was when he came home a week ago.

She was supposed to call Chief Bogo today to let him know what the doctor said after Nick’s appointment. Officially she was on paid suspension, but unofficially she was fox sitting, since Nick had no other close family nor a lot of friends that could drop everything just because he was injured.

Nick squeezed her hip gently. His claws raked across the soft fabric of the much too large ZPD work out shirt that she had taken up wearing to bed. She could feel the tips of them press against her lower stomach and fought to suppress a shiver at the feel.

He’s a fox though, the one predator my parents warned me the most about. Oh sure, Dad said to fear wolves, bears, even weasels. But foxes he disliked most of all.

Gideon Gray …
Dad had it out for foxes well before the fight with Gideon, but now they work together …

“You need to tell your parents.”

“How do you think Nick will take being surrounded by what, 283 bunnies now? Didn’t Mom just have another litter?”

Judy smiled. Well, Mom probably wouldn’t feel comfortable with him near the newborns, but the kerfuffle?

Nick is a good fox. I think once they get to know him they’ll understand that.

Judy draped her arm carefully over Nick’s stomach and scratched lightly at the soft fur there. His left leg shook slightly with the attention, and caused the fox to make a noise somewhere between a growl and moan.

Judy smiles as he mumbled, “Good morning Fluff.”

Nick tilted his head so he could look down at her, one eye barely cracked open.

“Good morning Nick. You know you can sleep in a bit longer, right?” She smiled up into his eye.

The eye closed; she couldn’t tell if he was winking at her or if he was just blinking the sleep out of them. “And miss seeing your beautiful eyes first thing in the morning?”

Judy giggled at him. He’s done nothing but get even more flirty as the week’s worn on.

Not that you mind it …

Not one bit.
She felt his tail thump lightly once, held down by the blanket over it. “How are you feeling this morning?”

“Sore honestly, but not as bad as it has been.”

“That's good; maybe we’ll be back at work soon.”

“Yes, Super Bunny being absent from the streets, whatever will the city do?”

“I dunno Slick, this last time I think you saved the day more than I did.”

“Only because it was my turn to get out of the car.”

Nick's grip on her hip tightened a bit more before relaxing again.

“What's wrong Nick?” She had gotten pretty good at reading him over the last week.

“Why did he take them?”

“Take who?”

“The kits, why did Charlie take the kits?”

“Wait, you knew him?”

“I know everybody, Carrots. I thought we’d established that.”

“Yeah, I guess we did. They’re still working on why…”
Nick fell quiet as he traced a circle on her hip with a claw tip. His claws were sharp but he never applied enough pressure to harm her or cut whatever she was wearing. Judy watched him as the corners of his mouth started to curl up in a smile.

“You know… Friday is just a few more days away now,” Nick said smugly.

“So are you going to tell me what kind of place The Whisper is?” Judy asked, looking up at him.

“No, but I will tell you there's a dress code.”

“I'm all ears Slick.”

Nick smiled. “No, I'd say you're only about a quarter ears.”

Nick winced and yelped in pain when her tiny fist thumped into the still bruised ribs on his right side. Nick's knees curled up slightly as he let out a pitiful whimper.

It took Nick several deep breaths before the pain subsided.

“I'm sorry Nick, I forgot….”

“I’ll be okay Fluff, I know sometimes my mouth overloads my tail. The dress code is evening wear.”

Judy’s face froze in confusion. “Wha?”

“The dress code for The Whisper is evening wear.”

*The Pawlive Garden doesn't have a dress code….. How nice of a place is he taking me?*
“Nick…”

“Not telling, Fluff.” Nick's grin went from pained to smug faster than Judy thought it would have. “Tell me Jack took you to some nice places.”

“Sure, we went to The Pawlive Garden….”

Judy watched Nick's face; if she could define the look he had at that moment it could only be defined as smug turned to eleven.

“You're telling me big time movie star Jack Savage could only take you to The Pawlive Garden?”

“Yeah, well, I think he was trying to be low key…” She heard Nick sigh in disappointment.

“I’ll see if Fru Fru is available to take you shopping,” Nick said as he slowly started to sit up.

_Sweet cheese and crackers what have I gotten myself into?_

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Nick sat in the back seat of the cab with Judy beside him. He stole a glance at the bunny before opening the texts on his phone.

Nick: Fru, I need your help!

Fru Fru: Nicky you need more help than I can provide.

Nick: I’m more than certain that only you can save me in this time of dire need Fru.

Fru Fru: Nicky if you angered Daddy again…”
Nick: No no nothing like that. I have a date for Friday and she needs fashion help Fru…

Fru Fru: Wow Nicky way to go whos the lucky vixen?

Nick: Not a vixen….

Nick snapped a quick picture of Judy and sent it to Fru Fru.

Fru Fru: Really Nick you asked her out?

Nick: Yeah I’m taking her to The Whisper Friday night.

Fru Fru: Way to go Nicky! Your mother would be so proud.

Nick: You think so? Can you help her?

Fru Fru: How’s tomorrow morning?

Nick: Perfect thank you, Fru!

Fru Fru: Now Nicky you better not be playing with that bunny.

Nick: Would never Fru, I love her.

Fru Fru: You told her?

Nick: Getting shot tends to put things in perspective Fru. I’m keeping what kind of place The Whisper is as a surprise.
Fru Fru: Will you perform?

Nick: Maurice already asked, I'm not sure if I can, will have to try playing tomorrow morning when she's out.

Fru Fru: She doesn't know?

Nick: Not yet ;)

Fru Fru: Pulling out all the stops then eh Nicky?

Nick: Yeah that's the plan, at the hospital for my appointment thanks Fru!

Nick locked the screen of his phone and put it in his shirt pocket. Opening the door of the cab he lowered his aviator sunglasses down off his forehead to shield his sensitive eyes from the bright sunlight.

“Who were you texting Nick?” Judy asked.

“Fru, she said she'll take you out shopping tomorrow morning.”

“So she was free?” Judy’s ears perked up.

“Yeah, and yes, she knows where I'm taking you. I also told her I was leaving it as a surprise.”

Judy grinned. “So there's a chance I can get Fru to spill the beans?”

“Only if you want the surprise taken away.”
“You know, with the amount of effort you’re putting into this I don’t think I do.” Judy had watched Nick text back and forth since getting up this morning and the look of smugness on his face afterward was quite impressive.

“Good. I need to swing by an ATM at some point today to get cash for your dress,” Nick said as he opened the door, holding it for her with his right paw.

“Nick, I can buy my own clothes….”

“Oh, I have no doubt that you can.”

“Then why….” Judy paused mid-sentence, something that he’d said before nagging at her.

Nick remained quiet and smug as they passed through the hospital to the elevators.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

“Well, Officer Wilde it would appear you can have use of your arm again,” said Dr. Vivian Kiger, the female cougar orthopedics specialist. “You’ll need to do stretches and keep strenuous movement at a minimum for at least another week, but afterward it should be back to normal again with regular exercise.”

“Can he go back to work?” Judy asked.

“His ribs are just starting to set. I would advise that he take it easy for at least another week, maybe two, depending on how fast he heals,” Dr. Kiger explained.

“Oh….” Judy’s ears flopped down her back.

“Officer Hopps, your partner is very lucky to be alive right now.”

“I know. It's just that I was hoping to get back out there soon, you know?”
The doctor nodded. “I'll clear him for desk duty after his ribs stop sounding like a leaking sailboat.”

“Thanks, Doc,” Nick said.

“How do the rest of your ribs feel?” Dr. Kiger asked.

“Still a little sore, but they’re getting better.”

“That's to be expected; ribs are one the worst things to break, as we can’t really set them like an arm or leg. We pinned your broken ribs back together when we repaired the hole in your lung, but….” Dr. Kiger shrugged. “It will take time for them to heal.”

Nick nodded as he put his shirt back on and buttoned it up.

“The front desk will give you a new prescription for pain meds. Take them as needed.”

“I’m sorry, Nick,” Judy said. She’d been rather quiet since the doctor had chastised her about her partner's health.

“For?” Nick looked down at her, raising an eyebrow.

“Not seeming to care about your health…” Judy whispered.

“Fluff…” Nick started to reply.

“No, it's not okay. You've been so sweet. and you're trying to arrange a date for us, and here I am more worried about getting back to work.” Judy’s ears flopped down her back.
“I’m not upset.”

“But…”

Nick knelt down so he could look her in the eyes. “Listen to me, Judy. I’m not upset. Being a cop has been your dream, and it must be torture for you to be away from it for a month looking after me. But it doesn’t change how I feel about you; it doesn’t change anything.”

“You're good at that.”

“What’s that?”

“Letting me off the hook.”

Nick smiled. “I can choose what I can get upset over, Fluff, and I choose not to get upset over this. Besides, look on the bright side...”

“Which is?”

“I can do this now.” Nick pulled her in tightly with both arms, hugging her tightly to his chest.

She closed her eyes as both of his long arms and big paws wrapped around her and pulled her against his blue Hawaiian shirt. *Dumb, charming, fox,* she thought as she melted into his embrace in front of the hospital.

“Nick?” she whispered, burying her face in the fur of his neck.

“Mmm?” he rumbled in her ear.

“I’m sorry.”
“You're forgiven.”

Judy sat on a tall stool at the island, watching Nick work in the kitchen; his knife clacked away as he chopped veggies for omelets. She watched enraptured as his paws moved with a surety born of having done these tasks a thousand times. The gleaming stainless steel appliances looked new. The countertops were made out of butcher block and the cabinetry was white with silver hardware.

“Nick, where did you learn to cook?” Judy asked.

Nick paused for a moment. “Guess I started when I was 16 or so…”

“Oh, so flipping burgers?”

“Heh, no… I actually started as a dishwasher.” Nick smiled. “I was between homes at the time, and this restaurant’s oven vented into the alley so it was warm. At the time, though, the best thing was the fact that not only could I be warm, I could also scrounge food from the dumpster.”

Judy watched him as he told his story.

Nick started cracking eggs for the omelets as he continued. “Typically I hid in the shadow of the dumpster, but that day I was especially hungry because I hadn’t eaten for a while, so I started scrounging a bit earlier than I usually did.”

Nick started whisking the eggs and added a splash of milk to them. “This waitress comes out and throws some bags of trash into the dumpster. They hit me and I must have made too much noise, as she went running back into the place. A moment later this old goat comes out and starts yelling at me.”

“Mel took pity on me that day. Oh he yelled; I'm not sure what I said in response, but he ended up telling me to wait there.” Nick poured some of the egg into a hot frying pan. “He returned a short time later with a chicken burger and some fries, told me to wait there until after they closed.”
Judy frowned as she listened to his story.

Nick poured half of the chopped veggies onto the egg patty. “Mel took me to his place and let me shower, offered me a safe space to sleep. The next night I started washing dishes. It was hot, grueling work, but he paid me fairly, fed me, and offered to let me sleep at his place. I did that every night for maybe, four months?”

Nick looked thoughtful as he sprinkled cheese over the veggies and folded the egg over them. “Must have been four months. Anyway, after that Mel started to teach me to chop and prep food. I moved from dishwasher to prep work shortly after that; another few months and he had me cooking almost every night.”

Nick moved the omelet from the pan to a plate, added some steamed carrots, and sprinkled a bit of chopped green onion over the top of the omelet before sitting the plate down in front of her.

“Nick that's horrible! Where was your mother?” Judy asked, looking at the plate of well-prepared food in front of her.

Nick poured the rest of the egg into the pan. “I’d been away from home for about three solid years at that point. Mom and I didn’t see eye to eye on a lot of things, and home life had become so stressful that I figured I was better off on my own.”

“What about kit services?” Judy asked as she cut into the omelet.

“A different time, Fluff,” Nick answered as he poured the rest of the veggies onto the egg for his omelet and then added a couple of strips of turkey bacon as well. “I was a runaway fox kit; who honestly cared?”

“How did you graduate high school then?”

Nick smiled at her before sprinkling the cheese onto his omelet. “Study guides from the library; I’d passed the exit exam the year before.”

Nick watched as Judy took her first bite of omelet and saw her eyes light up. “Mmmmm. Nick, this is very good!”
“Glad it meets your high standards, Carrots.”

“Wait, does this mean we’re officially dating now?”

“By fox standards?”

Mmmhmm?” Judy asked around another mouthful of omelet.

Nick grinned mischievously, almost showing her a hint of his sharp teeth. “Does it mean that?” Nick looked thoughtful for a moment as he placed his omelet on his plate. “Why yes, yes it does, especially since I know you’re happy to live on TV dinners and take out.”

Judy smiled warmly. “Well if this is the kinda food I have to look forward to, then maybe having a dumb fox for a boyfriend wouldn't be that bad.”

Nick chuckled at her.

“So you were legit at that time?”

“Semi-legit; I would run a three card monte or shell game down in Savannah Park in the afternoons, mostly just for extra cash,” Nick said as he took another bite of his omelet.

“Where was Fin?”

“I don’t know, I hadn’t met the guy yet. We didn't start working together until I was around 24 or so.”

“How did you know Charlie?”

Nick tensed and looked around. “You're not going to record any of this, are you Carrots? Even though I was pardoned, some of this could come back to bite me hard.”
“No…. I couldn’t do that to my boyfriend.”

Nick looked thoughtful for several minutes. “Charlie is, or was I should say, a small-time drug runner.”

Judy finished her omelet. “Nick…”

“I wasn’t involved in that Judy. I stayed as far away from drugs and other things as I could. Please believe that.”

Nick looked into Judy’s eyes. She frowned a bit at the expression on his face. Is that fear?

“Ok, Nick, I believe you”

Nick put his fork down and looked Judy in the eyes. “I knew Charlie because I’d gained a reputation for getting my paws on things that mammals wanted. Mostly information though. But with Charlie, I sold him certain rugs made from the fur of animals to help mask the smells of drugs. I didn’t know what he was using them for at the time. I just knew he bought several a month from me and the profit that I made off his sales was lucrative.”

Judy frowned as she thought.

“I stopped selling to him after I found out,” Nick explained.

“How did you find out?”

“The police blotter is public record. It’s also published in the Zootopia Daily Herald. I had a habit of picking up a paper to read the blotter to see which of my friends was picked up for what.”

“So you saw Charlie's name?”
“Yeah, he and his brother had gotten picked up for drug possession with intent to distribute.”

“So how did you find out what he was using your rugs for?”

“A detective came and questioned me.”

“What did you tell them?”

“The truth. Charlie or his brother would come in once a month to buy rugs made from any fur that had a horrible scent. Always paid in cash and I didn’t think anything of it, as it got the rugs out of my space.”

“What happened next?”

“The detective let it slip what Charlie was doing.” Nick looked down at his paws, his omelet seemingly forgotten. “On the street, I had rules…a code of conduct if you will. It was pretty simple: Nothing that would tear families apart. I didn’t deal in drugs, I didn’t knowingly associate with drug dealers or their suppliers or those they preyed on mammals…”

“What do you mean by that last part?”

“I was a hustler, maybe even at times a two-bit gangster. But never a pimp.”

Judy and Nick sat in silence for a while.

Nick looked ashamed as he gathered up the dishes and scraped the other half of his omelet into the trash, as his appetite was gone. Judy watched him, her frown deepening as her thoughts raced on.

She slid down off of the stool and approached him. “Nick?”

“Yeah, Fluff?” He turned and looked down at her, surprised as her arms wrapped around his waist tightly.
“It’s okay Nick. I know you’re not that mammal anymore.”

“I’m not sure you know what it means to me to hear you say that, Fluff.”

“Can I ask one more question, Nick?”

“You can ask me anything.”

“Why did you sell the rug to Mr. Big?”

Nick sighed as he looked down into her eyes.

“Depression is an ugly thing.”

“So how did you pull yourself out of it?”

“Well, I started by trying to patch things up between Mom and myself, and that was more by accident than anything else.”

“How so?”

Nick smiled at the memory. “Would you believe I sold her a pawpsicle?”

“Really?”

“Yeah; it had been years since I had last seen her, and it was maybe three months before you came crashing into my life. Fin and I had set up our operation on the east side of Savannah Square in an area we hadn’t tried before; then she came along and gave me five dollars and told me to keep the change.” Nick picked up their empty plates and rinsed them off. “She must have watched me sell the rest and Fin gathering the recycling bins for the sticks before she approached me.”
Nick paused for a while as he placed the dishes in the dishwasher and started cleaning up his prep area.

“What happened next?”

“We fought. We fought almost every time we ran into each other mostly over my poor life choices or whatever she caught me doing at the time.”

“Oh… I’m sorry Nick.”

“Why? My mom and I were like oil and water; we loved each other but we didn’t mix very well, and honestly, we didn't fight over the pawpsicles. She might have if she knew how they were being made, but we fought over something else that day instead, I'm not sure what though.”

“So why did you fight all the time?”

“Mom wanted me to follow in Dad’s footsteps and be a tailor, or work for her in real estate.”

“So why didn’t you?”

Nick took his knives over to the sink and started washing them. “Honestly? Pride. Well, pride and greed. I was making on average $200 a day with pawpsicles, music, and… Let’s just call them other ventures.”

“Music?”

Nick’s sly smile slowly turned mischievous. “Yeah, music.”

Judy frowned, thinking back to Nick’s taste in music in their cruiser. *Wait, he said he knows everyone….*
“Ask the question, Fluff.”

Judy blushes. “How do you know what I'm going to ask?”

Nick grinned. “Remember Fluff, I know everyone.”

“So do you know….”

“Amellia?” Nick interrupted. “Yes, I know her quite well, Fluff.”

“How…” Judy stuttered. “How do you know Gazelle?

Nick looked down at the knife he was cleaning sadly. “A story for another time maybe.”

“Please?”

Nick sat his knife aside and picked up the second one, starting to wash it by hand.

“She taught me how to play when I was 19, even gave me my first guitar…” Nick started. “She wasn't famous then, just trying to make it through the day like the rest of us.”

Nick sighed, drying his knives “Mel had died a few weeks prior and my money was running out. Very few places wanted to hire a fox to cook in their kitchen so I was falling back on the one thing I could. That evening I had set up a shell game in the park and had almost won enough for a burger, a drink and maybe a night in a sleazy motel. Then an officer came by.”

“What happened?”

“I was given an option of either going to jail or making a donation to the officer's dinner funds.”

“Oh…”
“It was low stakes, like fifty cents a try. I’ve always been good at sleight of paw. It wasn’t technically illegal, but I guess it was enough that the officer thought he could at least throw me in a cell for 24 hours.”

Nick smiled as he placed his knives in the wooden block holder. “It’s kinda ironic though.”

“How’s that?”

“The day I met Amellia was also the day I met Chief Bogo.”

Judy sighed as she snuggled into the chest of the sleeping fox. Dinner had been excellent; an eggplant pasta dish that she had never tried before with a carrot cake for dessert. *A freaking carrot cake!* she thought to herself. *My fox baked me a cake!*

She paused at that though. *My fox?*

She pulled back as far as the pair of strong arms wrapped around her would go and looked up at Nick's sleeping face. Nick's mouth was slightly ajar, showing just a hint of the sharp teeth contained within.

Judy softly caressed the side of his muzzle and caused him to whimper softly, “Judy,” as he nuzzled into her paw.

*He told me a lot of stories about things he’s done and mammals he knows.*

*Bogo took $20 from a hungry fox and gave it to Gazelle, who gave it back to Nick.*

*No wonder Nick gives the chief so much grief.*
Wonder if Bogo even remembers the incident.

Judy closed her eyes and snuggled her face into the fur of Nick's chest, her small paws gripping it lightly. She fell asleep to the sound of his breathing.

“Trust Fru’s fashion sense!” Judy heard Nick’s voice say in her head.

I have fashion sense! was Judy’s reply.

Do you? Really?

No, no I do not.

Judy looked through the racks of clothes while her friend Fru Fru looked through another carried by an annoyed looking polar bear in a suit. Then again, maybe Kevin always looks annoyed.

“I think we are looking in the wrong store, Jude,” Fru Fru said.

“But this is what I can afford!”

“Nonsense; Nicky is picking up the bill. Besides, do you want to look like my Aunt Edizel or do you want to bag your fox?”

“What do you mean Nick is picking up the bill?”

“Kevin honey, show her.”

Kevin reached into his pocket and pulled out a medium mammal sized envelope and handed it to her. Judy opened the envelope and suppressed a gasp at the small stack of bills it contained.
“So should we stop pretending and go someplace to get you something to make Nicky eat out of your paws or what?”

“Two hundred dollars a day Fluff... Pawpsicles, music, and other ventures.”

That fox still has some answering to do, but if he wants me to spend his money...

Judy looked at the small female shrew. “Help me get my fox…”

Judy paused listening outside Nick's apartment. The pleasing sounds of a guitar could be heard faintly through the door. She had two garment bags tossed over her shoulder and a small plastic bag in her other paw. Nick knows how to play guitar?

She could make out the chord progressions and the slow beat of the song he was playing.

“Come on in Carrots; I know you're out there!” Nick called from inside the apartment, not missing a beat with the guitar.

Nick smiled at her from his place on the couch. An acoustic guitar was sitting in his lap; he was fretting the notes with his left paw while his right plucked and strummed the strings as required. Judy watched him for a moment, her purchases momentarily forgotten.

“Have a good time Fluff?”

The tip of Nick's tail flicked in time with whatever song he was playing while his paws did what was needed to hit the next chords, but his eyes and attention never left the bunny.

Judy walked into the spare bedroom and hung up the pair of garment bags.
“What did you do while I was gone, Slick?”

“Oh, just made some phone calls and played some guitar.” His paws keep moving, the acoustic guitar singing its song. Judy felt like she should know the song as she placed the plastic bag under the garment bags.

She walked into the living room and sat down on the couch beside him as he played. His paw moved up and down the fretboard with a grace that she had never seen in them before. His eyes closed, a slight smile on his muzzle, as he played bits and pieces of songs she knew. As he played for her, he somehow managed to weave the different pieces together into a pleasing chorus of music.

She watched as his demeanor changed, his ears laid back slightly against his head.

“Sometimes late at night,
I lie awake and watch her sleepin’”

His paws moved over his guitar, accompanying his voice perfectly.

“She's lost in peaceful dreams
So I turn out the lights and lay there in the dark”

Judy’s ears folded back as she listened to the city fox sing country music. His tone and inflections were enough to let her know that this wasn’t the first time he’d played this song. The thing that struck her as really odd was that he didn’t sound totally ridiculous doing it.

“And the thought crosses my mind
If I never wake up in the morning”

Judy's paws came up to her chest while he sang to her, his paws moving slowly and deliberately across the strings of his guitar.

“Would she ever doubt the way
I feel, about her in my heart
If tomorrow never comes
Will she know how much I loved her’’

Nick’s head was leaning against the back of the couch. His eyes closed as he went into the chorus of the song and his right paw was playing the guitar a little louder than before as he strummed out the notes.

“Did I try in every way to show her every day
that she’s my only one
And if my time on earth were through
And she must face this world without me
Is the love I gave her in the past
gonna be enough to last
if tomorrow never comes.”

It took a few minutes of silence for her to realize that Nick had stopped playing. The guitar was sitting silently in his paws.

Nick sat the guitar down, leaning it against the arm of the couch as he turned and looked into Judy’s eyes. The look in his eyes was almost predatory; it made her shiver in anticipation. She scooted down on the couch so that she was almost laying on it as he loomed over her, their noses just inches away from touching.

He kissed her tentatively at first, the different lengths of their muzzles making it awkward. They soon found the way of it though, and their kiss deepened with need and passion. He came down to his elbows, pinning her to the couch as his paws gently ran along her sensitive ears.

Nick broke the kiss, looking down into her eyes. “I love you, Judy.”

Judy’s eyes widened in surprise. He hasn't said that since the hospital!

Her eyes closed as he gently ran his fingertips over her cheeks, burying his nose into the fur at the
junction of her neck and shoulder. Her nose twitched as her arms wrapped around his neck, holding him tightly to her, his teeth nibbling softly at the soft skin hidden under her fur.

“Nick…” she moaned softly at the feel of his teeth. Her head tilted the opposite way, giving him more access to her vulnerable neck.

He nibbled a little harder, being careful not to break the skin; his tongue lashed out, feeling her pulse under it. She shuddered and arched up toward him, her paws holding him in place. He kissed the spot lightly, pulling back to look into her eyes as they came open once again, her arms still holding onto his neck.

Vrrt, vrrt, vibrated her cellphone in her pocket. Judy groaned as Nick backed away from her so she could get to her phone.

Judy sighed as she looked at the screen. “It’s my parents. Sorry Slick, if I don't answer they'll just keep calling back until I do.”

“So nice of you to call!” Judy said somewhat excitedly while Nick got up off the couch.

Nick picked up his guitar and placed it back on its hanger on the left side of the large screen TV. He barely listened to the conversation between the bunnies.

Nick walked into the kitchen and flicked on the lights as he passed by the switches.

“Mom, I have a date tomorrow night,” Nick heard Judy say, his ears swiveling toward the living room as he started to chop up vegetables for dinner.

“But you're supposed to be taking care of your partner!”

Nick glanced up, seeing Judy smiling at him over the back of the couch.

“Oh, I think Nick will be just fine while I’m out.”
“Judith Laverne, is that fox taking you out to dinner?”

“Mom, what gives you that idea? And what would it matter if he was,?” Nick stopped chopping vegetables and looked up at Judy.

“I would not have a problem with you dating your partner. Your father, on the other paw…”

“I thought it got better after you guys partnered up with Gideon.”

“Your father tolerates Gideon, mostly because he's helping us sell more produce with his pies. But that does not answer the question Judith. Is Nick the one taking you out tomorrow night?”

“Yes…”

“Good.”

Nick couldn't keep the surprise from his face. He could see she was just about as surprised as he was.

“You...you mean that?”

“Of course I do dear. While your father and I both liked, Jack at least Nick is male. You remember your Aunt Clara’s latest fling don't you?”

“Of course Mom, you won't let anyone forget Carl.”

“It’s Carla dear.”

“Yeah well, the police database says its Carl.”

Nick coughed a bit at that.
“We probably have never should have suggested you look into that…”

“No, no you shouldn't have.”

“So…. where is Nick taking you?”

Nick smiled and turned his attention back to the vegetables that he was dicing up for stir-fry.

At least one of her parents is on my side.

Nick heard Judy’s conversation move down the hall to the guest bedroom where she’d placed her purchases from that morning.

Nick turned on the burner and started to heat up his frying pan. He dumped in the chopped vegetables and poured in a bit a soy sauce, adding some garlic, pepper, and ginger to the pan as well.

“Mmmmm, smells good Slick!” Judy called as she walked back into the living room.

“Wait, he cooks for you!?” Nick heard her mother exclaim.

“Yep! I haven't had a TV dinner since Nick got out of the sling.”

“Oh my god; let me speak to Nick…” Nick’s ears plastered back against his head while he stirred the vegetables around the pan.

Nick looked down at the phone that Judy presented to him. “Hello Mrs. Hopps, it's been a while since we last spoke.”

“Mr. Wilde, what pray tell are you feeding my daughter?”
“Tonight? Hmm, Mongolian vegetable stir fry with rice noodles and tofu, and maybe a chocolate carrot cake for dessert.”

“You're aware….”

“That she doesn't overly care for spicy food? Yes, ma'am, I am aware.”

“So….”

“Soy sauce, garlic, pepper, and some salt; most of the stir fry itself is made up of yellow and green bell peppers with green beans, corn, and some shiitake mushrooms.”

Nick smiled at Judy’s mother’s look of surprise.

“Ok Mr. Wilde, I'll leave you to it, but you better be good to my daughter.”

“I love her, ma’am,” Nick told her before handing Judy back her phone.

Judy sat on the edge of the bed waiting, letting her mind wander back over the evening.

_He kissed you._

_He wanted to do more than kiss… she shot back at herself._

_His teeth on your neck felt good…_

_Sweet cheese and crackers, it did! Do you think he knows?_
How could he not?

She blushed as she thought about the feel of his teeth and tongue on her neck, her right paw coming up to touch the spot. Her thighs shifted slightly as she thought about the feelings that washed over her at that moment.

Why did he stop….

Mom called, dufus.

Yeah, but he didn’t try again.

More than likely didn’t want things to be any more awkward than they already are.

Nick stepped back into the bedroom from brushing his teeth, his eyes tracking over Judy slowly.

“Penny for your thoughts, Fluff?”

Judy blushed, her cheeks and inner ears turning bright red. “Just thinking about this afternoon…”

Nick sat down on the bed beside her. “It was a very enjoyable afternoon. Your mother surprised me.”

Judy’s ears perked up a bit as she looked up at him. “How so?”

“Didn’t expect her to support you dating a fox. Not after they gave you the fox repellent and offered you a fox taser when they found out I was going to be your partner after I graduated the academy.”

“Mom told me just before I started dating Jack about a ferret she dated in high school. I think she was hinting then that she was okay with us.”
Nick sat quietly for a moment not sure how to respond. “Seems a thing for sharp teeth might run in the family then, eh Fluff?” He joked.

She tensed but laughed anyway and blushed even brighter, the inner portions of her ears turning bright red. “How long have you known, Slick?”

Nick looked down into her eyes. “I started to put things together after the hospital. But know? I didn't really know for sure until…well, this afternoon on the couch.”

Judy just blushed and held his gaze for a moment before looking away.

“You have a very interesting reaction from being nibbled on a bit, Fluff.”

Judy blushed more. “You noticed that did you?”

“It would have been impossible not to.”

“How so?” she asked quietly.

“Aside from the moans and the shaking?”

She nodded.

Nick looked up as he attempted to find a polite way to tell her.

“When you're…” Nick paused for a moment and attempted to pick his words carefully. “Excited, your scent changes; it’s still you, but more…. Sweet, is the term I think I'd use to describe it.”

Judy blushed and pulled her ears in front of her face hiding behind them.

“It's a very pleasant smell.”
Judy looked up, peeking out from under her ears.

“The first time I smelled it was in the exhibit when we hustled Bellwether. The second time I most definitely smelled it was on the bed after I was released from the hospital. The third time was today on the couch.” Nick paused, thinking back. “There may have been a few times I smelled it, or something close to it, in the cruiser.”

“Nick!” Judy blushed as she punched him in the arm.

Nick rocked to the side slightly and rubbed his arm where she punched him.

“Honestly Carrots, I'm not judging you.”

Judy’s ears flopped back behind her head as she shyly looked up at him. “You're not?”

“No. You're not the first and you won’t be the last prey to…” Nick paused again and looked down into her eyes as he picked his words carefully. “Get enjoyment from a predator’s sharp parts.”

“How do you feel about that, Nick?”

“What, about you getting enjoyment from my teeth and claws?”

She nodded at him, searching his eyes.

He smiled at her, his lips pulling back to give her a rare glimpse of his pearly white teeth. “I find it much like your scent, Fluff. Intoxicating.

“Then why…”

“How do you feel about that, Nick?”

“What, about you getting enjoyment from my teeth and claws?”

She nodded at him, searching his eyes.

He smiled at her, his lips pulling back to give her a rare glimpse of his pearly white teeth. “I find it much like your scent, Fluff. Intoxicating.

“Then why…”

“How do you feel about that, Nick?”

“What, about you getting enjoyment from my teeth and claws?”

She nodded at him, searching his eyes.

He smiled at her, his lips pulling back to give her a rare glimpse of his pearly white teeth. “I find it much like your scent, Fluff. Intoxicating.

“Then why…”

“How do you feel about that, Nick?”

“What, about you getting enjoyment from my teeth and claws?”

She nodded at him, searching his eyes.
Judy just nodded at him.

“In my last relationship, I pushed way too hard and way too fast and I scared her off.”

“What happened?”

Nick sighed. “It’s not something I want to talk about yet, Fluff.”

“Nick, if you’ve known that I like your teeth and claws, why do you hide them from me?”

Nick chuckled. “ Noticed that did you?”

Judy nodded.

“I’m not sure how many predators you had out in Bunnyburrow, but here at the start of every school year the predators are given a class, typically during recess, on how not to needlessly frighten prey.”

“Nick, that’s…”

Nick shrugged. “It's the way things are, Fluff. Besides, most of the class was helpful for putting prey at ease in order to con them anyway.”

“Wait, what?”

“Yeah, I'm pretty sure the school system doesn't realize they’re teaching How to Scam Prey 101.”

“That’s horrible Nick…”

“Well, it's better than what my mom and dad had to go through in the 60s and 70s.”
“What did they go through?”

“It’s not a very good bedtime story Carrots and it won't make you feel very good, so let's not go there either, ok?”

“I’d still like to know Nick.”

“I promise I’ll tell you, just not tonight.”

Nick crawled up on the bed and laid down on his back.

Judy smiled, crawling up beside him and curling herself into the crook of his arm. Nick's ZPD shirt rode slightly up her thighs as she curled up and he turned out the lamp.

“Goodnight Judy.”

“Goodnight Nick.”

Nick stood in front of the mirror and slowly tied his tie in a double Windsor knot. His chances to wear an actual tie these days were limited, as the ZPD rules stated that all ties had to be a clip on, and even then they were optional wear.

He smoothed down the collar of his shirt and adjusted the knot of his tie. He looked himself over carefully, making sure everything was in its place: His freshly pressed crisp white shirt, black slacks, and his deep purple tie. He slipped the black vest of his suit on and buttoned it, grinning at himself; tonight was the night.

Finally! It’s been almost a month since the shooting. Two weeks since I've been released from the hospital. But I’m doing it; I'm taking Judy out tonight.
“The heart wants what the heart wants Nicky,” he heard his mother's voice say in his head. It was one of the last things she was able to say to him, and it was one of the more rarer times that they didn't fight.

Nick sighed and looked up. *I hope you're proud of me, Mom,* he thought to himself before picking up his suit jacket and slipping it on. The one thing years of service to Mr. Big had thought him was how to wear a suit, and, more importantly, how to look comfortable doing it.

“*Clothes makes the mammal, Nicholas,*” Nick could hear the advice once given to him by Mr. Big himself. After that advice, Nick had always made sure to look his best in front of his former boss.

He smiled at himself in the mirror; now the advice had taken on a new meaning to him.

Nick rolled his shoulders, making sure everything fit just perfectly. In most ways, the suit looked better on him now than it did when he’d first had it tailored for his frame; the academy had done him favors when it came to his physical appearance.

He picked up his wallet, slipping it into the inner pocket of his suit jacket, and then picked up his phone to checked the time. *Good, we still have about twenty minutes until the car arrives.* He slipped his phone into the front pocket of his pants as he opened his bedroom door to wait for Judy out in the living room.

Nick looked around the room while he waited for Judy to finish getting ready in the second bedroom. Small changes had taken place over the last few weeks: a trinket of hers here and there, her phone charger by the couch. *I haven’t asked her to move in, but I think that's a foregone conclusion at this point.* Her scent was mixed in the air with his. *Even my bedding smells of her. I doubt that she has much of anything left at her old place…*

Nick turned as he heard the second bedroom door open.

They locked eyes, amethyst to emerald, before both of their gazes moved down. Judy was dressed in a floor length black evening gown. The sweetheart neckline showed just enough of her chest to be tantalizing. The back and sides of the dress were scooped out, showing large swaths of exposed fur. How far down the back went Nick could not yet tell, but the slit on the left paw side of the skirt went almost all the way up to her hip, showing plenty of her well-toned calf and thigh. Around her neck was clasped a simple necklace with a single emerald gemstone.
Nick's eyes traveled back up to hers and he smiled warmly, showing her just a bit of his teeth. “You are truly a stunning bunny, Judy.” Her nose twitched with the compliment and the blush of her cheeks slowly crept up into her ears.

“You clean up rather well yourself, Nick.”

Nick's phone vibrated in his pocket, signaling the arrival of their ride. Nick smiled brightly at her, the smile even lighting up his eyes.

“Our ride has arrived, Miss Hopps, if you’d be so kind as to allow me to escort you to dinner?” Nick said formally, grabbing his keys from the counter and walking up to her to offer her his arm.

“Of course Mr. Wilde, I would absolutely love to join you for dinner, since you did purchase me this lovely dress and what I have on under it…” Judy replied as she took his arm.

Nick coughed a bit at that before his expression went from surprised to smug. “Well Miss Hopps, if the dress is anything to go by, I'm sure you’ll be even more stunning in just what’s on under it.”

Judy blushed and took his arm as he led her to the door. “Play your cards right Slick and you'll get to see me without even that.”

Nick growled slightly, eyeing the rabbit as he closed and locked the apartment door behind him. He smiled as he smelled her excitement, flashing her a toothy grin as he led her to the elevators.

He let his eyes roam over her and smiled, seeing the back of her dress dip to just below her tail.

Best money I have ever spent, he thought to himself.

He pushed the button for the lobby, then allowed his paw to drift down her exposed back.

“What’s on your mind, Slick?”

As he moved his paw back up along the curve of her back, he pressed the tips of his claws into her
fur, allowing them to slide gently against the skin beneath.

Judy shivered at the feel of it. “Is that your plan, Mister Fox? To torment this poor country bunny during dinner so you can have your way with her?”

“Maybe it is Miss Hopps; maybe my plan is to take you out, wine and dine you, then make you dessert.”

Nick smiled down at her as the elevator came to a stop. He motioned for her to precede him and took the moment to admire her backside once again.

Judy paused as she exited the apartment building seeing the glistening white limousine. The car was sized more for smaller mammals instead of polar bears, but it was still clearly from Mr. Big’s rental agency. “Is that…” she started to ask.

“Yes, yes it is; Fru insisted.”

A male cheetah opened the rear door for them as they approached. “Good evening Miss Hopps and Mr. Wilde,” he said.

Nick waited as Judy stepped into the car first, with him following behind her.

Judy watched Nick closely; he wore his suit with the ease and comfort of someone accustomed to them.

“Nick?” she asked quietly as the car started to move.

“Yeah Carrots?” he answered as he turned to over at her.

“How long have you known?”

“Known what?”
“That you love me?”

Nick looked distant for a moment. “I think I knew you’d gotten to me during the press conference. I mean, why would you saying it was all biology that might have been causing predators to go savage bother me if you weren’t getting to me. But no, I didn’t know know until you started dating Jack. But I thought you were out of my reach, or wouldn’t even give me a chance. Yet here you are.”

Judy laughed nervously. “Yeah, here I am.”

“Your mother seemed oddly supportive.”

“Mom was always the more level-headed of the two. It’s my dad I worry about.”

“Yeah, I’m giving three to one odds that I’m going to get tased after he finds out.”

The look in Nick’s eyes got softer as he looked at her with a small smile on his face.

“What?”

“You are truly the most beautiful creature that I have ever seen.”

Judy blushed and looked away from him, her ears perking up just a bit as she heard his low rumbling chuckle.

“Don’t ever change, Carrots.”

The car stopped in front of a nondescript door with a wolf standing outside of it. The door itself was painted red and the wolf was dressed in a suit and tie.

The driver got out of the car and walked around to open the door. Nick got out first, rebuttoning the buttons of his suit jacket as he did so, and waited for Judy, offering her his paw as she neared the
Nick smoothly transitioned her arm around his after she got out of the car and led her toward the door.

“Thomas,” Nick greeted warmly.

“Nicholas Wilde,” Thomas greeted warmly. “And who have you got here?”

“My date and partner on the force, Judy Hopps,” Nick answered smoothly. “Judy, meet Thomas.”

“Hello, Thomas, it's a pleasure.”

“The pleasure is all ours, Miss Hopps. Please enjoy your dinner,” Thomas said as he reached over and pulled the door open for them.

They were instantly greeted by a white-tailed deer. “Nicholas!” The deer greeted them, his voice as over flamboyant as his suit. The suit looked like it had been made from one of Nick's Hawaiian shirts.

“Maurice, how is Janice?”

“Janice is doing well Nicky; she sends her regards and wishes you well. This must be Miss Hopps.”

“Yes; Judy is allowing me to court her this evening.”

Judy blushed at Nick's words. “It's a pleasure to meet you, Maurice; I was starting to wonder if Nick had any respectable friends.”

Nick chuckled. “I have you Carrots.”
“If you’ll please allow me to lead you to your table, you’ll be able to start enjoying your evening.”

They were led through another set of doors into a larger room with booths set up; the lighting was low and piano music could be heard. The walls were paneled in dark hardwoods and the carpet under their feet was plush.

Judy glanced around, noticing that most of the booths were filled with mixed species couples. As she slid into her seat, a quiet whir was heard as Judy's seat lifted so she would be comfortably sat at the table.

“This is pretty snazzy Slick, you should get something like this for me at your apartment.”

“Your server will be around shortly. Can I get you anything to drink?”

“Umm….” Nick smiled at Judy’s sudden panic.

“We’ll both have a Shirley Temple, Maurice.”

“I'll get those started right away.”

Judy looked confused for a moment.

“Don’t worry Fluff, it doesn’t contain alcohol. I don’t want to chance mixing it with my pain meds later, and I’m not sure how you deal with hard liquor,” Nick explained, opening his menu.

Judy nodded, looking over hers as well. “What's good here?” she asked nervously.

“Everything,” Nick answered honestly. “Maurice hired both a predator and a prey chef; they work hard to cater to both tastes equally.”

Judy nodded.
“They also strived for everything on the predator menu to have a vegetarian equivalent to it.”

“So what are you going to have?”

“More than likely the chicken alfredo.” Nick nodded and closed his menu. “Yep, the chicken alfredo.” He turned his attention to the captivating bunny across from him.

“What about some fish?” Judy asked, not even looking up at him.

“If I eat too much fish I start to smell like it, and I have this fantastic new girlfriend that I am desperately trying to impress.”

“May have already failed there, Slick.”

“You wound me, Carrots, you truly wound me,” Nick said as he held a paw over his heart.

“You have impressed me, Nick.”

Nick smiled at that, his tail thumping against the booth seat beside him.

“I think I’ll have the eggplant parmesan,” Judy said, closing her menu as well.

The two sat looking at each other for a few minutes.

“So why did you choose this place?”

“Other than the fact that I know the owner?”

“Yes, but you did tell me you know everyone, so that really isn’t all that surprising.”
“Good evening, sorry about the wait. My name is Luna, and I will be your server this evening. Here are your drinks,” Luna said, putting their drinks down on the table.

Nick turned his gaze away from Judy to notice the snow leopard dressed all in black with a white apron.

“Are you ready to order or do you need a minute longer?”

“I believe we are ready,” replied Judy.


“I’d like the eggplant parmesan please,” Judy said, looking up at the waitress.

“Excellent choice; might I recommend the broccoli salad as a side?”

“Sure.”

“And for you Nick?”

“I’d like the chicken alfredo, please, Luna.”

“Sure thing. I'll get these orders in for you right away.”

Nick nodded and turned his attention back to Judy.

“So tell me, Wilde, come here often?” she asked.

Nick smiled and chuckled. “Isn’t that supposed to be my line, Carrots? That is, if we’re going after cheesy pickup lines.”
“Well, she seemed to know you.”

“Of course she does.”

“Because you know everybody?”

“Well, that and I’ve been playing here every Friday night up until I got shot.”

“When did you start this?”

Nick shrugged noncommittally. “A while back.”

Judy stared at Nick for a few moments. “After I started dating Jack.” she said, looking down at the table.

“Judy.”

She looked up at him as he said her name.

“You need to stop beating yourself up over that,” he said as he looked into her eyes.

“It's hard not to, especially now that I know how you feel about me,” Judy whispered. Her eyes broke contact with his once again.

“Is it because you have feelings for me?” he asked quietly.

Judy nodded.

“I'm scared, Nick.”
Nick huffed at that and smiled. “Super Bunny, scared? What do you have to be scared of?”

“We are a predator and prey couple, Nick…”

“So?”

“In Bunnyburrow, it’s unheard of.”

“But Fluff, you're not in Bunnyburrow anymore.”

Judy looked up at him. “I know that Nick…”

“Mixed relationships do happen here; granted, predator and prey couples are still a little on the rare side, but for the most part, mammals here have enough of their own problems.”

“Meaning what Nick?”

“If you're worried about pitchforks and torches being brought out, that doesn’t happen in Zootopia. Now there are still bigots here, but for the most part, mammals want to mind their own business.”

Judy blinked at him. “You're not worried about….”

“How others will view our relationship?”

“Well, yeah.”

“No.”

“Why not, it could…”
“Judy, why worry about what could happen when it would keep us from living our lives?” Nick asked honestly.

“But it could affect our jobs…”

Nick shook his head. “Nope.”

“How do you know? Nick, we can't wishfully think a problem away….”

“Carrots, what is the ZPD policy on officers dating officers?”

Judy looked away, frowning as she tried to think of the policy. “I’m not sure.”

Nick pulled out his phone and unlocked it, his claw tapping away at the screen. He slid his phone across the table to her.

She picked up his phone and looked down at the screen, seeing that he’d brought up the appropriate section of the ZPD guidelines.

Judy started to read:

Zootopia Police Department

Interoffice Relationships

The Department recognizes that mammals working in close proximity to each other and in high-stress environments may form bonds that go beyond a duty relationship. The only time the Department prohibits these relationships is when one officer is the direct superior of the other. The relationship must be annotated on a ZPD Form 1061 with the officer’s supervisor.

Judy slid his phone back across the table to Nick and looked down at her paws. “I really am a dumb bunny,” she mumbled. “I'm sorry Nick, I skipped that part of the guidelines since I never thought they’d pertain to me.”
Nick chuckled. “I looked it up even before I joined.”

Judy looked up at him in surprise, her amethyst eyes going wide.

“Now, this doesn’t get us off the hook with your father, but I think your mother will be of help to us there. But for our lives here in the city…” Nick shrugged. “We will face adversity yes, but I don’t think it’ll be nearly as bad as you fear, sweetheart.”

Judy nodded, tears starting to form in her eyes.

“I’m sorry, Nick…”

“You have nothing to be sorry for.”

Judy gave him a wan smile and took a sip of her drink.

“You’ve given this a lot of thought, haven't you?”

“I have.”

Judy looked down at her paws while she sorted through her emotions.

Nick watched her face, her nose was twitching relentlessly and her ears were dropped down her back. He stretched a paw out across the table to her.

Judy looked at the outstretched paw on the table for a few moments before placing one of hers in it. She smiled as he closed his larger paw gently around her smaller one.

“So tell me, why did you need your left paw for this date?”
“Well….” Nick started, but was interrupted as their food arrived.

She watched his eyes, seeing a mix of both pride and something else in them. She couldn’t quite tell what the other thing was, but it excited her, as if she was being let in on one of his secrets

“Well…” Nick started again as the waitress left. “The Whisper is notable for three things, The first being the food. The second being the fact that it caters almost exclusively to mixed species couples, and the third is the club attached to the restaurant that has a stage where a live band plays every Friday night. The line up changes from time to time, but I hear they are quite good.” Nick grinned warmly.

Judy took a bite of her eggplant parmesan. “Does that band line up have a red fox in it?”

“It can if a gorgeous bunny wishes it,” he answered just before taking a bite of his chicken.

Judy sat on a stool at the club’s bar. Nick had escorted her there, saying it was one of the best seats in the house for a smaller mammal. Dinner had been absolutely fantastic; the eggplant was cooked to perfection and she had loved the crispness of the broccoli salad.

Nick had set her up with a rum and coke to sip on while he went backstage with the band.

_I told him he had three songs to impress me._

__He won't need that many…__

_No, no he won’t._

Judy’s ears perked up as Nick took to the stage carrying only an acoustic guitar. A stage paw brought up a stool for him and moved one of the microphones, adjusting it so it would pick up the sound from the guitar while leaving him one to sing into.
Nick gave her a cocky smug smile from across the room. No other band members took to the stage with him.

Nick's paws started to play. After every chord he played, he slapped the claws of his right paw against the strings of the guitar, causing them to be his own percussion to his playing.

His eyes locked onto hers, never leaving them, as he began to sing in a smooth and silky voice.

“You're my world, the shelter from the rain
You're the pills that take away my pain
You're the light that helps me find my way
You're the words when I have nothing to say”

Judy's heart melted her ears falling flat against her back. *Sweet cheese and crackers.*

“And in this world where nothing else is true
Here I am still tangled up in you
I'm still tangled up in you
Still tangled up in you”

“You're the fire that warms me when I'm cold
You're the hand I have to hold as I grow old
You're the shore when I am lost at sea
You're the only thing that I like about me”

Nick's smug expression had long since melted into one of complete sincerity as he continued to play. His eyes never strayed from her, somehow conveying the message of: “*My bunny.***”

“And in this world where nothing else is true
Here I am still tangled up in you
I'm still tangled up in you”

Judy had partially tuned out at that point, as her inner dialog had decided to speak up.

*Doesn’t matter now; you're his.*

*Mmmmmmm.*

*Do you love him?*

“How long has it been since this storyline began
And I hope it never ends and goes like this forever”

*You know, I think I do.*

“In this world where nothing else is true
Here I am still tangled up in you, tangled up in you
I'm still tangled up in you
Still tangled up in you”

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

She was right; he didn’t need three songs, but he played them anyway, not that she really listened after the first. Thoughts about what they’d likely be doing later in the evening had flooded her mind. She barely remembered the limo ride home, as he’d held her in his lap and kissed her the entire time. His paws had roamed and pushed the skirt of her black evening dress up her thighs, while hers undid his tie and opened as much of his shirt as she could.

Nick was by no means what one would call a muscular fox; his body just wasn't built for it. He was built for speed, agility, and cunning. The muscle that he did have was now well developed, and as such he was able to handle her thirty-pound frame with ease.
And now she found herself a few feet off the floor, pressed against the wall just inside the door of the apartment. Her feet pressed against his thighs while his paws gripped the cheeks of her ass, holding her up. His fingertips gripped and pressed enticingly close to her heated core.

He only removed his paws from her body to shake off the vest as she finally got the buttons undone. He broke their kiss, his nostrils flaring with each deep breath and smelling excited bunny.

Judy squealed excitedly as he pulled her away from the wall, her legs tightly wrapped around his waist. Her heart was pounding like a drum in her chest as Nick carried her into the bedroom. She marveled at the strength he had gained from his time at the Academy as well as her insistent three times a week workout routine.

Nick smiled as they entered the room, grateful he had left one of the bedside lamps on before heading out with Judy. He carefully crawled onto the bed on his knees and gently laid her down, her thighs spread around his hips.

Judy looked up at him, her nose twitching and her eyes bright with both wonder and excitement. Her eyes moved from his face down the cream-colored expanse of fur that stretched from his muzzle downward, and suddenly she wanted to see how far down it went.

Nick gently tugged at one of the two thin straps behind her neck, undoing the bow that held up her dress. He pulled the straps out from under her, letting them rest just above her shoulders. She was still covered by the dress, but it wasn’t held up; it would be very easy to pull the dress down and expose her chest to her vulpine lover.

He smiled down at her as her paws reached the last visible button of his shirt and hesitated as the shirt disappeared into the waistband of his pants.

Nick dipped his head, placing small light kisses along her short jawline.

Judy tilted her head and gave him more access, moaning softly.

Nick softly raked his fangs through the short fur of her neck. Her scent peaked as he gently nibbled on her neck, pinching the soft delicate flesh between his teeth before letting go.

Judy moaned, “Nick…” as she felt more of his weight rest on her, pressing her down into the
mattress of his bed. Her nose filled with the scent of violets and his shampoo. She gripped the fur of his chest though his opened shirt as she felt his teeth press into the junction of her neck and shoulder.

Nick moved down and pelted kisses and nibbles across the bare portion of her chest. His paws moved up her body, being careful to distribute most of his weight across his elbows. He hooked the straps of her dress with his fingers as he dragged his claws down her sides.

Judy moaned loudly arching her back up off the bed as if offering her chest to the fox above her.

Nick let go of the straps when the top of her dress was bunched around her hips. Sliding his body down hers he kissed across the swell of her left breast. His eyes watched her face as he closed his mouth around the breast, pressing his teeth into the tender flesh gently as he flicked his tongue across her nipple.

Nick let go of her breast and kissed his way down to her stomach.

“Nick, please….” Judy whined at him.

“Is there something you need, Fluff?” He softly ran a claw across her lower stomach, only a breath away from the waistband of her panties. He smiled to himself, smelling her, smelling her need. Her scent was heady and thick and almost indescribable, like trying to describe the color purple to a blind mammal. It almost drove him wild, testing his self-control.

Judy lifted her hips, trying to bring his attention to her crotch. He instead took the moment to finish removing her dress before dropping it on the floor beside the bed. Her eyes flew open as she felt him run a paw pad down across the lace covering her pubic bone. She groaned loudly as she felt him nip at her right inner thigh just where grey of leg and the white of her crotch met.

“Oh god, yes, please….” She lifted her head as she felt his tongue trace the edge of panties, and her breathing became more rapid. She slid her paws from the bed to his muzzle, trying to direct it to her core. She looked him in the eyes pleadingly.

He turned his head so that his nose was just inches away from her core and took a deep breath, his eyes becoming half-lidded with the scent of her. Nick slowly sat up and pulled his muzzle away from her, causing her to whine at him. His eyes never left hers as he pulled his shirt out of his pants, unbuttoning the last two buttons and dropping it on the floor.
Judy watched him intently, her eyes moving down his chest and back up again. She watched as he unbuckled and unbuttoned his pants before crawling back up her body. He kissed her softly before hooking his paws under her shoulders and dragging her up the bed, laying her head down on his pillow.

She squeaked with surprise as she was once again moved to where he wanted her. She watched him and moaned as he once again kissed and nibbled his way back down her body. She watched his eyes, and the fire that shone behind them excited her.

Nick watched her face as he pressed his lips to the waistband of her panties. He grinned as he hooked his fingers into them and slowly pulled them down. He kissed her pubic bone as more and more of her was exposed to the hungry fox. Her scent filled every corner of his mind; he was about to answer a question that had been on his mind since leaving The Whisper. *Does she taste as good as she smells?*

Judy blushed deeply as she was fully exposed to the fox for the first time.

Nick dropped her panties on the floor and looked into her eyes as he settled himself between her thighs. He ran his tongue slowly over his sharp teeth, making a show of it.

Judy’s eyes closed in anticipation as he kissed her just above her soaking wet sex. “Sweet blushing blueberries, stop the teasing and eat me already!”

She heard him chuckle at her, then groaned in pleasure as she felt his tongue slide between her folds from her entrance all the way to her clit. Her back arched as she felt his tongue flick over her clit a few times before dipping back down to her entrance.

Nick’s tail swayed from side to side as he slowly lapped at her sex. He enjoyed the taste of her, sweet and kind of earthy, only best described as uniquely Judy.

Judy moaned and writhed on the bed, her hips held in place by strong fox paws. She gasped, feeling the cool tip of his nose pressing against her clit as he started to push his tongue into her body. She heard and felt him growl low in his throat; the vibrations of it sent waves of pleasure through her body as he pushed more and more of his tongue into her. She could feel what would be the first of many orgasms building in her lower stomach, her muscles tightening in anticipation.

Judy’s back arched as she moaned loudly, her paws grabbing fistfuls of the comforter as she tried to push herself into the fox’s waiting maw. Her eyes snapped open before rolling back up into her head,
her stomach contracting with her orgasm and her left foot thumping repeatedly against the bed.

Nick slowly slid his tongue out of her and flicked it across her clit again. He slowly rubbed his tongue around the little nub of flesh and nerves, enjoying the way the bunny moaned as he did so.

“Feel good, Fluff?” Nick asked, his voice almost a growl.

“Oh, sweet bunny Jesus yes! More, you dumb fox!”

Nick chuckled and slid a finger slowly up and down her wet slit, being very mindful of his claw.

“Now, now, is that any way to talk to me after giving you such a wonderful experience?” he teased.

“Please…..” she begged, her chest heaving as she opened her eyes and looked down at him.

Nick pressed the fingertip to her entrance as he flicked the tip of his tongue across her clit again.

Judy squirmed slightly as she felt the thick digit press into her.

“Breathe, Carrots, just relax; I won’t hurt you.”

Judy closed her eyes as she started to breathe again, not having realized that she was holding her breath.

Nick slid up her body smoothly, his finger slowly pressing deeper and deeper into her.

“That’s a good bun; relax, let it happen,” he whispered softly into her ear.

Judy opened her eyes again as she felt him above her. Her paws let go of the comforter to slide them through his thick coat. She moaned sensually as she felt him start to slide his finger in and out of her.
Nick felt her inner muscles contract around his finger. He nibbled softly at the base of her left ear as he ground his palm against her clit.

“OH!” Judy exclaimed as her back arched again. Judy moaned as her stomach rippled and her orgasm tore through her body like a tidal wave.

“That’s it, cum lil bun,” Nick whispered into her ear, feeling her flutter around his finger a bit more.

Judy blushed at Nick’s words as she fought to regain her breath, the scent of violets copper and something deeply male filling her. Her small paws slowly traveled down his chest and across his stomach. She could feel the well-defined muscles hiding just under his fur.

Nick groaned softly at the feel of her paws sliding down his body. A deep rolling purr started in his chest at the pleasure of her paws on him.

Judy’s eyes widened in surprise. *Foxes can purr?* But the thought was lost when her paws encountered the waistband of his boxers. She stopped nervously, unsure if she should continue.

Nick’s breath hitched slightly at the thought of her touching him.

Judy looked up above her, following the cream colored expanse of fur up his chest and neck as she searched for approval.

Nick tilted his head slightly as he nibbled on her ear, seeing the question in her eyes, and nodded slightly.

“Roll over onto your back Slick,” Judy said softly.

Nick slowly withdrew his finger from her and did as she asked, rolling over onto his back beside her. His tail thumped softly against the bed, and his eyes watched her closely.

After a few minutes, Judy sat up and looked over the expanse of fox beside her. Her eyes strayed down his body to his pants and blushed. Her paws shook slightly with nerves, having never gone
this far with a boyfriend before, let alone on the first date. She couldn’t deny that the tension had been building between them over the last several months, and those had gotten thrown into overdrive once Nick had figured out her attraction with his teeth.

She lowered the zipper of his pants slowly, and her eyes traveled back up his body to his face as he watched her patiently. She hooked her paws into the waistband of his boxers and pulled them down with his pants slowly after he lifted his hips.

Nick watched her eyes as she looked everywhere but at his foxhood as it came into view. He was about average for a fox, but that didn’t really matter in this case, as he was sure he was larger than even the most well-endowed bunny.

Judy dropped his pants and boxers onto the floor. She was nervous, her heart pounding away in her chest. Most of her nervousness came from her lack of experience. She had given a paw job to a buck in high school, but after he’d gone around bragging about how he had “tamed” Jude the Dude, she’d refused any other dates and poured herself into her studies. But this was Nick; she’d been attracted to Nick for months, even if she barely wanted to acknowledge the fact herself.

Nick watched her; he could see the apprehension in her body language.

Judy reached out a paw and tentatively touched his foxhood. He moaned as she ran her fingers over it slowly, feeling the heat and the veins along its length. She turned her head and looked at him, her eyes going wide. She moved closer to him so she wouldn’t have to reach as far. Her mind went back to her sex education class in high school and the single paw job she gave. He’s huge.... She tried to close her paw around his cock, but couldn’t quite manage to do so.

Nick slid his paw down along her back until it rested just above her tail. He groaned softly as she started to slowly stroke his length.

Judy looked from Nick’s foxhood to his face as he slowly closed his eyes.

His eyes opened halfway with a whine as she stopped stroking him. He watched as she threw her left leg over his hips and settled onto his lower stomach.

Judy slid down his body until she felt her slit slide over the tip of his cock. He groaned loudly as he felt the heat and wetness of her. She reached down and nudged the tip of his cock against her entrance as she pressed back against it slowly.
They moaned in unison as the head of his foxhood entered her body. She stopped moving, her eyes going wide before closing, getting used to the sensation. His paws gripped the comforter in an effort to keep from rolling them over and just taking her. He opened his eyes and looked down at her.

The sight that greeted him was one that he would never forget. She was stretched out on her belly along his stomach. Her paws were pressed into the bed on either side of his chest and her face was turned up toward him. Her eyes were closed and her ears were draped down over her shoulders.

After a few minutes, she slowly pressed back. He thrust his hips up involuntarily as she did, thrusting a bit more of his length into her body. She squealed in surprise as she felt him move.

“Sorry….” he mumbled down to her.

Judy’s mind had melted at that point; she wanted more. She wanted more of her fox. *My fox?* she thought momentarily, pressing back even more and feeling him slide deeper and deeper. She no longer stopped after every inch or so. She moaned loudly and buried her face into the fur of his lower chest as she felt herself butt up against his knot.

Nick groaned loudly as he slid all the way into her, his eyes closed as he enjoyed the feel of the tight velvet wetness that gripped his entire length.

Judy felt stuffed. Her breath came in quick gasps as she slowly adjusted to the feel of him inside of her. He was large, larger than any of the toys she had bought to help her through her heats. But he felt oh so good deep inside of her.

Nick groaned as she slowly lifted herself up to look down at him.

Judy lifted herself up with her thighs and slowly slid back down his shaft. She moaned loudly as she felt his paws grip her hips and waist.

Nick kept rhythm with her, letting her set the pace. He enjoyed her tightness and the intoxicating smell of her excitement. His eyes opened, watching her face and seeing the pleasure she was receiving. A low half growl half purr reverberated through his body. He started to thrust his hips up into her.
Judy moaned and shook as an orgasm tore through her small body. Her inner muscles clamped down hard on the fox. She slid back down onto the fox as her hips twitched. She could feel the tension in him, like he was a spring wound too tight.

Nick laid under her, his body screaming at him to finish, to take her. His hips kept thrusting up into her, but it wasn’t quite enough for him.

Judy laid against Nick, gasping and moaning with each of his thrusts into her body. Her paws gripped the fur of his chest as she felt the tension build once again in her own belly. She felt him pull her down his body to meet each of his thrusts into her. She moaned as his knot pounded against her opening. “Yes,” she moaned.

That was all the encouragement he needed. His paws moved from her hips to her shoulders, cradling her against him as he rolled over. He pinned her to the bed under him, his strong paws not leaving her shoulders, her face buried in the fur of his chest. Nick started to thrust into her body again, the leverage and better angle into her aiding him in his goal. Nick’s breath became ragged, his thrusts into her urgent.

Judy’s eyes flew open as she screamed, her orgasm tearing through her body as he finally pushed his knot into her body. She moaned as a searing heat flooded into her body. Each pulse of heat into her corresponded with the contracting of her body. She felt his body shaking over her, his purr interrupted by each squeeze of her body around him.

Nick had just enough presence of mind left to roll back onto his back instead of collapsing down onto her.

Slowly their breathing evened out. Her eyes opened as she looked up at him. Her ears draped down her shoulders. Her paws softly rubbed his chest.

“Wow,” was all she could say.

“Mmmhhmm,” was his answer.

“Nick?”

“Hmmm?” Nick answered sleepily.
“I love you.”

Nick’s eyes opened and he looked down at her. He looked deep into her eyes and smiled. Not his half smug smile, nor the smile he gave when he was trying to hide that something hurt him. This was a genuine smile of happiness.

She could hear his heart beat a little faster.

“I love you too.”

Chapter End Notes

Edited 6/26/2018 Hopefully word choice punctuation and a few other things make this easier to read.
Edited 6/27/2019 My editor lilwashu76 has completed the edits for this chapter.
Episode 3: Code of Conduct

Chapter Summary

First I would like to thank everyone that has read this left comments and kudos. You guys rock.

Comments: 13
Kudos: 35
Bookmarks: 14
Hits: 1038

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Episode 3: Code of Conduct

“I’m no hero and I’m not made of stone
Right or wrong
I can hardly tell
I’m on the wrong side of heaven and the righteous side of hell”
~Wrong Side of Heaven - Five Finger Death Punch

It was a rare occasion when Nick was the first of them awake. The room still smelled of sex and excited bunny. His eyes opened momentarily, only to close again. The room was flooded with sunlight, which caused him to grumble softly.

But then he smiled as memories of the night before flooded into his thoughts.

His eyes opened again to find himself laying on his right side. His body curled around the small grey rabbit with his tail resting over her. He nuzzled his snout in between her ears.

Amazing how fast things can change around her.

Are you truly that surprised? It only took her 36 hours to turn you away from being a hustler.

“Nicky, one day you’ll find a vixen that will turn your world upside down,” He heard his mother tell him.

You were both right and wrong, Mom. I did find someone, but she wasn’t a vixen.”

Nick sighed contentedly as he breathed in her scent. As he became more aware, he realized she was facing him. His right arm was serving as her pillow, and her small paws rested against his chest. Her large feet were curled back against his thighs.

He laid contentedly, enjoying the feel of her soft breaths against his chest and the feel of her bare fur under his paws.
He had no idea what time it was, nor did he particularly care. His cellphone, which was currently somewhere between the front door and the master bedroom, was his alarm clock. But more importantly, he was very comfortable holding his bunny.

*My bunny?*

*Yeah, your bunny.*

He tightened his arms around her.

*Things escalated quickly last night.*

*Are you seriously complaining?*

*No, but....*

*She loves you.*

That thought shut up the rest of his internal dialog. He cocked his head and opened his left eye, looking down over the expanse of grey fur partially covered by his russet coat. His heart swelled with pride. His paws softly but firmly started to massage the doe’s back.

“Mmmm,” he heard her moan softly, her paws twitching.

Nick kept rubbing her back, moving his finger tips in slow but firm circles.

“If I’d known your paws could do that, I would’ve agreed to this a long time ago, Slick,” he heard her say as she pressed her face into his chest.

“Glad you approve, Carrots.”

“I love you, you dumb fox.”

“And I you, you sly bunny. I’m not sure you know how much it means to me though.”

“Oh I think I have a pretty good idea.”

“Oh?”

Judy pulled back from her fox and looked him in the eyes. “Try this on for size, Slick. One emotionally stunted fox got traumatized as a kit. He decided that if the world would only see a sly untrustworthy fox then that's what the world would get. It worked for him for decades, and then along comes this overly optimistic bunny.. This was followed by whoopsie number one: said bunny eventually saw though the fox’s facade and saw a fox that wanted to be more. Whoopsie number two happened when the fox unwittingly gave the bunny his heart, but didn’t tell the bunny. Whoopsie number three happened when the fox realized that life is short and told the bunny how he felt. But little did he know the bunny felt the same way and now here he lies in bed with the bunny.”

Nick smiled at her. “You forgot one thing, Fluff.”

“What’s that Slick?”

“That after a fantastic night of love making our emotionally stunted fox asked his bunny to move in with him.”

Judy’s eyes went wide in shock. As the minutes stretched in silence Nick’s ears slowly drooped.
Judy’s mind whirled though the possibilities and then the steps required to make it all happen. She failed to notice the reaction that her silence was having on her fox. Her mind endlessly looped back to one thing: “His bunny”.

Nick finally spoke up hiding his apprehension behind bravado. “Come on Carrots, you can’t leave a guy hanging like this.”

Judy’s ears perked up as she heard a song start to play. “Bad Mammal, Bad Mammal whatcha gonna…”

“Fruit Loops, the chief is calling you!” Judy wiggled her way out of the bed and took off down the hall.

Nick rolled over and smiled as he watched her bare butt take off. \textit{At least she didn't say no.}

Judy walked back into the room carrying his phone. “I have you on speaker, Chief.”

“Hey Chief, to what do we owe the pleasure this early in the morning?”

“Can it Wilde; it’s almost noon,” Chief Bogo said gruffly. “We picked up Thorton Wolferton last night.”

“How much blow did he get picked up with?”

“About 150 kilos.”

Nick shook his head. “Until I heard the kits in the trunk, I always figured Charlie was the smarter of the two, but now I wonder.”

“He hasn’t lawyered up yet, but he’ll only talk to you. Look, I know you’re still on medical leave, but we could use any info that could be pumped from this guy.”

Nick looked at his bunny and saw the gleam in her eyes.

“We can be down there in about an hour or so, Chief.”

“Don’t bother with uniforms but do look presentable.”

“Roger that, Chief; see you in a hour.”

Judy hung up the phone and looked at Nick as he rolled to the edge of the bed and stretched his shoulder. “Are you ok?”

“Yeah, just tight.”

“You sure you're up for this?”

“Not really, but maybe Thorton can answer a question of mine.”

“What question is that?”

“Why in the ever living fuck was his brother trafficking bunny kits?” Nick said as his voice took a rare tone of anger.

Judy was a little taken back with his sudden burst of anger over the events of almost a month ago. “Nick?”
“Sorry, Carrots; I have little patience for traffickers.”

“What happened?” Judy asked as she moved closer to him.

“Who says something had to happen? Maybe I’m just really outraged that mammals would sell other mammals?”

Judy stepped close to him, unafraid of his anger. “Nick, you don’t have to tell me right now, but I know there’s more to this than just disliking traffickers.”

Nick nodded gratefully, not quite ready to face those memories.

“Nick, did you mean what you said before?”

“About?”

“Me moving in?”

He smiled warmly at her. “Judy, I know you don’t have much stuff, and from what I’ve seen most of your belongings would fit in that suitcase of yours, so I thought it was a pretty much a foregone conclusion that you were moving in.”

Judy blushed. “Well, I still have a pawful of things left at my apartment so it wouldn’t be much trouble to move…..”

“When is the lease up on your shoebox?”

“It’s a month to month arrangement, since my apartment never holds tenants long.”

“Yes, I’m sure the Bucky and Pronk Show has a lot to do with that.”

Judy giggled at his joke. “I’m sure it does. Can I think about it?”

“Sure; just think of what you’ll be giving up though.” Nick winked at her as he headed for the bathroom to start getting ready to head into the precinct.

Judy watched as the city slipped by the window of the car. Her mind was lost in thought though, moving over the conversation that she’d had with Nick.

Nick doesn’t like traffickers.

Yeah, so? They’re criminals. That’s not what you’re really wanting to think about right now anyway, is it?

Well…

We are so moving in.

But….

Fluffy tail comforter…

Yeah, but…

Warm chest…
Yeah, but…..

HE COOKS REAL FOOD!

But Dad…

Mom approves…

“Foxes are red because they’re made by the devil,” she heard Pop Pop’s voice say.

Oh you so didn’t just bring Pop Pop and his speciest bullshit into this did you?

Well….

Fine, you want to play that game, let’s talk about that thing he did with his tongue. Speaking of which, it’s as long as your damn forearm! And let’s not forget mandatory cuddle time. Oh, and then there’s the most important thing: He. Loves. You.

Ok, so maybe I am moving in.

Judy stole a glance over at Nick as he sipped on his Snarlbucks.

So why make him wait?”

Wanted to play hard to get?

Girl, that only works BEFORE you have sex with him.

I’m afraid things are moving faster than expected…

She suddenly got the impression that if her inner voice could laugh at her it would.

Your mom and dad met, courted, and married within the space a month. Rabbits are not known for taking things slow.

Yeah, but I dated Jack three months…

Don’t even go there; we both know the reason it didn’t work out with Jack.

Ok, maybe it’s because Nick didn’t mark me.

Ask him…

“Ummm…..” Judy started.

Nick took a sip of his Snarlbucks and looked over at Judy. “What’s on your mind Carrots?”

“I was just wondering why didn’t you mark me?”

Nick chuckled softly as the ram cab driver coughed in surprise. He eyed Judy as the inner portion of her ears slowly turned bright red..

“Tell me Fluff, how much do you know about fox anatomy?”

“Not much.”

“Well, our most well known scent gland is in the cheeks, but we also have them between our fingers
and one other place that we won't discuss in front of company.”

“Sooo…”

Nick leaned in close to her and whispered into her ear. “I had my paws all over you last night; at this point I’m pretty sure even Wolfard would have problems telling the two of us apart.”

“B-but, I took a shower…”

Nick’s face took on a smug expression. “Sweetheart, it takes more than that fluffy smelling bunny shampoo to cut though fox musk.”

Judy’s nose twitched as she looked at him with a deer in the headlights expression on her face.

“But if you want the more traditional marking, we can exchange those after we get home.”

The mention of home seemed to jar Judy out of her shock. “We need to go by my place after we’re done at the office.”

Judy looked over to catch Nick’s tail thumping happily against the seat and his expression go once again from smug to smuggest.

Judy watched Nick as he walked up the steps to ZPD Precinct One. His paws were in his pockets. His ears were pinned back against his head. His sunglasses hid his eyes. But it was his tail, she realized, that told more about his emotional state than a lot of things he did, or in most cases didn't, do. The tip of Nick's tail was flicking back and forth nervously.

“You coming, Fluff?” Nick called to her.

“Uhh, yeah, coming; sorry Slick.”

“It’s okay Fluff, I know my tail is irresistible.”

His tail curled around her waist protectively as she caught up to him.

Judy didn’t seem to notice; she was paying more attention to her partner.

“If you’re not ready to do this, no one will fault you.”

Nick sighed and looked down at her.

“I’m fine, Fluff. Cool as a cucumber.”

Judy giggled. “You know Nick, cucumbers are not inherently cool.”

“They’re not?”

“Nope.” She made a popping sound with the P in nope.

“I’m shocked Carrots; I’ve been lied to my entire life!”

Nick held the door for her as they reached the top of the stairs.

“It’s not my fault you’ve based your coolness on a vegetable based lie,” she quipped back.
“But saying that I’m as cool as a pawpsicle just doesn’t sound as good,” he replied as he followed her inside.

“Well maybe you need to find a new gauge for your coolness, Slick.”

“Oh....my...goodness!” came the squeal from across the lobby.

“Hey, Spots,” Nick created the cheetah.

“Clawhauser,” Judy acknowledged.

“So, throw you two adorables together for about a month and you start dating, yes?” Clawhauser’s paws came up to just under his chin.

“Ummmm, we plead the fifth on that for the moment, Spots,” Nick answered as he glanced down at Judy, seeing the nervousness in her eyes.

“Yeah, the chief wanted Nick to question…” Judy started before being interrupted.

“Rrrriiiight, the Chief wanted to talk to you guys before you did that. Just go on up; I'll let him know you're on your way.” Benjamin watched them walk away and giggled as the fox’s tail wrapped back around the bunny. They are so banging like bunnies, he thought to himself.

“You know he’s going to find out soon enough,” Nick said as they waited for the elevator.

“How do you figure?”

“Who do you think Chief Buffalo Butt is going to have file the 1061 with IA?”

“Oh blubbering blueberries,” Judy said as she pulled her ears down.

“Hey, watch your mouth young lady; no taking blueberries in vain,” Nick said with a stern look, but his amusement clearly shown in his eyes.

“Sorry Nick, I didn’t mean to curse on blueberries,” she said as she looked down at the floor.

Nick smirked at her as they stepped into the elevator.

“You're forgiven Carrots, but you might have to serve a penance later,” Nick winked down at her.

“I’m pretty sure I already did, since I woke up this morning feeling like a used chew toy.”

Nick smiled. “I’ll have you know that I take excellent care of my toys.”

Judy paused, then looked up at him. Did he just….

She watched as his eyes half closed and his smile slowly turned smug.

Yes, yes he did.

There was a resounded WHAP heard in the elevator as Judy punched him in the arm.

“OW!” Nick said, rubbing the spot on his arm as they exited the elevator. “Hey, did you know in Fur Wars Bark Vader had a girlfriend?”

“Really?” Judy looked up at him, surprised.

“Yep, she was even in Episode 4: A New Fur.”

Judy looked confused as she thought about it. Nick made me watch those stupid movies…
“Her name was Ella. Ella Vader.”

_Ella Vader? Oh elevator...... Stupid smarty fox._ Judy turned her head to hide her smirk from him.

“Dumb fox.”

“Oh, come on, it wasn’t the worst joke I ever made.”

Judy knocked on the door to the chief’s office.

“Enter,” came the gruff response from inside the office.

Nick reached up and turned the doorknob, letting them inside the large office. The office was huge by their standards. You could almost fit an entire medium mammal apartment in the square footage that the office took up, or in the case of Judy’s “efficiency” apartment several. Pictures, plaques, and awards hung on the walls, serving as a testament to the Cape buffalo’s long and illustrious career. In the center of the office stood a rather large mahogany wood desk.

Judy hopped up onto one of the oversized chairs.

“It’s good to see you moving around again, Wilde,” Chief Bogo greeted him.

“Thanks Chief.”

Chief Bogo looked at his two smallest officers carefully. The lack of a witty response from the fox had started to throw red flags to the bull.

“I’ll call....” the Cape buffalo started.

“Actually sir, there’s a private matter that we’d like to discuss with you before getting down to business,” Judy said while Nick climbed up on the chair besides her. His tail wrapped around her waist so that the tip of it sat in her lap.

The buffalo looked at his officers for a long time before looking around on his cluttered desk for some paperwork.

“Well, you see...” Nick started.

“Can it, don’t care,” the buffalo interrupted as he continued to look for the paperwork. He finally found the form he was looking for.

“When did...this...” Bogo waved a hoof at the officers.”Start?”

“Call it eight days after I was shot,” Nick answered.

“Weren’t you dating that movie star?” Bogo asked as he filled in the form in front of him.

“Didn’t work out,” Judy answered.

Bogo snorted.

Bogo handed the form to Judy first. “Read it and if everything is correct sign the bottom; large signatures please.”

Judy looked over the document and was relieved at its simplicity. It only contained blanks for their names, their positions in the ZPD, their work relationship, and their supervisor’s name. Almost seemed like a waste of paper. Judy signed the document first, then Nick did the same. They both
made their signatures large enough that the Cape buffalo would be able to read them.

Judy handed the form back after they had both signed it.

Bogo looked at them both and sighed. “I had not expected to have this conversation with you two ever. It's part of the reason why I allowed you to pick him as your partner.” He looked at Judy as he said this. “But here we are. You’re not the first couple the ZPD has ever had. You’re not even the first predator/prey couple we’ve had. But you are the most publicly visible. With that being said, I along with the city will be watching you closely. NO PDA while on duty. Other than that, I will not give you the spiel about putting the city first or any such thing. I also won't insult any of our intelligence in thinking you'll always put someone else over each other. I only ask that you two do the right thing when the occasion arises.”

Judy and Nick nodded at him solemnly.

“Anything else?”

“I need to change my address….” Judy answered quietly.

Bogo rolled his eyes and sighed, feeling a headache coming on. “I’ll deal with it. Is it safe to assume that your new address is at Officer Wilde’s place?”

“Yes sir.”

“Now, if there’snothing else…?”

Judy and Nick shook their heads and Nick's tail tip flicked nervously in her lap.

Bogo watched them closely as he picked up his phone and dialed an extension. Winter is coming, he thought. I hope that bunny is prepared.

“Yes Delgato, he's here, get up here,” Bogo gruffed into the phone before hanging it up.

Nick’s ears stayed pinned back on his head and he flicked the left one twice.

Nick paused for a moment outside of the interrogation room, his hand on the door handle. He looked down at Judy when she put her small paw on his back and smiled up at him reassuringly.

“Are you going to be okay, Nick? Judy asked quietly.

“Yeah, Fluff, I will be. I just really hate these guys..” Nick sighed and looked down at her. “I'll tell you the story later. It's almost as bad as what my parents went through in the 60’s and 70’s.”

Nick pulled the handle of the door down and stepped inside, his partner staying in the observation room. “Thorton, ol’ buddy, ol’ pal; it would seem you have a been one naughty wolf.”

Nick sat down on a chair across a metal table from a brown and grey timberwolf. He sat a folder down onto the table in front of him.

“Sure took you long enough to get your cowardly hide down here, Wilde,” Thorton all but growled.

“Well you see ol’ buddy, I was on medical leave. You know, after your brother tried to kill me.”

“Yeah, a shame he didn’t succeed.”
“Mmmm, I guess it depends on your point of view,” Nick said. “But I wonder Thorton, why didn’t you and your brother just stick with drugs?”

“And what I really don't get is, why did you break the code? How much money did you have to be offered to go against what we were taught, Thorton?”

“Now what the mayor, DA, my boss and let's just call them various other interested mammals around the city all really want to know is one thing Thorton.”

“What's that?”

“Why were you stupid enough to pick up a pair of kits from Tundra Town. We both know what Mr. Big does to traffickers.”

“We didn’t get them from…”

Nick smiled at the wolf.

“I don’t have to say nothin’.”

“No, no you do not” Nick admitted. “Have fun up in the Ice Box; county is full so we’re retransferring you there until your arraignment.” The Ice Box was the nickname of San Siberia State Penitentiary. It was in the coldest part of Tundra Town and mostly housed cold weather mammals. Famous for its housing of many low and mid level mobsters.

Nick hopped down off the chair and started to head for the door.

“Wait!” Thorton called. “Maybe we can make a deal?”

Nick paused and turned, looking hard at the timber wolf. “I’ll make you the best deal you can possibly ever in a million years hope for in this shit fest you've made yourself, Thorton. I want two things. First, the name of your supplier and when and where your next shipment is supposed to come in. The second is the name of the kits’ buyer.”

“They’ll kill me.”

“If you're formally charged with child trafficking, sexual exploitation of a minor, and a slew of other things that picking up those two bunnies get you, I would be surprised if you were dead within a week.”

“What's the deal?”

“Give me those two things and I’ll talk to the DA about having your dumb ass thrown in solitary instead of gen pop until your bullshit blows over.”

“Is that it?”

“That’s the best I can do. You're going away for a long time. With your prior conviction, the fact we have you with at least 150 Kilos of coke, and the kits, you're looking at, oh, I don't know……” Nick paused for a moment, thinking it over. “Drug possession with intent to distribute, smuggling narcotics, kidnapping, reckless endangerment of a kit, sexual exploitation of a kit, and whatever else the DA thinks he can make stick.”

“But……”

“Minimum for the drugs alone is life; throw the kits on top of that and he might push for the death
penalty. But if you cooperate and give us that information, maybe, just maybe, he'll cut you a small bit of slack.”

Judy watched and listened as her boyfriend worked the timber wolf not just for the information that they needed but a signed confession as well.

“He is so wasted as a patrol officer,” she heard the smooth voice of Fangmeyersay.

Judy looked up at the tigress detective beside her. She was orange with dark grey stripes and a white underbelly. She wore a dark blue pants suit with her badge clipped to her belt.

"I don't know, Fangmeyer. Nick is a good cop and does field work well.” What Judy was leaving out was that Nick despised the paperwork portion of their job.

“Yeah, but listen to him. I’m pretty sure he could sell me my stripes and make me happy for the experience.”

“A year ago he would probably have had to.”

“He should be a detective,” Fangmeyer said after a few moments.

“He still has about another six months until he can take the tests,” Judy said.

Fangmeyer nodded. “I might have a talk with the chief about that.”

“Are you trying to steal my partner?” Judy looked up at the tigress again, crossing her arms over her chest.  

“Relax Hopps, it's not like I'm trying to take your boyfriend. I just think maybe beat cop isn't the best place for him.”

“How did you…”

“Know?” Fangmeyer finished for her. “Well it's a small room, and one of us smells like a fox used us as a towel and since I know it wasn’t me…”

Judy blushed and looked back though the one way glass.

“Well, just because he can get this guy to confess and give us his dealer and buyer doesn't mean he’s ready to be a detective.”

“No, probably doesn't.”

“But maybe you're right….”

“When do you take your test?”

“It’s on hold; I’m on unofficial probation for a slew of things regarding the Nighthowler case.”

“What? You mean Chief put you on probation after how we treated you?”

“It has more to do with the fact that when I came back to the city, I didn’t contact him about my lead, I recklessly endangered a civilian life, and caused massive structural damage to a rail station.”
“Still…”

“It’s fine. I’m somewhat grateful to be honest.”

“How so?”

“Who else in the department can handle Nick?”

“True. But I think that works both ways. Who else in this department could handle being partnered with you, Hopps?”

Judy just nodded at that, not really wanting to acknowledge the truth behind the statement. “I think he’s about done.” She watched as Nick gathered up the paperwork but left the pictures of the bunnies on the table.

Nick pushed the door closed behind him and slumped against it. He closed his eyes as he let out a huff.

“Are you okay, Nick?” Judy asked, visibly concerned for the vulpine officer.

“I will be, Fluff. I just feel dirty, like soul stained dirty” Nick looked more worn down and more tired than he had in a long time.

“You spoke of a code; care to explain what you meant?” Fangmeyer asked.

Nick nodded. “It’s fairly simple, nothing to break up families. Fru Fru Big had an older sister. At the time the Big family was pretty diverse in what they did. Everything from money laundering to drugs. If it made the family money, it wasn’t fully off the table. Then Samy overdosed; turns out she was in a relationship with one of their dealers in Little Rodentia. This caused Mr. Big to do a purge, a huge purge. Everything changed, or at least that’s how it was explained to me.”

Nick looked thoughtful for a long moment. “I wouldn’t go around spreading that tale though; there are very few mammals alive that know why Mr. Big purged the drug side of his endeavors. It wouldn’t bode well for my health if you did.”

Fangmeyer looked at Nick as if she had more questions, but decided that it wasn’t the best of time to ask. “Of course, Officer Wilde”

“Please, call me Nick.” Nick handed Fangmeyer the folder. “Fangs, if you can find a hole so deep and so dark that they have to pipe him sunshine, I would forever be grateful to you.”

Fangmeyer nodded and took the folder. “Nothing brings me greater joy than seeing mammals like him put away.” Fangmeyer jabbed a thumb in Thorton’s direction.

“Well, if there’s nothing else, I need to help my girlfriend move,” Nick said with a wink at Judy.

“One more question, that is if you don’t mind?” Fangmeyer asked.

“Sure, go for it.”

“Why did he want to talk to you?”

Nick turned and looked through the mirror at Thorton. “Don’t know, don’t care, and didn’t ask. Maybe he thought I would get him a better deal or that I’d let him go, just because I sold him and his brother the rugs they used before the last time they got caught. And no, I didn’t know what they were doing with the rugs at the time.”
“I don’t have much left here,” Judy said as she opened the door to her small efficiency apartment. Part of her was frightened about leaving the place and a part of her was excited about moving in with Nick. Much had changed over the last few weeks, and quickly too. Maybe not rabbit fast, but fast enough that it scared her a little bit.

Nick shrugged as he stepped inside and looked around. He had spent a few nights sleeping on her floor after graduating from the academy while the apartment his mother had left him was being renovated.

“I have such fond memories of your floor, Fluff.”

“Hush you; it was better than letting you go back to living under that bridge.”

“Well there was one thing my bridge had that this place didn’t.”

“Oh? And what was that?” Judy asked as she pulled a suitcase out from under the bed. The suitcase was dark and pale blue in a plaid pattern and almost as large as she was.

“US!” could suddenly be heard through the thin wall.

“SHUT UP! CAN’T YOU SEE THEY ARE SHARING MEMORIES!”

“YOU SHUT UP!”

“NO, YOU SHUT UP!”

Nick gave Judy an unamused look and just nodded at the wall. She opened the suitcase and started to pack away all the plush bunnies.

“Hey Nick, would you grab those books off the shelf for me please?”

Nick reached up to get the small stack of paperback books and handed them to her.

“BUNNY COP, IS THAT YOU?”

“Yes it’s me.”

He watched as she placed the books in the bottom of the suitcase, along with a few other heavier odds and ends.

“WE THOUGHT YOU DIED!”

“No, but my partner almost did.”

She unplugged the cheap radio alarm clock and placed it into the bag as well. She turned and opened the drawers of her dresser, transferring the few articles of clothing that remained to the suitcase.

“SO ARE YOU BACK?”

“No, just packing up the rest of my stuff.”

Nick smiled and let them have their conversation though the wall. The silence that followed her last comment was deafening. The knock on the door wasn't surprising to either of them. He handed her the few uniforms she had hanging on the wall mounted rack that served as her closet.
“Will you get the door Slick?”

He nodded and opened the door. “Hello fellas.”

Bucky was a lean brown kudu with white stripes and long curved dark brown horns. He wore a red t-shirt and blue jeans that Nick swore he’d gotten off the female clothing racks. His mate, Pronk, was a slender tan gemsbok with long dark brown horns. He wore a blue t-shirt and blue jeans.

“You're not really leaving are you Bunny Cop?” Bucky asked.

“Yep, moving in with my boyfriend,” Judy answered as she looked through the stuff in her mini fridge. Carrots for one, carrots for one, carrots for none… Sweet cheese and crackers, Nick was right! I am content on TV dinners.

“When did you get a boyfriend?” Pronk asked.

“I’m not sure, when did you get a girlfriend Slick?”

Nick grinned. “Well I’d like to think about three weeks ago, when she crawled into my hospital bed; or maybe it was just over two weeks ago, when she started staying at my place.” Nick thought about it for a moment. “Or it could have been last night after our first date, take your pick, Carrots.”

“I’d like to think it was after you got out of the sling and made me lunch the first time. Hey, can you hand me a trash bag?”

Nick reached over to her small stash of cleaning supplies and handed her a trash bag.

Judy started to throwing the TV dinners in the trash bag.

“Please Fluff, tell me we’re dropping those in the dumpster where they belong.”

“Of course, why wouldn’t I now that I have a live in foxy chef?”

Nick smiled and turned his attention back to Judy’s horned neighbors.

“So you guys are together?” Bucky asked tentatively.

Judy looked at Bucky and Pronk and tilted her head to the side, looking quizzical. “Am I dating a fox and moving into his den?” She looked thoughtful for a moment. “Why yes, yes I am.”

Nick smiled at his bunny warmly, his tail starting to wag behind him.

“Gah! I thought that was only a dog thing,” Pronk said as Nick's tail smacked him in the shins.

Judy’s head popped back up over the edge of the door of the mini fridge.

“Oh, sorry,” Nick said. “It's a Canidae thing. All canines do it really, when we’re happy.”

Certain that the exchange wasn't going to turn violent, Judy went back to cleaning out the fridge.

“So how does that work anyway?” Bucky asked.

“What, the tail thing?”

“No, you and Bunny Cop.”

“Well you see, when a tod loves a doe very, very much…..”
“Gah! Never mind! Good luck Bunny Cop; don't get eaten!” Pronk waved as he pulled his mate down the hall.

Nick stuck his head out the door. “Oh she's been eaten, and she enjoys it very, very much!” Nick called after them

“NICK!” Judy yelled as he shut the door.

“I'm right here, no need to yell,” Nick answered her with a smirk.

“Nick, one more comment like that and you won't get to snack on this bunny for a week!”

Nick grinned at her, flashing her a glimpse of his incisors. “And just who would actually be punished by that, little bun?” he asked, his voice lowered in a growl.

Judy swallowed as his stepped closer to her. Her eyes went wide at the display of his predatory side.

Nick ran a claw along the sensitive edge of her left ear. He smiled as he watched her shiver. “While granted I would be denied what has become a favorite snack of mine. You on the other paw would be denied the….” Nick grinned even more. “The pleasure of being snacked upon.” He licked his lips with his long vulpine tongue.

Judy watched the long pink muscle of his tongue as the memories of what he did with it flooded back into her mind.

“So let's agree now shall we?”

“T-t-to what?”

“Not to use sex as a weapon against each other.” Nick nibbled lightly on the base of her left ear as his claw reached the tip of it.

Judy moaned softly as his teeth scraped against the base of her ear and she nodded in agreement. She squeaked in surprise as his other paw took hold of her hip and pulled her against him.

Nick's ears turned, hearing something from the other side of the wall. His eyes narrowed at the sound. “While I would love nothing more than to strip you here and make you mine here in your old den, it will be much more satisfying for me to have my way with you in our home,” he whispered into her ear.

“But….?” she started.

“The walls here have ears, Fluff.”

“Niiicckkk….”

“I promise Fluff. I will finish this when we get home.”

“Ok, ok. I'm done packing. The next tenant can have whatever’s left as a welcome gift,” she said hurriedly. “Can you take the trash down to the dumpster? While you do that I'll turn in my keys.”

“It will be my pleasure to throw away this garbage that masquerades as food, Carrots,” Nick said dramatically as he tied the garbage bag closed.

Judy smiled as she zipped her bag closed and pulled it off the bed.
Nick picked up the trash bag and headed out the door. “I’ll meet you outside. After I get rid of this, I’ll call us a Zuber.”

“Ok, I won’t be long,” Judy said as she followed him out the door.

Nick walked down the stairs and out of the entryway of the apartment building. He paused just long enough to pull out his phone and begin the process of ordering the Zuber that would take them home.

“Hey! Watch where you’re going pelt!” he heard someone dressed in blue jeans and a hoodie exclaim.

Nick looked down to see a white bunny with black stripes. “Why, hello to you too Stripes. I see you’re dressing down to blend in with us plebs.”

“Fuck off. Is she upstairs?” the bunny asked angrily.

Nick looked thoughtful. “Is she upstairs? I suppose there are a lot of females in that building.”

“You know exactly who I’m talking about, you dumb ass.”

“Well, by now she’s probably at her landlady’s place turning in her keys.”

The angry looking black and white bunny looked surprised. “Why would she be turning in her keys?”

Nick smiled and finished ordering the Zuber. “Perhaps she found a warmer place to rest her head? With someone that cares more about her than how she makes them look to their fan base perhaps? you can ask her yourself; she’ll be out in just a few minutes.”

Nick walked past the bunny and down the street to throw away the trash. He tossed the trash in the first dumpster he came to.

“Tell me something Jack,” Nick asked as he returned and leaned against the rail. Nick wore a smug expression on his face. “Did you really think you would impress her with dinners at the Pawlive Garden?”

Jack looked surprised at the smug fox. “I didn’t just take her to the Pawlive Garden.”

“Nick, what’s your…..” Judy started to ask as she came out of the building.

Nick turned his head and smiled at Judy. “Hey Fluff, our ride will be here in just a few minutes.”

“Judy can I talk to you alone?” Jack asked.

“No Jack, you may not; I said all I wanted to say to you in the hospital,” Judy answered.

“You won’t answer my calls,” Jack said.

“I had you blocked.”

Nick frowned as he listened the to exchange. He took a deep breath and held it to steady his nerves. “Wait a second, is that…” Nick looked at Judy, his smile going more sly than smug.
“Look, whatever lies this pelt has filled your head with….” Jack started.

“Pelt? Lies? That's rich coming from you Jack; you couldn't even be honest with me about what you wanted. You led me on until I came to your place to find you in bed with…” Judy started, her fist balling up.

“How is Skye doing anyway, Stripes? Does she even know you're here?” Nick asked, keeping his expression neutral as he turned his head to face Jack again.

“She’s good. Wait…how…” Jack started.

“How did I know you were in bed with Skye?” Nick sniffed. “Say an hour ago?”

Judy looked at Nick, surprised.

“Uhhh, I think I should be going…” Jack said as he headed down the stairs.

“Hey Jack?” Nick called.

Jack turned around and looked at the fox.

“Tell my cousin I said hello and she should call me; we seem to have a lot in common these days.” Nick held up his right paw and mimed talking on a phone.

Judy smiled at Nick as his smile once again went smug while watching the striped rabbit retreat.

“On second thought, maybe I should give her a call….” Nick looked thoughtful for a moment. “I’m not sure if he knows that Skye has marked him, though; or maybe he does, since he was wearing an abundance of cherry cologne. She probably told him the cherry would mask her scent, but in reality Skye just really, really likes cherries.”

Judy giggled at that. “Why didn’t I smell anything?”

“You would have if he’d gotten any closer to you,” Nick reassured her.

Judy nodded thoughtfully. “Is Skye really your cousin?”

“Yeah. She changed her name when she got into show business.”

“Why would she need to change her name for show business?” Judy asked.

“Honestly? While she could have done well off of the good will my fathers tailor shop had built up in the city, she would have suffered even harder if I’d ever gotten arrested.”

“So she did it to distance herself from you?”

“Yeah, more than likely at my uncle’s insistence. Honestly though, she didn't distance herself very far.”

“How is that?”

“Lukraak has many meanings in Dutch, but one of them is…”

“Wild,” Judy finished for him.

Nick nodded as a blue sedan pulled up. “Looks like our ride is here.”
“Remember what you promised earlier, Slick?” Judy asked as the elevator doors closed in front of them.

Nick grinned down at her, bending down and growling softly into her ear. “I promised many things today lil bun, so just which one are you referring to?”

He grinned as he heard Judy's hard swallow. He lightly ran his teeth along the base of an ear.

Judy moaned in the confines of the elevator as she felt his teeth graze though her fur to the sensitive flesh underneath.

Nick straightened as the elevator doors opened on their floor. He grinned down at Judy, letting her leave the elevator first as he picked up her suitcase. He watched the seductive sway of her hips. He ran his tongue over his right incisor and grinned.

She waited for him at their door. “So Slick, when do I get a key?”

Nick grinned, digging his keys out of his pocket. “I haven't given you one yet? I could’ve sworn that I did.”

“Nope.”

He unlocked the door and growled down at her. “Well I guess that means I just can't let you out then doesn’t it?” His long pink tongue ran around the left edge of his muzzle as he opened the door for her.

Judy backed into the apartment and watched him as he set the suitcase down beside the door. He kept his eyes on her as he slowly closed the door and locked it behind him, enjoying the way her ears fell down behind her head.

“You're not going to hurt me are you, Mr. Fox?” Judy asked in a far too innocent voice.

“That all depends little bunny,” Nick answered, his voice low his eyes shining brightly and laser focused on her. Even his ears were pointed in her direction.

“On what Mr. Fox?”

“On your definition of hurt.” He lunged forward just as she turned to run into the living room, slipping just out of his grasp.

Nick growled as he went down onto all fours, stalking forward to chase her under the coffee table in front of couch. She misjudged the height of the couch and slid into the front of it instead of under it. Nick took the opportunity and pounced over the coffee table, his paws landing on either side of her head and body.

Judy froze as she heard, and somewhat felt, him land. As she turned her head to look over her shoulder, her vision was filled with the sight of Nick’s sharp teeth. She tried to scramble forward between his front paws but was stopped when she felt his paw between her shoulder blades, pinning her to the hardwood floor.

Nick tried to keep the pressure light; he only wanted to make things exciting for her, not to actually hurt her. He bent his head down and sniffed along her neck and shoulder.
Judy moaned softly under him as she felt his paw flex against her back, the tips of his claws pressing into her lightly. She closed her eyes and moaned even louder as she felt his teeth against the base of her left ear, nibbling slowly down the length of it.

Nick grinned as her scent changed. He fought the urge to wag his tail, smelling her growing excitement and pleasure with what he was doing. He changed ears as he reached the end of the tip of her left ear.

Judy’s heart hammered in her chest as her thighs rubbed together. She loved the feelings that coursed through her as Nick nibbled on her ears. She wanted more, but wasn't sure what or how to ask for what she needed.

Nick growled into her ear softly. “So little bun, we can do this the easy way or the…” Nick paused for a moment, running his tongue over the edge of her ear. “Enjoyable way.”

Judy halfheartedly tried to scramble away from the fox. Half of her mind was saying, Run, savage fox,” while the other half was screaming, Mate!

Nick turned her over, looking down into her eyes as he planted his paw into the center of her chest. He licked his muzzle from one side to the other. He slowly bent down until his sharp teeth were inches away from her throat. ‘Poor lil bunny.’

Judy looked up at him her eyes wide in excitement. Her heart thundered in her chest.

Nick slowly closed his paw as his claws extended, the sharp tips of them slicing through the thin cotton fabric of her shirt.

Judy’s breath caught in her throat as she squirmed, feeling just the barest of scrapes as his powerful arm pulled down slowly. The sound of rending fabric filled her ears as he ripped her shirt open from collar to hem.

Nick slowly spread the ruined shirt open and deftly unhooked the front clasp of her bra. He could smell her excitement and see the lust in her eyes. He reached down to unbutton and unzip her dress pants before quickly pulling them down and tossing them aside.

Judy took the opportunity to scramble up onto her feet and ran for the bedroom. She shed her shredded shirt and bra as she ran down the hallway. She could hear Nick's paw falls as he chased after her. She spared a glance back over her shoulder to see her fox chasing her on all fours down the hall.

Nick nipped at her tail, causing her to quicken her pace. His nose was full of the scent of horny bunny. His mouth watered with the thought of tasting what lay underneath the blue fabric of her thong.

Judy made it through the bedroom door first giving the door a nudge as if to close it while continuing forward into the room. Hearing her fox growl just behind her, she dove down to slide on her hip under the bed.

Nick growled as he shouldered the door back open, causing it to bounce off of the spring door stop with a reverberating boing sound. He leaped up on the bed, using his momentum to spring to the other side. He turned as he landed and grabbed for Judy's left foot as it emerged from under the bed.

Judy scrambled as she felt his paw close around her ankle but there was nothing for her paws to get purchase on. She knew she could have kicked him in the snout to get away but she wanted to be caught. She turned onto her back as his paws worked there way up her legs pulling her slowly out
from under the bed.

Nick paused just long enough to bury his nose against the front of her thong. As he breathed in her excited scent he growled low and deep in his chest, knowing that the vibrations rumbled through her core.

Judy blushed and moaned softly at the feeling of his nose so intimately close to her sex. Her heart pounded in her chest as she felt him start to drag her once again out from under the bed.

“Look what I found,” Nick rumbled low and threateningly as her face came out from under the bed.

“W--w-what did you find Mr. Fox?” Judy asked innocently.

Nick smiled at her. His grin showed her every sharp tooth in his mouth. “Why, my favorite snack of course.”

“W-w-what is your favorite snack Mr. Fox?”

Nick bent forward as his paws slid down to the flair of her hips and growled into her ear. “Why you, of course.” He lifted her up as he stood and placed her on the bed.

Judy started to back away but stopped when his paw grabbed her ankle again. She watched as he discarded his dress shirt and slid his way out of his pants, leaving himself in just his boxer shorts.

Judy felt pinned to the bed just by the intense look in the tod’s eyes. Her heart was pounding in her chest as she watched him crawl up onto the bed.

He was stalking her; she could see it in his eyes. But the hunger he needed to satisfy wouldn’t be filled with food.

Nick nipped lightly at her knee, which caused her to slowly spread her thighs. He purposefully nestled his head between them and propped her knees up over his shoulders. His nose was less than an inch away from his target. The smell of her almost overwhelmed his senses.

Judy propped herself up on her elbows as she watched him, amazed that he would do this for her again so soon. From what she gathered from her sisters it was an uncommon thing for bucks to do for does. Yet here was her fox getting ready to dine on her once again less than twenty-four hours later.

His looked up into her eyes as his tongue flicked out and ran slowly along the damp spot that had slowly formed in the crotch of her thong. His eyes were bright and mischievous.

Judy moaned softly at the feel of his tongue on her. She whined softly with her need as she attempted to shift her crotch closer to the fox. Her eyes were half closed but stayed locked onto those of the fox between her thighs.

Nick hooked the thin elastic waistband of her thong in his thumbs. He grinned up at her and pressed the claw at the tip of his thumbs into the thin material. He relished the sound of the fibers popping one by one. With a final tug the waistband snapped apart on both sides.

“Mmmmm, what have I here?” Nick all but purred. He slowly pulled the front panel of her thong down, revealing her sex to him.

“N-N-Nick please!” She pushed herself up toward his mouth, desperately seeking further attention.
Nick’s tongue slowly slid up and down the folds of her sex. He was careful to avoid her clit and entrance for the moment, savoring both her taste and her torment.

Judy moaned and attempted to reach down and direct her fox’s attention where she wanted it. Before her paws could reach his face Nick grabbed her wrists in his paws and held them to the bed. She groaned in frustration, her thighs tightened around his head.

“Pleeease?” she whined.

“Please what, Fluff?” Nick asked as he pulled his tongue away from her.

Judy whimpered and squirmed. Her back arched and her face and ears flushed with both excitement and embarrassment.

“Please Nick, lick my pussy,” Judy said, her voice barely above a whisper.

“Mmmmm, since you asked so nice,” Nick responded before his tongue traveled from her entrance all the way up over her clit.

“Oh gods, yes!” Judy exclaimed.

He grinned inwardly as he slowly circled her clit with his tongue, then captured her clit gently between his lips, flicking his tongue against it roughly.

“YESSS!” Judy exclaimed as she shuddered though her first orgasm her stomach contracted in time with the waves of pleasure that coursed through her body.

He let go of her wrists as he lifted her hips slightly to give him better access to her. He opened his jaw wide, his lower jaw pressing into the curve of her ass as the upper pressed his incisors against her pubic bone. His tongue darted at her entrance a few times before pushing its way into her body.

Judy’s eyes shot open and looked down between her thighs. Seeing as well as feeling his teeth pressed against her caused her to shudder. Her eyes rolled back up into her head as she felt the long pink muscle of his tongue force its way into her.

Nick truly enjoyed the taste of his bunny. The taste of her combined with the smell and the soft moans and whimpers she emitted as he made her orgasm almost drove him as wild. He could feel her inner muscles fluttering and clamping down on his tongue.

Judy moaned as she felt his tongue move inside of her. It felt like she was being licked almost everywhere at once. Her small paws gripped the comforter as another orgasm tore through her small body, causing her left foot to thump rapidly against the bed as the pleasure coursed through her.

Nick slowly pulled his tongue from her body, giving her clit one final lick.

He grinned at her. “Feel good Carrots?”

Judy looked down at the smug looking fox and nodded.

Nick pressed a kiss just above her soaking wet slit and started to slowly slide up her body. He pressed kisses here and there, on her belly, between her breasts. He paused long enough to gently nibble on both of her breasts. His tongue flicked across her nipples roughly, his claws raked though the soft fur of her sides.

Judy moaned at the treatment, enjoying his attention. Her paws slid through the longer and coarser
fur of his coat. Her nose filled with the scent of violets and fox musk. She looked up into his eyes and smiled as she saw the love reflected in his.

Nick bent his head down slowly. Their muzzles came together slowly at first, then the kiss deepened. He felt her tongue press against his lips, demanding entry. He parted his lips, knowing she could taste herself on his tongue.

Judy moaned into his mouth as she darted her smaller tongue around his larger one. She whimpered as he broke the kiss in order to remove his boxers. Her heart pounded in her chest as she looked at his foxhood once again. She moaned and arched her back as he ran the head of his cock up and down her wet slit.

Nick groaned softly as he slowly slid himself into her tight wet depths. He arched his own back to bend down and kissed her.

Judy moaned into his mouth as she tilted her head back and kissed the larger predator, exposing the soft flesh of her neck to him. Images flashed through Judy's mind of him biting her neck and she shuddered as his knot pressed against her vulva.

He held still for a few moments, letting her adjust to him being inside of her. His tongue danced with hers as he waited. He groaned into her mouth as he felt her hips move and he slowly started to thrust in and out of her body.

Judy’s paws gripped the fur on Nick’s chest as he started to push into her. Her body rocked with each powerful thrust into her body.

Nick groaned as he drove into her. He nibbled on her shoulder and was amazed that she could take him fully into her body.

Judy tilted her head away from him giving him further access to her neck. Her stomach started to tighten as another orgasm built inside her.

Nick pressed his teeth against her exposed neck and throat, his thrusts becoming shallow with the change of the angle. He could feel her pulse as he pressed his tongue against the side of her throat and licked it softly.

Judy whined as his thrusts changed and pressed her heels into his backside to encourage him to thrust deep into her again. Her need built with every second that passed.

Nick paused for just a second to lift her up onto his kneeling lap and let her sink all the way down onto him once again. He picked up one of the pillows from the head of the bed and placed it down behind her, gently laying her back down; now her hips could rest on the pillow and give him a better angle into her body.

Judy kept her arms wrapped around the fox and pulled him down with her. She groaned loudly as he started to thrust hard and fast into her body. With each thrust she could feel him throbbing with need.

Nick grunted with effort as he thrust into his bunny’s body. He growled as he drove into her, his instincts taking over as he attempted to push his knot into her body.

Judy screamed his name as she felt and heard an audible pop when his knot forced its way into her. Her legs shook with the orgasm that plowed through her body.

The sound that was torn from Nick’s throat he came inside of her was somewhere between a growl and a yip. His paws held her tightly against him as he kept thrusting his hips into her over and over
again.

Judy’s eyes flew open; her vision was filled with creme fur as she orgasmed a second time, her walls squeezing down tight on his knot. She loved the feel of his warmth inside of her.

Nick growled “Mine” loudly as he twitched inside of his bunny.

Judy moaned and blushed under him a she heard him call her his. She could hear his heart thundering in his chest above her. Even though he was resting most of his weight on his elbows, there was still enough weight pressing down on her to make her feel pinned between him and the bed.

“Mmmmmmm,” Nick groaned softly as he hooked his paws under her shoulders and hips and rolled over so she was laying on his chest. “Promise kept Fluff?”

“Mmmmmmm,” she answered as she stretched her legs out behind her.

Nick softly stroked her back as they laid together.

“Can I ask you a personal question Slick?” Judy asked quietly.

Nick chuckled. “Sure Fluff, but I think we’re a little beyond asking for permission at this point.”

“Where you abducted as a kit?”

Nick stared up at the ceiling for a long time.

Judy got uncomfortable with his silence and squirmed a bit, causing her to moan since they were still locked together.

“You don’t have to answer if you don’t want to…”

“No, no; I will. It’s just that of all the things I thought you were going to ask, I didn't think you’d ask about that right now. Give me a little bit, ok?”

“When?” Judy asked. “You keep saying that you’ll tell me certain things later or another time, but then…”

Nick sighed. “Tonight. I’ll make us some comfort food and I’ll tell you about it then, ok?”

“Ok. Thanks Nick.”

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Judy’s mouth was in heaven. She had watched Nick layer the dish with layer after layer of potatoes and cheese then smother it all in some sort of cream sauce and more cheese. An hour later this plateful of heaven was sitting in front of her looking all golden and cheesy.

Where on the face of this planet did he learn to cook this?

She turned her attention to Nick, who’d been looking rather thoughtful for the last several minutes.

“I guess it was ’97, maybe ‘98. It was winter though, I remember that, and it was cold. You know they let the downtown area be “natural” weather,” Nick started.

Judy listened to him as he started to tell his story.
“I had a partner at the time. She was was a female Boston. Sweet as could be. Black and white, liked everyone she came across. She was escaping the foster system and living on the streets. We joined up because she was older, and if we pooled our money together we could typically afford a cheap motel in Happy Town.” Nick looked down at his paws.

“I’ve never understood why they still call that area of the city Happy Town. It hasn’t been happy since before the 60s, maybe even before that,” Nick continued. “I never really knew what she did for her money but now that I'm older I can guess. She always wanted a shower and gargled with a ton a mouthwash after we got a room. She was probably…16? Maybe 17. I’d learned early that you don’t ask a lady her age.”

Nick took a bite of the food in front of him. “I remember she got into this car one evening and never came back. I reported her missing, but finding a teenage prostitute wasn’t high on the list of priorities for the police.”

Judy looked appalled at this point in his story.

“Downtown actually saw snow that winter. It’s rare these days for snow to happen naturally there; now they generally use the weather wall at Tundra Town to make downtown have a white Christmas.”

Nick took a couple more bites of his food, using the time to gather himself.

“It was late two, maybe three weeks after Sasha disappeared. I was walking toward the Rainforest District, because the weather wall there kept that side of it a bit warmer. Being that it was Happy Town it was fairly easy to find a place to hole up for the night.” Nick paused again as he looked down at his plate of food. “I was approached by a buck, white tailed deer not rabbit. I can’t remember what he said to me or what happened after that. I do remember waking up with my hands bound behind my back and a muzzle on my face.”

Nick shook and closed his eyes. “He had taken my clothes off and I was placed in a box of some sort. It was cold, colder than it was in Happy Town. I found out a while later that I was at the docks in Tundra Town.”

“How did you get out?” Judy asked as she got out of her chair and walked over to Nick, placing a paw on his thigh.

“I kicked the side of the box enough that I attracted attention. Next thing I know I'm looking up into the eyes of a polar bear. The bear went away and shouted things that I couldn't understand; then there were gunshots and I was removed from the box and put in the back seat of a limo. The bear gave me a blanket.”

“What happened next?”

“I was driven to a mansion in Tundra Town and given some clothes and a coat. They fed me, let me stay the night, then dropped me off in the Downtown area with the promise of some work when I was older.”

“Who…” Judy started to ask.

“Mr. Big.”

“Oh….Did the deer….” Judy was unsure how to ask.

Nick shrugged. “When I woke up I hurt in places that shouldn’t have hurt.”
Judy crawled up into her fox’s lap and held him tightly. “I’m sorry.”

Nick wrapped his arms around her tightly. “That’s not the worst of it.”

Judy buried her face in Nick's chest, silently wondering how it could get any worse.

“Sasha was rescued a few years later from an illegal brothel in Puriasa. After they finally figured out where she was from they sent her back here. The news made a huge deal of it and I went to see her. But what came back wasn't Sasha. It wasn’t even a ghost of Sasha; it was like seeing a zombie walk around in Sasha’s body.”

“Did she get better?” Judy asked hopefully.

Nick was silent for many minutes as he searched for the words to explain. “She battled addiction problems and other things. But in the end her demons won.”

“Nick…. I’m…” Judy was at a loss for words; she’d figured it was bad, but not that bad.

“I can deal with a lot of shit, Fluff. But mammals that make their living off of selling other mammals, especially kits? That's my line.”

“I thought you handled Thorton rather professionally today. Fangmeyer thought so as well.”

“Yeah well, it took everything I had to keep from strangling the guy myself.”

“Sometimes police work is like that Nick.”

Nick gently ran his paw down her back.

“Nick?” Judy wanted to break him out of his brooding mood.

“Yeah.”

“You owe me a shirt and a pair of panties.”


“I didn’t say I didn’t enjoy it. Just saying you owe me….”

Chapter End Notes

Fixed internal dialog formatting
8/26/2019 posted edited version.
“It's not that complicated and you ain't gotta believe
They'll put me down in a hole before I let you succeed
I've never been complacent, I can't afford to be
I know you think you're special but you ain't nothin’”
Meet the Monster ~ Five Finger Death Punch

Nick groaned as the alarms they set the night before started to go off. Blindly he reached over to his nightstand for his phone. He picked up his phone and pressed his thumb to the home button and silenced the gods awful screech. He rolled over and reached for his bunny. He found nothing but a warm spot on the bed.

“Come on, Nick. The doctor and the department shrink cleared you yesterday for duty. So it's time to go back to making the world a better place!” Judy said rather cheerfully.

He cracked an eye and looked at her. “Why don't you make my world a better place and crawl back into this bed with me.”

“As tempting as that sounds, we both know that if I get back into that bed with you, we will be late.”

“Fine, fine. Spoilsport.” Nick grumbled as he swung his legs out of bed and sat up rubbing his face. “You go take your shower, and I'll start the coffee and your tea.”

“Ok.”

Nick watched her skip off and shook his head.

“Price you pay for being a nocturnal mammal partnered with a diurnal mammal.”

“Wait isn't bunnies supposed to be crepuscular?”
“Yeah, I think ours is defective.”

Nick chuckled to himself as he walked into the kitchen nude.

“Gloriously so….”

“Yes.”

Nick filled the kettle on the stove full of water and turned the burner on. He stretched his back before he flicked the switch for his coffee maker. His coffee maker was a simple thing. He put water and coffee grounds in it and out came a pot of life-giving elixir.

He picked up his sunglasses off the counter and put them on before he turned on the lights in the living room and bathroom. Rabbits, in general, had poor night vision which is why they hardly ever was placed on the night shift. She had offered more than once to switch to a Nightshift, but he had declined. Years of hustling other mammals out of their money had gotten him used to be on a daytime schedule. Besides, it was safer for her if they patrolled during the day.

He got down her mug and a bag of the tea she preferred in the morning. She bought it from a rabbit specialty store. She claimed it was full of vitamins and a minimum amount of caffeine. Whatever was in it she hardly seemed to need it more drinking something with him in the morning because without his coffee he was pretty much useless.

He turned the burner off as the kettle started to whistle and poured the hot water into her mug, so the tea had enough time to seep.

He leaned against the counter and watched the pot of coffee slowly fill. His ears rotated toward the master bath as he heard her minorly off-key rendition of Try Everything. He smiled and closed his eyes again as he yawned.

He smiled as he smelled her coming down the hall. He filled his coffee mug and placed the carafe back onto the maker to keep the coffee hot. He added sugar and blueberry creamer before taking a sip of it.

“Showers all yours Slick.”

“Ok beautiful your tea is ready for you. I’ll be out in a bit.”

Judy watched as his tail sauntered down the hall with his coffee cup in hand.

---

Nick looked over his appearance in the mirror. The same sensations came over him almost every time. Belonging, pride, and wonder. He wondered if his mother and father would have been proud of him. Clipping his tie on he walked out of the bedroom to the kitchen where Judy already had his travel mug of coffee ready to go.

“Looking good Slick.”

“Thanks.” He picked up his travel mug and followed behind her to the door.
“What do you think Chief will have us doing today?” Judy asked as he shut and locked the door behind them.

“I bet we are talking to school kids today.”

“I don’t know you’re out of the news cycle,” Judy said as they walked down the hall to the elevators.

“Yeah guess your right. Buffalo Butt hasn’t put us on that assignment in a while.”

“Are we taking mass transit or did you call us a Zuber?”

“Mass transit with how much we been spending on Zubers, I’m starting to consider buying a car.”

“Oh and just what kinda car would you buy?” Judy asked as she looked up at him oddly curious.

Nick shrugged. “I don’t know haven’t looked at cars since I was a teenager.”

Judy nodded. “I grew up on a farm. The only other vehicle I have driven has been our cruiser. What did you like when you were a teenager?”

“I liked exotic sports cars, but those are vastly out of what I would want to spend on a car.”

“Like a Furrari?” Judy asked as she pressed the button for the ground floor.

“Yeah, I have savings, but I'm saving to retire and spending enough that some mammals could buy a house on a car seems…. I don't know wrong.”

“Does the apartment have parking?”

“Two spaces actually,” Nick answered as they came out of the building.

“So we could bring the cruiser home?”

“We could yes. If Buffalo Butt approves it.” He replied as they waited for their bus.

“That alone could save us a lot of money, let alone time.”

Nick nodded and took a sip of his coffee.

“Can I…” Judy started.

“Yes, Fluff,” He answered as they got on the bus and found seats.

“If you wanted to could you buy a Furrari?”

Nick nodded and took another sip of his coffee.

Judy sat quietly for many minutes. Nick looked down at her and pulled out his phone and started to type her a message.

Nick: Not something I like to talk about in public.
Judy felt her phone vibrate and pulled it out and started to reply.

Judy: I can understand that.

Nick: Once mammals find out you have money they start to seem entitled to it. I had a lot left over from my hustling days even after paying back taxes, and mom left me a bit. Plus I have an additional income from her real estate agency.

Judy: You kept the agency?

Nick: Why shouldn’t I have? Those mammals do good work and moms long time partner now almost solely runs it. I have to provide input on big decisions.

Judy: So how much are we talking here?

Nick closed his phone and put it in his pocket. He was quiet for a long time.

“I’ll only tell you that, Fluff, just before we are married. Otherwise, don’t worry about it.”

“But…”

“My net worth and additional incomes have been one hundred percent disclosed to Chief Buffalo Butt. I’m not hiding anything. I’m not in crippling debt. I don’t want it to be a factor in our relationship.”

Judy nodded understandingly. “...I can understand your position, Nick. And I appreciate your honesty on your debt load. With that in mind, I do have student loans that I took out for my Bachelors in Criminal Justice.”

Nick nodded and smiled down at her. “Would you believe I have an Associates in Business Accounting?”

“Really?”

“Yeah.” Nick grinned down at her. “I guess you could say bunnies are not the only ones good a multiplying.”

Judy giggled at him and smacked his arm half haphazardly.

Judy watched anxiously as Nick refilled his coffee from the Department break room. He seemed to be going slower than usual.

“Come on Nick hurry up or well be late and get parking duty for sure!” Judy scolded him

“Relax Carrots we still have ten minutes,” Nick said as he finished stirring his coffee and put the lid on the cup.
“Hey Wolfard long time no see buddy,” Nick called to one of the wolf officers as he and Judy entered the bullpen.

“Hey, Nick they finally let you come back to work eh?” Wolf replied.

“Yeah, well Bogo wanted to make sure I was at one hundred percent so I can keep up with Super Bunny.”

Judy grinned as she climbed up onto their shared chair. Nick jumped up on to the chair beside her and put his coffee cup and sunglasses down.

“ROOM ATTENTION!” Higgins bellowed. No sooner than he said room through every officer stood and started making noise as Chief Bogo entered the bullpen.

“Alright, you animals sit.” Bogo commanded. Bogo looked around the room sternly, and he could see over the top of the table at Wildes smug expression.

“First order of business. Our fox is back from medical leave, expect a sharp upswing in pranks.”

“I wouldn’t know what you’re talking about Chief Pinky.” This quip elicited a round of chuckles from every officer in the room.

“Shut your trap, Wilde!”

“Assignments, same as yesterday, Hopps, Wilde see me in my office.”

Nick and Judy stayed in their chair as the larger mammals filed out of the room on their assignments.

“What do you think Chief is going to assign us?” Judy asked quietly.

“Parking Duty.”

Judy rolled her eyes Parking Duty was Nick’s least favorite duty that they have been assigned. Truth be told it was hers as well. Generating revenue for the city didn't seem like important police work, but every so often they had been assigned it. Mostly after Nick got caught in some prank or another.

“If he was going to assign us that he would have just said it.”

“Yeah probably.” Nick picked up his sunglasses and his coffee and slid down off the chair. “Well let's go find out shall we.”

Judy nodded and slid down off of the chair as well and walked with him to Bogo’s office.

“Shut the door, Wilde,” Bogo told Nick as they entered the room.

Nick pushed the door shut and hopped up on the chair beside his partner.

“How are your ribs, Wilde?” Bogo asked.

“Still a little tender at times but otherwise pretty good,” Nick answered him.

Bogo nodded and stared at the two of them for many long minutes. He had misgivings about the
assignment he was going to give them, but he agreed with Fangmeyer for the most part.

“Hopps, the last time I gave you a case it ended in approximately one point five million dollars in property damage.” Bogo glared at the bunny officer. “And yes I know it could have been worse.”

Nick curled his tail around Judy’s hips and listened to Bogo wondering where he was going with this.

“I remind you of this because I don’t want this case to result in damages that the city can hardly afford.” The Chief said sternly.

“You two will be working with Detectives Fangmeyer and Wolfson. Fangmeyer requested you two by name. She seems to think you have what it takes to be detectives after the whole Bellwether fiasco.”

Nick felt Judy relax beside him a bit. As a result, Nick relaxed a bit.

“They will be handling the drug side of the Wolferton case. You will be looking into the kits.” Bogo looked down at his hooves for a few minutes before he looked back up at them. “Fangmeyer and Wolfson will oversee you, make sure they know what you are up to. Go see them for your case files.”

Nick and Judy both nodded and slipped out of the chair. Nick opened and held the door for Judy.

“And Hopps,” Bogo said causing Judy to turn around. “Try to keep your partner in one piece. The department can ill afford another doctor bill for him at the moment.”

“I’ll do my best Chief,” Judy said solemnly. She turned and walked out the door. Judy missed the look that Nick gave Chief Bogo.

Bogo watched the two go and shook his head. The look that Officer Wilde had given him let him know in no uncertain terms that Nick thought Bogo had gone too far. In a lot of ways, it reminded him of their confrontation in the rainforest district.

Nick watched his bunny as they walked down the hall from the chief’s office. He paid close attention to her scent and body language. Her ears flopped down her back, and she was looking at the floor.

“The shooting wasn’t your fault you know,” Nick said breaking the silence between them.

Judy just stared at the floor in front of her and nodded. He frowned down at her and glanced into a conference room seeing it was empty at the time.

Nick grabbed Judy by the arm and pulled her into the conference room and shut the door behind them.

“Wha? Hey!” Judy explained as Nick pulled her into the conference room.

Nick looked down into her eyes. “Ok, fluff what’s wrong.”
“What makes you think something is wrong?”

“Weird ears are droopy, and you’re looking at the floor like someone just ate your last carrot, and this is despite getting a case instead of patrolling or parking duty.”

Judy sighed and looked away.

“Look Buffalo Butt had no right to pin my shooting on you. It wasn’t your fault you, even he or I didn’t know that Charlie would be running around with kits and coke in the trunk of his car. We didn’t know that he would be willing to kill to keep them.”

Nick offed as a grey-furred missile launched herself at his midsection. He looked down at her and held her tightly.

“I’m sorry Nick, it’s just that it all made me wonder why you are a cop if you are doing so well,” Judy said tears and fear evident in her voice.

Nick sighed as he ran his claws through the fur at the back of her head.

“I’m a cop because some crazy bunny got it in my head that I would be a good cop.”

Judy’s arms tightened around him.

“What do you say, Fluff? Am I a good cop?”

“You are.” He heard her mumble.

“So what does it matter why I’m a cop? I’m here, and I’m your partner just like you asked me to be.”

“That’s what’s wrong…..”

“What’s that Fluff.”

“You are a cop because I asked you to be and you got shot…..”

“Stop, right now stop and look at me.”

Judy pulled back and looked up at him. He knelt down so they could look eye to eye.

“Let me ask you this, Fluff. Are you my girlfriend because I asked or is it because I asked and you wanted to be?”

Judy looked confused for a moment.

“Because you asked and I wanted this…..”

“Me being a cop is the same way, you asked me to be your partner, and I wanted to feel like I was apart of something bigger than myself. Just surprise I got my dream girl as well.”

Judy hugged him tightly again this time wrapping her arms tightly around his neck.
“There, there Fluff. Bunnies sooo emotional.” Nick smiled and held her tightly against his chest.

After many minutes of holding her, he kissed the side of her neck. “Now Fluff what do you say we go see Fangs and Wolfson about this case?”

Judy nodded and slowly let him go. “Ok partner lets go make the world a better place.”

Nick smiled at her and stood up. “You have already made my world a better place, Fluff.” He thought to himself.

Judy felt better, not perfect but better. She knew that Nick’s shooting wasn’t her fault. There was no way of knowing what was going on with the car when they pulled it over. If she had gotten out of the cruiser with Nick then more than likely she or he would have been killed instead of just injured. She understood this. She knew Nick understood this. She was sure that Chief Bogo understood this. What she didn’t understand what Bogo’s comments were implying that the shooting was her fault. Maybe he didn’t mean to imply that perhaps he was just frustrated? Nick told her health insurance for foxes was outrageous maybe City Hall had a heart attack over the bill? Either way, she felt better after having a talk with Nick in the conference room about it.

Judy shook her head as they entered the detective’s area. Unlike beat officers who when doing office work occupied a cubicle farm. Partnered detectives shared offices. This was to give them privacy when working on cases. The caseload from what Judy and Nick understood was pretty high. A lot of them worked more than one case at a time. This was in order to maximize their time, so when one case had gone cold, they could work another while waiting for lab work, files or even leads. The offices occupied both sides of the space with the center being taken up with a large conference table. Printers for the computers were on both sides of the area and at the end was a counter with coffee makers and what looked like a snack bar. The walls of the offices that faced the center were floor to ceiling windows most had the blinds down a few of the offices had their doors open and even a few had the lights off.

Judy and Nick walked over to Fangmeyer and Wolfson’s office door. Judy knocked politely as the door was shut and Nick leaned against the door frame. A few minutes later the door was opened by a Wolf dark grey wolf dressed in black slacks, white button up shirt and a blue sports jacket that was unbuttoned.

The two smaller mammals watched the wolf look around minorly confused before Judy cleared her throat to get his attention.

“Oh it’s you two sorry, was expecting Captain Rutherford. Alicia, your trainees, are here. Do come in.”

Nick and Judy looked at each other and shrugged at being called trainees. They walked into the office to see two desks pushed together facing each other in the center of the room. Large whiteboards behind each desk and the outer wall had windows that faced out into the city.

Alicia Fangmeyer was seated at her desk looking over some paperwork in a folder when Judy and Nick walked in. She was dress simply in black and pink pinstriped pants white shirt with a matching jacket resting over the back of her chair.
“Have a seat. We didn’t expect you down so soon. Matter of fact I had submitted the request for your transfer to Chief Bogo yesterday.” Fangmeyer said as she noticed their blank stares. “I take it Chief Bogo didn’t say anything about it?”

“No good deed goes unpunished eh, Fangs?” Nick quipped.

“Something like that. We are also hoping your experience and contacts on the streets will be able to help us put to rest some cases.”

“It would have to be new things that have happened since Bellwether,” Nick said.

“We are well aware of the…..agreements in which your life operates Wilde.”

“So promotion and a transfer?” Judy asked.

“That’s the size of it.” A new voice said.

The voice belonged to a great brown bear. His face was withered, and scars could be seen here, and there were bits, and pieces of his fur were missing and hadn’t grown back. His muzzle was lined in grey fur telling of the long years he had spent on the force. He was well dressed in a suit that wouldn’t look too out of place on one of Mr. Bigs Polar bears.

“Captain Rutherford, this is……” Fangmeyer started to introduce.

“Judith L. Hopps and Nicholas P. Wilde.” Captain Rutherford finished for her.

“Captain Rutherford.” Judy greeted, and Nick just nodded respectfully to the large bear.

“Hello, Ruthy,” Nick said and leaned back on the couch.

“Nicholas.” Captain Rutherford greeted the fox.

Judy groaned and looked at her partner. “Could he be serious for five seconds? Was that too much to ask? Did he have to go out of his way to offend his new boss so soon?” Judy covered her face with her paw and shook her head.

“Don’t worry Hopps Nicholas and I have a bit of history, don’t we fox?”

“If by history you mean you tried to turn me into a snitch and almost got me killed on more than one occasion? Then sure we have a history.”

“Yet here you are.” The captain replied spreading his paws out as if it all made sense.

“Wait, please tell me he didn’t take money or something else from you,” Judy bluntly asked as she looked into her partner’s eyes.


“I wouldn’t say I failed.”
Nick looked at Captain Rutherford and smiled. “Yet, here we are.”

“That we are.” The captain smiled. “If your half as good of a cop as you were at skirting the law then you'll do fine here.”

Nick shrugged and didn't offer any further comment.

“Get them started on their first case. We’ll keep the load light for now as we are more than likely throwing them in the deep end of the shit pool to start with.”

Nick frowned as he looked over the case file in front of him. The frown had been almost perpetual since they had been shown to their new office. “Somethings just don't add up right.” Nick thought to himself not for the first time in the last several hours. He had gone over Thorton’s story several times. But there were big glaring holes in it.

“Hey, Carrots?” Nick asked.

“Yeah getting anywhere with the traffic cams?”

“No, I’m having problems finding him around the park….” Judy said frustrated. “How are you coming with finding leads in the case file?”

“Well, it's better than when you started looking for Emmitt Otterton.”

“I feel there is a but in that statement.”

“There is, and it stinks.”

“Ok care to explain?”

“What are two bunny kits doing in the Meadowlands Park at 1000 on a school day?” Nick asked.

“Maybe they are homeschooled?” Judy offered. “A few families did that in Bunny Burrow as it let the kits help on the farm longer and the parents didn't have to worry about transporting hundreds of kits to and from school.”

“Maybe.” Nick frowned. “Do we have an address for the kit's parents? It wasn't in the file I was given…”

“I don’t have one either. We can look it up, by the name given or maybe even pull it from the report of the officers that took them home?” Judy frowned. “What are you thinking Nick?”

“I think since we cannot follow Charlie forward we need to follow him backward and figure out what was going on with the kits.”

“Nick are you suspecting…..” Judy started.

“I don’t know but, there is something that doesn’t feel right to Thorton's story.”
“I’m not yet sure Fluff, but I have a bad feeling about this case.” Nick started to go back though Thorton’s confession again.

Silence fell over the office as Nick and Judy worked. Judy typed away at her keyboard as he pulled up the report from the officer that took the kits home. Nick frowned at the copy of the confession in front of him. Something from his past nagged heavily at him.

“Nick?” Judy asked.

“Yeah?”

“I’m not familiar with this address. But it reminds me of Bunny Burrow.”

“Oh?”

“285 Branch Road 9856.”

Nick shook his head. “That should remind you of Bunny Burrow as that is not within the city limits.”

“Oh….” Judy pulled up zoogo on her computer’s browser and entered the address. Nick watched her ears fall back behind her head.

“Nick that address is about fifty miles outside of the city….”

Nick sighed. “Carrots how did you get my tax returns?”

“Ummm, Ben was able to get them for me as you were my only lead why?”

Nick frowned and looked down at the paperwork on his desk. “I don't think those kits was picked up at the Meadowlands Park….”

Nick ran his paws of the top of his head.

“You think they were picked up from home?”

Nick nodded. “How far along have you tracked Charlie's car back from when we stopped it?”

“I have been looking for it around the park….”

“Find it?”

“No….”

“Follow the car, and I'm betting it leaves the city heading out on highway 285 toward farm to market road 9856. But I think we need to talk with Fangs possibly Ruthy as well.”

“You think the parents sold the kits?” Judy all but whispered as she put the pieces together that he was laying out.

“I do.”
“Then we need to go out there right now Nick!” Judy jumped out of her chair and headed for the door.

“Judy wait!”

The use of her name and not a nickname caused her to pause and look at her partner. She turned and looked at him.

“We can not go out there half cocked. We need to have as much of the story as we can get from here and that means doing the legwork. But I suspect we are going to need more than a hunch and jam cam footage.”

Judy nodded. “We are going to need a warrant….”

“That we are Detective Fluff.”

“So what should we do?”

“I think you should follow Charlie's car back from when we stopped it to when it came back into and left the city. I also think I need to go have a talk with Ben and see what he can pull out of records for us.”

Nick slid out of his chair and walked out the door with his paws in his pockets and his ears low to his head. If truth be told he hated what he was suggesting that the kit's parents were doing. But Thorton said to them that Charlie had picked up the kits from Meadowlands Park at 1000, but Judy said she couldn’t find Charlie’s car there. Then there is the fact that the kits weren’t reported missing at all. It was all circumstantial evidence sure but to the ex-hustler if enough evidence pointed in a direction….

Nick sighed. What bothered him, even more, was it was bunnies. One of the, if not the most, family oriented species on the planet. What could drive a rabbit to sell their kits into slavery? What was bothering Nick thought was Judy, she had 287 siblings the last he heard from her. Judy was twenty-four years old and if her parents had 287 kits then how many of these kits had the Leapersons sold into slavery? Hundreds? Thousands if they had more than one doe? He shuddered at the thought.

What bothered him the most though was his mind was already working on how to make a scheme like that work. He never dealt in mammals it was an offensive line that he and many other that he knew wouldn't cross. But he couldn’t help but try to think of the logistics and the things that would go into it to make it work.

He felt dirty, even more, dirty than he did after questioning Thorton. He felt as if he had rolled in sewage then swan dived into the guano vats in the nocturnal district. Nick wondered if his soul would ever be clean after this case.

Judy watched her partner go. She could tell he needed time to process things. Ever since they had been told that they would be working on this case, he had steadily gotten more moody. Something was eating at him, and she wasn't sure what to do to get him to open up to her.

Judy was clicking through traffic cams finding the black mercury lemur with stolen tags. She would
make a note of the time when the car entered that cameras view then move to the next one in line. Sometimes it took looking through more than one camera from there she slowly and painstakingly followed the car from where they stopped it.

She was trying very hard not to think about what this case implied. She grew up in a very tight-knit family. Even if she was the oddball that wanted to be a cop. Her family still loved her very much and cared deeply about her safety and well being. To have a rabbit family sell their kits for Gods know what purpose? It was nearly unthinkable to her.

Maybe that what was bothering Nick? She knew Nick grew up as an only kit and to her, that had to be lonely. She wanted to go out there and confront The Carsons, but she could see Nicks logic. If they went in without so much as a search warrant, they could tip them off that the police was looking into them. Even worse would be to go in without so doing any background legwork and they are innocent of any wrongdoing. But a part of her couldn’t help but feel that he was right.

Judy kept going through the traffic cameras and just as Nick predicted the black mercury lemur entered the city limits on Highway 285 passing through the Meadowlands District. Judy noted the time and noticed it was approximately 15 minutes before the shooting had occurred.

Judy sighed just as Nick reentered the room.

“Whats wrong Fluff?” Nick asked seemingly back to his more upbeat self.

“Found Charlie's car.”

Nick nodded and waited.

“He entered the City on highway 285 just like you predicted.”

Nick sighed and nodded as he sat back down in his chair. “Claws is digging in the ZPD Database for us to see what he can dig up. We might have to go to Ruthy or Buffalo Butt for the rest of the information that we need.”

“So we wait?”

“Yeah, want to go get some lunch?”

They were seated in a dinner not too far away from the precinct. The pair of them had eaten here more than once, and Judy particularly liked the garden salad with shredded mozzarella cheese. Nicks fare rotated but today he was having blueberry pancakes.

“Fluff can I ask you a very personal and insensitive question.”

Judy stared at Nick for a while as she ate her salad weighing her options.

“Ok, Slick you can ask your question, but I get to ask one of my own at a later date.”

Nick nodded his agreement as he shoveled in another mouth full of pancake.
“How many kits can a rabbit have a year?” Nick asked after he swallowed his mouth full of pancake.

Judy’s ears fell back behind her head. “It varies……”

“Just say average?”

“Nick this isn’t something we like to talk about…..”

Nick nodded. “Sorry Fluff, I didn’t mean to ask about a bunny secret.”

Judy sighed and recalled her want of foxy secrets her first night in Nick’s, what is now their, apartment. “Mom had on average twenty-nine on the years they had litters.”

“Can I ask how many litters a year?”

Judy looked down at her food and nodded. “Three.”

Nick frowned and looked down at his food. “So on average about nine kits a litter……”

Judy nodded. “The larger the litter, the more risks to the kits and mother.”

Nick closed his eyes and hung his head. Judy watched him the expression from this morning returned over his face.

“Nick whats wrong?”

Nick sighed and started to lie to her.” Noth…”

“Fluff, am I a good mammal?”

“Yes, Nick, you're a good mammal..”

Nick leaned forward across the table toward her.

“If I was a good mammal would I have spent most of the morning figuring out how the Leapersons are running their little operation? If I was a good mammal would I be sitting here wondering how much more a female bunny would be worth than male? If I was a good a mammal would I be wondering what they did with the money and the various means of stashing that amount of cash?”

Judy looked at him for many minutes her nose twitching.

“Let me ask you something, Nick?”

“Ok shoot,” Nick said just before he took another bite of his pancakes.

“Are you asking yourself those questions because you want to run your own…..operation or because you want to end theirs?”

Nick’s ears fell flat to his skull. “Judy I would never…..”

Judy warmly smiled at him. “I know Nick, so there is your answer to your question. You are the
product of over twenty years on the street. You cannot help but think the way you do, but it's what you do with the conclusions that you make that makes the difference.”

“So…..”

“Yes, Nick you are a good mammal. Besides if you weren’t, I would arrest you.” Judy said as she darted her fork across the table and stole a bite of his pancakes.

Nick let out a barking laugh at his bunny’s declaration.

“Thank you, Carrots.”

“You are welcome, Now why haven’t you marked me?”

“Who says I haven’t?”

“Well, you haven’t…..”

“Rubbed my face all over you?”

Judy nodded and took a bite of her salad.

“Well, what does scent marks mean to bunnies?”

“That I’m taken…”

“Well since I know you still used that flowery bunny shampoo this morning anyone that smells you will still definitely smell me.”

Judy nodded again.

“I guess I haven’t due to….. Culture difference maybe?”

Judy looked into his eyes surprised. “Oh?”

“It’s not that. I’m embarrassed by you Carrots. Far from it actually. I’m proud to have you. It’s just…. Well with foxes the kind of marks you want. Come with some very significant connotations.”

Judy’s ears perked up a bit, she felt like she was about to get more fox secrets and in many ways she was. “Like what kind of connotations?”

“Marriage really, and it's not that I don’t want to marry you its just things have moved with a surprising speed between us, and you haven’t even set up our second date.”

“Oh.” Judy’s ears slowly lowered behind her head and down her back. “Everything has been so wonderful it had just slipped my mind. I’m sorry, Nick.”

“Don’t be I’m not complaining about anything that has happened between us.” Nick took a bite of his pancakes.

“So, you are not opposed to marrying me?” Judy asked shyly.
“Do, I see any future of mine that doesn't have you at my side?” Nick looked thoughtful for a moment. “No, no I do not.”

Judy smiled warmly.

“We have only been together what a month and a half?” Nick asked.

Judy nodded. “Yeah about that I guess.”

“What are bunny courtship timelines like?”

“Well, my mom and dad got married after about a month. But they went to high school together.”

“Nick nodded. “Did they date during high school?”

Judy was quiet as she went over what her parents had shared with her and her siblings about how they met and their courtship. “No, I don't think they did. Bunnies play the field a lot until they find their one. I guess it’s part of the reason we have a reputation for being very promiscuous.”

Nick nodded. “So was your Mother and Fathers courtship considered fast or slow by bunny standards?”

“I don’t know…” Judy paused before she asked. ”What about foxes?”

“The vixen drives the timeline of fox courtship. My mom and dad practically grew up with each other. So they knew each other for years before mom.” Nick paused for a moment as he searched for words. ‘Claimed him, I guess you could say.”

“So if the vixen drives courtship is Wilde your mom's name?”

“No it's my father's, mom wanted to distance us from her side of the family. I’m not sure why she never fully explained it to me, but I guess there were some issues between her and her parents.”

“So if we get married you would become Nick Hopps?”

Nick shrugged. “If that is what you wanted.”

“I don’t know…. I had always assumed I would take my husbands name.” Judy answered truthfully.

“Hmm, Judith Laverne Wilde.” Nick paused for a moment. “Or I guess we could always hyphenate it.”

“No,” Judy said quite firmly. “I always disliked hyphenated names it is like they couldn't make a decision.”

Nick chuckled. “Of course not. But it's also not like we have to decide on this today.” He reminded her.

Judy ate the rest of her salad as the pondered the question of her name.

“Judith Laverne Wilde.”
“It has a nice ring to it.”

“Yes, yes it does.”

It hit Judy like a ton of bricks just what the connotations of their lunchtime conversation was.

“Sweet cheese and crackers, I have been pestering Nick to marry me for the last month...”

“He didn’t say no.....”

“He does expect a second date.....”

“But what though....”

“Nick took you to, a fancy club and sung for you. Music is a big part of his life....”

Judy thought back to the many debates they had over musical tastes.

“Can’t-do music he already did that....”

“Awe........” Came the squeal that greeted them as they entered precinct one. “Sorry. I missed you guys as you headed out for lunch. Though I must say, you do make an absolutely cu.... I mean an adorable couple.” The overweight cheetah said.

“Hey Claws,” Nick greeted. “Did you get any of that information I requested?”

“Nice save there Clawhauser,” Judy said.

“Well for a lot of it we will have to subpoena for it, but I did get back the census report for that address.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah but I don't think it is going to be overly helpful to you.”

“Why's that?”

“Well, it only shows that six mammals are living at that address.”

“How many kits?”

“None....”

How many adults?” Nick asked dreading the answer.

“One male and five females, ages from eighteen to forty-two.”

Nick glanced at Judy and shook his head.
“It doesn’t mean much of anything as the census does not have to be filled out correctly.”

“Anything else?”

“Well, there has been some building permits filed…”

“Can you send us copies of those, Clawhauser?” Judy asked.

“Hmm.” Nick had a thoughtful look on his face.

“I know that look all too well, what are you thinking there Slick?” Judy asked.

“Well, I’m wondering if we have a cyber crimes division?”

“We do, but I’m wondering what kits have to do with cyber crimes?” Judy asked.

Nick sighed and looked at Ben who was listening in very intently. “Well around 2000 there was a
shift in the way things in the underworld was…” Nick paused for a moment. “I guess you could say,
procured? Anyway, things shifted from shady back alleyway deals to a more online presence.”

Judy nodded having had sat though a few lectures on the subject.

“Ebah was and still is pretty popular for fencing stolen goods but somethings you can’t get through
Ebah because it’s against the terms of service….”

“So what do shady mammals do when they want to sell something else? Say drugs or….”

“Well up to a few years ago there was the Game Trail, on the dark web but after the ZBI and the
DEA helped bring them down, I’m not so sure now. But the Game Trail wouldn’t have dealt in…..”

“So you think cyber crimes would be able to help us?”

“Yeah, I mean you don’t just stand on a corner advertising kits for sale, Fluff.”

Clawhauser gasped at the bluntness of Nick declaration. They had danced around the subject in front
of the tubby feline, but Nick just came out and said it surprised Clawhauser.

“You mean there are mammals out there selling their children?” Clawhauser asked.

Nick nodded sadly. “Unfortunately.”

“Nick, how did you know about the Game Trail?” Judy asked looking up at her partner.

Nick looked down at her and smiled. “Relax Fluff, I wasn't involved in it. But I watched from the
outside looking in. As hustles go it was a pretty good one, you could say I was curious about how it
all worked, but I don’t and probably never will have computer knowledge to pull that off on that
scale.”

“Cyber crimes are down in the basement,” Clawhauser said. “They are near records, but at the other
end of the building due to the heat the boiler gives off.”
“Come on Carrots, let us go speak to some geeks that knows more about the internet than we do,” Nick said as he started to walk away.

Judy nodded to him as they started to walk away. “I don’t think we should refer to them as geeks though, Slick.”

“True they might prefer nerds.”

“Nick they are officers just like we are.”

“Ok, ok, I’ll be on my best behavior.”

Judy groaned and rolled her eyes at him.

“Oh, come on Fluff, I turned on my charm and got you right?”

“No, you cooked me an omelet and got me.”

“Noted, A way to a bunny’s heart is through her stomach.”

Judy couldn’t help but smile at that. There was truth behind the statement after all.

The Technological Investigation Unit was a branch of the CSI unit for the ZPD. The TIU handled everything dealing with technology. The unit was started in the early 2000’s to help combat the growing rise of cybercrime. From there it branched into crime scene investigation when computers, cell phones, digital cameras, almost anything with a microprocessor became involved.

As such the mammals that ended up recruited for the TIU were first and foremost hired for their abilities with technology not necessarily their ability to be police officers. A small handful of the mammals in the TIU had criminal records. Others where some of the best and brightest that came out of Zootopia State University, lured in with scholarships or sign on bonuses.

Nick and Judy stared momentarily at the sign that created them as they entered the TIU. It read abandon all hope all ye who enter here. Above the words was the caricature of a weasels skull with monitors in the eye sockets and crossed keyboards underneath.

Nick smiled at it. “Interested decor. Definitely geeks, Carrots.”

“Nick…” Judy said mildly threatening. “You promised.”

“Its ok we prefer Geeks over Nerds.” An almost black wolf said as he walked up to them.

The wolf was nothing like the wolves that Nick and Judy had dealt with in their day to day duties. Where most was well groomed, this one was groomed to an almost manic level of care. He wore a well-cut suit and tie in black with a crisply pressed white shirt. His eyes set him further apart with black pupils and irises that was mixed rings of white and light blue. Nick figured them to be contacts of some sort as he hadn’t seen eyes like that on any mammal except maybe huskies.
“Now that we have nomenclature of the mammals in the dungeon how may we help you Officers Hopps and Wilde?”

“Why, they were promoted this morning!” called out a voice.

“Yeah, IT changed their duty titles in active directory to detective shortly after 9 this morning,” called a second.

Nick kept quiet as he studied the body language of the wolf in front of him. He knew the mammal from someplace but couldn't quite put a paw on where though. The wolf carried himself with an assurance that he was either better or knew more than anyone else in the room. Maybe both and that assurance didn’t sit well with Nick.

“Hello Cor,” Nick said after a few minutes.

“Hello, Nick how did you know it was me?”

“Well, the last time we meet you was white with black contacts. But you disappeared for a while, I guess now I know why.”

Cor chuckled. “Yes getting picked up by the ZPD was not on my list of things to do in my lifetime yet here I am.”

“How did that happen, buddy?”

“Honestly? I got sloppy but the pay is good, and it's keeping me out of prison….,” Cor answered with a shrug. “So what brings two of ZPD’s fastest rising stars into my domain?”

“We need help finding a website on the dark web,” Judy answered.

“Ok, what kind of website, there are all sorts of things you can find on the dark or deep web or even the onion network. I kind of need to know what it is your looking for.”

“We are looking for a website that sells kits, Cor,” Nick answered.

Cor stared blankly at them for many long minutes. “Nick you know I have never….”

“Look, buddy, we are not accusing you of anything, can we go into your office? This is part of a formal investigation….,”

“Sure, sure. I don't need my union rep right?” Cor asked one more time walking into a darkened office.

The office that that was dominated by a corner desk. One side of it faced the open door and was covered in paperwork and files. The other side was dominated by monitors and keyboards. Some of the monitors showed new stories others showed stock exchanges for around the globe. Others were powered off as if the wolf didn't want them to see what the screens may have held.

“Can we turn the lights up a bit in here? Judy’s night sight isn’t as good as ours is Cor.”

“Sure,” Cor answered. “I would hate for a lady to feel uncomfortable in the dungeon,” Cor answered.
Nick turned the lights up a bit making it easier for Judy to see. If she thought the office was a mess before having the lights turned up it was nothing compared to what it looked like when she could see clearly.

Along the back wall stacked three to four deep was gutted computers. Most with cables hanging out of them like half-eaten carcasses. On top of those sat broken monitors and what looked like some smashed tablets and smartphones.

“Now, about this website you need help finding.”

“We are looking for a website that would advertise kits for sale,” Judy stated.

Cors eyes tracked from the rabbit to the fox and back again. “You are serious?”

“As a heart attack,” Nick answered.

“We have reason to believe that their parents are selling them off from a…….” Judy struggled to find a word that fit. “Farm? Outside of the city.”

Cor’s face was blank devoid of much emotion. “That is honestly some of the sickest shit I have heard since taking up this job. Honestly, that is as low as some of the…..” Cor just shook his head.

“Can you help us?” Judy asked.

Cor thought about it. “If there is a website out there for this you can bet your tails that it is by invite only. It's not like you can go out and search the deep web with zoogle or pling.”

Nick and Judy both nodded their understanding.

“I believe we can help you though as I think this will also help us in our other investigations. We will need to shake a few cages to see if anything falls out……” Cor explained.

“So what sort of time frame are we talking about?” Judy asked.

“We’ll need a few days to get responses from a few leads that we might have. We are working with a few other agencies on a CP Ring, and this will probably have overlap.” Cor looked thoughtful. “Call it three maybe four days while we comb through data gained from raids for anything that might look like it would be useful to you.”

“Thanks, Cor,” Nick said.

“Do you two have any pictures of the kids in question? If so we can run the images against the database of crap we have collected, and we can tell you if they have been involved in our investigation.”

“We will send them to you by email.” Judy offered.

“That would be perfect.”
Judy looked over the permits on her computer and groaned.

“What's wrong, Fluff?”

“Well, it's what some of these permits are to have built.”

“Ok.”

“There is one here for a greenhouse with a sub-basement. The greenhouse is almost as big as one of the ones my parents had built a few years ago so the farm can produce enough fruits and vegetables in the winter for the family and have enough to sale…..”

“Ok, that doesn’t sound too bad.”

“It’s not it’s the sub-basement specifications listed on the permit.”

“Oh?”

“Nick, these specifications are almost exact to the building code my parents used when they built the new nursery in the warren….”

“I feel a but coming.”

“Yeah, but like twenty times larger.”

“So how many bunnies would we be talking?”

Judy lowered her head and closed her eyes her ears flopping in front of her face. “Depends.” She answered. “If they stuck to the nine a litter? One hundred and forty-five a year with five females.”

“But if they pumped the females full of fertility meds?”

“Hundreds.”

Nick nodded and sighed. “I know this hits close to home fluff and I'm sorry about that.”

Judy sighed. “Know what's bad Nick?”

“What?”

“I just hope this is bunnies being evil and has nothing to do with predators.”

Nick nodded.

“I'm not sure the city could handle something like this being perpetrated by predators,” Judy added quietly.

“All Kinds are lowlifes, Fluff. So I don't think we need to be going out of our way to borrow problems that might not exist.”
“Your probably right Nick.”

“I think with this and what we have been able to piece together of Charlie's movements along with what we might get from the TIU we shouldn’t have any problems getting a warrant.”

“I think your right as well Nick,” Judy said not even looking over at him from her computer.

“So what do you want for dinner tonight?” Nick asked.

“Huh?” Judy asked as she looked up from her computer.

“Well it is just about Five, and while I know, you are more than willing to sit here digging for more answers we really need to wait for the information for the TIU.”

Judy nodded in agreement.

“Besides I want to spend time with my girlfriend, and I cannot do that here in the office.”

“Someday, huh, Slick?” Judy asked.

“You could say that, Fluff.”

Judy watched him as he diced up an onion his knife moving with a deftness and sureness she had only seen on cooking shows. The chatter of the blade on the cutting board was relaxing to her. She loved the fact that she could forward to a home-cooked meal at the end of an exhausting day.

“And you thought we were going to get a school or parking duty.”

“Hey, those outreach programs are important.”

“Yeah I know, I just don't think well be doing much of that anymore,” Judy said.

“Probably not. Now that we are big-time detectives.”

“So what are you making me for dinner tonight, Slick?” Judy asked as she watched him.

“Perogies with fried onion,” Nick answered.

Judy nodded as her mind wondered as she watched him.

“How complicated does our date need to be?”

“I don’t know…”

“Maybe you should ask him?”

“Umm Nick?”
“Go ahead and ask your question Fluff.”

“How complicated does our date need to be?”

“It can be as simple or as complex as you want to make it,” Nick said as he started to fry up onion in the frying pan.

“That's not very helpful, Nick.”

“Tell me, Judy, what did you learn about me on our date?”

Judy’s ears fell back. “Well…”

“Its ok Fluff, I'm not looking to inflate my ego as I already know how awesome I am.”

“Well, I learned that you know more about how this city feels about mixed relationships than I do. I learned that you can sing and play an instrument, but truly I learned that the day before. I learned that you can clean up well and stow the snark for almost a full evening.”

Nick nodded. “It was a typical fox first date. I pulled out all the stops to impress you and to show my genuine interest in being with you. What we do doesn’t matter so much as us being together doing it. My mom's date with dad was archery.”

“Really?” Judy asked.

“Yeah, archery is a pretty big deal to foxes. My mom taught me how to shoot a bow in our backyard.”

“Why is that?”

“Well, I guess you could say it's because of Robin Hood.”

“Who is that?”

“You know Robin Hood? Rob for the rich to give to the poor? Such a good thief he stole the princess’s heart and married her?”

“Of course you would like an outlaw.”

“Well, it wasn’t about being an outlaw, Carrots.”

“Oh, so there is more to this?”

“Of course I think its a story that you would get into quite a bit.”

“How is that?”

“Well, really the story isn't necessarily about stealing. See the king is off fighting in the crusades and leaves the kingdom in the paws of his son. But the son is easily swayed by his advisor. So greed and corruption quickly spread over the kingdom to the point of over taxation of the populace of the kingdom to the point of starvation.”
Judy frowned as she thought about it.

“So really the story is about fighting injustice and doing what is right even in the face of overwhelming odds.”

“So it’s just not about stealing?”

“No it’s supposed to be a morality tale about the dangers of greed and that sometimes it takes a lot of courage to stand up against it,” Nick said as he sat a plate of perogies and onions in front of her. “In some ways, it mirrors the savage predator crisis.”

“So is this a movie or a book?”

“Both,” Nick answered after swallowing a bite of his dinner. “In the movie, the director cast a pair of foxes as the leads, but went out of his way to make sure the movie wasn’t pred vs. prey pretty much kept close as he could to the story.”

“Oh, maybe we should watch it sometime?”

“I’d like that it was one of my favorite movies as a kit.”

Judy ate her dinner happily. “So what kind of food is this Nick?”

“Polish, I learned how to make it from Kolsov’s wife.”

“So what is the big bear's wife like anyway?”

Nick chuckled. “She one of the nicest, sweetest mammals I have ever meet. Sweet and charming it was pretty easy to see why Kolsov fell for her, but a little hard to see the other way.”

“Why is that?”

“Well she is a school teacher in Tundra Town, and he's a mobster. It takes all kinds to make the world go around I suppose.”

“Kinda like how your an ex-hustler turned cop and I’m the city’s first bunny cop?” Judy asked playfully.

“Sort of I guess, but I didn’t mean it like that just that he's a totally different bear outside of the mob.”

“Well, either way, she taught you how to make a delicious dish.”

Judy sighed quietly in her comfortable, warm red furred cocoon. Nicks limbs were wrapped around her his snout rested just between her ears. She could feel the slow and steady breaths as he slept and could hear the steady beat of his heart. The back of her head was pressed against his chest. The tip of his tail rested just under her chin.

The room was dark but not so dark that she couldn’t see. After her first night there they had gone out
and bought some nightlights to give off just enough light that she could navigate herself to the bathroom without running into things.

She was dressed just in a pair of panties and him in a pair of boxers. She liked the feel of his fur against hers. She loved the feeling of warmth and intimacy it gave and being wrapped up and held by a predator made her feel oddly safe and at home.

“At home….”

“Has this place become home?”

Judy pondered this for a while as she had always referred to her old place as her apartment and the farm in BunnyBurrow was home. But now she felt like things had changed.

“What makes this different than my old apartment?” She asked herself.

“Nick…..” Her inner voice answered.

She smiled and slightly wiggled her tail back against his lower stomach.

“Home is where Nick is…”

“Yeah but that is not what is keeping you awake.”

“What should I do for our date?”

“Yeah that's not it either but its the easier of the things to think about right now.”

“We both like music, and movies. Maybe we should watch that movie?”

Judy thought about it for a few minutes.

“No I think he wants to go out and do something, but what?”

Judy’s inner voice was quiet for a bit before it spoke up again. “He took you to The Whisper and sang for you. He did it not just to show off but to show you that part of his life. To show that he was more than just a cop and an ex-hustler.”

“So what do I do with him that shows him something of me?”

“Well when things got really bad growing up you would go stargazing out in the north field….”

Judy thought about it for a few minutes.

“Stargazing and snacks?”

“Where in the city would you be able to find a place that has low enough light pollution that you could go stargazing?”

Judy thought about that for a while.

“Maybe Clawhauser would know?”
Judy sighed.

“What's wrong Fluff?” Nick said quietly.

“Good job you woke him up!”

“Nothing Nick go back to sleep.”

“You're stressed. I can feel the tension in your body so what's up Judy?”

Judy lay quietly in Nick's arms for many minutes.

“It's this case.” She finally admitted.

“It sucks,” Nick said.

“Yeah, it's just….”

“You are wondering what would cause bunnies to possibly do this?”

Judy nodded her head.

“Some mammals just are not wired in their head correctly.”

“Surely they know it's wrong.”

Nick kissed her softly between the ears.

“I don't think it's a matter of know right from wrong. I think it's more of a matter of caring.”

“Meaning what, Slick.”

“When I sold pawpsicles, I melted down a jumbo pop into smaller portions between it was cheaper that way. If Fin and I had taken the time to make the juice ourselves our overhead would have gone up. But by melting the jumbo pop down and refreezing it into smaller portions, we kept our quality up and our overhead low. The hustle itself wasn't illegal we just weren't one hundred percent honest about our product.”

“What does that have to do with…”

“I'm getting there Fluff. We didn't care if we got caught doing it as the worst that would happen is we would lose the merchandise and or get a twenty dollar fine. But most cops are to busy to even look into it. We were just unlucky that you noticed what it was we were doing. So our risk was pretty low.”

Judy nodded.

“Selling another mammal… That takes a special kind of mammal to do, and I don't mean special as in like how your special Fluff. I mean it takes a sociopath that just doesn't care about the well being of others, and the fact that it their own kits?”
Nick shook his head in the dark.

“It’s disgusting honestly,” Nick said finally.

“I agree with that. It goes against everything that I was taught growing up.”

“We will get them, Judy, if that is what is going on we will get them,” Nick promised.

“I know we will Nick.”

“Then go to sleep, Fluff. The next few days are going to be trying I think.”

“I’ll try. I love you.”

“I love you too.”
With this chapter marks my halfway point with season one. I hope those of you that are reading this are enjoying it. This chapter gets a little on the heavy side so just be warned about that now.

Comments: 21
Kudos: 56
Bookmarks:15
Hits:2028

Episode 5: Innocents Lost

“Another head hangs lowly
Child is slowly taken
And the violence caused such silence
Who are we mistaking?
But, you see it's not me
It's not my family
In your head, in your head
They are fighting”
~Zombie The Cranberries

Judy watched as Nick adjusted the straps of his issued bulletproof vest. The First one had saved her partner turned lover’s life. She prayed to any god that would listen to her, Bunny or Fox that the second one would never need to attempt to fulfill its function. Judy watched fascinated as the department's suppliers had not yet figured out how to to make a comfortable vest in her size. Instead, she was issued a form-fitting kevlar bodysuit with a hard shell stab vest for her chest. She watched as Nick seemed satisfied finally with the fit of the vest and his range of motion while wearing it.

“Feel ok, Slick?” She asked him after a few minutes.

“Yeah, these are just a pain to get to sit correctly.”

“Well, they haven't figured out how to make one in my size yet, so you have that going for you.”

“Yeah, they work on surface tension which is why they gave you that bodysuit from my understanding.”

Judy just shrugged at his comment.
“Think we’ll hear back from Cor today?” She asked.

“Yeah, I do. Just pretty sure we are not going to like what he has to tell us.”

“Well, it's been four days…..”

“Remember Fluff, he is working with other agencies, and we may have just stepped into the deep end of it all.” Nick reminded her as he buttoned up his shirt over the bulletproof vest.”

“How do you do it Slick?”

“Do what sweetheart?”

Judy smiled at the new nickname. “Keep all these facts in your head?”

“Practice Fluff. Lots and lots of practice. Know how you run around all day with those notepads jotting everything down either right there or shortly after that you may think is important to the case?”

Judy nodded.

“Well, when your hustling people on the street you can’t have a notebook and little details become very important. Like does this guy have a wife? What is her name? Did he mention that he had kits? If so what's their names and ages are they in sports? The more you can remember the more you can make a guy relax the more relaxed, the easier it is to get them to buy what your selling. Well unless it's like ninety degrees outside and your selling popsicles.”

Judy chuckled at the popsicle remark.

“So I guess you could say twenty years on the street gave me the presence of mind to help with police work.”

“Want to get Snarlbucks on the way into the office this morning?”

“Sure can we stop by that doughnut place on the way in and get Clawhauser a dozen? I think we may owe him he hasn't been quite the same since hearing about our case.”

“That's probably a good idea…”

Judy thought about it for a few moments. “Nick do you know any place where we could get away from the light pollution of the city for a few hours?”

Nick looked thoughtful as he slipped his shoulder holster on and threaded his belt through the belt loops of his pants and holster. “Yeah, there are a few places. Depends on how far you want to go.”

“Great, want to go stargazing with me tomorrow night?” Judy asked.

Nick smiled at her as she handed him his weapons from the opened safe. “That sounds like a date....”

It was Judy’s turn to look thoughtful. “Am I asking you out on a date to go stargazing?” She paused and tapped her chin with her finger. “Why yes, yes I am.”
“Then I accept Miss. Hopps, I would love to go stargazing with you tomorrow night. There is an old observatory on top of the nocturnal district. We could rent a car and go up there.”

“What and not take a Zuber?”

“Cell service is spotty up there, I would hate to have to walk down a mountain because we couldn’t get a ride.”

Judy giggled. “Yes, you complain enough when we work out like I would want to listen to that on a date.”

She watched as he slipped his service weapon into its new spot under his left armpit and the extra magazines for it into their slots under his right. He slid the taser into its holster on his left hip. Department policy had said that the lethal weapons were a last resort weapon. Nick had been cleared of wrongdoing from his shooting of Charlie weeks ago as Charlie had attempted to kill Nick first.

Judy had been ready to head to work fifteen minutes ago but since Nick was issued a new vest he needed to take the extra time to get the fit correctly. She had watched intently and even helped pull straps when necessary as she wanted her partner as safe as he could be. He was larger than her almost three times her size and as such would draw fire first before suspects tried to engage the “cute, harmless bunny.”

Nick slipped his light sports jacket on and smiled at her. “Ok partner ready to make the world a better place?”

Judy was dressed in her kevlar body suit with a white fitted dress shirt that ended in the belt she wore. The belt carried her service weapon and taser along with her cuffs. Over that, she wore a blue jacket that covered her weapons.

Judy paused at their door and looked up at him. “Nick?”

“Yeah?” He answered as he looked down into her eyes.

“I love you.”

“I love you too.” Nick bent down and kissed her lips softly. This had over the last four days, become their new ritual as they left to start their duty day. They kept the PDA to a minimum while on duty. Mostly Nicks tail would wrap around her at times, most of the time he wasn’t even aware of it.

She pulled him down by the lapels of his jacket and kissed him passionately before she chined each side of his neck marking him with her scent. He smiled at her as she still hadn’t used a shampoo that would even begin to cover or wash away the smell of fox on her.

“Given any more thought to getting a car slick?” Judy asked as they walked down the street from the bakery toward the precinct one building.

Nick nodded. “I looked for a bit yesterday during lunch.”
“Ohhh find anything you like?”

Nick smiled. “Maybe. Have you looked to see what's out there?”

“Well, my family always bought Pickups and large SUVs you know?”

Nick nodded having thought as much. “What you mean your family had more than just that rusted pickup you brought back to the city?”

“Yeah, that's just the truck dad likes to drive around the farm mostly because it's what he learned to drive.”

Nick nodded. “So have you given it some thought?”

“I don't know, it's not like it'll be my car right?”

Nick shrugged. “I don’t know I kinda like being chauffeured around by a beautiful bunny.”

Judy blushed slightly at the off-handed compliment. “That's only because I'm the senior officer. It would be your car so you could drive.”

Nick smiled down at her. “I don't know Carrots I think I have gotten used to riding shotgun with you. I didn't drive when I was doing hustles with Fin either not that I don't know how it's just I’m pretty comfortable in the passenger seat.”

“I would sometimes get to come to the city as a kit with mom and dad when they bought a new vehicle for the farm.” Judy started. “One year there was this bright white Mustang convertible. I fell in love with it. I was going to get one when I became a police officer.”

“Really?” Nick asked as he smiled at the image of Judy driving around in a white convertible with her ears flapping in the wind.

“Yeah, but I didn’t really understand how little a starting police officer makes versus the cost of living here in the city.”

Nick nodded knowingly. “Well if you wanted one now I’m pretty sure you could afford it.”

“I don't want to mooch off you Nick. I want to pay half the utilities on the apartment at least.”

Nick shrugged. “I would prefer you take that money and stick it in a savings account.”

“Why is that, Slick?”

“A couple of reasons Fluff. There might be something big you want. Saving for that now will make that purchase easier without having to take out a loan. Or even better saving it for a rainy day say you need to go back to the Burrows for a time, or something else comes up.”

Judy nodded.

“I’m not hurting, and I looked over the bills other than a bit more for hydro my bills on the apartment hardly went up with you moving in.” Nick paused as he thought about things.
“I understand that Nick, I just want it to be more of our place than your place with me being a live-in girlfriend.”

Nick grew quiet and thoughtful as they walked to work.

“Tell me Fluff did you look into my mother at all when you started to look for leverage to get my help?”

“No, why would I? I was after your help, not hers.” Judy explained.

Nick nodded. “It took mom’s death for me to understand how…. Hard she worked to get where she was. You would have loved her Fluff, hardworking had an almost righteous sense of right and wrong. I thought my mother was some secretary.” Nick shook his head.

Judy looked up at nick confused. “What does that have to do with paying half the bills for the apartment Nick?”

“I’m getting their Carrots. Have a little patience”. Nick sighed. “Mom figured out a way to make it all work. No one was going to trust a fox to handle their real estate deals, so she went into business with her best friend a basset hound named Daisy. Daisy was the face of the business, Mom was the brains between the two of them they built the fifth largest real estate and property management companies in the city.”

Judy just nodded.

“Remember how I said I wouldn’t tell you how much I am worth until just before we are married?”

“Yeah…”

“Judy you can’t pay half of something that doesn’t get charged.”

Judy paused her ears flopping down the back of her head. “He’s sca…..” Judy paused again her thoughts grinding to a halt. “NO! He has changed, it has something to do with the real estate business no scams, no hustles just something he is uncomfortable talking about…”

“Why, why would Nick be uncomfortable talking about his money,” Judy asked herself.

“Honestly Carrots, even with his being a movie star he still doesn't hold a candle to how awesome I am.” Judy heard Nick voice in her head.

“He wants you to want him not his money you dumb bunny.” Judy heard her inner voice scolded her.

“You coming Carrots?” Nick asked.

“Uhh yeah sorry Nick.” Judy rushed to catch up to her partner. She felt awful that her first thought was he was scamming the building.

“Hey, Claws we got you a present.” Nick greeted as he placed the box of doughnuts onto the front desk.
“Awe, you guys, didn’t have to…,” Clawhauser said excitedly none of the less.

“We made sure to get them with extra sprinkles as well,” Judy added.

The squeal that was emanated from the tubby cheetah could only be rivaled by a horde of squealing fangirls.

“You know sprinkles are like little flakes of happiness right guys?” Clawhauser asked as he stuffed one of the doughnuts into his mouth.

“Oh, the director of the TIU asked to have me tell you guys to go down to his office first thing this morning.” He told them after he swallowed the doughnut.

“Thanks, Clawhauser,” Judy said. “Come on Slick, sounds like we may finally get the information we have been waiting for.”

Nick nodded and followed his Bunny partner to the elevators.

Judy stood beside Nick as they waited for the elevator. Her mind kept returning to her earlier mental acquisition of her boyfriend. She hated that the first place her mind went to was he was slipping back to his old ways. Especially after he had gone out of his way to show her that he has changed and let her into his life.

Nick watched her. He could tell she was struggling with something from their conversation this morning. He chooses to not pry into her thoughts even though he could guess what was bothering her. “She wants to be apart of the support of the household.” He thought to himself.

Nick thought it over as they entered the elevator. The company that his mother left him was a massive boon in his life. He no longer really had to worry about money not that he really had to worry about it in his past. But now his earnings was entirely legal. Granted, in part, it made him the landlord to hundreds of mammals throughout the city. He came into his inheritance entirely while he was at the academy and had to disclose the amount of his extra income to Chief Bogo the morning he first reported for duty.

Nick remembered well the buffalo looking at him why he was here. But in the end, he kept Nick on as an officer, granted something like a suspension without pay would be meaningless to the fox. But the time away from his partner would be worse punishment anyway. The big thing for Nick was going from a homeless hustler to a property owner in the city. Granted the buildings was owned solely by the company but his stake in the company couldn’t be revoked from him.

Nick sighed. “The only real bill the apartment has Fluff is internet service, which is about a hundred dollars a month. If you want to pay half that and chip in for food your more than welcome to.”

Judy looked up at him surprised. “Really?”

“Yeah, I know you don't want to feel like a freeloader, and I get that. What I would like for you to do with the extra money is either save it or pay extra on your student loans and get them paid off early.”

The doors opened, and they stepped out into the hall. They walked side by side down the hallway to the TIU.
“Nick, I'm sorry.”

“For what?”

“I keep prying into things when you ask me not to, and well I started to draw some untrue conclusions for them things you weren't telling me,” Judy answered softly.

Nick nodded. “In this, I can understand it. You don't want to feel like a freeloader, and you want us to have an equal stake in our home. It’s commendable, and under normal circumstances, I would welcome the help with things like rent and utilities.”

“But things are not normal…”

“No, I just ask that you share in my good fortune. My mother worked hard, and for her hard work I just have to answer a few emails a week and sometimes meet mammals Daisy wants to hire.”

“How old was your mom when she passed?” Judy asked.

Nick sighed. “She had just turned forty-nine., and yes I know her and dad married young.”

Judy nodded and paused outside the door to the TIU. She looked up at him and smiled warmly. “I’m glad she had you regardless of her age. Ready to make the world a better place?”

Nick cocked his head to one side and smiled at her. His green eyes were shining brightly in the artificial light of the hall. “By all means after you Detective Fluff.”

Judy nodded and pushed the door open.

Nick and Judy looked across the desk at Cor. He looked scrawny more malnourished than anything. Judy noticed his suit didn’t hang entirely as well as Nick’s did. She couldn’t tell if that was because the suit was tailored when he had more weight on him or if it was because the suit was ill-fitting, to begin with.

“Your kits was in our database.” Cor broke the silence first. “I’m not sure whether to be congratulatory or to give you sympathy. Images of those two bunnies have been well…..” Cor paused. “Traded. I’m sorry if the way I talk about this is callus.”

“Was there a website like I suspected?” Nick asked.

Cor shrugged. “There is but we have been unsuccessful at gaining access, but we were able to get a bit of information from one of the early images of your kits.”

“Why not?” Nick asked.

“In order to keep from tipping our paw we have to take things slow and gain access to invite websites by gaining the mammals involved trust.” Cor answered.
“So we know where the image was taken?” Judy asked.

“Yes, they were sloppy with early images and one of the computers seized in a raid a few months ago had an early copy before they wised up and stripped the GPS data from the images,” Cor explained. “Before you ask, we have a lot of data to comb, and the only reason we looked at images we thought we already had was our software flagged it as having GPS data.”

Nick nodded. “So where does the GPS data point to?”

“A complex of buildings out along highway 285,” Cor answered.

Nick and Judy looked at each other and smiled.

“This information should be what we need to get our warrant,” Judy said excitedly.

“Yeah, we need to talk to Fangs and probably Ruthy as well.”

Cor picked up a folder off of his desk. “Here is a hard copy of our report along with copies of some of the images of the kits. It should get you your warrant. Word of advice though don't look at the pictures.”

Nick took the offered folder and nodded. “Come on Carrots we have a world to make better,” Nick said as he headed out the office door.

Judy waved to Cor as she slid out of her chair and followed after Nick.

“Hey Nick can, I see….”

“Nope, no, un huh sorry Carrots.”

“But….”

“Look,” Nick paused in the hall outside of the TIU. “What's in this folder is sick, its wrong, its perverted on a level that passes disgusting and ends up somewhere north of garbage. The only reason it was handed to us is to be used as evidence with the reports we wrote about Charlie's car coming in on highway 285, not from Meadowlands Parks and the report we wrote detailing what you found with the building permits, to get us a warrant. It will make you angry on a level that will cause you not to be able to think straight and as a result get one of us injured.”

“Nick I…..”

“Mostly though I don’t want either of us seeing these images in our heads when we see this kits. We owe these victims that Judy. We owe them the respect and decency not to see them like this.” Nick knelt down so he could look her straight in the eyes without looking down at her. “Mostly though Judy, I don’t want you dealing with the trauma some cops go through looking through this shit.”

Judy looked him in the eyes. “What do you mean?”

“Cor is haunted by it. I imagine he's seen more of this filth then he is comfortable with. You and I don’t need his ghosts, he told us not to look at the images for a reason.”

“Ok, Nick if you trust his judgment.”
“In this, I do other things…” Nick smiled. “Probably not.”

Nick stood and started to head for the elevators again. Judy walked beside him quietly.

“How do you know Cor, by the way?” She asked.

Nick chuckled. “I met Cor in college.”

“You two do not know how to do anything small do you?” Chief Bogo asked the two newly minted detectives sitting across from him.

Nick smirked, but before he could open his mouth, Judy thumped him in the arm rather hard.

“Ow!” Nick exclaimed as he rubbed his arm rather dramatically. “Who knew that for such a small package you would pack such a punch?”

“Quiet Wilde otherwise I’ll have your partner thump you again.”

Nick’s ears flattened against his skull. Captain Rutherford chuckled from where he leaned against the wall.

“So you were right she can contain his snark.” The aged grizzly bear commented.

“To a point.” Chief Bogo answered.

“I can see that.”

“Now that we have the snark contained momentarily tell us about the progress you have made on the case, Hopps,” Bogo ordered.

“After Wilde identified that the location of Charlies exchange was an abandoned hangar. We started to look backward in hopes we could figure out where the kits came from.” Judy answers.

“Tell us about the hanger.”

“The hanger is part of an abandoned airstrip just inside the Meadowlands containment wall. It hasn’t been owned since the airfields parent company went bankrupt in 1994.” Nick replied.

“And you know this how?”

“I made inquiries with the city to purchase the land for a business venture in 2003. The mammal at the land bureau in city hall attempted to track down who owned the land but after an hour decided that he had better things to do.”

“How did you recognize the address?”

Judy’s ears fell back at the question.
“I lived under the bridge that serves as the properties only access for a long time…”

“So what made you start looking at the kit’s parents?”

Nick sighed. “Call it a hunch? But there were things that upon review that just didn’t make sense to me.”

“Like?”

“What was a pair of ten-year-old bunny kits doing in Meadowland Park at 10 am on a School day? Why didn’t the parents report them missing before we pulled over Charlie? Then after reviewing where the officers took them what was those kits doing in Meadowlands Park?”

“I started to track back Charlie’s car from where we stopped it to where it entered the city. It entered on highway 285 just fifteen minutes before we pulled it over. We were able to pull the census records and some public building permits that were filed for the property in 2012.” Judy explained. “I recognized the building codes on one of the permits as that of a bunny nursery facility just much larger than expected.”

“How so?” Asked Captain Rutherford.

“In 2008 I helped my parents to file proper permits to renovate our warren’s nursery.” Judy started.

“Say no more, Hopps, I know some of that information can be sensitive to species that birth at home.” Rutherford interrupted. “We’ll just call it the personal experience.”

“And the reason you went to the TIU?” Bogo asked placing a finger on the folder in front of him.

“Personal experience. I know there was a shift in the way deals were made around 2002 more and more things went online it got both harder and easier to fence stolen property, and most major deals are all conducted online. Then in 2008 ish, the Game Trail came online, and that streamlined a pipeline from the distributor to end user on drugs. I figured if there were websites out there for drugs why not kits as well?” Nick replied.

“The reasoning is sound,” Captain Rutherford said. “What did the TIU tell you?”

“Cor asked that we send down the pictures of the kits that the officers took before taking them home. He ran them through the TIU database of exploited kits and got numerous hits. One of those hits still had GPS data that corresponds with the location that the kits was returned to.” Judy answered as she looked over her notes.

“You’re telling me that the ZPD unknowingly returned two exploited kits back to the mammal that has been abusing them and may have possibly sold them?” The expression on Chief Bogo’s face could have curdled milk.

“Unfortunately yes,” Answered Nick.

“Is there a website to sell kits?” Captain Rutherford asked?

“Cor indicated as much, but they were unable to secure an invitation to the site as of this morning,” Nick answered. “It leaves reason to be that if any computers have access to the site, it would be in the Leapersons compound.”
“It's more than enough to get them a warrant.” Captain Rutherford said.

Chief Bogo nodded. “That it is, it’s enough that I can authorize them to move in without a warrant. But we’ll wait for the DA and a Judge to return us a warrant.”

“I know of a Judge that owes us a favor we can get in front of him he’ll sign off on it quickly.” Captain Rutherford explained.

“What sort of resources would you two need to move on this compound.”

“Four buildings need to be secured. Three greenhouses with sub-basements and the main house that according to records is above ground.” Judy explained. “I would hazard one team of four as a clearance team and four teams of four to secure entrances and exits.”

“There are at least six adults may be more involved in this,” Nick added. “If we move in while it's still dark there is a large chance we can catch them all while they are sleeping.”

“Who would be watching the kits at night?” Chief Bogo asked.

“If they are using the mammal power available to them as my parents did then older kits would look after the younger ones,” Judy said.

“So twenty additional officers plus you two?” Chief Bogo asked.

“Plus paramedics and kit services for what kits we find on site,” Nick added.

“Ok, you two need to head home and be back here at 2300. Well use mid-shift for the raid and have swings cover mid-shifts patrols tonight. Be here in the bullpen for the briefing.”

Nick’s paws ran long Judy’s ears as she laid against his chest and stomach her chin resting on his chest. Her eyes as closed as she enjoyed the gentle attention.

“Nick?” She asked quietly.

“Yeah Fluff?”

“What do you think we'll find tonight?”

“I don't know, but you want to know what I hope we find tonight?”

“What's that?”

“That this is all a big misunderstanding and it is a big happy rabbit family.”

Judy nodded and went quiet again.

“Do you think we will find that?” She asked after several minutes.

“No.”
“Then…”

“Listen, Fluff, these bunnies are not you, they are not your parents your friends your neighbors. They are not a representative of your species they are just…”

“Evil.” Judy finished for him. “Nick thank you for not letting me look at those pictures today.”

He didn't answer her but did press a kiss to her forehead as best he could.

“A part of me wanted to see to understand what they were going through.” Judy continued.

“You can’t, Carrots, no one that doesn’t go through it would ever fully understand what they are going through. What the mammals that are supposed to love and protect them the most are placing them though. But it's our job to save them if we can, and tonight we are going to do just that I promise.”

Nick’s tail curled up and rested across her back.

“Why do you do that with your tail?”

Nick smiled. “After more foxy secrets Fluff?”

“Mmmmm am I?” She asked playfully. “Why, yes, yes I am one hundred percent absolutely!”

Nick chuckled. “So do you not like that I cover you with my tail?”

“Oh, no I love it, its just I want to know what it means.”

Nick smiled. “Does it have to mean anything? Maybe I just like covering you with my tail?”

“Don’t you play coy with me foxy, I know it has to mean something you do it without seemingly thinking about it. Even when we are with our co-workers and supervisors. So it means something.” Judy said her purple eyes narrowing as she looked up at her fox.

“Your right it does mean something. We foxes can be a solitary bunch. Granted a few of us do live in skulks but that's rare these days. But as such we don’t value things so much as we value those we let into our lives.”

“So it’s your way of saying you value me?”

“Partially, there are very few things foxes values more than their tail.”

“But you just said…”

“I’m using things in this case to annotate titles, Fluff.”

“Oh…”

“So needless to say, Carrots, you are very special to me.”

“So foxes wrap their girl or boyfriends up in their tails?”
“No, you have to be much more special than that.”

“Like how special?”

“Mates.”

Judy’s mind went blank for several minutes. The room went silent the only sounds to be heard, their soft breaths and the gentle rustle of fur on fur as Nick kept softly stroking her ears.

“Mates…. ” Her inner voice started.

“Well, it makes sense as we have already been…. ”

Judy turned her head slightly as she rested her cheek on his chest. She listened to his breathing and his steady heartbeat as she processed the information that he told her.

“You should mark him.” Her inner voice spoke up again.

Judy’s mind wandered back to all the times his tail had touched her even before they had officially started dating.

“He started to wrap me up in it the night he woke up in the hospital.”

Judy was the first to break the silence. “I love you, Nick.”

Nick smiled his arms wrapped around her tightly holding her in place. “I love you too, Judy.”

“You see me at your mate?” Judy asked softly.

“You’re my bunny.”

“That doesn’t answer the question.”

“It doesn’t? I thought I had already answered this Judy. I see no future of mine that doesn’t have you in it.”

Judy closed her eyes and gripped the fur alongside his chest a little tighter. The silence hung in the room once again as she processed the information.

“It’s been just over two months since the shooting. You have slept with him every night since he woke up. You haven’t left his side since.”

“It’s just a lot of emotional weight.…”

“It’s not that its just…. ”

“You’re scared.”

Judy sighed quietly as his paws ran over her ears and down her back.

“What’s wrong Fluff.”
Judy was silent for a while as she tried to figure out how to answer the question.

“I am scared…” She answered softly.

“Of?”

“This, us, I…..” Judy held onto her fox tightly. “I have spent my life pursuing a single goal, be the best police officer I could be. I didn’t date and when I did I never really made myself emotionally available to them.”

Nick held her and listened to her.

“I have been with you about two months. In two months you have turned my world upside down.”

Nick smiled and chuckled softly. “Glad to hear Fluff as it took you less than forty-eight hours to turn my world on its head.”

“It's more than that you dumb fox. Being here with you feels more like….”

“Home.” Nick finished for her.

Judy just nodded as that was exactly how she felt. Like she was home.

Judy looked over at her partner he was humming and tapping away at his phone where he sat in the passenger seat of the cruiser. Chief Bogo had motor pool strip the police markings from their old patrol cruiser so they could use it as detectives. He said it was more cost efficient that way. Judy didn’t care she felt like this car was theirs as they have had it since they started together as patrol officers.

She watched and listened trying to figure out what he was working on. They were pulled over alongside highway 285 waiting for the go order from Chief Bogo. The briefing and subsequent arming up in the armory had gone relatively smoothly. The team had swelled from 20 mammals to over thirty to work roadblocks and be a backup response team should the need arise.

“What ya working on there Slick?”

Nick looked over at her and smiled in the dim light of his phone and the cruiser's dashboard. “A song.”

“Oh really?” Judy’s ears perked up almost touching the roof of the car. “Can I hear it?”

“Not yet sweetheart.” Nick grinned knowing patience isn't her strong suit.

“But..” Judy turned to him and looked up at him giving him her cutest please look.

“Nope not looking, your cuteness won't work on me if I don't look,” Nick said as he turned and looked out at the dark of night. “Besides I want this to be a surprise.”

“Fine…” She reached over and thumped him hard in the arm.

“Owe. What was that for?” Nick asked as he rubbed his arm.
“For calling me cute.” She answered.

“Sorry to break this to you Fluff, but calling you cute is on line 23 of the boyfriend slash girlfriend end user license agreement.”

“But I didn’t sign no contract Slick.”

“Ahh, but you did as soon as you snuggled up with my tail.”

“Your tail seems to have a harsher end user agreement than my iCarrot phone.” Judy commented.

“Yes but I’m sure you love my tail more than you love your phone.”

“Fine, fine I grant you limited rights to call me cute in private just don’t over use it.”

“You are you know?” He asked as he turned off the screen of his phone.

“Am what?”

“Well, the word means, attractive in a pretty or endearing way. Or even, sexually attractive.”

“Well a lot of mammals when saying it to a rabbit or other small mammal don't mean it those ways,” Judy explained.

“Oh I know, and I get it, it’s like calling a fox sly. But there is a minor difference I think between us and the use of the words.”

“Oh, what's that?” Judy asked as she looked over at him.

“I like to think of myself as sly, as cunning maybe even a little devious,” Nick said his eyes taking a glint from the dash lights of the cruiser. “But you my dear, are very adorable, lovable, sweet, appealing, delightful, and pretty. I would even go so far as to say you are attractive and gorgeous all of which can be wrapped up in a single word.”

Judy’s ears fell back as she looked up at her partner.

“You, my dear bunny, are what I would call the very definition of the word cute.” Nick had learned so far over the center console as he talked to her that their muzzles were just inches apart.

“Sly fox,” She whispered to him as she grabbed the sides of his tactical vest and pulled him down into a deep passionate kiss.

“Dispatch, Zulu Two Four Zero.” The radio crackled.

Nick reached over and picked up the cruisers radio mic. “Go ahead dispatch.”

“Actual says take five.” The pair looked at each other for a moment before scrambling out of the car.

“Buddy checks! Five minutes to go roadblock crews get into position!” Judy yelled her high pitched voice barking orders. Four the cars started their engines and left the column alongside the highway as the rest of the mammals piled out and started to look over their gear.
Nick knelt down so Judy could pull and tug on pieces of equipment strapped to her partner's chest. Nick did the same for her making sure nothing was lose or would fall off. Both of them had tactical vests on with heavy steel and ceramic plates in the front and back. Judy carried her lethal service sidearm and a taser. Nick carried his sidearm and an assault rifle.

While Nick had graduated Valedictorian of his class, he set no new records, except one. Saying Nick could shoot was as big of an understatement as saying his fur was red or he was sarcastic and snarky. Nick set the record at the Academy not just for pistols but for rifles as well. His groupings were impossibly tight. No one asked where we learned to shoot at, Judy herself wasn’t even sure if he would answer her even now on that question.

“Two minutes!” Judy shouted as she climbed back into the driver seat of the cruiser and started the engine. Nick climbed into the passenger seat and buckled his seatbelt. Judy flicked on the emergency lights and the headlights at the same times before putting the cruiser into drive.

“Hey, Carrots?”

“Yes Slick?”

“Let's be safe about this ok?”

Judy nodded as she let off the brake and maneuvered the cruiser up off of the soft shoulder of the highway. It was a short drive up to the Leapersons compound as they had staged maybe five miles down the road. They didn’t go full code three, lights and sirens as there was no one out on the road at almost two am but they went with lights only. Judy pulled almost all the way up to the main houses front door and put the cruiser in park.

Nick opened the door of the cruiser and jumped out as soon as it came to a stop his rifle snapped up to cover the windows of the house as he made his way up to the houses front door.

Judy took her place to the right of the front door with Nick pressed up against her back followed by a timber wolf and a snow leopard officers. A Kodiak bear with a huge steel tubed battering ram took up position to the right of the door.

Judy held up her small paw with three fingers up, the steadiness of it hiding the nervousness and adrenaline that was coursing through her. She nodded to the bear who moved more in front of the door and pressed the ram beside the doorknob. The bear's eyes never left the rabbits paw as she slowly lowered her fingers one at a time until she had made a fist.

The bear started to swing the battering ram as soon as she began to lower her last finger. He used the weight and all the muscle in his 1500 pound frame to slam the ram into the solid wood door. The door exploded inward in a cacophony of splintering wood and metal fatigued beyond its breaking point.

Judy quickly went through the now open door. “Police!” She shouted. “Lay on the floor where you are with your paws over your head.” They quickly moved through the house clearing the first floor room by room. She noticed pictures on the wall that denoted a large family but very few actual smiles. The dining room and kitchen was much to small for the number of bunnies estimated to be on the compound. Judy frowned with the thoughts.
“Greenhouse one secure.” She heard reported over the radio as the other three building was secured.

Judy leaned against a wall beside the stairway entrance. The stairway was a perfect funnel position to the second floor. Solid walls with no visible means to see what was going on on the second floor.

Nick’s ears perked up as he could hear the telltale sounds of a shotgun being pumped and the smell of fresh gun oil wafting down the stairs.

“Roger,” Judy said into her radio, “Breach team about to head to the second floor.”

Judy was yanked back by Nick as she started to round the corner to head up the stairs. Drywall dust filled the spot where she had been standing moments before and the sound of a shotgun being pumped seconds before another shot filled the place with more powder.

“Police! Put the gun down and surrender!” Nick yelled up the stairs his back pressed against the wall just before the stairwell.

“FUCK YOU!” Was shouted back down the stairs followed by two more shotgun blasts the racheting of the gun could be heard between each shot.

“Mr. Leaperson, this isn't going to end well for you if you do not put down the gun.” Judy called up the stairs from behind Nick.

A single blast from the shotgun was all that was heard followed by the metallic racheting of the gun followed by some inelgibile cursing. They could hear the jiggling and metal on metal sounds as the suspect attempted to unjam the shotgun.

Judy was the first around the corner followed tightly by her partner. Then the snow leopard and wolf. Judy pulled the trigger on her taser as soon as she had a clear shot on the suspect at the top of the stairs. The twin electrodes shot forward and embedded themselves into the chest of the brown hare at the top of the stairs. The hare jerked as five thousand volts coursed through him and dropped him to the floor.

She ejected the cartridge from the front of her weapon and quickly reloaded it. The wolf secure the dropped shotgun as the snow leopard rolled the brown hare onto his stomach and secured his paws with a set of quick cuffs. Judy watched as the snow leopard felt for a pulse.

“He still alive.” The rough baritone of the snow leopard reported.

Nick had taken up a kneeling position just beyond the suspect his rifle trained down the hall. The hall had three doors on each side and an open door at the end of the hall. Each door was secured shut with a padlock except for the door at the end of the hall which was open.

“One suspect secured at the top of stairs, second floor,” Judy reported into her radio.

Judy taped Nick on the shoulder and motioned to the open door at the end of the hall. Nick nodded and began to smoothly move up the hall his rifle trained on the open door at the end of the hall. He looked at each entry they walked past momentarily to make sure it was secured with a padlock before moving forward again. He poked the door the rest of the way open with the barrel of his rifle before moving into the room.
Nick stopped for in the dim light of the bedside lamp he could make out solid white fur and a pair of deep blue eyes staring back at him. Small paws clutched a blanket up to her neck. Her ears was flopped down her shoulders. The next thing he noticed was the smells sex and excited bunny.

“Are you armed?” Nick asked carefully.

The bunny on the bed shook her head no.

Nick heard the clanking of a chain as she moved.

Judy entered the room just as Nick lowered his weapon and moved to the bedside. The bunny attempted to run away from her fear evident in her eyes. But was stopped short by the chain locked to the collar around her neck. Judy lifted the edge of the blanket just high enough so she could see and closed her eyes wishing she hadn’t.

Judy looked at the young bunny on the bed and spoke into the radio. “One female at the end of the hall we need paramedics and bolt cutters up here asap.”

“Good morning Zootopia! I’m Peter Moosebridge with this morning’s top stories.” Said a rather stately looking moose.

“Our top story this morning is, Zootopia Police Department spokesmammal Haytham Newcattle, issued the following statement.”

The camera cut to an image of a longhorn steer dressed in police dress blues, who adjusted a stack of papers in front of him.

“At oh two hundred this morning, ZPD Officers moved in on a compound approximately fifty miles North of the city limits. One male arctic hare has been arrested, and six female lagomorphs above the age of eighteen have been rescued. Among the rescued are over five hundred lagomorphs between the ages just a few weeks and fourteen years old. This is the largest trafficking bust in the history of our city and perhaps the largest in the country. Because of the nature of the crimes we will not disclose the name nor pictures of any of the lagomorphs rescued.”

Haytham paused and looked over his notes. “Also found on the compound was a narcotic grow operation containing not just marijuana but also nighthowler flowers. The estimated street value for the narcotics is in the neighborhood of five hundred million dollars.”

Haytham stopped and looked in the camera. “At this time the ZPD has no further comment and will issue press dockets before the end of the day.”

Judy nodded to Nick who cut the padlock off the first door. Thankfully the locks where rather flimsy and really just meant to keep the door closed than honestly keep someone out. Nick pulled the ruined lock out of the loop and flipped the restraining bar out of the way.
Judy knocked softly on the door as she opened it the peeling of rubber seals could be heard as the door opened.

“Hello? Its the police we are not here to hurt you.”

She could just make out sobbing as she entered the darkened room. She couldn’t make out anything in the pitch black room. The smell though was horrendous it smelled like an open sewer.

“Hello? I'm going to turn on the light….” Judy said softly.

“It doesn’t work he took the light bulb.” A female voice said between sobs.

Nick dropped the bolt cutters onto the floor and pulled a flashlight out of a pouch on his tactical vest. Nick clicked on the flashlight and shined it into the room.

The first thing they noticed as the light hit the back wall of the room was the window was boarded over from the inside. The second thing was the bucket in the corner with a toilet seat on top of it.

“That explains the smell.” Nick thought to himself.

“Nick shine the light at the ceiling please and stay here,” Judy asked as she entered the room. Nick did as she asked shining his flashlight at the ceiling and stayed just outside of the door.

What greated Judy as she entered the room was a threadbare mattress on the floor. On which sat a solid black bunny with brown eyes. She was nude and chained to the wall. Judy could tell she looked in her mid-thirties and hadn’t been fed very well. There wasn’t even a blanket on the bed to afford the bunny that bit of modesty.

“I'm Judy Hopps, a detective with the Zootopia Police Department. Are you hurt?”

“No, just hungry….”

Judy nodded. “My partner is just outside he can cut the chain off, and we will find you a blanket and something to eat. Is it ok if he comes in and cuts the chain?”

“He’s not gonna…..” The bunny asked shakily.

“No. Nick won't hurt you.”

Nick placed the flashlight down pointing up at the ceiling the white paint helped diffuse the light through the room and walked back down the hall to the master bedroom. The solid white bunny that was chained to the bed had already been moved down stairs and currently had an officer watching over her.

Nick dug through the closets looking for something to cover the bunny doe up with. When he keyed his mich.

“Dispatch, Wilde here.”

“Go ahead, Wilde.”
“Tell actual we need kit and family services down here, food and clothes as well.”

“How bad is it?”

“How actual call my cell if he wants to know that.”

“Roger, that passing the message Dispatch out.”

Nick found a button up shirt that had no scent on it and took it back down the hall and tossed it in toward Judy. “Have her put that on please.”

Nick sighed thinking he was going to see more abused bunnies in this one night that he hoped to ever see in his lifetime.

“Ok, Nick she's dressed.”

Nick stepped inside the room carrying the bolt cutters with him. Nick's ears pinned down to the back of his head as he could see the fear in the brown eyes of the black doe. She trembled at the sight of him carrying the bolt cutters. He knelt down beside her and moved the collar around her neck until he could get at the padlock holding it on.

“Shhh its ok, I’ll have this off in just a second.” Nick placed the jaws of the bolt cutters around the hasp of the lock and squeezed the handles together. An audible snap was heard as the cutters cut through the locks hasp.

Judy reached up and unbuckled the collar and let it fall to the floor. The doe sat frozen for many minutes her paw moving up to where the collar used to be.

Nick sighed as he collapsed onto the couch some eighteen hours later. Judy flopped onto it a few seconds later then slowly tilted over until her head landed in his lap. Their gear was stowed back at Precinct One, except for their sidearms and Judy’s taser.

“Hey Slick?” Judy said quietly

“Yeah Fluff?”

“I hate to do this to you but can we move our date to another night?”

“Honestly Fluff after our day I do not mind at all.”

Their day had started at 10 pm the night before. After subduing Greg Leaperson and opening six side room with bolt cutters and leading the search and clear into the basement of three greenhouse structures the pair was exhausted.

Chief Bogo ended up out at the Leaperson Compound at about six in the morning to take charge of the various governmental agencies that ended up out there. Nick shuddered at the memories of what they found under the greenhouses. Kits were taking care of kits in stacked cages. Many of which
were malnourished some of whom may still not make it. They ended up calling in Wolford who has the best nose on the force and did a ground search. The mass grave that was uncovered was appalling, and hopefully, news of it never makes it to the media. So far the list of charges being brought against Greg Leaperson might actually invoke the state's rarely used death penalty.

Nick closed his eyes and took slow, steady breaths through his nose. His paw softly rubbed the back of Judy’s head. She started to cry, the day and emotions finally catching up to her. Her eyes pressed against his left leg as she sobbed wracked through her body. Nick softly stroked her back knowing exactly how she felt.

“How could he do it? How, Nick? Those kits? The Does, his own daughter? How?” Judy looked up at him with her amethyst eyes rimmed in tears her exhaustion evident in them.

Nick just shook his head. “I have no answers, Fluff.”

Judy climbed up onto his lap and grabbed his shirt. He could tell she was hurt and angry but not angry with him. Before she could say something that they both would regret he kissed her. Her eyes snapped wide with surprise his paws came up and gripped her hips as her knees dug into his thighs.

Judy's paws loosened their grip on his shirt, as he slowly broke the kiss. She looked up into his eyes and regretted what had flashed through her mind in her moment of anger. She was tired, she felt dirty not just physically but emotionally and realized she just about took it out on the one mammal that loved her and supported her more than anyone else.

“Come on, Slick, how about we go wash some of the filth off of us.”

Nick nodded, having spent the day not just rescuing bunnies but also lugging around about a third of their weight in tactical gear has caused him to feel pretty dirty.

Judy slid out of his lap and started to sway her hips as she walked away.

He watched the sway of her hips until she stopped and looked over her shoulder at him.

“Coming dumb fox?”

Nick smiled and stood up. “Lead the way gorgeous bunny.”

Judy started walking again and peeled off her ZPD shirt as she walked down the hall. She dropped it on the floor knowing she'd have to pick it up later and paused momentarily bending over and peeled her pants down and shook her tail at Nick as she wiggled her hips from side to side. She knew the movement was unnecessary, but the low half groan half growl that it elicited from the fox behind her made it worthwhile.

Judy looked over her shoulder at Nick a grin slowly stretched across her lip, she was now only dressed in a black sports bra and a pink thong. “See something you like foxy?”

“Mmmmm, little that I like and lots that I love little bun,” Nick answered with a slowly growing hungry look in his eye.

Judy blushed as she stood up and started walking back down the hall again. Her hips swayed from side to side, and she could almost feel his eyes on her body. Judy heard his shirt slide off and fall on the floor of the hall just outside their bedroom door. Next, she peeled off her sports bra, it wasn’t as if
she really needed it, but needed what she did have to remain stationary when running down perps and in tactical gear.

She grinned at the sound of his pants hitting the floor and turned her head expecting to see him in his boxers. Judy’s heart rate quickened at the sight of the tip of his cock peeking out at her from his sheath.

“See something you want little bun?” Nick asked teasingly.

Judy blushed and nodded her courage suddenly leaving her high and dry. She had initiated this, she knew where it was going, and the shower was just an excuse. Judy needed to feel him, she needed to feel loved and wanted, and she wanted to show him that she loves him. Almost more importantly though she needed a distraction from the images of the day. The ugliness of the world had gotten to her, and she needed to be shown something good again.

Nick stepped past her his tail wrapped itself around her ankles momentarily before swishing up, and the tip of it flicked playfully past her nose.

The apartments master bathroom was huge. It has been renovated to Nick’s exacting specifications. Namely the large jacuzzi bathtub and the glass and tile walled walk-in shower.

The shower itself was remarkable in the number of shower heads it contained, and the water pressure was fantastic. It rivaled Judy’s childhood home, and the hot water never seemed to run out.

Nick stepped into the shower and turned on the giant overhead shower head. It could be set to simulate a gentle spring rain or a torrential down poor. Nick set it for the gentle rain and turned to Judy and offered her his paw.

Judy slid her thong down her long legs and stepped out of it and took his offered paw her heart pounding in her chest. The water was warm, and he pulled her against him her cheek rested on his lower torso. He bent his muzzle down and kissed her gently between the ears. Judy’s paws wrapped around his waist as he starts to sway back and forth with her under the warm shower water to music only seemingly he could hear.

How long they swayed back and forth under the steady stream of water, she couldn’t say. She whined a bit when he stepped back from her and picked up her bottle of shampoo. He poured a liberal amount into his large paws and rubbed them together to start them getting sudsy. He slowly but firmly began to wash her his paws firmly but gently washing her face and cheeks before moving up to the top of her head and up her ears.

Judy moaned at his attention to her sensitive ears her eyes closed, and her paws gripped the fur of his stomach. She loved this, but more importantly, she thought to herself she loved him.

He gently turned her and added more of her shampoo to his paw before he started to rub her shoulders firmly. Nick slowly felt the tension she had been carrying for the day melt from her. He watched her as his paws slowly moved from her shoulders down her back. With his thumbs pressed into her back the rest of his paws warped around her sides till his fingers met between her small breasts.

He rubbed his thumbs in slow firm circles across her back working the knots out of her. He leaned forward and whispered softly into one of her ears. “I love you.”
“I..I love you t.. too,” Judy said quietly as his paws traveled lower down her back. She gasped as she felt fingers brush softly over her waist and the flair of her hips slowly running down her pubic bone. She groaned frustratedly as his fingers stopped just above her sex. She shifted her feet and widened her stance just a bit to allow him access between her thighs. She softly moaned as she felt his teeth press against the base of her left ear. She could feel his hot breath on her as his paws shifted caressing the outer curve of her hips. She wanted him and wanted him now, but infuriatingly he was taking his time with teasing her as he ‘washed’ her.

Judy moaned and leaned forward to brace her paws against the wall of the shower as Nick ran the pads of his thumbs cover the curve of her ass. Her back arched as he never loosed his grip on her ear. His left paw snaked forward and down between her thighs to run two fingers over the wet lips of her sex.


He grinned around her ear as he heard her beg. Finally letting one of his fingers part the lips of her sex to find her clit. He slowly rubbed her clit with the leathery pad of his finger the shower doing little to hide the scent of excited bunny from him.

Judy moaned loudly, and her left leg trembled as she fought to keep her foot from thumping against the floor of the shower rapidly. His finger kept rubbing her clit gently, and she attempted to bow her head down, but his mouths grip on her ear forced her to keep it arched back.

Nick growled the word, “Cum,” into her ear as he pressed his finger into her sex. She moaned loudly and pressed herself down into his paw. Her knees were momentarily going weak as all the tension left her body and she was held up almost entirely by his paw on her sex. His finger slowly slid in and out of her through her orgasm.

Judy groaned in frustration when Nick pulled his finger from her needy sex. Her eyes shot open as he lifted her by her hips her feet suddenly dangling a few inches from the floor as he slid the hardened shaft of his cock between the cheeks of her ass. Her heart rate picked up as he fingers attempted to press handholds into the wall of the shower.

She moaned as he slid his cock down between her legs and ran the length of it over her clit. Her breath caught in her throat as her legs shook from the pleasure. He slowly pulled back again until just the head of his cock was nudged between the lips of her sex. Judy shakily removed one of her paws from the wall and reached down between her thighs and lined him up with her entrance.

Nick groaned loudly as he slowly slid himself into her. The rumbling vibrations of it shook her ear as she moaned. He slowly pushed into her one inch at a time.

Judy’s paw went back to the wall as he slid into her and pressed back with her arms as well as she could. She moaned loudly as his knot pressed against her, and he held still for a few moments. Her thighs shook in both anticipation and pleasure as he slowly pulled back.

Nick started to thrust in and out of her. He pulled back on her ear with each thrust into her body. His paws squeezed her hips and waist tightly as he held her up off of the floor.

Judy groaned as her muscular legs shook with each powerful thrust into her body. She enjoyed this his paws on her waist made her feel both protected and traped. The fact that he was holding her up to have his way with her only enhanced these feelings of both protection helplessness. She knew she could stretch her legs and feet down and put her toes on the floor but instead choose to keep them
relaxed to let him hold her up

Nick grunted with each thrust into her his need building as he started to try to force his knot into his bunny.

Judy felt it she knew it was coming she moaned louder in anticipation. “Please….” she cried to him. She felt his paws tighten on her hips and waist as he pulled her back harder with each thrust into her accepting body.

Nick let her ear go and threw his head back groaning as his knot slipped into her with an almost audible pop. He felt her inner muscles contract around him triggering his orgasm. His body was lurching forward with each blast of his seed into her.

Judy’s head flopped forward as her own orgasm washed over her feeling each wave of warmth as it invaded her body.

Nick pulled her up and cradled her against his chest as he slowly lowered them to the floor and turned to press his back against the wall. The warm water of the shower still cascading down over them.

“Thank you, Slick.” She said breathlessly.

“For?” He asked as he licked the side of her neck and face.

She giggled as the feel of his raspy tongue sliding over her fur. “Loving me.”

Judy laid surrounded by Nick. Their shower had long since been completed and how clean they had gotten during it was still very much so in question even after round two. But her primary goal had been achieved which was to show Nick she loved and trusted him physically. Afterward he had cooked her a meal of fried vegetables and tofu which she had eaten ravenously.

She rolled over in his arms and looked up at his sleeping face. She had almost said something very hurtful to him when they got home that evening. It was weighing heavily on her conscience. She had been frustrated and scared, and many of the bunnies rescued today reminded her much of her own family. She buried her face in the fur of his chest and held him tightly.

She smiled as his nose found its way under her right ear and he planted a soft kiss between them.

“I love you,” She whispered into his chest.

Nick started to purr his tail swished once against her back. “I love you too, get some sleep buffalo butt gave us tomorrow and the next day off.”

Judy nodded. “I'm sorry….”

“For what this time?”

“I...I...I almost said something that would have really hurt you.” She admitted quietly.
“I know.” Nick sighed. “I also know you were frustrated and angry but not with me. It was a crappy day, Fluff.”

Judy nodded into his chest.

Nick cracked an eye open. “But we did it.”

“Did what?”

“Well for those bunnies today we truly did make the world a better place.”

Judy smiled and was quiet for a bit before she replied. “Yes, yes we did.”
Episode 6: In the Mood for You

Chapter Notes

Warning there is a lot of Fluff in this one almost as cavity-inducing as Episode 2. There is also a great deal of smut and feelings in this one so be warned. There is a little plot, don’t worry though it goes back to police work in Episode 7......

Comments: 30
Kudos: 63
Bookmarks: 5
Hits: 2560

Episode 6: In the Mood for You

“You in the mood for me, baby? You in the mood right now? Come on, come on, sugar You in the mood right now?”
In the Mood for You ~ The Record Company

Judy’s mind floated quietly in the warm cocoon afforded to her by the closeness of her lover's body. A slow pulsing rumbling permeated even her dream to the point where it sounded like she was standing beside a high-performance engine. She was vaguely aware of paws holding her tightly, but it was of little concern to the drowsy doe. She was safe loved and protected. Judy's small paws reached and latched onto Nick’s warm fluffy tail and pulled it tight against her.

Nick smiled in his sleep. In his dreams, Judy was doing such gratifying things with her mouth and soft paws, which elicited his rolling purr. He curled just a bit tighter and snuggled her close to his chest. Nick let out a low whimpering whine that momentarily interrupted his purr. He ground his hips forward as his left leg shook slightly.

Judy’s eyes opened slightly as she heard his whine. Her left ear perked up and raised out of the sea of red and cream fur like a periscope searching for the source of her vulpine lover's distress. Her ear lowered covering part of his snout as she heard his purr resume. Her eyes just started to close as she felt something push against her hip.

Nick’s tongue lazy licked his lips and brushed against her ear where it had flopped over his snout. His purr continued to rumble in his chest as his dream kept playing out in his mind. He ground his hips forward again as his bunny teased him in his dream.

Judy’s eyes opened slightly as she heard his whine. Her left ear perked up and raised out of the sea of red and cream fur like a periscope searching for the source of her vulpine lover's distress. Her ear lowered covering part of his snout as she heard his purr resume. Her eyes just started to close as she felt something push against her hip.

Nick’s tongue lazy licked his lips and brushed against her ear where it had flopped over his snout. His purr continued to rumble in his chest as his dream kept playing out in his mind. He ground his hips forward again as his bunny teased him in his dream.

Her eyes opened again as she felt his raspy tongue against her ear. She didn’t know what time it was other than there was daylight filtering into her warm red cocoon. She felt him grind against her hip again.
“Niiick.” Just hissed at him and nudged him with her elbow. She wasn’t necessarily against a third round of sex with him, but she was sore and needed a bit of time to recover.

Nick’s eyes shot open, as he looked around alarmed. “Huh? You ok Judy?”

“I’m fine just stop humping against my butt.”

“Sorry,” Nick mumbled as he curled back up around his bunny.

“It's fine I'm just a bit sore still from last night. Good dream?”

“Great dream,” Nick answered and pulled her back against his chest.

“What was the dream about?”

“Ummm you sure you want to know?”

“Well, I think I’m entitled since you woke me up humping my butt.” Judy shot back.

Nick chuckled softly. “You went down on me, and what you couldn’t fit in your mouth, you were stroking with your paws.”

Judy blushed as she listened to him.

“It felt sooo, good.” Nick kissed her between the ears.

“You would like that?” She asked quietly from the safety of her fox cocoon.

“Mmmm perhaps, it was just a dream, Fluff, no pressure.”

Judy went quiet while she mulled it over in her mind some. Her sisters had brought home storied of bucks they had gone down on. Judy herself had never seen the appeal, but Nick had done some amazing things to her with his tongue.

“Selfish.” Her inner voice finally spoke up.

Judy buried her face in Nick’s tail.

“Honestly it never occurred to me…..” She thought to herself.

If her inner voice could have rolled its eyes at Judy, she got the feeling it would have.

Judy let go of his tail and turned over. Her face buried in his chest, he was warm, and the warmth comforted her.

“So is that something you would like?” She asked quietly.

Nick shrugged and scratched the back of his head. “I wouldn’t be male if I didn't admit to the thought has appeal.”

“SEE!” Her inner voice screamed at her.
Judy thought quietly. Her sisters mostly used it as a way to compare the size of their different males for bragging rights. Judy on the other paw knew without a doubt in her mind that her fox was much more endowed than any buck.

“But… If it makes him feel good....” Judy’s inner voice spoke up.

Judy softly ran her small fingers through the long fur of Nick’s chest. He started to purr with the feel of it. His eyes slowly closed as he enjoyed her attention.

“He makes you feel good....” Her inner voice intoned.

“You don't think he feels good too?” She shot back.

“You know exactly what I mean.....”

The unfortunate thing was Judy did know what she meant. She was nervous what if she wasn't any good at it? Sweet cheese and crackers what if it didn't even fit?

“What if it does?” Her inner voice threw back.

Nick whined as her rubbing of his chest slowed to a stop.

“Carrots, whats wrong?”

Judy was looking for a way to explain she was thinking about going down on him when she heard the familiar ringtone of her parents coming from her phone.

Nick groaned and slowly uncoiled himself from around her and stretched his back.

“Can you hand me a shirt?” She asked as she crawled across the bed to the nightstand on her side of the bed.

Nick nodded and walked over to his dresser sliding open one of the drawers and tossed her one of his work out shirts. Judy smiled and shook her head as she slid the shirt on so she would at least be wearing something when she answered the phone.

She pressed the answer button and was immediately greeted by the site of her father's nose almost pressed against the camera.

“Oh hi dad, umm you need to hold the phone back away from your face.” Judy watched Nick walk into the bathroom.

“Oh, there you are bun I couldn't see you there for a moment.”

“Well, it helps if you don’t try to shove the camera up your nose dad.”

“I'm sure it does, newfangled things you know when I was your age you talked into the phone not at it.”

“So uh dad, umm was trying to sleep in had a long day yesterday…”
“Jude it's after ten, but yes that is why I wanted to call we saw you on the news last night….”

Judy’s ears slowly lowered down her back.

“When I saw you on the news with your partner carrying that big machine gun I expressed my concern to your mother,” Stu explained to Judy. “Know what she said to me?”

“No, I don’t.” Judy’s expression changed if Nick had seen it he would have been able to tell she wasn’t amused.

“Well, I’ll tell you what she told me.” Stu’s voice started to rise as he became more animated. “She told me that she wasn’t concerned because your boyfriend would be watching out for you.”

Stu paused for a moment. “Now I didn’t see any bucks on TV with you, but I did see a fox whose tail was mighty touchy-feely with you.”

“Yes, dad I’m dating my partner Nick…”

“That's not right, he hasn’t even asked me, he has no ri….”

“I’m not twelve! I’m my own doe I can make my own decisions over who I see and who I don’t see.”

“Isn’t it weird Jude its like he's rutting his own food!”

“DAD!” Judy exclaimed her face and ears were turning bright red. “Predators haven't eaten other mammals in recorded time!”

“Oh, what about the Sink Isle Fox?” Stu asked.

“DAD, that was one mammal, and it wasn’t even a fox!” Judy all but yelled into her phone.

“Jude, this, this is just to much think about what this is doing to your mother!” Stu exclaimed.

“Mom supports us!”

“Then think about what it's doing to me!” Stu yelled. They looked at each other through the muzzletime connection, Stu's chest heaved liked he had been running. Judy's eyes were wide in shock. “It's too much Jude, first the cop thing which I still don't understand but this? No buck will want you after you’ve been with a fox.”

“Maybe I don't want a buck dad,” Judy said quietly.

“Is he forcing you into this?” Stu asked angrily.

“What? No! Dad how could you…”

“Well, Jack said…”

“NOT another word about that, that jerk!”

“Well, it would just seem like a fox thing to do I bet he even set up those rabbits on TV.”
“Dad? What?”

Judy looked up to see Nick leaning against the door frame.

“Dad I got to go.”

“I’m not done talking to you young lady!”

“You’ve said enough.” She hung up the phone and tossed it aside.

She looked up at Nick her eyes large and wet looking as the tears formed from her rampant emotions.

Nick walked back over to the bed and started to curl around her pulling her back into his warm embrace.

“How much of that did you hear?” She asked as she felt his tail cover back over her.

“Not all of it but enough.” He answered.

Judy sighed and buried her face into his chest. “I’m sorry…”

“Your not your father.”

“What?”

Judy’s phone started to ring again. She began to feel around for her phone with her paw.

“Are you sure you want to answer that?” He asked.

“No, not really.”

“Then don’t.”

Nick’s paws held her tight to his chest. He gently rubbed her back as her paws gripped the fur of his chest.

Judy’s phone went quiet for a moment then started to ring again. She sighed and buried her head into Nicks' chest. Her ear perked up as she heard her phone connect.

“Jude you listen to me…”

“Oh hello Mr. Hopps, I’m sorry Judy is quite upset at the moment and cannot come to the phone right now. You wouldn’t happen to know anything about that would you?” Nick asked his voice smooth as he innocently asked his question.

“I... um.. Uhhh.” Stu started.

“I see,” Nick answered. “Maybe it’s best if I spoke to her mother surely she would know how to calm Judy down?”
“I do not think that is necessary fox. I mean Officer uhhh Wilde was it?”

“I am off duty at the moment you see. So please call me Nick.”

“Let me speak to my daughter….”

Nick took a deep breath. “No.”

Judy looked up at her fox.

“You listen to me fox…”

Nick hung up the phone and powered it off. “Boring conversation anyway.”

He tossed her phone onto her side of the bed and wrapped both arms around her tightly.

Judy shook her head against his chest at his quip about his and her father's conversation.

Judy’s sudden intake of breath signaled that she was awake. Her eyes darted around the room finding it surprisingly absent of fox. The smell of cooking food wafting down the hall caused her stomach to rumble reminding her that she hasn't eaten since sometime the night before. She rolled over onto her back and stretched her arms over her head as her back arched off the bed.

She rolled over and picked up her phone seeing that it was still turned off. Her mind flashed back to that morning and pressed the button to turn it back on. She quietly padded down the hall as her phone slowly went through its boot process.

“Good afternoon, sleepy Carrots.” Nick teased as she climbed up on one of the stools at the counter.

“Hey Slick, mmm making pancakes?” Judy asked as she spied a stack already sitting on a plate.

“Yep,” Nick said as he pushed the plate of pancakes in front of her. “There are blueberries and strawberries and whipped cream for them if you want.”

“Yes please!” Judy answered in a cheery voice. She had learned over the last few weeks that Nick made an excellent homemade whipped creme. Her own mother used the stuff that came out of cans but Nick? Nick made things himself.

Nick walked over to the fridge where he placed a small mixing bowl earlier still filled with the heavy cream sugar and vanilla confection. Taking a large wooden spoon from a drawer and put a large dollop of it right in the center of her pancakes.

“Are you going to eat as well?” She asked.

“All ready ate, even had mine with a bit of turkey bacon.”

Judy looked at her phone seeing she had twenty-three missed called, eight voicemails, and two
hundred and forty-three text messages. Her ears feel down her back.

Nick eyed her and her phone. “What's wrong?”

“Just a load of missed messages.”

Nick nodded. “I get he is concerned for you.”

“Who?”

“Your father…” Nick said as he leaned against the counter top and pushed the bowl of sliced strawberries in front of her.

Judy sighed and nodded.

“Judy listen to me…” Nick looked deep into her eyes as she ate her pancakes. “I would give almost anything for my parents to be back in my life. There isn’t a day that goes by that I do not miss them. I never really knew my father he…..”

“He what Nick?” Judy asked noticing the pain in Nick’s eyes.

“I was three or maybe four. It’s one of the earliest memories I have. I was laying on the floor in the living room playing with some toy cars. I loved the Dukes of Hayzard and Nightbiter. Mostly because of the cars.” Nick smiled at the memory. “My mom and I would watch Nightbiter and after that would be reruns of Paw Trek,” Nick said quietly. “There was a knock on the door midway through Paw Trek. I was pretty tired, I’m not sure what mom thought, but she got up and answered the door.”

Judy put her fork down.

“A wolf was at the door in police uniform, he said something to mom quietly while looking over her shoulder at me. Mom started crying, and she closed the door and scooped me up off of the floor.”

Judy looked at her phone again.

“I remember sitting in the waiting room of a government building. I later found out it was the morgue. There was a pig and some other mammal, I’m not sure what as I couldn't see them. They were murmuring and stealing glances at me. That's how I found out my dad had died. Mom couldn't find the words to tell me.”

Nick sighed. “Mom would tell me stories about him, things they did as kits, the trouble they got into. She had to get a job, and I saw her less and less. I wanted acceptance, so I tried to join the Junior Ranger Scouts, and well I told you how that worked out for me.”

“How…” Judy started to ask.

“He was killed during a mugging a springbok wanted his money. Dad gave it to him according to the cameras outside of his shop. The Springbok then stabbed him in the neck with a knife anyway. My dad bled out.”

The room went quiet. Judy could almost hear her own heartbeat.
“Did they ever find the Springbok?”

“No. I’m not even sure they looked all that hard.”

Nick watched as emotions rapidly crossed her face.

“My point is Fluff, that morning when my dad went to work at the tailor shop he fully expected to come home. I’m sure your father will learn to accept us. Don’t do anything drastic because he’s worried about you and your angry over his lack of understanding.”

Judy nodded at him and opened the messenger app on her phone.

“Hey, Fluff?” Nick asked his tone of voice going from serious to playful.

Judy looked up at him just as he dolloped a bit of the whipped cream onto her nose.

“NICK!” She yelled as she looked surprised and then shocked as he licked it off. His smug grin was settling across his face. “Why you….?”

Nick leaned forward, so their muzzles were just inches apart.

“I love you.” He told her in all sincerity the smug grin instantly being wiped off of his face to be replaced with a rare look of honesty.

Judy smiled at him realizing that he was just trying to lighten her mood after his story and their morning. Her ears slowly lowered down and over her shoulders. “I love you too.”

He leaned forward and kissed her lips softly. Her paws shot up and grabbed the fur alongside his neck and pulled him in tight as she deepens the kiss into a passionate one.

Judy pushed the plate out of the way and crawled up onto the counter and pressed more of herself against her fox. Nicks paws slid down her back and pulled up the hem of the shirt she was wearing.

Judy moaned into his mouth as his right paw gently stroked her tail. She broke the kiss and looked into his eyes.

Judy trembled as she stared into his eyes. It wasn't fear that she felt, she had never felt fear around Nick. Even when he pretended to go savage in the Natural History Museum. She suddenly felt hot her ears flushed brightly and her body sung out for him.

“Sweet cheese and crackers I'm having my heat.....” The thought raced through her mind as Nick’s eyes became lidded.

She watched as he breathed deeply and his paws tightened around her dragging her closer to him. Her eyes went wide as her mind quickly raced back to sex ed from high school.

“You'll only go into heat once you've chosen your mate.”

“But....”

“You chose.” Chimed in her oh so helpful inner voice.
Nicks paws gripped her as he started to sniff the air around her.

“He knows…..” Her inner voice says laughingly.

His nose buried against her neck as he smelled her causing her to giggle softly. His low growl rumbled through her neck.

“Nick?” She asked quietly as his tongue lapped gently against her neck.

His eyes snapped back open. His tongue stopped mid lap.

She pulled back from him slightly and looked into his surprised expression. “So…um….I uh started my…”


“I have…."

Nick’s eyebrow rose. Her scent was filling his nose if he thought horny bunny was intoxicating before what she was hitting him with now should have been considered illegal.

Judy blushed as his eyes slowly became half-lidded once again. The smirk that stretched across his face let her know how he felt.

“You have?” Nick asked his voice low.

“Ummm chill pills…” She answered, at this point, she felt if it weren't for her grey fur Nicks new nickname for her would be tomato.

Nick shook his head. “I don't think those are necessary…..today”

“But…”

“Your smell is intoxicating.”

Judy smiled at him. “So you like how I smell Mr. Fox?”

“Mmmmm, little bunny if I could figure out how to bottle this up I would be the richest fox in the world.” He answered as his nose went back into the crook of her neck before slowly starting to travel down her body.

Judy giggled at his antics as he “searched” for the source of her scent. He stopped right as her groin his work out shirt still covering her as he took a deep breath. His senses swam, his tail started to sway from side to side, his claws pressed into her hips.

She looked down at him; her paws scratched him lightly behind the ears. She took in the look of pure unadulterated bliss on his face. She blushed but didn't stop him as his thumbs slowly lifted the front of the shirt. Her paws kept moving over his ears and head.

Nick opened his eyes as he lifted the shirt over his nose. His eyes locked on hers as he took his first direct breath of her. His tongue flicked out pressing its way between her closed thighs and over her sex.
Judy’s eyes were transfixed by his. Her heart hammered away in her chest. His eyes spoke of need
desire and possession. Her eyes spoke of love and acceptance. She whimpered softly as he pulled
back from her and stood.

Nick kissed her again as he pulled her tight against him gathering his bunny up in his arms and
started down the hall. She wrapped her long muscular legs around his torso tightly, her arms
wrapped lovingly around his neck.

The trip down the hall was short it passed before they even broke the kiss for breath. Before she
knew it, she was standing on the edge of their bed. It was one of the rare times she could easily look
him in the eyes and what she saw was only his love for her.

Nick looked over her slowly. One of her shoulders was sticking out slightly from the neck of the
shirt. Her ears were draped down her back. While most rabbit males would prefer a female that was
rounded and pleasantly plump. Judy was anything but. She was made of lean hard muscles, under
the silkiest soft fur Nick had ever had under his paws.

His paws gripped the hem of the shirt and slowly lifted it up and over her head dropping it onto the
floor beside the bed. When her arms came back down, they wrapped once again around his neck.
They stared intensely into each other’s eyes for a moment before she moved forward placing small
light kisses along the length of his muzzle.

Her nose was instantly filled with the scent of him, violets, coffee a bit of blueberry with a hint of a
metallic copper smell. It was a uniquely Nick as she could have ever hoped for. Even now months
later, even though they have spent almost every moment possible together, she was still amazed by it.

She pulled him down by the neck and rolled him, so he landed on his back on the bed with her
straddling his lower stomach. His eyes opened as he looked up at her causing her heart to flutter just
a bit before and went back to her gentle ministrations. She ran her small fingers through the fur of his
chest.

She knew he wanted her. She could feel the heat rising off of him, feel the barely controlled
movements of his paws along her thighs and back. She looked back over her shoulder at the rather
pronounced tent in her fox’s boxers and turned and looked him in the eyes.

“Mmmmm is that for me, Mr. Fox?” She asked softly.

Nick smiled up at her. “Why yes, yes it is.”

Judy slid down the rest of his long, lean frame. Her paws were sliding slowly and softly down his
chest and stomach. She paused momentarily when she bumped into the rather sizeable tent in his
boxers to lift herself up and slid over it.

Nicks half-lidded eyes closed. She could hear the rolling pur rumble through his chest and smiled.
Her eyes locked onto the growing bludge in his shorts as she slid her paws down to the waistline.
Her weight settled lightly on his thighs.

His eyes opened slightly as he watched her. He pressed his fingertips into the bed sheets. Her paws
slide down over the front of his boxers, and he whined ever so softly as she closed her fingers around
him.
His hips rocked up against her paws. She smiled up at him and let go, his pitiful whimper drew a
smile to her face as she reached up to the waistband of his shorts. He lifted his hips slightly as she
tugged them down to his thighs.

It wasn't the first time she had seen his foxhood. Typically it was about to be thrust into her when she
saw it. This was just one of the first times that she saw it up close. She wasn’t sure where to begin on
what she wanted to do. She understood the mechanics of the act her sisters talked and gossiped
worse than even Ben. She had just never done it.

Judy reached forward and ran a finger lightly down his red shaft to his sheath and back up again. Her
heart pounded in her chest, she looked up at his face. His eyes were mostly closed she could see just
a hint of green peering down at her. Truth be told his heart was pounding away in his chest just as
much as hers. He had no clue what she was about to do but was fighting every instinct in his body
that screamed at him to take his bunny, to make her his prey.

She slid her finger back up his slowly hardening length. She could feel the heat of it as slowly closed
her paw around as much of it as she could. She could feel it harden and throb in her paw in time with
his heart. She watched fascinated as he got harder and longer as she slowly moved her paw up and
down his length.

She bent forward to take a closer look. He was long much longer than any of the males her sister
talked about, and her small hand couldn't entirely close around him. His scent was thicker headier. It
still smelled of violets, but it was thicker. She looked up at his face as he moaned softly as her paw
moved up and down his length. She could hear his sharp intake of breath as her paw moved up over
the tapered head and back down again.

Judy moved to his side and rested her head on his lower stomach. She built up her courage slowly.
She could knock out a rhino, has taken down not one but two mayors and even recently led a raid on
a traffickers compound. But she was mildly intimidated by being intimate with her partner, her lover,
her boyfriend, her fox.

Nick opened his eyes a bit again when he felt her move. He watched her as he fought to keep his
breathing slow and steady. She was manipulating his foxhood as she looked at it all the while one of
her paws was slowly moving up and down his length. The real feel of her paws was better than his
dream. He had no idea how something that feisty could be that soft as well.

He gasped quietly when she took the first tentative lick of him. Her tongue was small, but it left a wet
trail of warmth that he couldn't deny. He moaned softly and fought every instinct in his body to keep
from thrusting his hips up. His paws slowly gripped the sheets of the bed tighter.

Then it happened, his eyes shot open as he felt her engulf the head of his foxhood in her mouth. He
looked down at her watching his green eyes bright with desire as he watched her. He moaned as he
felt her tongue flick around the tapered head. “Gods…” He thought to himself as she slowly took
more and more of him.

Eventually, she draped herself across his lower chest and stomach. She had to move almost her entire
body, but she slowly took him. It was uncomfortable at first but like her sisters said she adjusted. Her
eyes remained closed until her nose bumped up against something.

Nick groaned he felt like his cock had been enveloped by a tight wet velvet glove. His body shook
slightly under her every muscle of his stomach wanting to fire with the pleasure she was giving him.
His eyes opened, and he looked down at her. He could see her glistening wet sex just out of his reach. He could feel her hot breath on his knot and was amazed that she was able to take him like that. He wanted to cum he could feel it building just to the point of release but being unable to. He whimpered softly in both pleasure and frustration.

Judy’s jaw was getting tired, she felt like she was forgetting something about her boyfriend something important. She could feel the pent-up energy of him underneath her. She could feel him writhing as he enjoyed her attention. Her nose bumped against his knot again and then it dawned on her. She let go of his thighs and moved her paws up.

Nick's eyes rolled into the back of his head, and he arched his back as her paws closed around his knot. He howled with his release as he shot blast after blast of his cum down his girlfriend's throat.

Judy swallowed in time with him keeping the pressure on his knot until he was finished. Truth be told she wasn’t thrilled with the taste, but she was happy she made him orgasm. She slowly pulled back and let go of his knot. Rolling to the side, the looked up at the ceiling listening to his heavy breathing.

“Feel good, Slick?” She asked after a few minutes.

“Wow…” Was all he said.

Judy giggled softly at him.

“Give me a moment, Fluff, I may have died.”

“That good?”

“Mmmhmm, where did you…”

“My sisters gossip…."

“Really that from Sisters talking?”

“Well, that and bunnies have no gag reflex to stop us. Plus we can swallow and breath at the same time…”

“Really?” Nick lifted his head and looked down at her.

“Yeah….” Judy answered a bit embarrassed over their use of that particular ability.

“Lucky me.” Nick sat up slowly and looked down at her. She blushed as she met his eyes and he licked his lips.

Judy could see the barely contained desire in his eyes. Even though he just had a dream of his fulfilled, he still wanted her. He wanted her bad, he wanted to make his mate feel just as great as she made him feel.

Nick picked her up gently and laid her in the middle of the bed. He bent his head down and softly kissed her lips before moving down her body. As he moved down, he softly planted kisses along her neck and across the small swell of her breasts.
Judy moaned as she relaxed under his ministrations. His soft kisses down the length of her body left no doubt in her mind what he was about to do. Her father had always warned his kits about the dangers of predators, but if he had had only known… Maybe it’s a good thing bunnies didn’t all know about the joys of being eaten by a predator she thought. Otherwise, there would be no more bunnies.

She gasped as he placed his first kiss on her sex. she had lost track of him as her thoughts had wandered. She moaned and shamelessly thrust her hips up to his mouth as his tongue racked along the glistening wet slit of her sex.

Nick's eyes watched her face intently. He knew she wanted this he knew she almost needed this. The intoxicating smell of her heat combined with the incredible pleasure that she had given him had led him to this point. It wasn’t the first time he had done this for her. But it might as well have been. He had spent six months with her in their police cruiser. In that time she had never gotten her heat. The fact that she got it today with him meant something, what he could only suspect but he wanted her to know how special she was to him.

Nick grinned to himself as she gasped loudly as his tongue pressed between her folds and traveled from her opening up and over her clit. The smell filling his nose was like a drug that only served to push him to take her all the more. He teased her entrance with the tip of his tongue before sliding it back up and over her clit.

“Nick...please.” She softly begged him her back arching up off the bed her need undeniable.

“Please what?” He asked mischievously. She whimpered and almost growled at him as her small paws came up to grab the fur on either side of his face to pull him back toward her crotch.

He reached up and took ahold of her wrists his paws covering almost all of her forearm and pulled gently until she let go. He held her arms to her side as he turned his attention back to her sex ignoring the soft please for his attention, he slowly slid his tongue back up and down her folds.

He wanted to hold her there at the edge of unimaginable agony and pleasure as she had unknowingly done to him moments before. It was a delicate balancing act his tongue slipping up and down to tease and flick across her sensitive flesh and pulling away to leave her wanting.

“Please, Nick, please.” She pleaded with him.

He smiled momentarily before plunging his tongue into her depths.

Her reaction was instant, her thighs closed around his head trying to lock him in place as her back arched off the bed. “OH SWEET.......” She never finished the cute curse on her lips as her hips bucked against his snout. “YES!” She groaned and shook as her orgasm roked through her body faster than the speed of thought.

Nicks talented tongue kept licking and pushing deeper into his bunny. The taste was indescribable, he had enjoyed horny bunny before, but nothing had prepared him for the richness of horny bunny in heat.

Her eyes rolled back into her head as another orgasm tore through her body on the heels of the last. Her arms struggled slightly to be free, but she was also thankful that he held them down. The feeling of helplessness excited her even more as his tongue pressed deeper into her. She could feel him shifting slightly as he touched the tips of his teeth lightly against her pubic bone.
His ears were filled with the sounds of her excitement. His tongue pressed deep into her as he growled low in his throat. The vibration of it rumbled through his tongue and snout and into her body.

Judy climaxed a third time her body going rigid into an arch. She screamed his name as the orgasm tore through her body.

Nick slowly pulled his tongue from her body as she relaxed back into the bed. Her breathing ragged and sporadic. She felt as if she was floating and the only thing keeping her grounded was his paws on her wrists.

Nick slowly moved up her body. He looked down at her happy face and the slow smile that crept across her face. Her eyes slowly opened and looked up into his, her paws traveled up and cupped his face. He leaned down onto his elbows and gently kissed her, their tongues entwining in her small mouth.

He broke the kiss first and looked back down into her eyes. A small thin string of saliva connected their lower lips, but he didn't care. He started to move, and she spread her thighs welcomingly for him her eyes gazing up at him.

Nick settled between her thighs the length of his cock resting just above her sex. He smiled down at her as her gaze moved from his face to his cock.

Judy’s heart hammered away in her chest from the excitement of being with him.

“Nick…..” She started just before he slowly slid his entire length into her. Her head flopped back onto the bed and her back arched. “Mmmmmm, yesss…..” She moaned. Her small paws grabbed his arms as she felt his knot press against her sex.

Nick groaned, he enjoyed the way she felt around him more importantly though he enjoyed being with her. He slowly started to thrust in and out of her body, his rhythm slow and steady.

Judy groaned loudly, her paws grabbing the bed sheet as her left leg thumped rapidly against the bed. Her breathing came in short gasping breaths. “Oh, gods more Nick more!” She all but screamed at her fox.

Nick grinned down at her as he slowly pulled all but the tapered head of his cock out of her then thrust back into her hard. He enjoyed the way she squirmed underneath him and the look of pure bliss on her face.

Judy’s abs flex as she groaned loudly as her body clamping down around him hard as her orgasm burned through her body. She wanted him, wanted more.

Nick started to thrust faster into her, the needs of his body overriding his need to torment her with pleasure. With each thrust into her body, he could feel her give just a bit more to his knot. His pace had long since evened out to a steady thumping rhythm.

Her ankles locked just behind his hips and pulled him into her with each thrust. “Yes… oh….gods yes.” She moaned as she meets him thrust for thrust, her paws grabbed the sheets to keep from moving with each powerful thrust into her body. He tried to slow down to last a bit longer, but she was having none of it as she kept the pace just as steady as before. “Come on foxy give it to me.”
She grunted with each thrust.

Nick's eyes snapped open as he looked down at her, as he did his best to comply with her demands thrusting into her harder and faster. His knot was starting to slam against the lips of her sex. His paws gripped her waist tightly as he pulled her back into each thrust. He felt his need building even faster caused him to thrust harder into her.

Judy’s stomach flexed as she did her level best to slam her hips into his in time with him. His paws kept her in place as he thrust into her. Her body shuddered as her foot thumped through another orgasm, her eyes rolling up into her head. Her paws let go of the bed and grabbed his wrists.

Nick threw back his head and let out a half moan half howl as his knot popped abruptly into his lover. Her body was squeezing down on it like a vice as he fell over the point of no control. His body shook with the power of his orgasm.

Judy groaned as she felt him fill her body with his hot seed. Her heart continued to hammer away in her chest as she felt him come down on top of her. He barely had the sense of mind to catch himself on his elbows resting over his bunny. She shook under him with the after-effects of her own orgasm her eyes slowly opened, and she pulled his muzzle down and kissed him passionately.

He broke the kiss and cradled her to his chest as he rolled onto his back his tail curled around and covered her back as he stared blankly up at the ceiling with a goofy grin on his face.

“I really hope that's not all you had in you Slick as I would like to go for a second round…” She quipped.

He woke slowly sometime later. He could tell that it was early evening by the light coming into the bedroom window. The first thing he noticed was his lack of warm bunny. They had gone another three maybe four rounds before he had just straight up passed out. The last thing he remembered was curling around her, and her paws were stroking his head. He uncurled from the center of the bed and stretched out on his back. He groaned softly as his back popped.

He slid over to the edge of the bed and slipped his legs over the edge as he sat up stretching again. He smacked his mouth dryly he could still taste bunny. His ears perked up at the sound of her voice. While he couldn't make out what she was saying he could hear that she was animated about, not angry though maybe excited? He shrugged and stood up, walking into the bathroom and flipped on the lights.

He looked at himself in the mirror. The fur along his muzzle was matted and the father down his body he looked the more matted his coat became. He smiled at the memories of the afternoon, he would have never guessed a year ago that she could be so... passionate.

He turned on the shower and leaned against the counter as he waited for the water to warm up.

“A year ago I was in the Academy.” Nick thought to himself as he waited.

“Yeah, and you were infatuated with her then as well.” His inner voice shot back dryly. “Wouldn’t even take the chance to try to get her...”
“Well I did now didn’t I?”

“Almost too late…”

Nick thought about that for a while. Getting shot hurt like hell, but in some ways, he was grateful for Charlie shooting him. If it wasn’t for that, he wouldn't have faced his mortality and realized how stupid he was being. Life he learned from that is short and you never know when it's going to be taken from you.

Nick sighed as he stepped into the shower.

“You did it, Nicky!” The voice of his mother sounded in his ears. “You got your bunny, now do what it takes to keep her.”

“It’s only been just over two months mom.” Nick shot back. “We haven’t even gone on our second date…”

“Screw the second and third dates…. You know how you feel about her!”

Nick tilted his head back and let the water run over his face his eyes closed. He did know how he felt about her. He wasn’t joking or kidding around when he told her that he didn’t see a future of his without her in it. That sly bunny had given him a new lease on life, not just a new lease but a new life.

“She went into heat today.”

He picked up his shampoo and a dumped a good bit into his paws and started the process of cleaning up. He liked being clean that was one of the changes in his life. Granted when he lived under the bridge he had still found ways of taking a shower it had just became more difficult to get done.

He wasn’t sure what to think about her getting her heat. He knew that the odds of him getting her pregnant were pretty slim, he had better odds of getting bitten by a shark while being struck by lightning in the middle of Sahara Square. So while not impossible just improbable. They hadn’t even talked about kits, maybe she doesn’t want any?

Nick pondered that for a moment then gave a mental shrug. If she didn't want kids then he would roll with it, he decided. If she did, then they could always adopt.

Nick smiled as the last of the shampoo rinsed from his fur. What was important to him was being with her, as long as he had her nothing else mattered.

He shut off the water after a minute longer and gave his body a great shake to fling as much of the water out of his coat as he could. He opened the shower door and grabbed a towel and started to dry out his fur as he stepped out.

He looked at himself in the mirror and smiled. Truth be told for one of the first times in his life he was proud of himself. It wasn’t just the fact that he had Judy’s love it was the fact that for once he felt like he belonged. He was a part of something, a part of a pack a team and to top it off it was legit.

He draped the towel around his neck and stepped out of the bathroom and smiled seeing his bunny sitting in the middle of the bed in his ZPD workout shirt.
“Hey there, Slick, feel better?” He heard her ask in a cheery voice.

“Much, it appeared as if my snack had exploded all over my face.” Nick quipped back. “How was your talk with your family?”

“Mmm better than the first one. Come here and lay down.” Judy said as she picked up his brush.

Nick dropped the towel on the floor and walked over to the bed. He stretched his back slightly as laid down in front of her stretching frame out before her.

“So I take it your mother was able to get your father to calm down?” Nick asked as she started to brush out the fur of his back. He sighed softly at the feel of the stiff bristled brush moving through his coat.

“Yeah, evidently dad had threatened to exile me from the family when you hung up on him.” Nick's ears fell back with that news. “But mom got him to calm down before he did anything drastic.”

Nick nodded. “That's good then….”

Judy took a deep breath. “Dad wants to meet with you…”

“Oh?”

Judy kept the brush moving through his fur firmly but steadily. “Typically he tries to scare the buck off, but in this case, mom said he wants to meet the mammal that thinks he good enough for me.”

Nick's ears stayed plastered to his head his eyes closed.

“In any case Nick it doesn't matter what dad says.” Judy continued.

“Judy, I don't want…..”

“It doesn’t matter because I have already chosen you, Nick,” Judy said as she interrupted him.

“You say that like I understand what you mean, Fluff.”

Judy sighed. “Ugg you dumb fox, sometimes I forget that we are not just from different cultures, two different species.” She put the brush down and bent down to look at his face. “Bunnies don't have a season, Slick, once we are with our mate we are…..fertile for about nine months of the year. Our heat is just meant to entice our mate to…..”

“Mate?” Nick supplied his eyes opening to regard her face.

“Yeah, you said the thing you do with your tail…..”

Nick nodded understandingly and smiled at her.

“So you might as well put a ring on my finger Slick, as I think we are stuck with each other.”

Nick's ears perked up. “Nicholas Hopps,” he tested the sound of it.

“Actually….. That's one bunny tradition I want to talk to you about…..” Judy said.
“Oh?”

“Well for bunnies the female typically takes the males name…..”

“Judy Wilde?” Nick said after a few minutes.

Judy nodded. “So tell me Slick, when you mean that you see no future without me in it?”

Nick turned over onto his back and looked up into her eyes. “Is that what this is about?” He asked quietly.

She nodded, her heart pounding away in her chest.

Nick smiled his expression softening, his eyes held hers as he reached up and ran a finger along her jaw. “Tell me Judith do you think I’d run from you?”

Judy’s eyes went wide with him using her name. Not Judy or Carrots or Fluff but her name. “N..no,” She answered nervously.

“Good Sweetheart because I couldn't run now even if I wanted to…”

“What does that mean?”

“I choose you too.”

“Y..you do?” She looked down at him as her eyes go glassy.

“I do.

Judy smiled and kissed his lips softly. Nick warped his arms around her and pulled her down onto his chest. His tail flicked up and over her back holding her tightly against him he looked up at the ceiling.

“What did you and your mom discuss?” Nick asked softly.

“You mostly.”

Nick laid quietly underneath her as he softly stroked her ears.

“Mom was trying to get a feel for what kind of mammal you are.”

Nick chuckled. “Well just over a year ago I was a shady mammal.”

“Yeah, well I don’t think it's an overly good idea to tell them all about your past either.”

“Probably not. So are your parents coming here or are we going there?”

“I don’t know yet honestly, it's harvest season so they are somewhat busy right now and we are still in the middle of this case.”

Judy looked up at her fox from where her chin laid on his chest. She laid snuggled into his arms as
she listened to his pur roll through his chest. After a few minutes and pushed up off him his arms going slack around her as she moved to look down into his eyes.

Nick looked up into her eyes and smiled. “I love you.” He said simply.

“I love you too.” She answered as she took his face in her paws softly stroking his cheeks. She bent forward after a few minutes and ran her chin over the sides and top of his muzzle then up and over the top of his head. She made sure to rub it over every inch of fur between his ears. She once again looked down into his eyes.

Nick looked up at her confused for a moment. “Did you just?”

“Mark you?” Judy paused for a moment. “Why yes, yes I did.”

Nick smiled at her then sat up on the bed, his eyes never leaving hers. She looked nervous as his eyes studied hers.

“I know it has a different meaning for valupes…..” She started nervously.

Nick shook his head and placed a fingertip to her lips to stop her from talking. The look in his eyes was intense but loving and even though she was embarrassed she was held captivated by them.

“I accept.” He said softly as he bent forward and rubbed his cheek along the left side of her neck and face first. He brushed his cheek over the top of her head. Switching cheeks midway across the top of her he ran the other one down the right paw side slowly. Before he pulled back and looked deep into her eyes.

Judy’s eyes were wide with shock as she looked up at him. Her mind tumbling over the implications of what he just did. “But you……” She started as he smiled at her.

“Marriage yes…” Nick said. He could clearly see she was frustrated, excited and scared rolled into one.

“The vixen in or in our case the doe.” Nick gestured to her with his paw. “Controls the courtship timeline. You had only been marking my neck up to this point. Which is acceptable but today you marked my head.”

Judy nodded.

Nick smiled at her. “You proposed, Fluff.”

Judy’s eyes went wide, and her heart raced in her chest. “I…I…” She stammered nervously.

“It’s ok…” Nick said softly as he looked deep into her eyes.

“It is?”

“Judy, I promise you, I accept, I will marry you.”

Nick rocked back slightly as the grey bunny became a small blur and plastered herself to his chest her arms wrapped around his chest tightly. He wrapped his arms around her, and his tail curled protectively around her back. His stomach chose that moment to rumble breaking the moment.
Judy giggled. “How about we get some food in you, Slick?”

“Sure, I was thinking about ordering some Chinese…..”

“Good evening I’m Fabienne Growley, “ Zootopia News Networks female snow leopard anchor said into the camera.

“And I’m Peter Moosebridge.” Zootopia News Networks male moose anchor followed behind.

“In a follow up on yesterday’s story about the daring raid to save over five hundred lagomorphs from traffickers outside of the city. Officials are reaching out to surrounding communities for assistance in finding homes for the rabbits. In a bizarre twist City Officials have announced that all five hundred plus kits are kits of the six above eighteen rabbits rescued and as such are looking for homes in the lagomorph dominated Tri-Borrow Area.” Peter Moosebridge reported.

“The father, a Greg Leaperson, has been formally charged with a slew of charges including kit trafficking, sexual assault of a minor, false imprisonment, rape and kit pornography. Bail at this time has been denied. Mr. Leaperson has been assigned a public defender, and the trial date has been set for November 12th.” Fabienne Growley followed up.

A hoof picked up the remote to the TV and muted the rest of the broadcast and dropped the remote onto the conference table in front of him.

“It is unfortunate that Leaperson was caught…” A high pitched female voice said. The speaker was a middle-aged rabbit in a pinstripe suit. “His operation had been going on for over ten years. Do we know what happened?”

“Our typical information channels inside the ZPD have been mum on how he was caught. But it has something to do with the newly promoted detectives…” A second voice spoke up. This one belonged to a male beaver in a polo shirt and khakis.

“What are their names?” A deceptively deep voice asked. It belonged to a male zebra in a black suit and tie.

“Nicholas Wilde and Judith Hopps.” The female rabbit answered.

The zebra snorted. “Wilde…..” He paused where had he heard that name before?

“He helped bring down Dawn Bellwether.” The beaver supplied.

The zebra frowned no that wasn’t it.

“Bellwether was an idiot.” The zebra snorted. “Ambitious but an idiot.”

“There is much money to be made off the stupid preds.” The rabbit supplied.
“Agreed but I find it humorous that most of the mammals we sold Leaperson’s products to was prey.” The Beaver shot back.

The rabbit shrugged at the statement. “Regardless it will be a while before we get another operation like that going again. Finding a….. Willing supplier will be difficult.”

The zebra nodded. “How is our drug operation looking?”

“Production numbers are good, and Zootopia is only a small percentage of our total in sales.” The beaver reported. “We need to increase shipments elsewhere.”

“The ports here are useful for that.” The rabbit said. “The problem is operational security is questionable at the moment, we have no clue how much Thornton may or may not have told the ZPD.”

“What about our sources inside the DA?” The zebra asked.

“The DA is playing these cases close to his chest, its like he doesn't trust his staff.” The rabbit answered.

“And inside the ZPD?”

“Their investigation has stalled…”

“Wilde and Hopps?”

“No, Fangmeyer and Wolfson.” The rabbit reported.

“Don’t we have something on Wolfson?”

“Not directly, but we do on his brother.”

“Might be time to put a bit of pressure.”

The rabbit smiled and nodded.

Nick placed his snout between Judy’s ears and breathed deep taking a deep lung full of her rich earthy scent. It amazed him that she still smelled of soil and the outdoors. She had long since passed out, and he was somewhat grateful after round eleven he was starting to wonder if he would even survive.

“Bunny heats need to come with warning labels.” He thought to himself. “Warning: This mammal is known by the state of Califurnia to cause spontaneous combustion of your foxhood, dehydration, and death. Mate at your own risk.”

He smiled at the thought. “The warning label would need to be put on her foot or something.”

He uncurled from her slightly to reach over to the nightstand and pick up a bottle of water before taking a long sip.
“How to survive your Bunny’s Heat: A survival guide by Nicholas Wilde. Step one: Stay hydrated.” He thought to himself as he finished his bottle of water.

He put the empty bottle back on the nightstand and curled tightly around the sleeping bunny.

“All joking aside, I feel extremely blessed. Maybe my ledger with Karma has finally balanced out.”

“Or maybe she’s getting you ready for a big hit.” The cynical voice in his head spoke up.

Nick gave himself a mental shrug and closed his eyes his snout resting between her ears once again. His body slowly started to relax as he felt her paws grab his tail and snuggle it close to her. He smiled and wondered what his ancestors would have thought about him and his bunny.

“Probably something along the lines that you have taken playing with your food way to far.” His cynical side spoke up.

“Shut up.” He told himself.

“I love you.” He whispered between her ears just before his slipped off to sleep.
Episode 7: One Step Forward

Chapter Notes

For those that have left me comments of encouragement, thank you!

I ask at this point for no more comments concerning grammar etc. I know its bad but if you're not going to volunteer to help with the problem, then I really don't want to hear about it anymore.

Comments: 49
Kudos: 71
Bookmarks: 16
Hits: 3027

Episode 7: One Step Forward

“I take one step forward, and two steps back
It's always been like that
It shouldn't be like that
I'm trying to overcome myself
Trying to work around this hell”
Will The Sun Ever Rise ~ Five Finger Death Punch

Nick walked up a hill toward figure with its back turned to him. The green grass was ankle high, and he honestly had never seen a hill like this except for in movies. There wasn’t even one in the Meadowlands Park. Everything was so vivid bright and green. His few friends were waiting for him at the bottom of the hill, but he didn’t want to be at the bottom. The figure at the top drew him like a moth to a flame. The closer he got to the character the more he could make out.

She was dressed in a white gown, it's train and veil was flowing behind her in the breeze making her look like pennant flag fluttering in the wind. The figure turned slowly and looked down the hill to regard him.

He stared up at her for the longest time. Her grey fur contrasted sharply with the white of her gown. The brightest amethyst eyes looked down at him with love that shined brightly in them. She held a bouquet of spring flowers in her paws, and she smiled brightly at him.

To say he was looking into the other half of his soul would belittle the truth of the pair of them. While they could get along just fine without the other as they were complete and whole individuals, but together they were more significant than the sum of their parts. They didn't so much complete each other as they did complement each other.

He took off running for the top of the hill, desperate to feel the bunny wrapped up in his arms to call
her his own to love and protect her the best he could. As he crested the top of the hill, he scooped her up into his arms holding her tightly to his chest his tail coming up to cover her back.

“I love you.” He told her as tears started to stream down his face.

“I love you too.” She said, only to him. His heart sung.

He closed his eyes and buried his face into the crook of her neck as he felt the familiar presence of two other mammals. He felt the warm embrace of his mother and father wrap around him and his bunny. Welcoming the rabbit into the family.

“Nick…” He heard his bunny say. She sounded far away even though she was right there in his arms. He shook it off and enjoyed the warmth of the embrace for just a bit longer.

“Nick…” He heard her say again, this time sounding much closer. He grumbled and tried to hold on to the feelings a little tighter.

“Nick.. wake up sleepy Todd.” He heard her say one more time as his eyes slowly cracked open leaving the vision and feeling of warmth behind.

“Mmmm Carrots what time is it?” He asked as he smacked his mouth dryly.

“Just after seven” She answered him softly.

“Why my beautiful bunny are you waking me up after the night we had at seven?”

“Because Clawhauser called we are needed in the office ASAP.”

“But we had the day off….”

“Yeah well, the chief giveth and the chief taketh away. Come on you need a shower, and I promise we'll stop at the muffin place on our way in.”

He sighed as he slowly uncurled from the center of the bed, and stretched. “How long ago did Claws call?”

“Maybe twenty minutes?” She asked as she watched him get up. “I let you sleep while I showered.”

“Thanks for that,” Nick said as he stretched out his eyes closed and sighed as his back popped softly. He opened them and regarded the bunny as she watched him, the smile that slowly crept across his face was not the usual sly smile he wore but warm and endearing.

“So Nick quick question before you get into the shower..”

“Sure.”

“Do I get a ring?”

“Valupes exchange rings at the wedding, yes…”

She blushed and looked away. “Well, traditionally bucks give the doe an engagement ring….” Judy explained.
“Oh…” Nick looked thoughtful for a moment. “Valupes don’t do that, what purpose do they serve?” He asked honestly.

“Well, I guess its a token of affection, to show I have agreed to be married.” Judy tried to explain. “Really nowadays it's just a way for a doe to brag about their mate.”

“Fluff, if you wish to brag about me you don't need any silly ring to do that…” Nick said as his smile slowly turned smug.

“Oh, I know that…” Judy looked down.

Nick's ears went back as he studied her body language for a moment. “Do you want a ring?”

She nodded shyly.

“Carrots, if it's that important to you all you had to do was say so. We can go look at a few jewelers I know on our next day off.”

“Really?” She asked looking back into his eyes just before he sat up and swung his legs off the edge of the bed.

“Yeah, besides I need to get moms ring resized for you….”

Judy looked at him inquisitively.

Nick sighed and looked at the floor. “Mom….” Nick started and paused to collect his thoughts as a flood of emotions passed through him. “Didn’t want to be buried. Dad wasn’t either. I scattered her ashes out of a scenic overlook as she had requested.”

“So there is no grave to visit?” Judy asked quietly.

Nick shook his head. “But Mom left me instructions in her will and what she wanted to be done with her wedding ring. The ring is to go onto the paw of the love of my life.” Nick turned his head and looked deep into her eyes. “So yeah I need to get it resized for you.”

Judy smiled and could feel the blush slowly creeping up her ears. “What do you do if you feel the need to talk to her?”

“Well, there is a stone in the living room, on the bookshelf with her paw print engraved on it. There is also a matching one for my dad.”

“Oh…” Judy looked at the time. “You need to get cleaned up and ready to go, Slick.”

Nick nodded as he stood up and headed into the bathroom. She watched him go and waited for the sound of the shower being turned on before she slipped off of the bed and padded quietly into the living room. She never really did pay much attention to what was on the bookshelves behind the couch. They had spent hours snuggled together in the room watching movies. Sometimes he read a book while she read muzzlebook on her phone.

She spotted the stones one engraved with the name Vivian Wilde and the other carved with John Wilde. Both had paw prints engraved on them. They looked heavy and was made from white
She stood there for some time looking up at the stones her ears flopped down her back, her paws clasped in front of her. She was unsure of what to say. Rabbits cremated their dead as well, but they put the ashes in a communal Moslem. The harsh reality was for every rabbit that made it adulthood at least five did not. Accidents being the most significant cause of death among rabbit youth. She had already mourned three of her littermates and one of her cousins.

She was unsure of what to say to the parents of her fiancé. Would they even hear her? Did her littermates listen to her when she spoke to them?

Judy shook her head she wasn't the most devote of rabbits, and those questions were better left for another day. She said quietly. “Thank you for the fox. I’ll try to take good care of him.” She turned and walked back into the bedroom just as Nick shut off the shower.

Nick’s aviator sunglasses glinted in the sunlight as they walked down the street. He was munching happily on his blueberry muffin and sipping on a cup of coffee from Snarlbucks.

Judy looked up at him as she took a sip of her tea.

“What's on your mind, Carrots?”

“Lots honestly.” She said as they walked through the early morning foot traffic toward precinct one.

“Enlighten me Fluff,” Nick said as he took a bite of his blueberry muffin. The place next door to the Snarlbucks just down the street made some of the best blueberry muffins in the city. Nick thought the name was fitting, A Taste of Home.

“Well, we are engaged when do you want to do the wedding? Do you want kits? What’s your retirement plan look like? Where will we live?” Judy started as she rapid fired questions at him.

“Some of those are oddly the same questions I have for you. Minus your retirement plan and where would we live. Add in how long do you want to do this police thing.”

Judy looked thoughtful for a moment. “Spring. I like the idea of a spring wedding.”

“Spring works for me,” Nick gestured with his coffee cup. “Honestly doesn't matter to me.”

“Why not Nick?” She asked then quickly added. “It's an important day.”

“It is Carrots, but not nearly as important as you.” Nick looked thoughtful for a moment. “Besides we could always have a quiet ceremony with a justice of the peace down at the courthouse and skip all the hoopla.”

“That is an option.” Judy conceded. “Bunny weddings do tend to get a little out of control. The last one, my dad, drank half the open bar and well let's just say he made a fool of himself.”

“Fox weddings tend to be simple affairs,” Nick said. “My mom told me her and dads ceremony was just a JP, him, her and a few of their close friends.”
“We could use a wedding planner and use that to try to keep things under control.”

Nick eyed her and grinned. “Let's see how well that goes after we break the news to your parents. I'm now giving four to one odds that your dad uses a fox taser on me when we meet.”

Judy's ears fell down her back as she envisioned her irate father attacking her fox with a taser. “I won't let him.” She said with conviction in her voice.

“What's that?” He asked as he took a sip of his coffee, his muffin long since finished.

“I won't let my father tase you.”

He cocked his head to the side to look down at the bunny and could see the determined look in her eyes as her ears stood erect once again. “Ok.” He said after a few minutes.

Judy nodded and smiled up at him. “You are not going to argue to the point?”

“Nope,” He said as he took a sip of his coffee. “But two to one odds say you end up arresting your own father after he hits me with a taser.”

“I'll take that bet.” She said.

“Ok Carrots but I won't take your money…” Nick looked thoughtful for a moment. “How about if I win you end up doing the dishes for let's say a month?”

“Ok and if I win?”

“What do you want?”

Judy looked thoughtful as she thought about it. “I want nightly foot massages for a month.”

Nick smiled and nodded. “Deal.” Little did she know that he would massage her feet for her if she only had asked.

They walked in silence for a bit as they crossed a street. Judy glanced up at him and smiled. “So… what about kits?”

Nick shrugged. “I won't pressure you into anything.”

“What does that mean?”

Nick stopped and looked down at her. “I know your career is important to you. I will not say yes let's have kits, or no let's not have kits. Medical science isn't even one hundred percent sure we couldn't have kits.” Nick paused for a moment. “While there are things that separate us as mammals, there is enough there that is the same that life might find a way. However improbable that might be.”

Judy nodded. “We could adopt?”

“That we could, and it's a decision that doesn't need to be made today, or even before we are married.” Nick looked up at the sky before looking back down at her. “Honestly, Fluff, I'm not even that sure I would be a good father.”
Judy smiled up at him amusement shined brightly in her eyes.

He saw that look in her eyes and smiled as well. “What’s so funny Carrots?”

“I think all fathers think that.”

Nick nodded. “Probably.” As he turned and started to walk back down the street again.

“So we cross that bridge when we come to it?” She asked as she once again walked beside him.

Nick nodded. “That’s my thought. If we are meant to be parents either the right kit will come into our lives, or we will conceive a miracle ourselves.”

Judy smiled up at him she liked that idea. Conceiving a miracle with him.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

“Hey Claws,” Nick said as he walked up to the front desk. He took off his sunglasses and placed them in the inner pocket of his sports jacket.

“Hey Ben,” Judy greeted as well.

“Hey, guys, sorry for calling you in on your day off but the Director of the TIU wants to talk to you, and the Chief is about to blow his top as well.” The chubby cheetah leaned over the front desk and whispered down to them. “Just between us, I think that City Hall is crawling up his tail.”

“Really?” Judy asked.

“Yeah,” Ben looked around the foyer of the building. “Between us, he’s been stressed since getting back from outside of the city limits.”

“Ummm we should be heading up to see the Chief,” Judy said as she took hold of Nick’s arm.

Nick nodded and waved as he followed his bunny to the elevators. He watched her tail for a moment before sliding his eyes around the rest of the building. While the stairs leading up to the building was spaced well enough to allow a smaller mammal to traverse them the stairs inside the building was intended more for larger mammals, as such Nick and Judy ended up using the elevators more than the stairs. It rankled Judy something fierce, but she did understand that the budget didn’t allow for extensive renovations to the building.

The building was quiet, which didn’t surprise Nick much. The only time the building was overly busy was near shift change over or there was a mammal brought in for booking.

He stepped into the elevator with Judy and took a deep breath shortly after the doors closed. While her hormone suppressants where working they didn’t suppress her heat one hundred percent. He smiled into her eyes through her reflections in the highly polished doors of the elevator.

Judy’s eyes traveled to his as she watched the slow smile creep across his face. Her inner ears quickly turned pink as she recognized the smile from the day before.

“Wipe that grin off of your face, Slick.”
“How long are those suppressants supposed to last for, Carrots?” Nick asked his grin getting wider.

“Eight to twelve hours why?” Judy suddenly looked concerned. “You can’t smell anything right?”

“Oh, Fluff, remember I’m a predator, your natural predator to be exact.” Nick’s grin grew wider, more predatory. “Since I now know what to smell for, I would be able to track you across this city.”

Judy smiled at him. “Good to know Slick, be a good fox though and well see what happens tonight when we get home.”

Nick’s tail swung side to side behind him, and his grin went back to smug as the elevator doors opened. Judy shook her head as they walked down the hall toward the chief’s office.

Judy knocked softly on the Chief’s door.

“Enter” Came the gruff order from the other side.

Nick turned the doorknob and pushed the door open for Judy. “Hey, Chief.” He greeted a little overly cheerfully.

Judy sighed wondering what kind of trouble her fox could possibly get them into this time.

“Wilde, Hopps.” Chief Bogo greeted as he sat down a report that he was reading. He watched his smallest Detectives climb into the chair across from his desk. “Do you know what this is?” The Chief asked indicating the report he was just reading.

“I would hazard to guess a report….”, Nick said.

Chief Bogo starred at the fox. Judy could tell that her fox was already getting on the Chief’s nerves. “Do you know what's contained in the report?”

Nick was about to open his mouth when he saw Judy raising her fist out of the corner of his eyes and wisely shook his head.

Bogo smirked. “They may be sleeping together, but it appears as if she can still keep him contained.” He thought to himself. “The report is a bunch of jargon that comes down to we have stressed the cities social services to far with the Leaperson Case,” Bogo said as he picked up another report. “This report is the preliminary report from the TIU stating what you found is the tip of the iceberg.”

Nick and Judy sat quietly listening to the Cape buffalo.

“I have fielded calls from the mayor’s office and the district attorney’s office. Both are interested in the same thing, how much bigger is this going to get and do we have the resources to handle it?” Bogo looked down at his desk. “I’ll be frank.”

Nick started to open his mouth but was quickly silenced by a punch in the arm from Judy. He glanced down at her, and the look in her eye said that he needed to keep quiet, so he just rubbed his arm.

“Thank you, Hopps,” Bogo said with a smile. “As I was saying. I’m not concerned with mammals outside of the ZPD jurisdiction lines. I am concerned about mammals inside our jurisdiction. I want
you two to track down and find anyone who has purchased a kit from Mr. Leaperson here in the city, and we will prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law. The rest we will turn over to the Mammal Bureau of Investigation.”

Judy nodded, and Nick didn’t open his mouth which was odd to the small doe, but she quickly placed it out of her mind.

“Dismissed,” Bogo said before going back to his reports.

Nick and Judy slid out of the chair and headed out the door. Judy closed it softly behind her as they walked down the hall. She observed her partner turned lover, turned betrothed. His ears were back, and his tail hung low behind him, much in the same way he walked when they first meet. She had come to understand this was Nick when he was trying hard not to be overly noticed. She glanced to her left and grabbed his paw pulling him abruptly into the same conference room he used a week or more before to talk to her.

She shut and locked the door before she turned and looked him in the eyes. “What's wrong Nick.”

“Noth…” He started.

“Don't give me that. I can tell when something is bothering you.”

“It’s silly don't worry about it.”

Judy thought for a moment. “Would you like to know why I stopped you from snarking at the Chief?”

Nick locked eyes with her and nodded.

“It's because we are…” She searched for a word. “Partners not just here but we are in everything, and part of that is sometimes saving you from yourself. The Chief is stressed he has City Hall breathing down his neck about this…” Judy searched for a word. “Depravity. That we uncovered they want to know how far this goes who's involved and how high of places does it go.”

Nick nodded his smile slowly coming back.

“Any other day. I would have let you snark to him.”

“Thanks, Fluff.”

“Come here.” She said rather forcefully.

He stepped closer to her as she grabbed the lapels of his jacket and pulled him down. She pulled him low enough that he dropped to a knee to keep from falling over.

“I love you, Nicholas Wilde. Don't you ever doubt that.” She whispered into his ear.

He smiled and kissed the side of her neck. “I don’t. I love you too Judith.”

He pulled back smiled at her warmly. “Now let's go make the world a better place.”
Judy watched her fox as they entered the TIU. His tail had picked up a bit, and his ears seemed a bit perkier than a bit ago outside of the Chief's office. Something was still off, but she couldn’t quite put her paw on it. Maybe it was the case, or perhaps it was the way she went about keeping him from snarking at the Chief. More than likely it was a culture difference they would have to work through to be together.

“Detectives Hopps and Wilde.” She heard Cor greet them as she snapped out of her internal thoughts.

“Cor, ole buddy what do you have for us that couldn't wait another day.” Nick greeted the grey wolf in a blue almost black suit and tie.

“Yes, I apologize about cutting your time off short…” Cor lead the pair into his office and once again sat behind the desk. “Unfortunately some of the information gathered from the Leaperson Compound has a short shelf life if we wish to act upon it.”

“How short?” Judy asked.

“A week maybe two.” Cor took a deep breath. “The website that you inquired about does exist. Mr. Leaperson was logged into his seller's account when you raided his compound, and we have been able to use that account to gain access to vital records of transactions that have taken place.”

“So we have names and credit cards?” Judy asked.

The look Cor gave her asked clearly if she was stupid. Her ears fell down her back as she looked between the two larger predators.

“Bitcoin.” Nick supplied. “But I thought that bitcoin was untraceable.”

“Nothing is untraceable. Hard to trace maybe but untraceable?” Cor snorted. “We were able to trace the bitcoins used in Mr. Leapersons transactions back to accounts on three of the major exchanges. Two of the exchanges have willingly given up records of the accounts in question. The third, Chief Bogo submitted the paperwork to the DA to have them subpoena the information from them.”

“So what do we need to do?” Judy asked.

“We have already compiled a list of Internet Service Providers and IP Addresses that we need to have subpoenaed so we can access the billing info. From there a search or arrest warrants can be issued.” Cor explained.

“So paperwork and then kicking in more doors.” Nick summarised.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Nick sat typing away at his keyboard in his and Judy’s shared office. They had agreed to split the IP addresses considering the large number that they had to subpoena. The unfortunate rules of the DA’s office are they couldn't just subpoena a block of IP addresses they had to do one address at a time. The fortunate thing was the DA was expecting these subpoena requests and expected them to be pretty much the same expect the changing of a small pawful of numbers. After typing out the first, it
was a matter of saving it then changing the IP address number and sometimes the ISP name and address before saving that one.

Judy watched Nick out of the corner of her eye. He seemed to be making good time thought his list of addresses, but even after her talk with him in the conference room, he didn’t appear back to his usual self. She glanced down at the lower right-hand corner of her computer screen seeing it was just before eleven. “Maybe some lunch?” She thought to herself.

“Take him home and….” Her inner voice started.

“NO!” She stamped down on the thought, not before some very vivid images flashed through her mind. She looked down at the list of addresses before inputting the next one into the form to keep her pace up.

It wasn’t that she didn’t want to do what her inner voice suggested. She was after all a bunny, and the multiplication jokes were made for a reason. To top that off even with the hormone suppressants she still felt the call to be with her mate very physically. It was more of a time constraint. If they started, she wasn't going to stop easily, and she knew it.

“I love that dumb mopey over emotional fox.” She thought to herself.

“Hey, Fluff?” Nick spoke up several minutes later.

“Yeah, Nick?” She answered shaking herself out of her inner thoughts and looked over at him.

The smug grin that stretched across his face was almost normal. “Just what are you thinking about over there Carrots?” He asked.

“Ummm nothing… why?” She asked forcing her ears down her back so he wouldn't see the blush creeping up them.

“Well, you are just about hot boxing the office….” If his grin could get any wider, it would have. “So I figured whatever your thinking over there it must be good.”

Judy smiled warmly at his expression. “There my dumb fox is.”

“It could have been good, but it was one of those fleeting..” She made a dramatic gesture with her paw. “Moments. It seems to have left me.”

“Nick!” She hissed at him.

“Speaking of delicious why don't we go get some lunch?” Nick sighed and added. “There is someone I want you to meet.”

Judy watched her fox as he walked up the street. They typically went to the left after leaving the Precinct One building. But instead, he went right.
“You coming Fluff?” He called after her. “So who did you want me to meet?”

“Daisy's daughter Lorie,” Nick answered as he shoved his paws in his pants pockets.

“Oh, Daisy runs the property management agency right?”

Nick nodded and looked down at her. “You could say that Lorie and I grew up fairly close. With mom gone and my Uncle not wanting anything to do with me… Daisy and Lorie are the closest I have to family.”

“Oh…,” Judy said her ears were falling down her back. “Am I dressed right to meet someone important to him?” The thought shot through her head. “So we are meeting them for lunch?”

“Well, not exactly Lorie extended an invitation for us to have lunch at her establishment before we had even gotten together. But well it never felt right to go until now.” Nick tried to explain.

“So now that we are engaged?” Judy asked.

Nick nodded. “If we are going to do the big wedding thing. They are going to need to be invited, and I would prefer to tell them we are engaged personally rather than through the mail.” Nick paused and looked down at her. “I owe them that much.”

“What does that mean?”

“Lorie is as close to a big sister as I will ever have.” Nick shook his head. “She took it rather hard when I ran off and hustled.”

“So she's angry with you?” Judy asked as she looked up at him concerned.

“I don't think she's angry as so much as disappointed.”

Judy nodded as she thought about it. “I think that's understandable….”

Nick nodded agreeing. “She is more than justified in her feelings over my past actions.” He sighed. “I just hope that we will eventually be able to move past it.”

Judy nodded as they walked down the sidewalk in silence. Her mind raced through possible outcomes of what she was about to step into. It struck her as odd as she got more nervous around meeting mammals than she did over taking down criminals.

Nick paused in front of a darkened restaurant. Judy looked up at him confused.

“Doesn’t look like they are open, Slick.” She said.

“They are not. Not to the public at least.”

Judy was about to say something as Nick pushed the door open and held it for her.

The restaurant was large so it could accommodate the megafauna as wells as the smaller mammals. The decor was decidedly better than anything Judy had seen previously well except for maybe The Whisper. Where The Whisper was more subdued lighting this place took full advantage of the massive windows and skylights.
Judy watched as Nick tucked his sunglasses back into the inner pocket of his jacket.

“Nicholas!” Exclaimed a female basset hound. “It's about time you took me up on my offer of lunch here, and look you brought a friend. I didn’t know you had anyone that would be seen with you in public.”

Nick smiled warmly at the basset hound. “Lorie as eloquent as ever I see. I just never had someone up to the standards of bringing here. Now if you would please allow me to introduce to you my betrothed…..”

“What someone actually agreed to marry you? And a bunny at that!” Lorie exclaimed.

Judy smiled at the exchange.

“Well she roundabout way accidentally asked me, and I accepted, now if you would please let me introduce to you my betrothed Judy Hopps. Judy this is Lorie Denton, the daughter of my business partner and owner of this fine establishment.”

“The Judy Hopps?” Lorie asked.

Judy’s ears fell down her back, it had been a while since anyone asked if she was that Judy Hopps. Meaning the Nighthowler case and that disastrous press conference.

“I mean nothing by it, Miss Hopps. It's just when Nicholas took over his mother's side of the property management business he was pining away for you then. I’m just surprised it's taken him this long to bring you here. Tell me how long have you been engaged?” Lorie asked her face full of happiness.

Judy’s ears slowly perked back up. “Well, it's been less than twenty-four hours I guess since I marked him.” She answered.

“And are you following the fox traditions of no ring or…”

“We will be following the bunny tradition of an engagement ring, but we will go pick it out together. I was thinking of taking her to Buccellati’s on our next day off.”

“Really?” Daisy raised an eyebrow and Nick nodded.

Judy looked up at the two looking confused.

“Now Nicholas are you here to tell me you got engaged or are you here for lunch?”

Nick smiled. “Why not both?”

Lorie smiled at them. “Why not indeed. Do I have your permission to tell mother?”

“By all means.”

“Right this way then.”

The table that Lorie lead them too was on the second level of the restaurant and overlooked the
square around the watering hole fountain at the center of the Downtown district.

“Miss Hopps if you'll give us one moment we will get you an appropriately sized chair,” Lorie said as she retreated away only to return with a taller more comfortable chair. Judy sat in it and could comfortably sit at the table like it was sized for her. Being a small mammal, she is used to the indignity of having to use a booster seat meant for other mammals young. This was quite the turnaround. She supposed the chair could be used for that still, but she chooses not to dwell on that.

Lorie placed menus in front of them.

“Now we are typically a dinner establishment, but my cooks are already on shift preparing some things that have to be done before we open. Most of our fares are available to you, if not I will let you know. Can I please get you something to drink?” Lorie explained and asked for their drink orders.

“Ummm, Nick what's that drink you got me at The Whisper?” Judy asked.

“Shirley Temple.” Nick supplied.

“I'll take one of those,” Judy said.

“Make it two.” Nick smiled up a Lorie.

“So what's good here?” Judy asked.

“Honestly?” Nick asked as he opened his menu. “No idea.” Nick flipped the page of the menu as he looked through it.

Judy smiled at that. “This Pear and Blue cheese salad sound good.”

Nick nodded. “I think I'll get the Chicken Caesar.” Nick shut his menu then looked across the table at Judy.

Judy looked up at him and smiled. “So do you have another reason for coming here?”

Nick smiled at her. “Why would I need an alternative reason to come here I'm sure Lorie’s staff is more than capable of making good food.” He started.

The look that Judy leveled across the table caused him the chuckle. “I don’t believe that for a second, Slick.”

“Slick… that’s a good nickname for him.” Lorie said as she brought them their drinks. “I always thought of him more as my annoying little brother.” She explained.

Nick smiled up at Lorie. “You did try to be a big sister.”

“A fat lot of good it did you still ran off,” Lorie said as she shook her head. “So before I get angry enough to beat some sense into Nicholas, did you decide on what you wanted for lunch?”

“I would like a pear and blue cheese salad please,” Judy said.

“Excellent the pears are fresh today.”
“How about you goofball?”

“The Chicken Caesar please.”

“I’ll have those right out for you.”

“Lorie, could you join us for lunch please?” Nick asked.

Lorie looked at him for a few minutes huffed and nodded.

Nick sighed and looked down at the table.

“So yeah you were right she is rather upset with you,” Judy remarked.

“Her and Daisey were there for mom… I,” Nick shook his head. “Lorie has every right to be angry with me. I was nowhere to be found until the missing mammal case. But that's not why we are here.”

Judy looked at him and waited.

“Daisey and Lorie are the closest mammals I have to a family so I figured if I was to meet with yours soon we might as well meet with mine now or at least one of them.”

“Mother will approve of you,” Lorie said she sat their lunches down in front of them. She sat down a glass of water and a cobb salad for herself before moving over to another table to pull the third chair up to it.

“I am sorry if I was hard on you before Nicholas.” Lorie apologized before she turned her attention back to Judy. “Vivian wanted to meet you. She spoke highly of you considering you did something we all considered impossible.”

Nick looked down at his salad and ate quietly.

“Oh, “ Judy said as she ate her salad.

“Nicholas was…”

“A scoundrel?” Judy supplies.

“I guess that’s a nice way of stating it.” The look that Lorie shot Nick caused his ears to fall back against his head.

“Lorie, I’m going to need you to let up on Nick a bit. He beats himself up enough about what's happened between him and his mother. He doesn't need us doing that as well.” Judy said softly putting her salad fork down.

Lorie looked over at Nick whose face was neutral and hard to read. Judy could tell it was just the mask he wore to the outside world and shook her head.

Lorie sighed. “So when is the wedding or have you guys not got that far yet?”

“We are thinking spring.”Answered Nick. “Unless I can convince her to elope to the courthouse
“We’ll, either way, Mom and I better be invited, Nicholas,” Lorie said.

“Of course,” Judy said as she smiled.

“So…” Lorie starts. “How did you two meet?”

“Would you believe it started with a pawpsicle?” Nick asked.

“Really?”

“Yes, he sold Mr. Otterton a pawpsicle and my only lead in finding him was Nicks fluffy red tail,” Judy answered.

“So Nicholas helped you when you asked for it?” Lorie asked as she took a drink of her water.

“Uh no,” Judy grinned looking across the table at Nick. “I had to blackmail him with tax evasion.” Lorie sputtered and turned her head just in time to spray water all over the floor. “Really?” She asked as the coughing died down.

“Yeah,” Nick said. “I wasn’t the most helpful even after being threatened.”

“Now that is the Nicholas I know.” Lorie smiled. “So how much time of yours did he waste?”

“All most an entire day.” Judy admitted, “Between the Mystic Springs Oasis and Flash at the DMV.”

“Really you took her to the DMV?” Lorie asked. “Why on Earth would you take her to the DMV?”

“To waste her time like I felt she was wasting mine,” Nick answered somewhat truthfully.

“But you found Mr. Otterton and the rest,” Lorie said.

“Yeah, we had a run in with my boss in the rainforest district.” Judy sighed. “Nick saved my job and helped me get the lead that lead us to the missing mammals.”

Judy looked down at the remains of her salad. “The press conference….” She sighed. “I ended up quitting the force shortly after. I just wanted to help, make the world a better place. But it forced a mirror in front of my face and showed me how bad my prejudice actually was.”

“But the news…” Lorie started.

“The news only told the official story. I had been at home for a while when my parents finally convinced me to start working at our produce stand.” Judy smiled. “My old grade school bully gave me the lead about the midnicampum holicithias or nighthowlers. I had made the assumption that nighthowlers were wolves.” Judy shook her head. “The silly thing is I had brought in Duke Weasleton that day for stealing some.”

“She came back to the city and apologized to me for the press conference. I had already had already forgiven her so, I didn't think twice about helping her a second time.” Nick explained as Judy dried up her eyes.
“Catching Dawn Bellwether had honestly mostly been luck. If she had stayed in the Mayor's office and kept her head down she would have never even been looked at.” Judy explained. “But she couldn’t let us wreck her plans. She was after absolute power and was willing to use the cities predators to get it.”

“The plan was to run, but Judy had hurt her leg on a tusk and couldn't run very fast, so I swapped out the Nighthowler pellet for a blueberry from her family's farm,” Nick explained. “A ram caught us as we were trying to escape and rammed us into the exhibit.”

“Nick choose to hang onto me instead of the gun, I had the recording pen that I had used to blackmail him with tax evasion. The plan kinda came together on the fly we weren't sure if she would monologue like a cheap villain or not but sure enough.” Judy explained. “She shot Nick with the, and he whispered go with it to me. He pretended to go savage, and I ran.”

Nick smiled across the table at her.

“Oddly enough I wasn't afraid. I knew he wouldn't hurt me we had almost died together at least a dozen times up to that point. As he went” savage” she laid out her plan perfectly, and I recorded it.” Judy finished.

“So you been together ever since?” Lorie asked.

Judy’s ears fell back, and she looked from Nick to her plate again and shook her head. “I made a stupid bet with him about three months after he got out of the Police Academy.”

“Oh?” Lorie asked.

“Nick told me he knew everyone worth knowing in the city. Even somehow got us and my parents' tickets to a Gazelle concert. That concert was sold out but Nick made a phone call, and we had front row tickets.” Judy sighed. “We had just watched the new Jack Savage movie together, so I bet him lunch for a month that he didn’t know Jack Savage. The biggest stupidest mistake of my life.”

Lorie looked between them.

“I knew Jack Savage from doing a bit of work at the local movie studio. They needed a guitar riff, and I was recommended he sat in on the recording session. Struck me as a huge douche but I was trying to impress the girl.” Nick said. “I called Jack and said his biggest fan was just hammering to meet him and if he met her for lunch I would be much appreciative.”

“He was charming at first,” Judy said wistfully. “Nick warned me that he was a movie star and was used to playing roles. He played me pretty good. Thankfully it never made it very far. I think I knew Jack wasn’t right for me.” Judy said as she looked across the table at Nick their eyes locking.

“So what set all this in motion?” Lorie asked.

“I got shot,” Nick said.

“Yeah, we went to the hospital but found the room occupied by…” Lorie waved a paw a Judy. “She seemed pretty shook up, and we didn’t want to bother her, so we left. It was like she was standing guard over you daring anyone to bother you.”
Judy blushed and nodded. “I just wanted him to wake up. Stupid fox said…” She stopped as her emotions started to get the best of her.

Nick smiled and moved his chair over to her side and pulled her against him. “It was odd. I was laying on the ground bleeding out, and I could hear Charlie's gunfire and the bullets strike the cruiser. I knew Judy was in trouble, I knew I was hurt but not how bad. I pulled myself up with my back to the rear tire of his car drew my weapon and shot him. I honestly thought I was going to die there, so I told her not to date Jack that he wasn't good enough for her.”

“I...I asked him if he thought he was good enough for me and he said no but he would try.” Judy smiled. “He passed out from blood loss at that point. He had two shattered ribs one of them punctured a hole in his lung and a hole clear through the upper portion of his left shoulder.”

“I woke up in the hospital a week later.”

“I haven’t left his side since.”

Lorie was quiet for many minutes. “That’s quite the story. “You changed him.”

“I wouldn't say she changed me in so much as she made me want to be better. Made me want to be something other than a sly fox.” Nick said.

Lorie looked at him surprised and after a few minutes nodded. “So let me tell you about the time…..”

“You done, Slick?” Judy sighed as she finally crossed off the last IP Address of the list of ones that they needed to subpoena. She looked at the time on her desktop and shook her head.

“Yeah just rounding them all up to send over to Ruthy so they can be processed,” Nick said.

“So what do you want to do for dinner tonight?”

“Not sure anything, in particular, you're in the mood for?”

“Well, it's been a few days since my foxy live-in chef has made me anything tasty to eat…”

“I just made you pancakes yesterday Fluff.”

“Yeah but…..” She started.

“Is there something you would like to eat?”

Her ears lowered, and she looked over at him kind of shyly. “Perogies?”

Nick smiled and nodded as he thought about it. “I think I still have some made and frozen. I tend to pre-make them in large batches and freeze them, so they just need to be fried up.”

Judy nodded and smiled.

“Do you want to send these requests to Ruthy or should I?” He asked.
“Can you do it?”

“Sure, you save yours to the same place?” Nick asked.

Judy nodded and watched as her fox wrapped her their work. “So any more thought on getting a car?”

“Yeah, I was looking at one this morning….” Nick said as he typed away on his keyboard.

“Oh really?” Judy asked her ears perked up.

“Yeah, a Toyota Canary,” Nick answered as he finished sending the documents to Captain Rutherford.

Judy’s enthusiasm seemed to deflate a little bit. “Nick that's……”

“A responsible car that never seems to die?” Nick said as he looked over at her.

Judy shook her head as she couldn’t argue with his logic but the car was boring. "If you could put boring on wheels and drive it around that would be a Canary.” She thought to herself.

Nick observed her facial expression he could tell she was processing the boring car idea. As her ears lost some of the previous perkiness to them his smile slowly turned sly and mischievous. “Well, it's either that or a Challenger….” He added as he shut down his computer for the night.

Judy’s ears perked up a bit. “Really Nick?”

“Yeah you don't think I would want to ride around in a Canary do you?”

Judy shrugged and looked over at him. “Honestly Slick I wouldn't put it past you.”

Nick grinned at her.

“So are we going to go for a test drive or….” Judy started.

“Heh, I’m not sure which your more excited over, your… what did you call it oh right your engagement ring or this car…”

Judy blushed and smiled at him. “Well, the car would allow us to skip public transit so we can get home a little faster and might not have to leave so early…..”

Judy’s eyes widened as she watched him run his tongue over his teeth as he thought about it.

“I see the appeal. I just want a certain….. Style without seeming pretentious.” Nick attempted to explain.

“So you want fast loud and brash without spending enough to buy a small house?” She asked innocently.

“Exactly!” Nick exclaimed as his grin stretched across his face. “So I sent the subpoena requests to Ruthy you ready to head home?”
Judy nodded as she shut down her computer. “Yeah, I am.”

Nick smiled as he took a deep breath. “That's good I don’t think those suppressants is going to suppress much longer.”

Judy smiled at him as she stood up from her desk. “Well then Slick, I guess we better be on our way home then.”

Nick smiled at her. “Yes by all means Detective Fluff.”

Nick watched her tail as he followed her down the hall to the elevators. His mind lost in a sea of possibilities that the evening could hold for them.

Nick put the last of the dinner plates into the dishwasher. Judy had slipped off to the bedroom shortly after she finished her plate of perogies.

Nick smiled to himself as he took a sip of his bottle of water.

“She’s changing into something more “comfortable.” His inner voice spoke up.

Nick himself had changed just before dinner. Taking his bulletproof vest off was one of the few joys that only a few mammals would understand. He was dressed only in a t-shirt and a pair of shorts.

Nick grinned as his nose caught the scent of her. It was like a thick fog rolling down the hallway, enticing him, beckoning him to come and lose himself with is bunny.

“She is going to be the death of me.” He thought to himself.

“More than likely, but is there any other way you would want to go?” His inner voice asked.

Nick shook his head amusingly before he picked up his bottle of water and moved around the corner. The sight of her took his breath away. She was dressed simply but no less enticingly. She was clad in only a simple red pair of panties and the button up shirt she had worn to work that day. The shirt was left unbuttoned and hung open just giving him a slight peak at her breasts and the soft white fur of her stomach. His tail swung behind him lazily as he looked her over and his tongue snaked out and ran over the upper lip of his muzzle.

She looked up at him and cocked her hips to the left a bit putting her paw on the swell of her hip. She could almost feel the rake of his eyes over every inch of her exposed fur. She had always thought herself a bit plain. She had sisters and cousins that had unique fur patterns and better curves. She knew her athletic build wasn’t as attractive to bucks. But with the way Nick always looked at her she felt as if she was the most desirable rabbit on the planet.

“See something you like, Slick?” She asked seductively.

She watched as Nick took his time in finishing his bottle of water. The gulping of his throat his eyes never leaving her. His moving around the corner had caught her off guard as she had expected to have to walk into the kitchen entirely to get his attention. She knew her suppressants wore off during
dinner. A dinner she had asked for then retreated to their bedroom rather quickly. She knew she
could have come out in shorts and a t-shirt, but the game was still somewhat important to her.

She watched as he placed the cap back onto the now empty bottle of water and placed it on the
counter beside him. He didn’t move towards her as so much as he stalked with the innate grace of a
predator moving in for the kill. She stared at him her eyes slowly going wide he hadn’t said a word,
but the tent in his sorts and the intense look in his eyes spoke of everything she needed to know.

He stopped just inches from her and lifted her chin gently with the tip of a claw. Her heart hammered
away in her chest. He bent down and kissed her softly. Her paws came up and rested on his chest.
He slid his paw behind her head cradling it as the kiss deepened and their tongues entwined in her
small mouth. His other paw cradled her mid back, as his tail wrapped around the back of her thighs.
The smell of her excitement and heat threatened to overwhelm his senses.

They kissed for many minutes lost in each other. Lost in the want and the desire to be together. She
pulled back her amethyst eyes coming open looking up into his half-open emerald ones.

Pulling away from him she turned and started walking down the hall toward their bedroom. She
silently wished he was wearing a tie so she could have towed him along behind her as she paused a
few steps away and looked back over her right shoulder at him.

“You coming, Slick?” She asked her voice low and husky with want. She didn’t even wait for an
answer from him before she started to walk away once again. Her hips swayed back and forth
enticingly. Her small teardrop puff of a tail giving a slight shimmer as she felt his eyes on her once
again.

Nick followed her his eyes moving from the sway of her hips to the puff of her tail. He watched her
as she dropped the shirt on the floor it sliding down her arms to reveal the well-defined musculature
of her back. She was more well defined than obscenely built athletic and lean. Even in her own way
dangerous. Everything that a rabbit buck would find unattractive drew him like a moth to a flame.
Underneath of it all, she was loving, caring and gentle.

She stopped by the side of the bed. She beckoned him forward with one finger as a warm smile
brightened her face.

He stepped close to her taking her paw in his. He kissed the knuckles of her paw gently. She gasped
slightly as his paw moving from hers to her wrist pulling it behind her back and pulling her toward
his chest.

She looked up at him her eyes searching his. He regarded her his eyes warm loving but intense with
their want and desire for her. She blushed and closed her eyes from the insanity of his look her thighs
pressed together and shifted slightly trying to get stimulation. She could smell him, he didn’t have a
bad scent, he smelled like violets and male. It only served to make her want him all the more. Her
eyes opened once again looking back up at him.

Nick slowly knelt before her his eyes not leaving hers, his left paw keeping her right trapped behind
her back. He had no idea why he held her the way he did, his instincts wants and desires slowly
taking control as his tongue flicked out and lashed at the nipple topping her left breast.

Judy shuddered with the sudden contact her free paw moving to his shoulder for support. She gasped
as she watched his mouth open and closed almost entirely around her breast the feel of his teeth
pressing against her caused her to moan.
Nick’s eyes never left hers as his tongue continued to lash against the nipple of her trapped breast his right paw moved around her hips proving her additional support. He felt her shudder against him. He let go of the breast slowly before turning his attention to her right.

Judy moaned his name and closed her eyes as she felt his mouth close around her right breast. His teeth pressed just hard enough pinch but not break the skin. His tongue lashed almost violently at her nipple. Her paw moved from his shoulder to his neck as she shuddered with the pleasure that coursed through her body. Her eyes opened once again as his tongue slowed its assault on her nipple.

Judy’s eyes slowly opened as she looked down at him once again. His tongue lazily flicked against her nipple. Her eyes went wide as she felt his claws of his right paw extend and slowly rake through the fur of her hips and slowly up her back. She looked down at him as he let go of her breast and kissed her softly between them.

Nick’s eyes stared up into hers. His right paw held her left steadily behind her back as his right moved up her back. He squeezed her neck once before his paw kept moving up over the back of her head the only actual contact between it and her was the blunted tips of his claws.

Her eyes went wide as she felt him gather both of her long sensitive ears in his paw. She moaned softly as he squeezed firmly and slowly pulled them back and down forcing her to look up at the ceiling slowly. Her eyes closed as her free paw moved from behind his head to his shoulder and squeezed softly as his nose moved from between her breasts to her exposed throat.

Nick could smell her excitement combined with her heat. Not a word was spoken between the two she trusted him not to hurt her, and he trusted her to tell him if he goes too far. His sensitive ears could hear the pounding of her heart. All of his senses were trained on her as he softly kissed the base of her throat.

Judy moaned as she felt his soft kisses from the base of her throat to her jawline and back down again. She trembled in his grasp but didn’t fight him. She wanted this she wanted to feel this helpless to feel the sharp parts of him that marked them as different.

Nick slowly parted his jaws and pressed his tongue against the artery that ran along the left paw side of her throat. He could feel the strong but quick heartbeat underneath the layers of fur and skin.

Judy moaned softly as she felt him trace the artery with his tongue. Then her eyes shot open as she felt him close his jaws around her throat much in the same way he did in the natural history museum but more firm holding her there.

Nick’s left paw let go of her ears and slowly moved back down her body. His paw moved quickly down to her hip before sneaking around between them. He felt her shift her feet expectantly his middle finger slid slowly over her panty covered sex. He was amazed at the wetness that he found.

Judy groaned and pressed her hips down as best as she could. Her eyes fluttered as his tongue bathed the soft fur of her neck as her free paw held onto his shoulder as her breathing became faster.

He pressed his finger harder against her sex and growled at her. Her eyes flew open as his growl rumbled through her throat and into her body, it was low dangerous and rolling. Her knees gave out, and he guided her to the floor beside their bed his teeth never leaving the sides of her throat, but he did let go of her paw to slow her decent with his right paw.
“Nick….please I need…” She moaned as her orgasm subsided. He slowly let go of her neck and worked his jaw from side to side. He looked down into her eyes as he paws came up and pulled him down into a deep passionate kiss, her tongue pushed its way into his mouth as she ground her hips against his finger still pressed against her sex.

She pulled back and looked up at him her eyes full of love, want and desire. He looked down into hers before he slipped his left paw under her legs and the right under her back and lifted her up onto the bed.

She watched as he quickly shed his t-shirt and shorts. She smiled seeing her fox shed his clothes her eyes drawn down inexplicably to his foxhood that was starting to peak from its sheath. She lifted her hips and quickly shed her panties looking him in the eye as she tossed them to the floor. She rolled over onto her stomach and looked back over her shoulder at her fox as she slid her knees under her lifting her hips into the air.

Nick’s eyes went wide as she lifted her hips into the air and shook her tail at him. His paws moved over the curve of her rear, his thumbs traveled slowly up the cleft teasingly.

“Nick... I...I need…” Judy started.

She watched as he loomed over her his left paw leaving her ass to prop himself up behind her as he bent down to whisper darkly into her ear. “I know what you need, Fluff.”

“Then please…” She started and moaned as soon as she felt him run the head of his foxhood along her wet slit.

“Please what?” He said teasingly.

“GIve it…” She started. Her eyes rolled shut as she felt him slowly slide the length of his hard cock into her. “Yesss.” She hissed.

Even after two months of being together, he was still amazed at her ability to take him fully. The angle into her was awkward, and he groaned softly as she pressed back until he was almost knot deep into her. He started to thrust in and out of her regardless, enjoying the way she felt as she slid along his length.

Judy arched her back and pressed back and up against her fox. She moaned with each thrust into her body. Her paws gripped large pawfuls of the blanket covering the bed. “More please…..” She begged of him.

Nick stopped his thrusting into her long enough to straighten up. He gripped her hips with both paws and lifted her slightly from the bed. He felt her straighten her legs a bit and brace her arms a little more against their bed. Her eyes opened as she looked back over her shoulder once again. The smoldering desire he saw in them about drove him wild as he started to thrust into her once again. His entire length sunk violently into his bunny with each thrust his knot slammed against her sex.

Her paws gripped the blanket as he pounded his way into her body. She groaned with each of his thrusts into her. She pushed back with her arms meeting him thrust for thrust. “Please…”She whimpered. His paws tightened on her hips as he pulled her back into each thrust. His knot was pressing more and more into her with each thrust. “Yesss…” She hissed as his knot finally slammed home into her body her eyes closed as her body shook with the pleasure of her orgasm.
His head rolled forward as he groaned out his release. The squeezing of her body in time with each jet of his hot seed into her. His breathing hard and labored his fingertips pressing hard into her hips holding her in place.

She could feel small thrusts of his hips and the warmth of his seed in her. She smiled and moaned softly with each of his small thrusts her head lowered to the bed between her arms.

His eyes slowly opened and looked down at her. He slowly and carefully lowered them to the bed at first onto her stomach then he rolled them to the side as he pulled her back against his chest his leg curled up to cradle her hip.

Judy slowly tilted her head back and pressed soft kisses along the underside of his muzzle. “That was great, Slick.” She said softly.

His arms tightened a little around her in response, and he pressed a kiss between her ears.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Hours later, Judy laid on Nick’s chest her body convulsing with aftershocks of another round. Her small paws gripped the fur on his chest. Her ears lay limp one down her back the other flopped over covering one eye. His paws rested on her back his head back as his chest heaved with each breath.

“Gods, Fluff, you are going to be the death of me. Glorious, glorious death.” He said dramatically.

She smiled not really having the energy for banter. “I love you, Nick.”

He cocked his head to the side and looked down at his bunny. “I love you too Judy.” He replied simply.

The use of her name sent butterflies down her stomach every time he did it. He saved it for special times not that she minded his nicknames for her.

She snuggled into his chest even more as she felt his tail drape along her back. They both knew they were going to need to rewash the bedding tomorrow, but neither would complain. She loved him, she was happy, and she was engaged.

Her eyes flew open as she realized she hadn’t called her mom to tell her.

Nick felt the sudden jolt that ran through her. “What's wrong?” He asked quietly.

“I need to call mom and tell her….” She started, her ears suddenly standing upright.

“Not tonight, Fluff.”

“But…”

“It is just before one AM.” He told her glancing at the alarm clock on the nightstand.

“Oh…” Her ears slowly lowered back down. She listened to his heart beat slow and steady, she snuggled against him as his tail settled once again across her back.
“You can call her in the morning,” Nick said softly.

Judy nodded and yawned softly as her eyes slid closed. “I love you…” She said quietly.

“I love you too. Good night.”

“Good night,” She mumbled softly.
I'm quite shocked at the response to Episode 7. It gained almost 700 hits in the two weeks between it and Episode 8.

Comments: 57
Kudos: 78
Bookmarks: 19
Hits: 3717

“Hear the innocent voices scream
As their tormentors laugh through all of it
No forgiveness from all I've seen
The degradation I cannot forget
So sleep soundly in your beds tonight
For judgment falls upon you at first light”
The Vengeful One ~ Disturbed

Judy stared down at her phone, she had been looking at it for the better part of an hour. She had gotten up fixed her morning cup of tea and proceeded to try to come up with the perfect way to tell her mother that she was now engaged.

“Knocked out a rhino, taken down not one but two mayors, first rabbit police officer, and detective.” She thought to herself.

“Yet afraid to tell your own parents your engaged.” Answered her conscience. “Oddly enough it feels like it would have been easier to tell my parents that I wanted to be a police officer than tell them I'm marrying a fox.”

Judy sighed as she unlocked the device. She looked down the hall toward the bedroom she shared with her fox wistfully. “I just want to crawl back into bed with said fox.” She thought to herself.

“But it's not really mom whos reaction I'm afraid of....”

“It's dads,” Judy admitted to herself.

She looked down the hall once more thinking of crawling back into the center of the warm auburn and creme cocoon waiting for her in the middle of the bed. She shook her head before finally opening her contacts list and pressing the one for her mom's cell phone.
Judy held her phone down in front of her as the familiar ringtone of muzzle time played.

“Hey, Bun is everything ok?” Bonnie asked as the call connected.

“Yeah, mom everything is great. How are you and dad?”

“Your dad and older brothers are out in the western field today getting the harvest done. How is Nick?” Her mom asked.
Judy sighed in relief least she wouldn't have to deal with her father right away.

“Nick is great, and that's kind of the reason I called…” Judy said shyly her ears were falling down her head.

“Oh don't tell me you two are having problems....” Her mother starts.

“Oh, no, no, no nothing like that mom everything is more than great between Nick and I.”

“That’s good Bun, I haven’t seen you as happy as you are with that fox. Your father will come around I promise you…”

“How can you tell that I'm happier?” Judy asked.

“Well you smile a lot more, and well bunny doe’s have this look about them when they choose their mates…” Bonnie explained.

“I did get my heat,” Judy admitted.

“Really?”

“Yeah…”

“Oh, Jude….” Bonnie smiled brightly into the phone. Bonnie's eyes softened as a small smile started to cross her face.

“You know that Vulpine culture is a bit different than ours right?”

“Well, of course, I don’t see how that would be any major obstacle to overcome.” Her mother started. “Even hares culture is a bit different than our own.”

Judy nodded. “Well, Nick and I marked each other the night before last…”

“That’s nice that you two are already sharing that level of commitment…”

“Well to Vulpes it’s more than just a promise…” Judy started.

“Really?” Bonnie asked as she started to look concerned.

“Yeah well…” Judy looked away as she thought of how to tell her mother.

“What happened?” Bonnie asked.
“I’m… we are… engaged.” Judy answered after a few minutes.

“Like to be married?” Judy winced a bit at the seriousness of her mother’s tone.

“Yes.”

“Surely he wouldn't hold you to that if you didn’t know…” Bonnie started. Her smile began to fade.

“Mom, its ok… I really want this.” Judy said.

“Then that's wonderful, Bun!” Her mother exclaimed. “Let me see the ring!”

“I don’t have one yet,” Judy huffed. “Vulpine culture doesn’t have them.”

“What then how do they tell who is promised to who?”

“Scent marks,” Judy said. “Their sense of smell is pretty high up there almost as good as a wolfs.”

Bonnie nodded. “Well that explains things, you said you don't have one yet though.”

“Nick said we can go pick one out together and that he needs to get his mothers wedding band resized for my paw.”

“Really?”

Judy smiled and nodded. “Yeah, evidently his mother left instructions for what was to be done with it in her will, and said it was to go onto the paw of the love of his life.”

“Really Jude? The love of his life?”

Judy nodded. “That's what he said.”

“To be honest, I had thought you were introducing us to your boyfriend at his graduation,” Bonnie admitted. “But when you brought Jack home I suddenly had hopes for grand kits.”

“Mom you have dozens of grand kits.”

“That I do, but I won’t have any from you,” Bonnie said disappointedly.

“Mom why is that important to you?” Judy asked.

Bonnie looked thoughtful for a moment. “Jude your the only one of all my kits that has my eyes.”

Judy's ears lowered once again. “Well, Nick said that medical science isn’t sure if we couldn’t have kits…” Judy started.

“Really?” Bonnie asked. “But you are so different, he's a predator and your prey.”

“From my understanding, we may have started that way, but the more the all have slowly evolved the closer we are to one and another.” Judy tried to explain.

“So the possibility is there?”
“Wouldn’t fully rule it out,” Judy said as she looked down the hall to the bedroom that contained her sleeping fox.

“So when’s the wedding?”

“We are thinking spring…” Judy answered.

“Ohhh you know how out of control Bunny weddings get, is he prepared for that?”

“I don’t think so, Vulpine weddings from what he was telling me are vastly simpler affairs.” Judy looked back at the image of her mother. “Even if we have a traditional bunny wedding, his side of the family is… Sparse.”

“Yes, you said he only has some close family friends and a cousin?” Bonnie asked.

“Yeah..” Judy answered hesitantly.

“Well if you do a Vulpine wedding will there still be an open bar for your father to drink half of and make a fool of himself?

“I doubt it.”

“Hmmm, that might be the way to go then,” Bonnie answered. Judy could tell from the tone of her mother's voice that she was fed up with her father's antics at weddings.

“You know springtime is when…”

“Yes, I know the significance of spring to lagomorphs,” Judy answered as she watched her mother's ears fall down her back. “Mom, what's wrong?”

“I am happy for you and Nick dear… It's just….” Her mother started.

“Dad.”

Bonnie nodded and started to look thoughtful.

“I made a bet with Nick that I would do the dishes for a month if I have to arrest dad for using a taser against him,” Judy explained.

Bonnie nodded. “Maybe that would be for the best.” She said after a few minutes.

“What?!? Mom you can't mean that I mean its dad the bunny that offered me a fox taser in front of my fox partner. But still.”

“Well it's just maybe a night or two in jail would serve to shove a mirror in your father's face about his speciest ways.”

Judy nodded. “Maybe….”

“Trust me on this Bun, it's going to take something pretty drastic to change your father's ways. Either you and your fox giving us grand kits or a night or two in jail. But he's not going to just change on
his own.”

She looked at the time at the top of her phone. “Sweet cheese and crackers mom I have to go, It's past time to get my fox up out of bed and we are going to have a long day today.”

“Ok, Bun you take care and be careful you leave your father to me.”

“Ok, Mom love you bye.”

“Love you to Bun,” Bonnie said just before hanging up.

Judy moved into the kitchen and started the coffee pot brewing, before heading back down the hall toward their bedroom. Her ears perked up as the sound of the shower running and sighed in relief when she saw the empty bed.

She walked back down the hall smiling as she climbed back up onto the step stool to watch his coffee pot fill. Her ears perked up at the sound of his footfalls as he came down the hall.

Nicks pants barely clung to his hips as he tossed his bulletproof vest onto the nearby couch and draped his shirt over the back. His white undershirt clung to his chest.

She smiled at him her eyes traveling from his face down his chest to his opened pants. “Good morning, Slick.”

“Morning, Fluff, have a good talk with your family?” Nick asked as he leaned against the kitchen counter.

“Yeah…”

“How did they take it?”

“Mom took it rather well…” Judy answered.

“And your father?” Nick asked as he moved past his bunny into the kitchen.

“He doesn’t know yet…”

Nick nodded. “But your mother was ok with it?”

Judy smiled brightly and nodded. “Mom seems oddly supportive.”

“I think she just wants you to be happy,” Nick said as he picked up his mug. “Not having tea this morning?”

“I had it before I called mom….”

“How long have you been up?”

“Since just after four…” Judy answered.

“That's not much sleep Fluff…”
“I know, I just couldn't sleep anymore.”

“Well if we need to we’ll pour some more tea into you this afternoon. Especially if we have to serve warrants.”

“You think the information will turn around that fast?”

“I do. Remember what Buffalo Butt told us? Half the City’s leadership is breathing down his tail.”

Judy nodded.

“I’m betting the DA is just waiting for the warrant paperwork and already has a judge lined out to approve it all.”

Judy nodded. “I just hope we find more kits alive.”

Nick nodded as he poured his cup of coffee and added his blueberry creamer. “I hope so as well.”

“Do you think we will?” Judy asked as she looked up at her fox.

Nick shrugged and took a sip of his coffee. “I suppose it depends on the purpose that they were bought.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well…” Nick started as he struggled to figure out a way to explain. “If they were bought as strait slave labor. Then there is a chance they could be. Even if they were bought for bedroom purposes, there is a good chance they could be.”

Judy nodded. “How many do you think was bought by predators?”

Nick looked thoughtful. “I’m willing to say about half.”

Judy nodded. “Would you have….”

“No.” Nick cut her off sharply. “Never, even if I had the money I would never buy another mammal like that.”

Judy nodded. “There was a time mammals were not so….” She waved a paw. “Morally just.”

Nick nodded as he sat his coffee cup down on the counter and started slipping on his vest.

Judy watched him. “Do you think your family ever owned a slave?”

Probably not, Fluff,” Nick answered as he tightened the straps of the vest. “It took a decent amount of wealth to own, house and fed another mammal, even if you only do the bare minimum to keep them alive, and that isn’t going to make them productive.”

Judy nodded and looked thoughtful for a few minutes. “Rabbit families go back a long time. My families farm has been in the family for generations. Even back to the point of us being more clans than families.”
Nick listened to her as she explained. “Are you trying to tell me your family had slaves, Fluff?”

Judy nodded and looked down.

Nick shrugged. “Doesn’t matter.”

“Nick how can you say…”

“You are not them, you didn’t do it hell I'm betting no mammal alive has been a slave to your family.”

Judy nodded. “But still…”

“Let me ask you this Fluff. If your dad tases me when we meet should I be angry with him or you?”

“Him, I didn’t….”

“Of course not. The principal is the same though. Your ancestors may have had slaves hell they may have had a fox for a slave doesn’t matter. No one should be angry with you for the actions of a mammal that has been dead and gone for over a hundred years.”

Judy nodded.

“And we have enough to worry about without digging up the sins of our ancestors,” Nick said as he slipped on his shirt and started buttoning it up.

“Like the Leaperson Kits….”

“Exactly.”

Nick’s tail wrapped itself around the back of Judy’s thighs as they walked from the bus stop to the Precinct One building. He sipped quietly on the travel mug of coffee he carried. His eyes hidden by his mirrored aviator sunglasses watched the various mammals on the street.

Most ignored the fox and the bunny as they walked down the street. A few looked on to the pair in open amusement, and even fewer still looked on them in open disgust.

Nick sipped his coffee, and his bunny talked energetically of farm fields and family. He only half listened to his partner. Years on the streets told him something was off, but he couldn’t quite yet put his paw on what. His eyes darted around taking in what he could see without moving his head. His ears did a slow rotation around listening for anything that didn’t belong on the street.

He frowned at his coffee cup as he emptied its contents. He would need to refill it from the break room but the coffee that Clawhauser made, not to mention the creamer, was a poor imitation of what coffee should be.

“Maybe I can get a mini fridge for our office and keep my own creamer there.” Nick thought to himself. The unsettling feeling had not left since they got off of the bus.

“I think you would love them, Nick!” Judy said excitedly.
“I’m sure I will, Carrots.”

*What did she say? Somthing about pies I think. I like pies....He thought to himself.*

“Hard to believe that the best pies in the tri burrows area are made by the same mammal that was my childhood bully,” Judy said shaking her head.

“Wait, what? Are you telling me Super Bunny was bullied and now he bakes pies? Just how bad did you beat this poor bunny Carrots?” Nick asked.

Judy’s ears fell down her back. “It wasn’t a bunny.” She said as she looked away.

Nick looked down at her. “A sheep then?”

Judy shook her head again. “No, not a sheep.”

“Must have been that Bobby Catmull that you told me you had a brief crush on….” Nick teased.

“No, his name is Gideon Gray, and Bobby was never a bully.”

“Now is this the same bully that gave you the lead on the Nighthowlers?” Nick asked.

“Yeah, we both were young and stupid…” Judy started.

“We all were at one point, Fluff.” Nick interrupted. “Some don’t ever fully grow out of it.”

Judy nodded. “I was nine, and it was the Carrot Day festival…”

“What you bunnies have a…” Nick chuckled. “Of course you have a carrot festival. We should go sometime, it would be like going to a festival just for you Carrots.”

Judy giggled. “You would go with me?” She asked as she looked up at him and had trouble imagining him in the country.

“Of course I would,” Nick sounded a little offended that she thought he wouldn’t go. “Now you were telling me about the time you was nine.”

“Well, a few friends and I put on a play about what we wanted to be when we grew up. I hadn’t worked up the nerve yet to tell my parents that I wanted to be a police officer and move to the city, so I saw the play as the way I would do it.”

“Did you have one of those cute little pretend police officer hats?” Nick asked.

Judy nodded. “Badge and all.” She sighed as she remembered. “It was after the play I must have given my parents a heart attack. As they were telling me that I needed to give up on my dream of being the first rabbit police officer and that I should just settle.”

“Wait, your parents actively tried to crush your dream?”

Judy nodded.
“And you still have contact with them, after all, you went through?” Nick asked.

“Well, they are my mom and dad.” She answered.

Nick nodded at that. “Your a bigger mammal than I am.”

“I’m not so sure, Slick, you forgave me after all.”

Nick looked thoughtful and nodded.

“Anyway, I saw Gideon and his friend Travis sneak after some of my friends.”

“Let me guess you went and beat Gideon so bad he became a baker?”

“I wouldn’t say that. When I got there, he had already stolen my friend's tickets. I told him to give them back, and he pushed me down. He stood over me and mocked me. I thought this is it this is where I prove to my parents that I can be a cop. So I kicked him square in the muzzle.”

They had stopped in the middle of the sidewalk the foot traffic moved around them as Nick looked down at his bunny.

“He clawed my face and held me down in the dirt and told me to remember this day every time I ever thought I would be more than a carrot farming dumb bunny. He didn’t watch my paws so while he held me down, I swiped my friend's tickets back.”

“Where did he claw you?” Nick asked softly.

Judy brushed her thumb across her left cheek.

Nick took off his sunglasses and brushed his thumb along her left cheek. He could feel the faint scars under her fur now that he knew what to feel for them. He looked into her eyes. It seemed time like most things had healed them well.

“What was his species?” Nick asked after a few moments.

Judy looked up at him. “Gideon Grey is a red fox.”

Nick looked shocked for a moment. “Well, that explains somethings.”

Judy smiled sadly. “I love you, Nick.” She said just before she wrapped her arms around his waist.

Nick smiled down at her warmly and warped his arms around her. “Awe Carrots, this doesn’t change anything between us.”

Judy nodded. “He went through years of therapy afterward the state got involved, and he ended up turning to baking to help center himself.”

Nick smiled and softly stroked her ears.

“You are not mad?”

“Why would I be?” Nick asked as he thought about it. “In a way, I owe Mr. Grey a debt.”
“Well, he clawed me.”

“He gave you the information about Nighthowlers that sent you back to me,” Nick explained. “In his own way, Gideon gave me something more precious than I can ever hope to repay.”

Judy looked up at him her eyes going a little glossy.

“Now, no need for tears, Fluff.” Nick looked back up and down the sidewalk as the strange feeling of being watched subsides.

“Something wrong Nick?” Judy asked.

“Ever since we got off the bus I felt like we were being watched,” Nick explained.

Judy nodded and looked down the street from where her head was pressed into Nicks lower chest. “I don't see anything.”

“Yeah, me either the feeling has passed through.”

Judy pulled back from him and looked up. “Come on we need to get to work.”

“Wilde! Hopps!” Came the bellow from Captain Rutherford’s office as they walked into the detective's wing of Precinct One.

Nick pinned his ears back as Judy looked up at him accusingly. Nick looked down at her bewildered as she was and shrugged as if to say I didn't do it. They turned around and headed for the large bear's office.

“Get in here.” Captain Rutherford said gruffly as they approached his door.

“Good morning Captain…” Judy greeted as they entered the office.

“Morning Hopps, close the door, Wilde.” Captain Rutherford said his voice gruff.

Nick pushed the door shut then joined Judy on the chair meant for much larger mammals in front of the Captains desk. His tail wrapped around Judy’s waist and the tip of it rested in her lap.

Captain Rutherford looked over his pair of newest detectives. He watched as the rabbit's paws stroked the foxes tail lovingly. He sighed the sound sounding like a pair of great leathery bellows. “This arrived for you two this morning from the District Attorney's office.” He started to explain as he picked up a thick folder and handed it over to Judy.

Judy opened it and saw it contained search and arrest warrants.

“They must have had a judge in the office half the night to push these though as fast as they did,” Rutherford said. “That being said be careful and coordinate your arrests with dispatch. Hopps, I got word from the armory this morning they would like you to go down and try out a new weapon they hope will work in your size.”
Judy nodded and started to slide out of the chair with Nick.

“Miss Hopps if you would stay for a moment. Wilde, you are dismissed.” Rutherford said.

Nick hesitated for a moment at the door.

“Wilde get out.” Captain Rutherford ordered.

“Captain Rutherford I assure you whatever you have to say to me you can say it in front of my partner.” Judy started.

“Not this I can’t.”

Judy nodded. “Go on Nick it’ll be fine.”

Nick nodded and walked out of the office shutting the door behind him.

Judy and Captain Rutherford looked at each other for a few minutes.

“What is this about Captain?” Judy asked breaking the silence first.

“Miss Hopps there is no easy way for me to ask this, so I will be blunt. Do you feel safe with Detective Wilde?”

“I trust Nick with my life Captain…” Her face was full of confusion.

“That’s not what I meant Miss Hopps, are you being coerced into your relationship with him?”

Judy’s face went blank as she stared at the Captain. “I...I’m...what?”

“Is Nicholas Wilde forcing you into a relationship?”

Judy’s eyes hardened as she stared at the large bear. He swallowed nervously.

“No Captain, Nick isn’t forcing me to do anything. Now may I ask what brought this on?” Judy asked her voice just as hard as her glare.

“We received an anonymous tip…..” The bear sighed as he brought up the file on his computer.

Judy stomped out of the Captain's office, the door banging loudly against the wall. She stomped down the row of offices until she got to the one. She shared with her fox

Nick turned when he heard her enter the office. He paused as he saw the barely controlled rage in his bunnies features. He watched her silently as she pushed the door shut.

Judy looked at the door for a second before she locked it as well. The sound of the lock sound both final and comforting. She turned and regarded her fox as she walked toward him her features softening slightly as he turned his chair to face her.
Nick knew something was wrong, she was angry he hadn’t seen her this angry ever. This was more of the anger one felt when something was trying to tear your family apart.

“Fluff, what…” Nick started as she climbed up into his lap, his arms and tail went around her as she curled against his chest. He looked down amazed at how quickly the anger seemed to melt off her.

“I wish I never made that stupid bet,” Judy said in a voice just above a whisper.

Nick nodded. He didn't need to know which bet she spoke of.

“What happened?” He asked his paw softly stroking her ears.

Judy’s paws gripped the fluffy end of his tail. “He called in an anonymous tip. Saying I was being forced into a relationship with you by you.” She explained.

Nick nodded. “Well, that explains why Ruthy wanted to talk to you alone. I hope you weren't too hard on that old bear.”

Judy shook her head. “He let me listen to the tip. That's how I know it was Jack that called it in and not my father. I don’t think my dad is that petty though.”

Nick nodded as he listened to her.

“Why can’t Jack just let me go?” Judy asked. “We didn’t even have all that much time together as he was busy shooting that movie. I took him home more or less to get my parents off of my tail about needing someone other than you in my life.”

Nick chuckled at that. “Yet here we are.”

Judy nodded. “I think if I was honest with myself we could have avoided this entire situation. I just wanted you to fall flat just once. That boast of you, knowing everyone not quite to be true…”

Nick kissed her softly between the ears. “I have had a long time in this city, Carrots, and in my last line of work you make contacts almost easier than changing shirts.”

Judy nodded and rested her head against his chest. She sighed it wasn't the same as his vest blocked the firm fluffiness that was his chest. His arms were still comforting though.

“As to why Jack can't let you go….” Nick looked down at her. “Your the one that got away, the mammal that the great actor Jack Savage can’t claim as a notch on his bedpost and to someone as ego-driven as Jack…..”

Judy nodded starting to understand. “It’s like I slapped him in the face.”

Nick nodded. “We will deal with him.”

“How?”

“Well, we can always get a restraining order against him.”

“Wouldn’t really stop him from calling in anonymous tips though…”
“No but I’m fairly sure you just set Ruthy straight, and Buffalo Butt wouldn't put any stock in it either.”

“So we outlast him?”

“In most cases unless he wants to do something idiotic.”

They fell silent for many minutes Nicks paw softly stroking down her ears and back.

Judy sighed. “I love you, Nick.”

“I love you too Judy.” He answered with all sincerity.

Nick studied the weapon that the armorer handed over to his partner. For the most part, it looked like a nine-millimeter slide mated to a lower designed to fit her paws with a buttstock and a foregrip. A small semi-automatic rifle for a small mammal based on a pistol for a more massive mammal. Honestly, the weapon looked like it fell out of a Jack Savage movie.

Nick shook his head as he saw a design flaw with the weapon from the start.

“It looks nice, but I think it was designed by a large mammal for a smaller one,” Nick said at last.

“Don’t discount it out of the box, Slick, I haven’t even fired it yet.”

“I wouldn’t be the perfect partner if I let you fire that weapon Fluff.”

“But..” She started.

“Get a proper cheek weld and sight picture,” Nick told her.

Judy did as she was asked sighting the weapon toward the wall her cheek pressed against the buttstock of the firearm. Her right paw on the pistol grip her left wrapped tightly around the foregrip.

Nick took ahold of the slide and started to push it back toward her face along its range of motion and stopped when it pressed into her nose. Her eyes went wide as he demonstrated the flaw he saw in the weapon.

“The problem is the slide is made from a large mammals weapon it's a good cost savings idea, but the problem is when the weapon is fired it will cycle back into the users face. In this case the face of my mate.”

Nick released the slide for it to snap back forward with a metallic clack as Judy lowered the weapon and looked at it again.

“So what would you have done differently, Nick?”

Nick looked at the armorer. “It needs an upper and bolt carrier group like the AR variant I carry on raids. This would make the mechanism internal, so it doesn't smash in the users face.”
He looked thoughtful for a moment and pulled out his phone and taped away at it. After a few moments, he pulled up a website. “Colt makes an AR variant in nine millimeter. Now if they make it in a small enough form factor for a small mammal to use they don’t say.”

The elephant armorer looked down at him a grizzled veteran of the police force and nodded. “We will send this one back to the firm that made it for us with your recommendations.”

Nick nodded and started to turn to head out of the armory. He paused before looking down at her. “You bring your chest plate today?”

Judy nodded. “I keep it in the locker room, you think I’m going to need it?”

“Better to be safe than sorry.” He said as he turned around. “Hey, Frank?”

The elephant armorer turned around and looked back down at the vulpine detective.

“Can I get my rifle?”

“You need the Chief’s authorization for that.”

Nick nodded and turned back to the door.

“How bad do you think this is going to get?” Judy asked.

“We are dealing with Mammals that have purchased kits, Fluff, I won’t be surprised if we are given SWAT assistance after this goes south the first time.”

Judy nodded as they headed for the elevators.

Nick leaned against the back wall of the elevator his paws stuffed into his pockets.

Judy watched him his body was relaxed, but she could see a hard look in his eyes.

“He’s not just nervous, he’s scared.” Her inner voice spoke up.

“We are about to knock on the doors of some potentially dangerous mammals.” She told herself.

“It’s not for himself that he fears for…… it’s you.”

Judy fought to keep her ears up as the realization struck her.

“Some of those are oddly the same questions I have for you. Minus your retirement plan and where would we live. Add in how long do you want to do this police thing.” She heard Nicks voice from the day before.

“So how long do you want to do this?” Her inner voice asked.

Judy stared at her fox through the reflection in the elevator door.

“He didn’t say we had to stop……”

“He’s thirty-three and has already been shot once.”
She observed his body language. His ears were high on his head and faced forward. His paws stuffed in his pockets forced the suit jacket higher up on his hips giving him a more relaxed air. Her eyes stopped as they traveled up his body to his.

A light blush crept up her ears as she came to the realization that he had been watching her eyes all along.

“Like what you see, Fluff?” Nick asked her with an air of a mammal that already knew the answer to the question.

“I’m not sure Slick.” She started to answer and paused as a smile crept across her face. “So far all I see is a scruffy looking fox.”

“Lucky me then.” He answered her, his eyes half-lidded and a smug smile crept across his face.

“Only you would think looking scruffy is lucky.”

“Yeah well you spent the last few minutes checking out the scruffy looking fox,” He bent forward and whispered into her ear. “Besides I know this scruffy looking fox happens to have your number.”

The elevator dinged as the doors opened to the ground floor of the precinct one building and he walked around her and out of it. The tip of his tail flicked her nose as he walked past.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Fifteen minutes later they found themselves in their assigned ZPD car. Nick in the passenger seat Judy in the driver seat.

“Just like old times, right Fluff?”

“Old times we were in this car two nights ago….” Judy reminded him.

Nick shrugged, “First address is seven one five, Charlson Ave, it’s here in Savan Central.” Nick said.

Judy nodded as she entered the address into the cars GPS system and they set off.

Nick pulled out his sunglasses and put them on as he looked out the passenger side window of the car as they quietly passed by the city scenery.

Nick looked over at his partner as he pulled out his cell phone and started to scroll through the long list of contacts. He pressed the one for his cousin Skye and hoped she wasn’t busy at the time.

Nick: Sky how is my favorite cousin?

Skye: I’m the only cousin you have that will have anything to do with you remotely……..

Nick: See, and that is what makes you my favorite! Now how is your bunny?

Skye: I don't have a bunny...
Nick: That's odd I guess Jack didn't pass my message onto you when I ran into him outside of my bunny’s old apartment.

Skye: What message?

Nick: We have more in common these days than you know.

Skye: Doesn’t mean I’m seeing Jack.

Nick: Well then there is another vixen that he is sleeping with that smells oddly just like you and has a love of cherries.

Nick sat his phone down for a moment his smug smile stretched across his face.

“Nick what's going on..” Judy started to ask as his phone began to ring.

Nick looked at his phone, and his smug grin went wider as he pressed the answer call button.

“Hello, Skye, it's been a while since we talked.”

“Don’t give me that, just what are you trying to pull this time?”

“Pull? Me? Skye I’m minorly offended, I’ve turned over a new leaf this last year unless you haven’t been paying attention to the news.” Nick said innocently.

“Well yes dad thinks your scamming the city,” Sky told him.

“Hmmm, remind me not to invite him to the wedding then,” Nick said offhandedly.

“Wedding? Are you getting married, Nick? Who did you con into that?” Skye asked skeptically.

“Well, you know my partner on the force?” Nick asked.

“Yes that sweet young bunny, too bad she didn't stick around.”

“Yes well we are engaged,” Nick told her.

“You better not be pulling my leg.”

“Nope wouldn’t dream of it, at least not about this, seems dear cousin we have much more in common these days other than living in the city,” Nick said as he watched the city pass by.

“Meaning?”

“Well you know, we ran into Jack a few weeks ago outside my intended’s old apartment building.”

“Yes, you said that.”

“Honestly Skye? Cherry perfume to attempt to cover fox musk?”

Nick heard the vixen giggle at the other end of the phone.
“Well, it does certainly make him smell more scrumptious.”

“I’m sure it does.”

“So was you in on him trying to pull her into a three-way with you and him?” Nick asked.

“No that wasn’t my idea, Jack said that the city would never accept him and me as a couple and he needed a public partner,” Skye explained.

“Yes, I know your family has always been far more accepting of polygamy.”

“Yes well, dad and my mothers always have gotten along rather well.”

“I’m sure they have.”

“Well, I’m sure you haven’t contacted me over an incident that happened weeks ago, Nick.”

“Yes, you are quite right. It would seem your bunny has an attachment issue with mine…”

“What did he do…”

“He left a quote-unquote anonymous tip that I’m forcing Judy into a relationship with me.”

“Well, are you?”

“No.”

“Then I don't see the problem.”

“He's trying to stir up trouble for her at work, Skye.”

“Oh…”

“Now, I’m hoping we can handle this like reasonable adults. I tell you, you tell him to back off and that she's gone. Otherwise, we start with court paperwork, and if that doesn't work, then I will provoke den laws.”

“You couldn't…”

“She's been living in my den for close to three months now, Skye.”

“I see.”

“No, no I don't think you quite do. If Jack doesn't stop trying to make Judy’s life harder than it needs to be. Then I will make sure it stops.” Nick said low and threatening.

The silence stretched out between the two foxes. Judy’s ears were folded down her back as she concentrated on driving the car. She had been paying close attention to the conversation between the two vulpes.

“Congratulations Nick seems father was quite wrong about you. You have changed.”
“Thank you, Skye.”

“I’ll talk to Jack, if you are that ready to defend her then he should know in order to make an informed decision of his own. Will I be invited?”

“Of course Skye, but it might not include a plus one, I’m sure you will understand.”

“Of course. We should talk more often.”

“We should like I said we have more in common these days.” Nick could see the car pulling over. “Well Skye it’s been fun, but duty calls.”

“Be safe Nick.”

Judy looked over at her fox, the smug expression on his face spoke almost all she needed to know about his actions.

“So you called his girlfriend eh, Slick?”

“Did I call Skye? Yes, yes I did.” He said smugly.

“Why?”

“Easy, Fluff, if he can make your life miserable well turnabout is fair play.” Nick grinned. “Plus letting my cousin know her bunny is playing with fire.”

“Den laws really?”

“Would I provoke a rarely used subset of laws mostly geared toward predators and their mates to protect you? Yes, yes I would.”

Judy nodded and looked across the street at the house they were going to. “So who are we here for?”

“Brain Prancerson, age 42, White-Tailed Deer,” Nick answered as he opened his door and unbuckled the seat belt.

“What would a white-tailed deer want with a bunny?” Judy asked as she got out of the car.

“Who knows?”

Nick looked up both sides of the street. The neighborhood was fairly upscale. The rows of townhomes with well maintained front lawns. The houses were all painted roughly the same shade of blue with white shutters. The houses with fenced in front yards were all three-foot tall white picket fences. He could hear Judy's car door open and close as she got out and moved around to stand beside him.

“I feel like we just stepped onto the set of one of those cheesy sitcoms you like so much, Carrots.”

“I kind of like it,” Judy said.

“This isn’t the kind of neighborhood that I would have expected to find a slaver in, and I sort of expect to hear a laugh track at any moment.”
Judy nodded in agreement. “Is this the right address?”

“Seven one five, Charlson Ave,” Nick confirmed as he pulled the envelope out of the folder that contained the warrants for the address.

They walked across the street. Nick noted the midsize sedan parked in the driveway of the house. Nick eyed the door as they walked up the concrete walkway. The grass of the home was well cut and maintained.

As they stepped up to the door, they could hear some shouting through the closed door. Nick reached up and pressed the button for the doorbell. The muffled ding-dong sound could be heard through the dark stained wood door. Things went eerily quiet on the other side of the door.

Nick and Judy looked at each other, and as reached up and rang the doorbell again. Nick looked at the pair of locks on the door. One just above the doorknob itself and the deadbolt lock only six inches higher.

“Police open up we know someone is at home!” Judy shouted.

They heard a crashing sound and glass breaking the faint muffled sounds of a struggle.

Nick looked down at Judy. “I could pick the locks, but I don’t think we have time for that.”

She tossed him the keys to the cruiser. “Go get the breaching tool. I’ll call dispatch for back up, but we need to get in there right now.”

Nick nodded and jogged for the cruiser. After motor pool had removed the cruisers police markings so they could use it as detectives, it just looked like a giant black SUV. But it was hard for them to think of it any other way than their cruiser.

He popped open the rear hatch of the cruiser and inserted a key into a lock inserted into the floor. He disengaged the latch and lifted the heavy steel lid. Inside the shallow compartment strapped down was a sixteen inch long shotgun with a slotted muzzle brake and several shells.

He undid the velcro straps holding the shotgun in place and lifted it out of the compartment. He quickly checked to make sure the weapon was on safe before he flipped it over and loaded six of the shells into the internal magazine of the gun.

He closed the lid of the compartment and relocked it before closing the rear hatch of the SUV. He clicked the lock button on the fob to lock the cruiser as he jogged back across the street.

Judy put her phone back into her pocket as he approached.

“Clawhauser has backup and EMT’s on the way, but they are at least ten minutes out,” Judy explained. “I told them we are going in regardless.”

Nick nodded. “Well, I have our key ready. Let's try to get him to open the door one more time, and then we open it ourselves.”

Judy nodded as they walked back toward the door. Nick rang the doorbell and pounded on the hardwood door once more.
“Police! Mr. Prancerson open the door!” Judy called out. They could hear someone thumping around.

After a few moments, Judy nodded at Nick as she backed away from the door. She forced her ears down her back and covered her ear canals with her paws.

Nick’s ears pinned back behind his head as he pressed the buttstock of the shotgun tightly against his shoulder. He aimed at the upper left corner of the door just a few inches down from the top where the hinge would be. His left paw pumped the action on the shotgun causing to load a round into the chamber with a double metallic clack. His right thumb took the weapon off of safe as he turned his head and pulled the trigger.

The weapon thumped back into his shoulder as it sent the round of compressed iron filings shredding into the wood frame of the door. He ratcheted the pump on the shotgun as he turned his head and aimed at the left middle door and pulled the trigger once again turning his head and closing his eyes just before firing. He felt the wood pepper against the right cheek of his face as once again the shotgun thumped into his shoulder. He knew from training at the Academy he would be sore for a few days as he ratcheted the third round into the chamber and aimed at the lower left of the door. Pulling the trigger the wood shredded under the hail of gunpowder and iron shavings.

He turned and pressed the muzzle of the weapon between the door and the door jam right even with the doorknob and pulled the trigger, shredding the wood and metal of the latching mechanism. He lifted the muzzle of the weapon as he ratcheted the fifth round into the chamber and lined it up between the door jam and the deadbolt before firing once again.

He slung the weapon over his right shoulder and pushed forward on the middle of the door. It crashed into the hallway of the home with a resounding thud that echoed throughout the house.

Judy was quick to move as she pulled her taser and drove past her fox. She was impressed from start to finish it took Nick about fifteen seconds to blow the door open with the breaching rounds that they were supplied with.

“Mr. Prancerson? We have a warrant for your arrest.” Judy called out.

“Get out of my house!” An angry voice called out as they heard hoof steps retreating up the stairs.

Nick pulled his taser as he followed his partner through the house. Their footfalls were silent as they made their way room to room through the downstairs area. Jud paused as she entered the dining room.

The remains of breakfast were scattered across the room. Three pairs of large metal bowls were against one wall with a metal ring bolted to the wall just above them. Three of the bowels contained an assortment of vegetables and the other three water or maybe juice. Across the room lay a solid white form that laid crumpled against the floor and wall under the window.

Judy moved quickly across the room and knelt down beside the small crumpled form of the bunny. She reached forward and felt for a pulse and breathed a sigh of relief. Not knowing what the little rabbit’s injuries where she chooses not to move him.

Nick moved to cover the stairs his taser pointing up the stairs.
“He’s alive,” Judy announced quietly. They could hear sirens in the distance. Back up was still a few minutes out at least. Nick nodded as he looked up the stairs.

Judy observed Nick, his ears trained forward his nose twitching with each breath. “Two more rabbits in this house plus you.” He said

Judy nodded and started to move up the stairs slowly. Nick put a paw on her shoulder and shook his head. “Mr. Prancerson.” He called out.

“DIDN’T I TELL YOU TO LEAVE?” Prancerson yelled out from upstairs.

“I’m Detective Nicholas Wilde and my Partner Detective Hopps, we are here to serve a warrant for your arrest,” Nick called up the stairs.

“NO SHIT? YOU DON’T THINK I FIGURED THAT OUT?” Prancerson yelled back.

Nick took a step up the stairs. The floorboard of the step must have been lose as it made a slight creaking sound as he added his weight to it.

Two shots rang out in close succession hitting the wall above Nick's head and sent drywall dust filtering down over his face.”

“Mr. Prancerson, this isn’t going to end well for you if you don't put the gun down and give up,” Judy yelled up the stairs.

“Mr. Prancerson, how many hostages do you have upstairs?” Nick called up.

“HOSTAGES? I HAVE NO HOSTAGES! I HAVE MY PROPERTY!”

Nick glanced down at Judy and shook his head as he holstered his taser. He took off his suit jacket and handed it to her and unholstered his sidearm from its place under his left armpit.

“And the one downstairs? What did he do?” Nick called up the stairs.”

“HE DISRESPECTED ME! I GAVE HIM EVERYTHING, AND HE DISRESPECTED ME!”

Nick took a step up the stairs carefully testing the step before he added too much of his weight to it.

“Respect is important,” Nick called out.

“YOU KNOW NOTHING!”

Nick could hear hoof falls at the deer started to pace back and forth as he kept moving up the stairs silently one foot in front of the other, testing each step as he walked up them. He held his weapon in a two pawed grip, his right index finger on the trigger. His left paw acted more to stabilize the gun.

“I know a lot about respect Mr. Prancerson, or the lack of it given.”

“SHUT UP! DON’T PRETEND TO KNOW ME!”

“I don't know you Mr. Prancerson, I do understand how you feel though…”
Nick could just see over the top of the stairs. His ears pulled back tightly against his head. The stairs ended in a short hallway with a single partially open door at the end.

“YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND! I SAVED THEM ALL OF THEM THEY OWE ME!”

“I’m sure you did Mr. Prancerson,” Nick said as he watched the deer pace from left to right and back again cross his line of sight through the slightly opened door.

“Now Mr. Prancerson, I need you to think long and hard about this. What’s going to happen to you today? We both know that us going away isn’t going to happen. Your only viable option is putting the gun down and surrender.”

Nick trained his weapon on the deer as he stopped in his line of sight.

“What will happen to them?” Mr. Prancerson asked.

“They will be reunited with their Mothers. The rabbit you bought them from is already in custody.” Nick answered truthfully. “Now Mr. Prancerson, I’m going to have to ask you not to move.”

The white-tailed deer looked through the gap where the door was left open and could see Nick with his weapon trained on him. He swallowed hard and looked down at the hoof holding the gun.

“Mr. Prancerson, I really don’t want to shoot you today. So please don’t move. You move I shoot you, you raise that weapon, I shoot you. Your only real viable option is to put the gun down and put your hooves behind your head.”

Nick watched as the deer weighed his options. His finger tightened slightly on the trigger.

Judy listened to her fox. She had placed his suit jacket over the back of one of the dining room chairs. Two more cops entered the room and held a finger up to her mouth for them to be quiet. She motioned to the crumpled form of the white bunny buck by the window, and they nodded. Her eyes trailed back to her fox as the EMTs started working on the small buck. Her eyes widened as she heard a metallic thunking sound as a gun hit the floor.

Nick moved quickly up the stairs his weapon leveled straight at Brian Prancerson's head. He could hear Judy as she dashed up the stairs behind him. He pushed the door the rest of the way open. His eyes quickly scanned the room seeing the huddled forms of two more rabbits their eyes not leaving him.

“On your knees.” He ordered as he quickly kicked the weapon across the hardwood floor.

The white-tailed deer complied silently, his hooves behind his head. Judy holstered her taser as she moved behind Prancerson.

“Brian Prancerson, you are under arrest, for kit trafficking, resisting arrest, and attempted murder of a police officer. You have the right to remain silent anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney if you cannot afford one, one will be provided for you.” Judy recited as she cuffed the deer's hooves behind his back. “Do you understand your rights?”

“I do..”
“Good evening in tonight's top headlines, Herds and Grazing Councilman Brain Prancerson has been arrested today. In relation to the kit trafficking ring broken up earlier this week,” Peter Moosebridge reported.

The camera cut to Haytham Newcattle the ZPD Texas Longhorn steer spokesmammal standing in front of Precinct one building.

“This morning at approximately ten-thirty Detectives from the ZPD approached Mr. Prancerson’s Residence to serve a search and arrest warrant. When the detectives announced themselves they could hear the sounds of a struggle taking place. It was then decided that they would breach Mr. Prancersons door and enter the residence. After a brief standoff with the detectives, Mr. Prancerson was taken into custody.” Newcattle finished and looked at the gathered reporters. “I will allow a few questions at this time.”

He pointed to a mammal off camera.

“What are the charges against Councilman Prancerson?” Asked a voice off camera.

“Currently Mr. Prancerson is being held on kit trafficking, unlawful use of a firearm, resisting arrest and attempted murder of a police officer. More charges will be leveled against Mr. Prancerson as the situation becomes clearer.”

He pointed to another mammal off camera.

“Who was the arresting officers?” Aske another higher pitched voice.

“Detectives Wilde and Hopps.”

“Is this about the Leaperson case from a few days ago?” Asked a third, this question came out of turn.

“Yes.” He snorted and pointed to another Mammal farther back due to the way he gestured with a hoof.

“What was the means of finding evidence against Councilman Prancerson?”

“The ZPD is not in the habit of sharing evidence gathering techniques for an ongoing case. Last question you in the front.”

“Is there to be more arrests?”

“Yes, I have this strait from Chief Bogo if you bought a kit from Greg Leaperson we will find you and prosecute you to the fullest extent of the law. No more questions thank you.”

The camera cut back to Peter Moosebridge and Fabienne Growley in the studio.

A hoof picked up the TV remote from the arm of the comfortable chair the mammal sat in and muted the TV. His black and white striped hide could just be made out from underneath the sleeve of his long-sleeved white shirt. He picked up his wine glass and walked over to the room's floor to ceiling
windows and looked out over the city.

He gazed out at the city hard taking periodic sips from his half-full wine glass. It wasn’t that it wasn’t expected that the police would move in on the buyers of the kits. He had fully expected it. It was the speed and efficiency in which the ZPD’s detectives were driving through the case. At this point trying to stop or slow down Wilde and Hopps case would bring undue attention.

He snorted his hot breath blowing out and momentary fogging the window. “Stupid fox. Why couldn’t he had just stayed in a box, under a bridge?” He thought to himself.

He fished out his cell phone from his jacket pocket and scrolled through the list of contacts before pressing one. The sound of the ringing of the cell phone filled the room before the call connected.

“Hello, Doug.” He said into the device.

Nick and Judy stumbled into the apartment, tired exhausted and at least in the case of the fox, sore. The shotgun while manageable had bruised his right shoulder pretty extensively.

Judy watched as Nick pulled his shirt out of his pants as he unbuttoned it and dropped it on the floor as he made his way to the kitchen. The ripping of velcro and the sigh of relief from her fox as he lost the bulletproof vest as well brought a smile to her face.

She picked up his shirt and vest for him and made her way into the bedroom. It wasn’t that he wouldn’t clean up after himself it was just that she knew he was sore after breaching Prancerson’s door. She tossed the shirt in the clothes hamper and sat the vest down by the closet door.

“What would you like to eat Fluff?” She heard Nick call down the hall.

“I don’t know why don’t we order in? I know your sore and tired…”

“I appreciate that Fluff anything you have in mind?”

Judy thought about it for a moment. “Does that sandwich place down the street deliver?”

“Yeah, they do…”

“Ok, then I'll call in just moment.”

“Thanks, Fluff!” She heard him groan as he slumped onto the couch.

She stripped off her shirt and tossed it into the laundry hamper as well. Then stripped off her leggings and threw those into the dry cleaning pile, that contained some of Nick’s suit pants.

She looked at herself in the full-length mirror on the closet door. Her white and grey fur shone in the lamplight of the room. Her dark blue sports bra and panties contrasted well with her natural coloring. She could see minor scrapes here and there, mostly hazards of her job. A small few were hazards of being well loved by her fox.

The scrapes from Nick were few and far between. He was always careful sometimes too careful for
her tastes. The few marks she had from him she was oddly proud of having. She shrugged off her sports bra and tossed it into the clothes hamper. She wasn’t as busty as some of her sisters or even her own mother. Most bucks wanted larger breasts on a female, but Nick never complained about her. He always told her how beautiful she is.

Judy shivered slightly it wasn’t the words he said it was the look in his eyes when he said them to her. He always looked at her during those times as if she was the most beautiful mammal on the planet.

She turned from the mirror and strutted into the bathroom. She reached up and flipped on the bathroom light and stepped up onto the wooden stool in the room for her to use. Nick had offered to have the bathroom remodeled to include a sink and mirror at a more comfortable level for her, but she declined. The stool worked just fine for her.

She turned on the faucet and ran warm water. She had almost lost him again today. The third time in so many months. First Nick’s vest saved his life. The second his pulling her back just before Greg Leaperson fired his shotgun at her and the third this afternoon when Mr. Prancerson put two rounds into the wall above his head.

“Marry him.” Her inner voice chimed in as she tested the water to make sure it was warm but not too hot.

“I will, this spring.” She shot back.

Judy closed her eyes as she washed her face.

“Unless I can convince her to elope to the courthouse with me.” She heard Nick’s voice intone in her head.

“You arrested a City Council Member, A stockbroker and the Chief Information Officer of a rather large corporation today.” Her inner voice told her.

She looked up into the bathroom mirror water dripping down her face. The council member was the worst of it. The Stock Broker went quietly as if they had been expected and the Chief Information Officer had to be escorted out of a high-level staff meeting.

Nick’s shoulder was the only real injury, and that was from having to use the breaching rounds to enter Brain Prancersons home.

Judy met her own gaze as she came to realize the truth of his love for her. He would never ask her to quit, and he wouldn’t stop either unless she did. She had her dream, she became a cop and a detective but now what? Now, what did she want?

“Dreams can change.” Her inner voice told her.

She reached over and pulled the paw towel off of the rack and dried her face. She thought over that for a moment as she dried her face. Her dream did change. First, it was to be a police officer, then to have Nick as her partner, and now…..

“Now what?” Her inner voice asked.

“I don’t know.” She admitted to herself as she dried her paws and hung the towel back on the rack.
“You want him?” Her inner voice asked.

“More than anything.” She answered.

“More than being a cop?”

Judy stopped suddenly as she looked at herself in the full-length mirror. Her light pink nipples puckered in the mild chill of the room peeking from the soft white fur of her chest. She looked deep into her own eyes as she thought about the answer to the question. Which was more important being a cop, or being with Nick?

“That’s the twenty-four million dollar question isn’t it?” Her inner voice chimed in.

Judy opened the closet and pulled out the tacky green Hawaiian shirt that he wore when she first met him. She slid the shirt on and buttoned the center button just to hold the shirt closed.

She closed the closet door and looked herself in the mirror. The shirt looked like a dress on her most of the buttons were still undone. If she had done them all up, it would have made it difficult to move. Regardless the shirt always would look like a tacky green dress on her. She smiled remembering the first day they had met.

She snorted theirs wasn’t a love story for the ages. Doe speciestly profiles tod, tod scams doe, doe blackmails tod, doe almost get tod killed a dozen times….

Judy smiled and started to saunter down the hallway. She stopped suddenly as she spotted him. His undershirt laid on the floor of the couch. The only thing left on him was his pants. His shoulder holsters and the belt holster for his taser lay on the coffee table. The fox himself lounged on his back on the couch a bag of frozen peas pressed to his shoulder. Not even his phone was in his paw, he was just looking up at the ceiling. The tip of his tail would periodically flick back and forth.

“You ok Nick?” She asked softly as she walked into the room.

The sudden intake of breath made her realize that she had startled him a bit. His head turned to regard her, and a smile slowly brightened his face.

“I’m fine, Fluff nothing a little time, and frozen peas can’t cure.”

She stepped over to the couch and climbed up and over him being careful not to touch his right shoulder and settled between him and the back of the couch her head resting against his left shoulder.

Her paws gripped his tail gently when it settled across her back.

“What’s on your mind Fluff?” Nick asked as his left arm settled over her.

“Lots of stuff….” She admitted quietly.

Nick nodded and held her tight with his left arm. “Lay it on me Fluff we are a team that's what I am here for.”

Judy nuzzled into his neck. His warm fur felt soft under her fingertips. “We’ve almost died three times on this case…..”
Nick nodded. His paw curled around the curve of her hip his thumb slipped under it to softly caress her side.

“Nick, do you think life goals can change?” She asked softly.

He was quiet for many minutes before answering. “I think, Fluff life has a way of testing us and putting before us things we may not have known we wanted.”

“I have always wanted to be a Police Officer it was like the big epiphany moment when I decided that's what I wanted to do, that's what I wanted to be. I drove head first into it, I trained and got the best grades I could from the time I was nine. I didn’t go to prom, I didn’t go to homecoming the day after high school graduation I enrolled in the community college to get my general education done. After that, I enrolled in the tri-burrow Zootopia University Satellite Campus for my Criminal Justice degree. My parents forced me to minor in botany as that was the only way they would help pay for my degree.”

Judy quieted down her fists tightening in the fur of his tail. Nick kissed the top of her head and waited. He got the feeling that she had more to say.

“I….I only had Jack before you. I...I didn't see a future with Jack. I hoped to have a future with him. Maybe just to rub it in my parents face that I could have my career and a catch of a buck as well. But I realized along the way Jack and I weren't meant to be.” She buried her face in the fur of his neck.

“So your life goals are changing. Newsflash for you Fluff, they need to change. Otherwise, we end up stagnant under a bridge.” Nick said to her softly.

“I...I love you, Nick.”

He smiled she felt the little tension in his body that had built up over the course of their conversation melt from him. “I love you too, Judith.”

She lifted her head as she looked him in the eyes. “I don't want to wait until Spring.”
Episode 9: The Way She Loves Me

Chapter Notes

Those of you who have stuck by me and have been reading this: Thank You!
Those that have left comments of support: Thank You!

Word of warning: This is not the fluffy chapter you think it is.....

Comments: 63
Kudos: 91
Bookmarks: 22
Hits: 4242

Episode 9: The Way She Loves Me

“If you could only see the way she loves me
Then maybe you would understand
Why I feel this way about our love
And what I must do
If you could only see how blue her eyes can be when she says
When she says she loves me”
If You Could Only See ~ Tonic

She lifted her head as she looked him in the eyes. “I don't want to wait until Spring.”

Judy stared into her fox’s eyes. The range of emotions that swept through them was genuinely astonishing.

“When?” Nick asked softly.

Judy shrugged and settled back down against him his warm body comforting.

“As soon as possible.”

Nick nodded and winced as he reached for his phone on the coffee table. She watched as he unlocked his phone and pulled up his web browser.

“You have your birth certificate with you, Fluff?”

Judy nodded. “ I do.”

“It looks like we can go to the County Clerk and apply for our marriage license. From there it's a
three to four business day wait as they process it. I’m willing to bet that sloths do the processing.”

Said as he read the requirements off of the City Hall website.

“Ok, then what?”

“Then we find an officiant to marry us.”

Judy thought for a moment. “Do you think Chief Bogo would do it?”

Nick smiled as he thought about it. “I’m sure he could do it, the question would be if he would do it…."

Judy nodded. “So you are going to let Lorie and her mom know?”

“I will once we have things nailed down a bit more solid. Do you think your parents could come?”

“Would you want them there?”

Nick sighed and looked down at her. “Yes, I want them there for you.”

“I can ask. Dad is going to…”

“Be unpleasant?” Nick asked dryly. He didn’t relish the thought of meeting her father as her husband.

Judy nodded. “That's putting it mildly.”

“He doesn't have to be there, but your mom can at least be there.”

Judy nodded. “I’ll call mom in the morning; they will need more than just a day’s notice to get here.”

Nick softly stroked the back of her head. He felt her relax against him.

“Now don't get me wrong, I'm delighted you want to move the date up significantly. However, are you sure this is what you want?”

Judy nodded. “What do you know of Lagomorph courtship timelines?”

“From what you told me, I know they tend to be on the fast side.”

“You haven't looked it up online?” She asked.

“No, I felt our timeline would be at our pace and not something a wiki could tell me anyway.”

“Bunnies move fast in courtship. I think it's a holdover from when….”

“Your species was a food source?”

Judy nodded.

“So how fast are we talking?”
“If you were a rabbit?”

Nick nodded. “If I was the most awesome rabbit you ever met.”

Judy smiled and suppressed a giggle. “We would be getting ready for our first litter.”

“Oh…”

Judy smiled at the surprise in his voice. “Told ya Slick we move fast.” She shrugged. “You know I was hesitant when you first asked me to give you a chance.

Nick nodded. “I could tell.”

“The first night here was…” Judy paused as she searched for a word.

“Different?” Nick asked.

“Yeah but in a good way. I wanted to be here, but at the same time I was unsure of how to act.”

Nick smiled remembering her in nothing but his workout shirt. “I know you gave me quite the show that first night.”

Judy blushed and buried her face against his neck. “I hopped the painkillers had kept that memory from forming.”

“How could I ever forget my first look of your fluffy tail Carrots?:

Judy smiled. “Was it my tail or my butt you were watching?”

“Why does it have to be one or the other? Why not both?”

Judy giggled she could tell it was a rhetorical question. “You know if you were a rabbit I'm pretty sure our pizza would have ended up all over the floor.”

“I can’t say that I wasn’t tempted….” Nick admitted smugly.

“Why didn’t you?” Judy asked inquisitively.

“Honestly?”

“I wouldn’t have asked if I didn’t want an honest answer, Slick.”

“I guess you’re right there,” Nick answered running his left paw over the top of his head nervously. “Well other than the fact I still had a bullet wound in the shoulder broken ribs and recovering from a hole in the lung?.”

Judy nodded and smiled waving her paw as if to say trivial things. “Yes other than those minor annoyances.

Nick chuckled softly. “Respect mostly I guess.”

“Mostly?”
“Have I ever made you feel like I wanted a relationship with you solely for the sex?”

Judy thought back over the last few months. They have had plenty of sex, but there were other moments there as well. “No, I guess you haven’t.”

Nick sighed. “I love you, Judy. I love you so much it scares me.”

“I love you too Nick.” She could feel butterflies fluttering around in her stomach.

His arm wrapped back around her holding her tightly to his chest. He set his phone down on the coffee table and shifted the frozen peas on his shoulder.

“I…” She started but was interrupted by the rumbling of his stomach. “Oh, sweet cheese and crackers I forgot to order our sandwiches just a moment…”

Nick winced when she accidentally placed to much weight on his right shoulder and watched the sway of her hips as she moved down the hall. He got up and took his bag of peas into the kitchen and placed them back into the freezer. He stretched his shoulder wincing slightly.

“It's going to be painful for a few days but not unmanageable.” He thought to himself. He could hear her down down the hall ordering their sandwiches. He grabbed them a pair of bottles of water from the fridge before he walked back into the living room.

“Ok, Slick, our sandwiches will be here in about fifteen minutes or so,” Judy said as she walked back into the living room just as he was sitting down. “So now I don’t have to worry about you eating me.”

Nick grinned at her and licked his lips slowly, his long tongue snaked out between his sharp teeth. “But, Fluff, you just happen to be one of my favorite snacks.”

She blushed deeply. Her inner ears turned a bright scarlet red. “Well, Slick, maybe I can be desert?” She quipped back at him as she strutted over to the couch and curled up against his left side. “My suppressants should wear off soon.”

He wrapped his arm around her tightly his tail rested once again in her lap his paw rested lightly on her hip. “That might be a plan.”

“Do you think we have much left on this case?” She asked.

“No sure Fluff, we are going to be busy tomorrow though, we only got three of the arrests done, and the paperwork for Prancerson alone took half this afternoon.”

Judy nodded.

“My main hope is we find some evidence of someone higher up in the food chain.”

“What makes you think there is someone higher than Greg Leaperson involved in this?”

“Too much money involved for there not to be..” Nick replied.

Judy just nodded. She couldn’t fathom why someone would want to buy another mammal. She
understood that it happened, just not the why it happened, she hoped that she never would.

Judy softly stroked her paw through the fur of his stomach. She smiled at the rolling put that the action elicited.

“How much money are we talking about?”

Nick sighed and looked up at the ceiling. “Close to five billion dollars a year.” He answered softly. “More than 80% of the bunnies we have recovered have been female, and most of those have been below the age of sixteen.”

“What’s happening to the males?”

“Don’t know…..” He answered tensely.

“Can you guess…..”

Nick closed his eyes. “Remember the grave?”

Judy nodded her ears drooped down her back. “Oh….”

“My guess is once a bunny reaches a certain age it became impossible for Leaperson to give them away. Those that didn’t end up there more than likely went to South Animalica.”

“Why there?”

“South Animalica is corrupt. However, the industries there is still largely mammal power based. Farming, logging, and mining…..” Nick shook his head.

“My family farm…..” Judy started.

“It's different Fluff.”

Judy nodded.

“Your parents don't work your brothers and sisters to death. They have opportunities to get an education and have a life of their own. The mammals sold into this they don’t some may never have the chance.” Nick explained.

Judy remained quite. Her thoughts were a jumbled mess. Growing up some days it felt like slavery, but Nick was right regardless she had opportunities brought by the farm and its success. Her train of thought was derailed by the sound of knocking at the door.

“That's our sandwiches I'll get it Slick.” He said as she stood and walked to the door lifting the back of the shirt to be hooked over her tail giving him a view reminiscent of their first night together.

“More fox less work.” Her inner voice intoned.

Nick watched her his eyes tracking both the glorious buns of her butt and the teardrop-shaped tail. He smiled as her tail twitched slightly before she opened the door.

Nick grinned as he slowly stood up and stalked toward his bunny at the door. His eyes raked over
her as she finished paying for their meal. The closer he stepped to her the more he could tell that the suppressants were wearing off. She had just closed the door and had started to turn around when his paws smacked into the wall and door on either side of her head trapping her between them.

His right paw moved from the wall to the deadbolt in front of her. She watched as it slowly clicked into place with a loud thunking sound of metal against wood. The noise sounded final given her predicament at the moment. A hundred ways to get away from him flashed through her mind in an instant, but she ignored them all. Her head slowly tilted back to look up at him with her paws holding the plastic bag of sandwiches in front of her.

Her nose twitched as his muzzle came into view. His lips were pulled back into a lecherous grin that told her he was hungry but this hunger wouldn’t be satisfied with a sandwich. Her tail twitched nervously as he dipped his head and kissed her lips softly. The angle made the kiss awkward at; first, her paws gripped the bag tighter.

He broke the kiss his lips moving from hers to the left side of her neck. He kissed her neck softly before his fangs grazed gently through the soft fur to scrape lightly against her flesh.

Judy moaned the bag of sandwiches slipped from her paws and onto the floor. She reached up and held onto his neck holding him there. His nose pushed the collar of the shirt aside baring her neck and left shoulder. He slowly kissed along the top of her shoulder as his tongue flicked out periodically to brush against her fur.

He slipped a paw into the mostly unbuttoned shirt. Judy gasped as she heard and felt his claws extend to rake through the fur of her stomach. Her muscles tightened before she forced them to relax trusting her fox not to hurt her. The low growl that rumbled through his chest and shook her more pleasurably than any of her toys had hoped to achieve, but also sparked all the instincts to run from him all over again.

His paw started to travel up her body and was stopped momentarily by the only button done up on the shirt. He deftly popped it open his claws gently raking against her flesh as they traveled inch by agonizing inch up her small frame. She groaned as she felt his paw avoid her breasts and his claws slide up between them.

Her breath hitched in her throat as she felt his paw finally close and squeeze her breast the tips of his claws pressing against her. She could feel the sharp points of them pressed against her, but he was always careful not to cut her.

Her paws let go of his head as he pressed his tongue against the side of her neck. Her pulse pounded quickly beneath it. “Niiick” She hissed as he teased and nipped her neck. His paw released her breast as it slides down her lithe frame back across the taunt expanse of her stomach. His claws scratched through her fur agonizingly slowly as his paw slowly traveled lower and lower.

Judy bit her lip and slowly spread her ankles apart in preparation. His paw traveled at an agonizingly slow pace. She trembled under his touch as her paws reached behind her and began undoing his pants.

Her scent was intoxicating to him as if the sweetest ambrosia made just for him. She vibrated under his touch as his paw slowly down across the front of her panties. She silently cursed leaving them on. She moaned and leaned back against him her paws pushed his pants down and groaned in frustration as she felt his boxers.
Her paws stopped as she felt his paw pad slide over her panty covered slit. She shuddered slightly at the faint rasping sound his claw made over the soft cotton material of her panties. He kissed her shoulder once again just before his jaws closed around it firmly as his paw pad pressed harder against her through her panties. Her eyes closed tightly as her first orgasm rolled through her like a tidal wave of pleasure. His other paw came off the wall and wrapped around her stomach holding her both still and protectively.

Judy moaned loudly. She turned her head slightly and kissed his muzzle where he held her shoulder firmly in his jaws. Her suppressants entirely wore off and the hormone cloud that rolled off her thoroughly threatened to overwhelm his senses. He kicked his pants off and away as he breathed in through his nose. He let go of her shoulder not trusting himself not to clamp down harder as his need grew.

She squealed in surprise as he lifted her off the floor and carried her back across the room to the couch. Most of her weight was supported by the arm around her stomach the rest by the paw on her crotch. He kept running a finger up and down her slit as he carried her.

Her fingers came in contact with his hard cock through his boxers. She closed her hands around him as best could and squeezed softly causing him to groan. Her eyes opened as she felt him bend her over the arm of the couch her fingers letting go of his cock. She shrugged off the shirt and tossed it to the floor. Then braced herself on the seat cushion that he had sat on just a few minutes ago.

Nick moved his paws slowly down her back and sides from her shoulder blades to the wide flare of her hips. His fingertips hooked the waistband of her panties as he slowly dragged them down. Judy looked back over her shoulder at him seeing him look at her body intently as it's relieved entirely to him.

Her tail twitched as he knelt behind her onto the floor as he pulled her panties all the way off her legs. She spread her thighs for him fully expecting her fox just to take her then and there. She moaned loudly as she felt his tongue along the hot folds of her pussy licking her from the beginning of her slit all the way to her entrance. She pressed back against his snout as she wanted more.

Nicks paws gripped her hips and the cheeks of her ass as he excruciatingly slowly licked her sweet pussy. She blushed as she felt him spread her and moaned loudly as his tongue lapped at her clit her paws gripped the seat cushion of the couch.

“Yesss.” She hissed as her orgasm tore through her body. Her body shuddered again as she felt his tongue press into her and rolled a bit. Her thighs pressed against the arm of the couch as she tried desperately to push herself back against his snout even more. She groaned frustratingly as he pulled back, her eyes opened to look back over her shoulder once again.

Nick stood behind her and dropped his boxers. He slid the tip of his cock slowly between the firm cheeks of her bottom enjoying the way the soft fur felt against him. She closed her eyes she could feel the hot trail of precum he left between her cheeks. She had instigated this by reminding him of their first night in his den and then by flipping up the back of his shirt once again. He groaned softly as he slid the head of his cock all the way down between them and the and then up and down her soaking wet slit.

Judy moaned and pushed back against him as she felt him slide his cock against her slit. She groaned loudly as she felt him start to slide into her. Her paws pressed into the couch as she attempted to push herself back against him. The angle into her was different she felt him thrust into her in entirely new and unexpected ways. She felt him stop as his knot pressed against her outer lips.
Nick looked down across the expanse of grey fur of her back. He could feel her tail twitch against his lower stomach. He moved a paw from her hip to her shoulder as he started to thrust into her. His nose was full the smell of horny bunny, and he could still taste her rich, unique flavor on his tongue.

Judy groaned as she felt his paw move as he started to thrust into her. Her feet bounced slightly with each of his thrusts into her body. She enjoyed the feeling of helplessness as he took her. Her orgasm built quickly as he kept thrusting into her.

He paused long enough to gather her paws behind her back and held them there with his right paw. His left reached forward and pulled back on the base of her ears forcing her to arch her back as he started to thrust into her once again.

Judy’s eyes shot open as the sudden sensations. The feeling of helplessness enhanced by the inability to move her paws. Her sudden orgasm tore through her body the tight walls of her pussy clamped down around his thrusting cock. She felt him start to thrust harder and faster into her, his knot beginning to demand entrance into her body.

Nick grunted with each thrust into her. He pulled back slightly on her wrists in an attempt to get just a little more leverage. Her orgasm was causing her already tight pussy to feel like a velvety vice clamping down around his cock. He let go of her ears to pull back on her hip as he pounded his cock into her.

Judy pressed her face into the couch to stifle the scream as another orgasm shuddered its way through her body. She felt as well as heard a pop as his knot forced its way into her. His head flung back as his hips kept jerking forward the sound he made torn somewhere between a groan and a howl.

Judy moaned into the couch as the warmth of his seed spilled into her. Her walls contracted down squeezing his knot tightly. His knees became weak, and he released her wrists as he slumped forward along her back and onto the couch.

She huffed as she attempted to catch her breath. She smiled and turned her head to the side she could feel the weight of him holding her under him. His knot held them together firmly as she could feel each twitch of his cock inside of her. Usually, she would be on his chest, but this was different and sometimes different was nice.

She moved her paws from behind her back and stretched out her arms. She knew they would be stuck like this for a bit. He could move them entirely onto the couch, but she was content to lay where she was under him for the time being. He wasn’t pressing her down too hard, and she was still able to breathe. Her eyes opened as she felt him shift slightly more off of her back.

“You ok there Slick?”

“Mmmhhmm.”

She felt his paw softly stroke her back and side as a rolling purr started deep in his chest. Judy shut her eyes once again as she enjoyed the sensation of his paw and closeness to her.

Judy’s eyes opened. The light that filtered into the bedroom cast the room in the warm, vibrant colors.
of the predawn morning. Having grown up on a farm meant that dawn had always signaled the start of the day for her. She smiled at the feeling of his paw that rested lightly over her stomach. His fluffy tail tucked up under her chin; like a warm living blanket.

The rest of their evening had passed in a blur. Eating the sandwiches, she ordered while laughing about the after sex stereotype, more lovemaking and finally falling asleep in each other's arms.

Judy lifted his paw from her gently as she emerged from the center of her foxy cocoon and looked at his face. She smiled at the peacefulness of his slumber. Nick had curled around her protectively the same way he had every night since getting the sling off. It was typical for a rabbit to sleep with their littermates in piles until their parents separated them into rooms of their own.

She sighed as she bent down and placed a soft kiss on the top of his muzzle before sliding out of bed. She picked up her phone off of the nightstand and padded her way quietly into the on suite bathroom.

She turned on the water for the shower so it could get warmed up. While she waited, she stepped up onto her step stool and looked at herself in the mirror and smiled. Her fur was matted in places from the various activities the night before.

She looked down at her phone while she brushed her teeth scrolling through the various Muzzlebook notifications as she did so. Most of them as they were notifications of pictures being posted, which she summarily ignored. Nothing stood out to her as overly needing her attention other than a few private messages asking if she had indeed broken up with Jack. It had seemed to her that the warren gossip was a bit slow and she decided to let it remain so for the time being. Which meant her mom and dad hadn’t informed the warren of her change in relationships yet.

Judy spat her toothpaste into the sink and rinsed her toothbrush and mouth out with water. Well if the warren gossip was being slow, up till this morning, then she was about to set it ablaze after her phone call with her mother. She had explicitly avoided any updates to Muzzlebook about her relationship other than to turned it back to single for a week or so then again to in a relationship, but she didn’t tag anyone.

She opened her Spotifur app. Nick had placed her on his family account shortly after he joined the force as she had complained about not being able to afford the new Gazelle Album. She smiled at the memory of Nick's rant against record labels and the pennies they give to artists. His rant now made a bit more sense considering his other talents that she wasn't aware of at the time.

She paused for a moment. “Did Nick try to get picked up by a record label?” She shook her head as she selected her more upbeat playlist. The familiar opening beats of Try Everything started to thump through the Bluefang speakers in the shower.

Judy started to shake her hips as she hopped down off of her stool and half strutted, half danced her way into the large shower. Her hips rolled side to side in a poor imitation of Gazelles, but Nick always seemed captivated. She smiled as he thought about what her day lay ahead of her. Going down to the courthouse and applying for their marriage license and doing the job that she loved with her fox. But first, she needed to call her mom.

Judy smacked the controls for the water shutting off the shower. She gave herself a very unbunny like shake the same way Nick did to get most of the water from her fur. Reaching outside of the shower she grabbed one of the fox-sized towels. And warped herself up in it. It looked like a robe on her, but she actually liked that it kept some of the chill from her as she made her way over to the fur...
Judy hung up her towel and grabbed her phone turning off the music as she walked into the bedroom to finish getting ready for her day. She spotted that her fox had pulled a pillow into her place as he slept. She had joked once about getting him a stuffed bunny in her size to cuddle with in the early morning, but the look of indignation he had given her made her think twice about it.

“Carrots you are the only bunny I want to cuddle with stuffed or otherwise.” She heard his voice in her head and smiled as she walked over to their dresser. The dresser was large and ornate; she suspected there was a history behind it for Nick. The left side of it had been left empty before she had moved in. The right side of it had his clothes. The top of it was just about at eye level for her, it was made out of dark rich wood with a dark stone slab top. There was nicks and dings in the finish as if it had been moved many times. She suspected it had been his mother’s, but she never asked.

Judy opened the top drawer and pulled out a pair of white cotton panties and a matching sports bra. She slipped the panties on and slipped the sports bra on over her head. She walked over to their closet and pulled out a pair of slacks and a blue button-up shirt. Judy finished dressing quickly and walked into the bathroom to pick up her phone before she walked down the hall to the living room and kitchen area.

Judy flipped on the lights and stepped up onto her stool in the kitchen to turn on the stove to start the water for her tea boiling. She smiled as she saw that Nick had already put her cup and box of tea out for her.

Judy sighed and pulled out her phone, no longer feeling the trepidation from the day before. She had already done the hard part and told her parents,-- well at least her mom,-- that she was marrying a fox. How bad could it be that she was moving the date up….significantly?

Judy unlocked her phone and opened her recent calls and smiled. Since moving in with Nick, her cellphone usage had dropped significantly. She pressed the one for her mom and waited for the call to connect.

“Morning Jude,” her mom greeted her as her face filled the screen of her phone.

“Morning mom. How are things?”

“Oh well, your brother Matthew is sick this morning.”

“Really?”

“Yeah came down with a bug last night I guess.”

Judy nodded. “Well, I hope he starts feeling better soon.” She paused and then asked, “Did you tell Dad yet?”

Bonnie looked around behind her warily and lowered her voice. “Not yet. He still seemed a bit...”
peeved about you dating.”

Judy sighed and looked away for a moment. “Well then….?” she started.

“What is it?” Bonnie asked.

“Mom, this case we are working has been hard.” Judy started.

“I know Jude. You explained to us after you took off with the truck that being a police officer is dangerous. So I don’t expect that being a detective is much safer.”

Judy nodded. “Nick has been taking most of the risks….?”

“Is he all right? He looked ok on the news….?”

“Sweet cheese and crackers, we were on the news again?” Judy asked.

“You haven’t been following the news?” Bonnie asked.

“No. Typically, when Nick and I come home it's late and well….?” Judy blushed slightly.

“So it fits?” her mother asked bluntly.

“MOM!” Judy exclaimed.

“Well you know we have always been open about sexuality here….?” Bonnie started.

“Yes mom, I'm well aware.”

“Well, I was just wondering. You know you have to keep him in check somehow….?”

“I can toss Nick around in the ring easily enough. Besides, we agreed not to use sex as a weapon against each other.”

“Oh really?” Bonnie asked as her eyebrow raised.

“Well yeah….?” Judy blushed and looked away before mumbling. “He does this thing with his tongue.”

“You mean he….?” Bonnie started to ask.

“It feels so good…..?”

“So if you withheld sex he wouldn’t…..?”

Judy nodded.

Bonnie smiled and started to laugh. “Well, it seems like he's smarter than the average buck then….?”

“Really?”

“Yeah, if I even hint to your father he wouldn't be getting any he folds….?”
Judy blushed again. “Mom! Somethings I really don't need to know….”

“Well, you just said…..”

“Mom! I know its just that…..”

“A part of you wanted to share how lucky you were with your fox?” Her mother interrupted.

Judy just nodded.

Bonnie smiled at her daughter over the connection. “Oh, Jude, looks like there is some typical bunny doe in there after all. But I’m sure that’s not the only reason you called this morning.”

Judy nodded and turned off the stove as the kettle started to whistle. “Mom do you think you, and maybe dad could come to the city say Wednesday or Thursday of next week?”

“I don’t know. We are in the middle of harvest and we still have the lettuce, peas, and radishes to pull in…..”

“Mom, it’s important…..” Judy interrupted as she poured the hot water into her mug and set a tea bag to soak.

“Jude…..”

“I’m moving up the wedding.”

“I thought you were waiting until spring…..”

“We were, but…..” Judy was torn, she wasn’t supposed to talk about an ongoing investigation. “What did the news say Council Mammal Prancerton was charged with?”

Bonnie looked thoughtful for a moment. “Some stuff about kit trafficking and…..” Her mother’s face slowly changed from confusion to understanding.

“I know it’s not the big elaborate wedding that is traditional rabbit fare. But mom he is important to me and…….” Judy’s eyes glassed over as the tears built up.

“I understand.” Her mother said quietly. “You are both in a dangerous line of work.”

Judy nodded as she took a deep breath to reign in her emotions.

“You sure you want your father there?”

Judy nodded. “He’s still my father, and I know this might cause problems between us…”

“He will come around…” Bonnie said. “Can you make it Thursday?”

Judy nodded. “That shouldn't be an issue we go down to the courthouse and file for our marriage license this morning.”

Bonnie nodded. “I’ll talk to your father, but I will be there Wednesday night regardless then.”
Judy smiled. “Thank you, Mom.”

“I love you, Jude.”

“I love you too.”

“Take care of Nick.”

“I will.”

“Bye for now.”

“Bye for now.”

Judy looked at her phone for a few moments before she opened Muzzlebook. Tapping the profile options, she scrolled through it until she found the one for relationships. Looking at the choices, she thought about it for a few minutes.

“Do you really want to do this?” Her inner voice asked.

“I’m already going to marry him…”

“Your family…..”

Judy pressed the “engaged” option then scrolled down and pushed the link for Nick’s profile.

She read the words that appeared on the small screen. “Are you engaged to Nicholas Wilde?”

Judy smiled and pressed yes as she thought. “Yes, yes I am.”

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Nick and Judy stood at the top of the courthouse steps as Nick placed his sunglasses back on his face.

“Well that was easier than I expected,” Judy said.

“Oh?”

“Well, I half expected some species remark about how we couldn’t get married because your a predator and I’m prey,” Judy answered as they walked down the steps.

Nick shrugged. “We might have received that statement not long ago.”

“Oh?”

“Well, some Wonder Bunny came along and shoved a mirror in front of the populace of the city,” Nick explained. “When it turns out that predators were being targeted with a drug and low and behold that drug worked just the same on prey as it did on predators….”

Judy nodded. “I think you give me to much credit there Slick.”
“I don’t think so…” Nick looked down at her as they walked along the sidewalk toward Precinct One. “I think you haven’t looked at the larger ramifications of the Nighthowler case.”

“How so?”

“Case law changed, Fluff, you changed case law.” Nick paused and looked down at her.

Judy looked up at him confused.

“Bellwether was charged with terrorist acts and numerous other charges but in those was speciest discrimination and profiling charges. All against predators.” Nick started to explain. “Up to that point not hiring a predator for a job, not giving a predator equal pay, not letting a fox on the police force. All were considered ok and not discrimination because of laws passed in the city over fifty years ago. Since Bellwether charges against some of the cities largest companies have had discrimination lawsuits filed against them so policies are changing. Slowly, maybe but there is change.”

“But…”

“Yes, your press conference was a disaster, and it did more the hurt predator rights, since….” Nick trailed off for a moment.

“Since what Nick?”

Nick took off and sunglasses. “Back in the fifties there was a Mayor, Swineton, I think her name was. She had control over the city and city council for three decades. She did what Bellwether wanted to do she ruled by fear. She fought hard to keep predators off the council she worked to undermine predator businesses with extra taxes for “reparations.””

Nick shook his head. “Any time there was a murder in the city a predator was always somehow involved.”

Judy looked up at him and could see the sadness in his eyes.

“I’m not saying the predators were fully innocent but a large number ended up incarcerated because of simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time, and they were the only predator in the area.” Nick sighed. “In late fifty nine early sixty Mayor Swineton passed the SAFE act. All predators from the age of twelve forward had to be collared with a shock collar.”

“Nicks that is…..”

“The collars was billed as keeping predators dangerous emotions in check. In reality, they worked on heart rate anything that got a predator's heart rate up caused an ever increasing shock to the predator.”

“Nick that's…” Judy started.

“Anything Fluff, yes anger but also happiness and sadness, pain, confusion… love.” Nick interrupted. “Crime interestingly didn't drop the murder rate stayed the same. But predator birth rates dropped. Infant mortality rates skyrocketed.”

“Then how did it stop?” Judy asked.
“Zootopia was being heralded as being on the forefront of Mammal cohabitation. The Nineteen Eighty Olympics was being held here. The organizers wanted both predator and prey kits in the opening ceremonies.”

“What happened?” Judy asked her heart racing.

“Three kits died on worldwide tv when their heart rates went too high, and their shock collars electrocuted them. The games were immediately called off athletes went home in protest. Federal Authorities moved into the city and investigated. Not just the collars but the reason behind them. Laws in the city were looked at more closely many deemed unconstitutional. Swineton ended up getting life in prison along with many of her cabinet members. It took the death of three kits on worldwide tv to spark enough outrage that predators voices in the city were finally herd.”

“Your parents….”

“Were collared my mom had the scars on her neck from the collar. It's why she always wore high collared shirts as the collar burned the fur off her neck.”

“So Bellwether…”

“Was trying to bring the collars back. It wouldn’t have taken much overall twenty-two predators were struck with the Nighthowler serum. With the city looking at every predator like they were a ticking time bomb ready to go off. The case labeled it all as a terrorist act. But the special prosecutor uncovered that Bellwether was hiring an overwhelmingly large number of prey to fill roles that they were not suited for.”

“Like a bunny as a police officer?” Judy asked.

“You are the exception, not the rule, Carrots.”

“But…”

“We had four rabbits in our class at the academy,” Nick stated.

“What happened to them?”

“Got weeded out the first two weeks into the program. They were not willing to work even half as hard as you did. They saw you did it and set all those records and figured it must have been easy. When it got really hard, they quit and went back home.” Nick smiled. “Major used you in her opening speech she said she didn’t cut you any slack and not to expect any either. Then looked at us all and asked if we were half as tough as a bunny.”

Judy smiled up at him. “It took a lot of work to make it through the academy.” She admitted.

“I know.” Nick placed his sunglasses back on his face and started to walk toward Precint One again.

“They didn’t teach any of that in BunnyBurrow,” Judy said as she walked beside him.

“They don't really teach it here either. Its glossed over as if we all had been singing kumbaya from the beginning.” Nick said.
“Then how….” Judy took in a deep breath. “Your mom….”

Nick nodded. “There is hardly a predator in this city who doesn't know about the SAFE act as about ninety-nine percent of our parents went through it.”

“So how does that all tie into the Nighthowler case and us getting married?”

“Well other than you being the great Judy Hopps? Can you imagine the media outrage if we went to the media saying the city won't let the ZPD poster bunny and fox marry?”

Judy smiled and snorted slightly. “Ok yes other than that.”

“Discrimination. Swineton kept power by it. Bellwether hoped to do the same. No one right now wants to be painted with the same brush.”

Judy nodded as she walked silently beside him for a moment. “I called mom this morning.”

Nick smiled and tilted his head to look down at her. “I figured and was wondering when we would talk about that.”

“Sorry I was pretty excited about filing for our marriage license this morning….”

Nick nodded. “I figured, I also figured you had something to do with an abnormally large amount of Lagomorph friend requests on Muzzlebook…..”

Judy nodded. “I may have updated my relationship status this morning after talking with mom…..”

“Let's talk about Muzzlebook after we talk about how it went with your mom…..”

“It went well, she’ll at least be here Wednesday night with or without my father.”

“Well that's good least. I will get to meet my mother in law before the wedding.” Nick quipped. “But I'm upping the odds on that bet. Seven to One odds say I get tased on Wednesday night.”

Judy giggled and shook her head. “I told you I wouldn't let that happen… Even if mom thinks it would be a good idea for dad to spend a night or two in a jail cell.”

Nick just chuckled a bit. “I still think he will regardless.”

Judy shook her head.

“And Muzzlebook?” Nick asked.

“I changed my status to engaged with you.”

“Well, that explains all this then.” He pulled out his phone and unlocked it as he handed it to her.

She could see the pending notification numbers in red beside the Muzzlebook app, and her eyes widened. Even as she looked at the phone, it picked up several more digits.

“What’s the count up to now?” Nick asked nonchalantly.
“Three hundred and sixty-two…” Judy responded.

“When I was woken by it this morning it spun up past a hundred just in the time it took me to even look at it. The thing was vibrating so much I thought there was an emergency,” Nick stated. “I ended up having to turn off push notifications for a while.”

Judy smiled. “Welcome to the family, Slick.”

Nick looked at his phone in dismay as he rode in the passenger seat of the cruiser.

“I don’t think I’m going to be able to use Muzzlebook ever again Fluff.”

“Now you are just being over dramatic…,” Judy replied as she rolled her eyes.

“Four hundred and twenty-seven notifications, how do you do it?”

“By ignoring the vast majority of it and only focus on what my litter mates and close friends post?”

Nick nodded and thought about it for a moment. “I’m going to need you to help me with going through all these mammals and figuring out who I should pay attention to and who I can safely ignore….”

Judy smiled.

“After this is done we should talk to Ruthy and Buffalo Butt about some time off for a honeymoon,” Nick said nonchalantly.

“Oh, and what is a foxes idea of a honeymoon?” Judy asked her ears perking up.

Nick thought about it. “A nice hotel room with a comfortable bed with a view and room service.” He shrugged. “What’s yours?”

“About the same but we should go someplace other than here in the city…” Judy answered.

Nick nodded and smiled. “That way they cant call us in because they know we are here in the city….”

Judy nodded.

“Sly bunny.”

“Dumb fox.”

“Your dumb fox though.”

“Yes, mine….” Judy smiled warmly.
Nick smiled as the cruiser came to a stop. They looked out of the windows of the cruiser at the large house they stopped in front of.

“Who are we here for Slick?”

Nick opened the folder that he stuck in between the seats. “We have four to do today, Ruthy and Bogo farmed out the rest to other units this morning.”

Judy nodded.

“Matthew Cuppaw, age thirty-nine, a snow leopard. Nick read off of the warrant……” Nick frowned.

“What's wrong?” She watched as he flipped the page of the warrant.

“He either has a load of rabbits in his basement, or he's been…..” Nick swallowed as he unbuckled his seat belt.

“What's his weight?” Judy asked as she drew her taser.

“Just over a hundred pounds.”

Judy nodded as they set the voltages on their tasers.

“If he moves funny tase him,” Nick said as he opened his car door.

“Did you get more of those shells for our key?” Judy asked as she opened hers and got out.

“Yeah, I’m hoping though we don't need it.”

Judy nodded as she walked toward the door and Nick fell in step beside her.

“How many?” She asked.

“forty-two.”

Nick rang the doorbell.

“JUST A MINUTE!” They heard a mammal yell from the other side of the door.

Nick and Judy looked at each other as they heard the door unlock.

A leopard just a little taller than Nick opened the door and looked down at them. “Oh hey, you are early…. Doesn't a wolf typically deliver the goods? I….”

“Matthew Cuppaw?” Nick asked.

“Uhh yeah…” The leopard answered as he started to reach for Judy.

She reacted instantly her small taser appearing in her paw out seemingly out of nowhere. “Matthew Cuppaw you are under arrest,” Judy stated factly.
The leopard lunged forward for her as she squeezed the trigger and backed off the front step of the home. The twin electrodes penetrated through the leopard's shorts and into his hide just above his thighs before delivering about sixty thousand volts.

Nick watched in amusement as the leopard went stuff as the voltage surged through the leopard's body. He smirked as Cuppaw fell face first out of his home and onto the walkway that leads to his door and winced. Then started to chuckle as a growing puddle appeared under the now prostate leopard.

“Matthew Cuppaw.” Nick started as he pulled out his paw cuffs. “You have the right to remain silent, but do feel free to moan and groan though getting hit by those things hurts. Anything other than the aforementioned groans will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney, If you cannot afford one, and if you can’t your more screwed than you already are, one will be appointed to you.”

Nick finished securing the leopard's paws behind his back. “Don't worry about acknowledging your rights we will read them to you again after you regain a bit more of your senses.”

Nick patted the paw cuffed leopard on the head as he stood back up. “Can you watch him? I would like to do a quick sweep of the house before we call it in, so we know what services to call for….”

Judy shook her head. “I don't think so, we should call for backup instead of you going in there alone.”

Nick nodded and looked toward the open door. “Call it in.”

Judy nodded as she pulled out her cell phone.

Nick kept his attention on the open door, his ears would periodically swivel around, but he kept his eyes trained on the door.

“This is Detective Hopps, We are at 192 Burnt Tree Avenue, need back up and possible medical support.”

Judy watched as Nick walked up to the door and started to sniff. She could see his ears getting lower and lower on his head.

He turned his head and looked at her. “Tell dispatch we are going to need the coroner as well.”

“And notify the coroner…,” Judy said just before she hung up her phone and asked. “What do you smell?” Just before slipping it back into her pocket.

“Blood and a lot of it.”

“Backup will be here in ten.”

Nick nodded and sighed. “I don't think you want to go in there, Fluff.”

“I can handle it….”

Nick looked down at her and tilted his head. “You sure?”
Judy swallowed and nodded as her eyes peered in through the gloom of the entryway. Her nose wasn't nearly as sensitive as Nicks was but even she could start to pick up the faint coppery flavor of the air.

Nick flicked out his sunglasses and slid them over his eyes. “What do you want for dinner tonight?”

“I don't know I think it depends on what time we get off.”

Cuppaw groaned on the ground behind them. Nick looked at the leopard dressed in a black t-shirt and khaki shorts.

“What are you thinking Nick?”

Nick just shook his head and turned his attention to the street. Nothing had moved along the road in a while. That wasn’t unusual in of itself they were off of the beaten path closer to the heating wall between Savana Central and Tundra Town than most mammals preferred. Rent and housing here were cheaper than closer to downtown where he and Judy lived.

Nick turned his eye toward the house. A single story ranch dwelling he could see the basement awning windows on either side of the house with their underground metal lined wells. A home like this wouldn't be overly expensive given its proximity to the wall he thought to himself.

Nick and Judy turned their eyes to the road as a dark grey sedan pulled it. It was obvious it was for police use with the extra antennas and the steel rims. He breathed a sigh of relief as he recognized Fangmeyer and Wolfson as they exited the car.

“What do we got?” Fangmeyer asked as she and her partner walked up.

“Perp took a shock to the groin. So careful where you step if its wet it is more than likely not water….” Nick answered.

“Nick and I need to secure the house before the medics and coroner get here.”

Fangmeyer nodded.

“You sure you want to go in there? “ Wolfson asked as he wrinkled his nose.

Judy just nodded and started to walk closer to the door. “You coming Slick?”

Nick turned as he followed Judy into the house as he slid his sunglasses off and back into the inner pocket of his jacket.

Judy pulled her taser out as she entered the house first. Nick drew the heavy pistol instead of his Taser. He was pretty sure there was no one left alive in the house.

The front room was large with a big screen tv, and a pair of gaming consoles hooked up to it. Controllers and games were scattered across a coffee table haphazardly. A large comfortable looking couch sat behind the coffee table.

A large corner desk was set up against the far wall. On top of it sat multiple monitors. The desk was set up in a way that you couldn’t see the monitors from the open door.
Nick walked over to the desk and saw that the monitors were in their standby mode indicated by yellow power lights. He wiggled the mouse, and slowly the monitors lit back up going straight to the leopards desktop. Only a few of the monitors seemed to be in use the rest showed a background image of a bunny. Nick took a step back, the picture was an obvious photoshop but the rabbit spread out across the monitors was supposed to be Judy. The way she was laid out instead of being sexy was more akin to being a meal.

“We are going to need the TIU,” Nick said as he walked away from the computer.

“What…”

“No,” Nick said firmly standing in her way to see the computer.

“But…”

“Remember when we first got the file from Cor?”

Judy nodded and turned and headed into the kitchen with Nick not so far behind her.

Nothing moved in the house was eerily still the smell of blood got stronger as they entered the kitchen. A board creaked under their feet as they entered the kitchen.

They could hear a faint rattling of metal, sounded odd like a ball or something hitting a chain link fence. Nick's ears swiveled as he attempted to locate the source of the sound.

“It's coming from the basement…,” Judy said.

Nick nodded and walked over to a door and opened it. The door opened into a pantry the smell of blood was the strongest here. The sick coppery smell filled his nostrils, he could hear the banging more clearly it sounded as if some mammal was kicking against chain link fence.

Judy pushed past him and looked down and grabbed the rug that covered the floor and pulled it back revealing a rather poorly made trap door. The smell that struck Nick knotted his stomach.

“Judy wait!” Nick yelled as he grabbed her before she pulled up the door.

“Nick! Let me go there is someone in trouble!” She yelled at him.

“Judy I know, but there are dead mammals down there,” Nick said calmly as he held her tightly. She shook in his arms, vibrating with energy. He could almost feel her heart race.

“I'll go down, and I'll get them just please please please wait here….” Nick begged her.

Judy settled she could hear the desperation her fox’s voice. “Please…” He whispered into her ear one more time. She froze her heart racing and after a few minutes nodded.

Nick let her go as she stepped aside from him. He stepped up to the trap door and pulled it up. He could hear Judy retch from the smell that came from the basement as he stepped down onto the stairs.

The kicking stopped.

The basement was dark and dry he could make out shapes hanging from the ceiling as he stepped
Nick looked to his left and saw a light switch. He flipped it on and promptly wished he hadn’t.

From the ceiling hung four small bodies by their feet. The bodies raw and pink from being skinned. Nick's stomach turned, and his breakfast threatened to vacate it. The hides of the four mammals were stretched out on racks on one side of the room. The other was dominated by a grisly looking table saw.

From the look of the hides more than just rabbits had died down there.

Nick stepped farther into the room around the Bodies to see four cages lining the back wall. Only one was occupied. Blue eyes brimmed with tears stared at him. Nick slowly walked closer to the cage.

The young rabbit had dark grey fur, and from the way that they cowered against the back wall, Nick had a hard time telling if they were male or female. The young rabbit’s nose twitched, and nostrils flared as Nick stepped closer.

“I’m Nick, I'm a detective with the ZPD……”

“I’m next……” The young bunny said quietly. His eyes darted around the room.

“I’m going to get you out……”

“I’m next……”

Nick stepped closer and looked at the latch of the cage. He sighed at the padlock and looked around the room hopeful for a key.

“You wouldn’t happen to know where the key is?” Nick asked.

“I’m next……”

Nick studied the lock for a moment. It was cheap and flimsy, he shook his head. “What is it with traffickers and cheap locks?” He thought to himself.

Nick reached into the inner pocket of his jacket and pulled out a business card. It wasn't one of his it was one of the ones for his tailor, but it would do. He folded the card a few times and looked at the bunny.

“If you tell Carrots that I did this she won't be pleased with me,” Nick said softly as he wedged the business card between the shank and body of the lock, down through the opening that the shank locked into the body though. He wrapped his left paw around the shank of the lock and the folded card and squeezed as hard as he could. With his right paw, he pulled down on the body and the lock popped open.

“I’m next……” The young bunny said staring at the lock.

Nick removed the padlock and opened the gate of the cage. The squeal of metal on metal let him know that the gate wasn't overly maintained or maybe it was more to strike fear into the occupants. He slowly reached in and gathered the rabbit into his arms cradling its head against his chest. The bunny's paws grabbed Nick jacket and held tightly.
Judy’s nose twitched. Nick had been down there a long time. What if he was in trouble? What if….. The thought was derailed as his head appeared in the opening for the trap door.

“Nick!” She said the relief in her voice apparent and her ears fell back at the sight of the young bunny. She could tell it was a young male maybe eight years old. Her heart wrenched at the site of pure terror in the young buck’s eyes.

“I need your jacket Fluff…” Nick said. “Has EMS arrived?”

Judy nodded and stripped off her jacket and wrapped it over the buck.

Nick used his left foot and kicked the trap door shut. “Don’t go down there…”

Judy nodded and looked at the trap door one more time. “Come on let us get him some help.”

“I was next…..” The young buck said quietly and shook against Nicks’ chest.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

“Startling News tonight from the Zootopia Police Department Precinct One. We go to our correspondent on the ground for the latest.” Fabienne Growley said.

The camera cut to a light grey female koala bear standing in front of the ZPD Precinct One building.

“Yes, reports are coming out of the Precinct One building today of more arrests made in the Leaperson Kit Trafficking Scandal. In all totaling over forty arrests had been made in the last twenty-four hours. A surprisingly large number of the arrests have been prey species, but there have been a few predator species as well. Among those is eccentric billionaire Matthew Cuppaw. Mr. Cuppaw is CEO of Cuppaw Holdings the largest contractor that does maintenance on the climate walls for the city. In a quick move, Mr. Cuppaw was arraigned this evening on charges from kit trafficking to murder and consumption of mammal flesh. Due to the extreme charges being pressed bail has been denied.”

The camera cut back to Fabienne Growley. “Thank you, Sarah, now, here is Chuck with the weather…”

The zebra muted the news broadcast and swirled the wine around in the wine glass held in his right hoof.

“I had warned Cuppaw about his…… Depravity one day was going to catch up with him.” He thought to himself as he looked at the TV. The otter on screen giving a silent weather report.

The ringing of his cell phone pulled him out of his thoughts.

“Yes?” He said as he answered the phone holding it up to his ear with his other hoof.

“It's ready but…..” The voice on the other end said.

“Will it work?”
“It should….”

“I don’t care about should, yes or no will it work….”

“Yes but I don’t know what else or for how long it will even work. I don’t know I had more time to test the original…..”

“Good have it delivered to my office in the morning.” The zebra hung up his phone before the voice could say anything else.

He looked at his phone for a moment before placing another call.

“Savage.” answered a voice after a few moments.

“Jack… How would you like to repay your debt to me in full?”

Judy watched as her fox trudged down the hall of their apartment. He left a trail of clothes and gear behind him as he stripped. He hadn’t said much of anything since he told her not to go down into the basement. The CSI techs that went down there came back looking troubled as well. She could only imagine the horrors that the cellar had kept hidden.

She paused unsure of how to help her fox. He was usually so stoic, as nothing ever seemed to get to him. “Don’t ever let them see they get to you…” She heard in his voice. The memory of the sky tram flashed briefly before her eyes.

Judy’s nose twitched as she heard the shower turn on. She suddenly understood, and she started to walk down the hall after her fox. As she passed his bulletproof vest she looked down at it and paused mid-step as her understanding of him solidified even more. “It’s a mask…” She thought to herself. “The jokes the stoic nature it’s all just a mask…..” She knew she got to him. He admitted as much, but the job? She thought it rolled off of him, the slurs that had been thrown his way while on duty, the spitting and being called a traitor.

Her paws started to work the buttons of her shirt as she started walking down the hall once again.

She entered the bedroom as her sports bra hit the floor she unclipped her taser from her belt and set it besides Nicks weapons on top of the dresser. Her belt buckle made a light jingling sound as she pushed her pants and panties down and kicked them off of her feet.

Judy walked into the bathroom. Typically the room would be full of classic rock when he showered alone, but instead, the only sound heard was the water cascading down in the shower. She stepped over to the shower door it was already fogged a bit from the hot water.

Nick liked being warm she reflected. It was a holdover from his being homeless.

Judy pulled the door open and stepped inside. She found Nick standing in the middle of the shower the shower heads hitting his back as his forehead rested against the wall. His ears were splayed apart. His eyes were closed, and paws hung limply at his side.

“Nick?” She said softly as she stepped closer to him. His right eye cracked she could just see a hint of emerald green peering at her. She hurried to his side as she looked up at him. Tears brimmed his eyes, he had a distant look in them. She understood then what he kept her from seeing.
Nick took a deep breath, she could hear the slight creak in his still not fully healed ribs. “He probably shouldn't be doing field work.” She thought as she lifted his paw and slid under it. Her arms wrapped around his waist tightly. She felt his paw tremble on her back before he turned and pressed his back into the wall as he slid down it gathering her up in his arms on the way down.

Judy curled up in his lap letting herself be drawn down with him. Not a word was spoken between the two. None was really needed. She felt his paw hold her protectively. Her face pressed against his chest. She felt his nose press between her ears as the water continued to cascade over them. Her paws pressed against his chest.

He broke, safe in the shower, with the one mammal he trusted, he broke. His tears fell freely. Judy felt them splash against her ears his chest started to heave. Her eyes closed she snuggled in tighter to his chest letting him cry. His paws held her tightly to his chest.

“Its ok Nick.” She stroked his face softly. “It's ok my big brave fox, Its ok.” She whispered to him. She had no idea how long he cried, to her it felt like an eternity. She had no idea what he saw in that basement, he had shouldered that burden for her willingly.

“I love you….” She whispered softly.

“I love you too…..You have no idea how much I love you.” His long wet tail wrapped around her.

She smiled but didn't say anything as he was wrong she had an excellent idea at how much he loved her.
First things first: Many thanks to lilwashi76 who has stepped up to edit my work.
I also have to thank my friends on the ZNN discord: Pandora, Dangersque and many others who have encouraged me to write.

The original first draft of Savage Days was done back in March of this year, I hadn't even seen the movie just read a few fanfics and watched clips on youtube. Then I watched the movie and scraped what I had written. Over the month of April, I did lots of research and laid down what is now Episodes 1,2 and 3.

I hope you guys have enjoyed this and will join me for Season Two.

Comments: 71
Kudos: 106
Bookmarks: 24
Hits: 4881

“Far off in the distance, somewhere you can't see
Allegiances have formed your destiny
Opposition all around, feeding off your soul
Trying hard to swallow up you whole
And the demons all around you, waiting for you to sell your soul”
Black ~ Kari Kimmel

Judy looked down at her fox as she slowly but firmly ran the brush through his fur. He still hadn’t said much. His head was turned, so his nose was close to her. Her scent seemed to be relaxing him along with the brush. They had stayed in the shower for over an hour. When the water started to go cold, she convinced him to turn it off and dry off. It had taken a while to get him thoroughly dry; his layers of fur seemed to soak up all the water. But she pampered him as best as she could.

“You ok, Slick?” she asked softly.

His eyes opened slowly, and he looked up at her. “I will be.” His eyes seemed to have lost some of the luster from the morning. They looked tired and distant. She set the brush aside and rolled him over onto his back. He complied willingly as he looked up at her.

Nick’s eyes were half-lidded as they tracked her movements. She slowly stretched out along his chest, her small body pressing his down into the bed.
“Want to talk about it?”

Nick’s paws gently wrapped around her.

Judy closed her eyes, loving the weight of them on her back. He was quiet, and she partially wondered if he was ignoring the question.

“It…” Nick started quietly. “It was awful….I’ve seen too much in this life. Of... the.. this.........”

“This...what?” she asked.

Nick shook his head. “I don't regret going down there… It's just…”

“What?”

Nick closed his eyes. “He was eating them.”

Judy’s nose twitched as she remembered the shouted words of Matthew Cuppaw as he was placed in a patrol car. “You don't understand! They breed the way they do for a reason, so better species can consume them!”

She felt his paws tighten on her back.

“This case…”

“Let's go to Hawaii,” Judy said quietly, changing the subject.

“Huh?” The bewilderment was evident in Nick’s voice.

“For our honeymoon, let's go to Hawaii.”

Nick thought about it for a moment and relaxed. “A tropical island with my beautiful new bride?” he asked rhetorically. “Count me in, Fluff.”

“I could get a little bikini….” she hinted. “Maybe something that will contrast nicely with my fur?”

Nick nodded, a slow smile creeping across his face as he imagined how she’d look in a bikini, one as skimpy as possible if he had his way...

“But first,” she started. “I’d like to take you to the warren…”

“Oh?” Nick sounded surprised, and the smile faltered a little bit.

“I want you to meet my family.”

Nick nodded, though a shadow of doubt crossed his face. “Even though they didn't support you?”

“Doesn’t matter,” Judy sighed, her paw tracing circles in the fur of his chest. “They're still family. That doesn't change just because they don't agree with some of my choices.”

Nick nodded. “I...I can understand that…”
“But Nick?” Judy said as she looked up at him.

“Yeah?”

“They’ll be your family as well.”

Nick smiled and kissed her between the ears. “So I’ll be a rabbit clan’s fox?”

Judy smiled. “No, you’ll be my fox. My family just gets to tag along sometimes.”

Nick smiled, and she could feel him relax even more under her. “I like the sound of that, Miss Hopps.”

“Soon, I’ll be Mrs. Wilde,” she replied.

“Yes, yes you will be,” Nick said.

Judy moaned softly as she closed her eyes, feeling his paws flexed against her back. His paws slid a bit further down her back, making her heart rate increase.

“Judith Laverne Wilde,” he said softly, almost reverently. “My wife,” he added, almost whispering.

Judy smiled at the sound of it on his lips. “Tell me something.”

“Anything.”

“Months ago, when you asked me to give you a chance, did you think it would end here?”

“Who says it’s ending?” Nick said softly as he planted a soft kiss between her ears.

“I mean…”

“I know what you mean Fluff. No, I didn’t think it would end here. I had hoped, but I didn't think it would.”

“What do you mean?”

Nick smiled slightly and looked down at her as she lifted herself up to see his eyes. Hope filled her as she saw that some of the luster had returned to them. As he looked deep into her eyes, she felt like he was peering into her very soul.

“I mean, Judy, that you're too good for me. You are out of my league, yet here you are, mine.”

“Lucky you then,” she said as she settled back against his chest. “That you don't get to make that decision.”

Nick smiled warmly, his paws tightening on her lower back. “Yes, lucky me.” He answered softly.

Judy shivered slightly in the early morning chill. Her sleep-fogged mind searched for an answer to the question. Why was she cold? Her paw patted around her, searching for her fox.
Judy’s eyes snapped open when she didn’t immediately find him. Lifting her head from the bed, she looked around the room. It was still mostly dark. The barest hint of light had started to lighten the sky outside of the bedroom window. The place was cast in the soft, subdued light of the nightlights that they had installed after her first, almost disastrous, trip to the bathroom in the dark months ago. Looking at the bedroom door, she could tell that it was closed. Her ears perked up, just barely picking up the soft melodic sound of his guitar.

Judy moved over to the edge of the bed and slid down off of it. As she walked to the door, she picked up the gaudy green Hawaiian shirt off of the footboard of the bed as she passed by. She quietly opened the bedroom door and slid on the shirt as she padded her way down the hall.

As Judy made her way down the hall, she could hear Nick strum chords on his guitar, pause, then try the same melody in a different key.

The area in front of the couch was a mess, and her fox sat in the center of it. Crumbled up balls of paper were scattered about the area and across the top of the coffee table. Judy watched as Nick made some marks on a piece of paper with a pencil. Her eyes focused on Nick, clad only in his carrot print boxers.

She leaned against the wall as he started to play again, the melody soft and somewhat soothing. His thumb caressed the top string of the guitar, adding a minor bass line to the tune that his fingers plucked out. The music stopped suddenly when he yawned.

“Nick?” she said softly.

Nick smiled at her with tired eyes. “Hey! Morning, Fluff. Did I wake you?”

“Only with your absence.”

“I'm sorry.”

“Have you slept?”

“Not really no,” he answered as his ears splayed out to the sides.

Judy walked over to him slowly. The shirt was still unbuttoned and showed off most of her body. She plucked the guitar from his paws and sat it down on the coffee table, then stood in front of him.

“Why?” she asked, her fingers softly working through the fur behind his ears.

Nick shook his head and pressed his nose to her belly.

“Maybe it'll make you feel better?” she asked, sounding hopeful.

Nick's nose slipped as he pressed his forehead against her chest. He was quiet as she rubbed the back of his head softly.

“I was slipping off to sleep holding you,” he started and paused to swallow. “Then I saw them looking at me accusingly like I wasn't fast enough to save them.” Nick shuddered slightly; he wasn't giving her the full details of his dream. He didn't want to burden her with that.

Judy wrapped her arms around his head and held him.
“Come on,” Judy said after a few minutes as she took his paw and pulled him up.

“Carrots, it's still a little early to be getting ready.”

“We’re not going to work today. I think it's understandable that you need some time…” Judy said.

“What, Super Bunny is pushing for a day off?” Nick asked in disbelief as he let her lead him down the hall.

Judy looked up at him. “Well, Super Bunny can't do anything without Wonder Fox,” she stated matter-of-factly.

Nick smiled as she pushed him back onto the bed. He slipped up onto the bed and slid toward the center of it. His eyes tracked her as she made her way around to her side of the bed.

Judy slipped the gaudy shirt off and tossed it back over to the footboard of the bed. She stepped up onto the step stool, then crawled up onto the bed and settled against him. He rolled onto his side, his tail curled up over her. She pressed her face into the fur of his chest. His scent smelled strangely of violets with a faint metallic tang to it.

Judy snuggled into him as his nose rested softly between her ears. She could feel his warm breath wash over the top of her head. In a lot of ways, it relaxed and comforted her that he was there. She wished she could comfort him the same way his large presence comforted her.

Judy’s mind flashed back to helping her mother in the warren nursery. Her mom had thought maybe showing Judy the joy of taking care of kits would perhaps change her mind about becoming a police officer.

“I don’t know what else to do, Mom; he won't relax and go to sleep!” A fourteen-year-old Judy all but hissed at her mother.

“Oh, Jude, here, let me show you a trick that used to work on you,” Bonnie said, taking the young rabbit from Judy's arms.

Judy watched as her mom gently rubbed her brother's ears between her thumb and forefingers in firm but smooth circles. The young buck slowly went to sleep.

“See, even works on your father at times,” Bonnie said quietly.

Judy thought about it for a moment. “If it works on rabbits, would it work on a fox?” She pushed up with her feet and slid up his body slowly. He lifted his muzzle, giving her access to his throat. He had explained to her that it was a sign of trust between Canidae. She planted a soft kiss against his throat before she sat up in the middle of the foxy cocoon he had created for her.

“Carrots…”

“Shhhhh, lift your head up slightly, Slick.”

Nick did as she asked and sat down cross-legged and gently pushed his head into her lap. She softly
started to stroke the fur along the top of his head. She gently took his ears between her thumb and forefingers and began to rub them in firm but slow circles.

Judy listened to him and kept rubbing his ears. As the minutes passed, his breathing changed; his head pressed more against her, and he finally slipped off to sleep. She looked down at her fox, his head filling her lap, and smiled.

Judy’s eyes lifted from Nick’s sleeping form to look out at the brightening sky as the sun slowly rose over the city.

“Serendipity,” Judy prayed silently. “Please help Nick; please help my fox.”

Judy looked at the lightening sky outside their bedroom window. Hours had passed. Whenever he’d started to stir, she’d rubbed his ears until he settled back down. Now that she was sure he was deeply asleep, she carefully peeled herself away from him.

Judy picked up the gaudy green Hawaiian shirt and slipped it on, buttoning up a small amount of the buttons and picked up her phone. She stepped silently out the door and paused for a moment as she contemplated shutting it. She shook her head and headed down the hall to the living room, placing her phone in the breast pocket of the shirt.

Leaving the door open will let me hear if he stirs again, Judy thought to herself.

Judy shook her head at the mess he’d made, balled up wads of paper scattered about. His coffee cup still sat on the coffee table with his guitar and notepad. She picked up his guitar and walked over to the wall. By lifting the guitar up mostly by its body and standing on her tiptoes, she was just able to get the headstock hooked on the hanger for it on the wall. She turned back to the room and thumped her foot for a moment, then picked up his coffee cup as she walked into the kitchen with a sigh. She climbed up onto her step stool in the kitchen and dumped out his coffee cup, then filled the kettle and placed it on the stove to boil.

Judy leaned against the counter top as she fished her phone out of the shirt pocket and unlocked it. The background wallpaper of her phone was a picture of him and her together just after his academy graduation. They were both happy in it.

Judy opened her contacts and scrolled through until she found the work ones. She pressed the one she was looking for.

“Captain Rutherford,” the gruff voice answered.

“Good morning, Captain, it's Hopps.”

“Good morning, Judy. How’s Wilde?”

“That's the reason I called….”

“I take it he's not doing well?”

“No, no he's not…”

“What’s going on?”
Judy hesitated before trying to explain. “He’s having dreams…”

“Is he talking about them?”

“A bit,” Judy answered.

“That’s good. Keep him talking about it so he can work through it. If he has too many issues we can schedule him time with the department therapist.”

“I’m not sure how well he’d do with a therapist. He doesn’t open up easily.”

“I know,” Judy heard Captain Rutherford sigh, and then there was some typing in the background. “I can authorize two weeks R and R for the pair of you.”

“Actually, I’d like a bit more than that if possible. Nick and I are getting married next week, and I want to take him to Hawaii for our honeymoon.”

“I’ll talk to Chief Bogo, as I cannot authorize any more than two weeks of paid…”

“Nick and I would both be willing to take it as unpaid,” Judy said.

“Really?”

“Yes, sir.”

“I will talk to Chief Bogo.”

“When you talk to the Chief, let him know we would like to speak to him as well.”

“About?”

“We’d like him to be our officiant for our wedding next week.”

Judy heard a snort at the other end of the line. “I’ll let him know. Take care of your partner.”

“I will, thank you, sir.”

“And Judy?”

“Yes, Captain?”

“Congratulations.”

“Thank you, Captain.”

Judy turned off the screen of her phone as the line went dead. The kettle started to whistle as she slid the phone back into the pocket of the shirt. She set a tea bag to steep in a mug of hot water as she looked over the disaster of their living room. She kept dunking the tea up and down as she looked.

Judy took a tentative sip of her tea before throwing the bag away. She stepped down off of the ladder with her cup and walked over to the coffee table to look down at the notepad.
The lines and circles drawn on it meant little to her. What drew her eye was the words written under everything. Judy’s eyes tracked across the words, then looked up at the top of the page and read the title.

“Your Arms Feel Like Home,” she whispered as she read the title.

*It’s more than that you dumb fox. Being here with you feels more like,* she heard herself say in her head.

*Home,* She heard Nick’s voice.

Judy sipped her tea and looked around again. The mess suddenly didn't feel so bad. She started to walk back down the hall as she sipped her tea, suddenly finding herself not wanting to leave him alone any longer than necessary.

She set her mug on the nightstand on her side of the bed. As Judy climbed up onto the bed, she looked over Nick again. He seemed to be sleeping soundly, so she adjusted the pillows and leaned back against the headboard before she slipped her phone out of the pocket.

Judy scrolled through the notifications on her phone. Several of her siblings wished her and her fox the best, a few stated disbelief, and a smaller pawful stated anger at them. She shook her head and added the bigots to her blocked list. She was relieved to see that most of her littermates were either supportive or indifferent. Judy shrugged as she scrolled through; while she had a lot of notifications, she didn't have anywhere near the number Nick had the day before.

Judy’s phone vibrated in her paw, startling her a bit as a green box flashed up on the screen.

Mom: Can we talk?

Judy: Nick is asleep finally…

Mom: It's important, about next week.

Judy: Ok, give me a few minutes. I'll call from the living room.

Mom: Ok

Judy turned off the screen of her phone and slid out of bed with a soft thump as her feet touched the floor. She turned back and looked at Nick to see him still sound asleep and sighed with relief. She picked up her mug of tea and padded back down the hall.

Judy took a sip of her tea as she looked around the room. Knowing what he had been working on the night prior made the mess not seem so bad. *Maybe Gazelle’s living room looks about the same after writing a new song?* she thought to herself. She sighed, knowing she was just putting off the call to her parents. Nick would probably bet that her father would be included on this call.

Judy sat down on the edge of the couch and pressed the home button at the bottom of the phone before bringing up her contacts list and hitting the contact for her mother. She wasn’t even sure the phone rang when her mother answered it.

“Good morning, Mom,” Judy said as her mother's image filled the screen.
“Goo…” her mother started before she was interrupted by her husband.

“IS THAT JUDITH!?!?” Judy could hear her father in the background. “LET ME SPEAK TO THAT WAYWARD KIT!”

Before Bonnie could answer, her father's face filled the screen of the phone. “Jude, you listen to me right now! I forbid you to marry that fox! I have set you up with the Mason’s son, Thomas. You remember him from school, right? Well, he sai…”

“STUART JACOBSON HOPPS!” Judy winced as her mother used her father's full name.

“What, Bonnie? She's about to make a huge mistake! No rabbit will want anything to do with her after…” Judy listened to her mother and father fight over the phone.

“If you finish that sentence, Stuart, the only fluffy tail you will be seeing for a long time is your own after Doc Johnson surgically removes your head from your tail hole,” her mother threatened.

“Jack said he wanted nothing to do with her now! He said it would feel like tossing a carrot down a hallway!”

Judy’s eyes narrowed, and then widened in surprise as she heard a WHAP from the other end of the phone.

“YOU WILL NOT SPEAK ABOUT OUR DAUGHTER IN SUCH CRUDE MANNER!” Bonnie screamed at her husband, each word punctuated by a smack on the head with what Judy could only assume was a rolled up newspaper.

“GIVE ME MY PHONE AND GET THE FLUFF OUT OF MY HOUSE!” Bonnie screamed at Stu. “YOU CAN SLEEP IN THE BARN, SINCE THAT'S OBVIOUSLY WHERE YOU WERE RAISED!”

Judy winced as her mom's phone was tossed onto the kitchen table and just missed landing in the carrot juice by a few inches. She could hear the back door slam as her father made his retreat.

She could hear her mother huffing in the background.

“Now, if any of you have anything disparaging to say about your sister you can go join your father out in the barn,” Judy could hear her mother threaten her brothers and sisters. “You don't have to agree with her choice, but you do have to keep your opinion about it to yourself, or at least be respectful.”

There was a soft scraping sound as her mother picked her phone back up. “I'm sorry about that Jude,” her mother said as her face once again filled the screen.

“It’s not your fault, Mom…”

“No, but a kit should never be treated like that by their parents. No matter how old they get.”

“I take it Dad isn't coming?”

Bonnie shook her head. “No, he's dead set against it, even called Jack last night.”
Judy sighed and grumbled. “Stupid bet.”

“What's that dear?”

“Oh, just me wishing I never made a bet with Nick,” Judy sighed. “I made a bet after watching a movie that Nick didn’t know Jack Savage, and, well…”

Bonnie chuckled. “Remind me never to bet against your fox.”

“That would be a wise idea,” Judy sighed. “The day Nick got shot, I hadn't seen Jack in weeks. I’d told him it was over, but he came to the hospital to check that I was ok, even though the news had pretty much reported that I was uninjured.”

Bonnie nodded. “Jack had called that night asking if you were ok.”

“We had a fight in the cafeteria. I'm surprised it didn't end up on social media.”

“What was the fight about?”

“Ironically? Nick. He accused me of having an affair with Nick, saying the shooting was Nick’s fault…”

Bonnie nodded. “We saw him on the news.”

“Yeah well…” Judy looked at her mom. “Nick was and still is a hero. Without Nick, I wouldn't have gotten my job back. Without Nick, all these kits…” Judy shook her head. “And now…”

“And now what?”

“We made another high profile arrest yesterday.”

“We saw the news…”

“Well, the guy had a basement. Mom, the smell…” Judy paused. “We could hear the kit kicking the cage from the kitchen. Nick opened the pantry door, and I just knew the way down was there. I pulled the rug back, and there was a trap door. “

“What happened?” Bonnie asked.

“Nick grabbed me and pulled me away from the door before I could open it. He begged me, Mom, he begged me not to go down there…” Judy shook her head. “He went down by himself...the smell, Mom, oh sweet cheese and crackers, the smell... He came back a short while later with the kit. He wasn't gone long, but I’d started to worry anyway.”

“Is he ok?” Bonnie asked softly.

“He didn't sleep last night. I got him to sleep this morning by tweaking his ears like you showed me with Kevin…”

Bonnie looked surprised. “So that works on a fox as well?”
“Yeah… Thanks for that.”

“Good to know just in case you two give me grand kits…”

“Mom!” Judy blushed and looked away from the phone.

“Relax, Jude. I'm sure Nick will be fine.”

“What makes you think that?”

“He has you to take care of him. It's how this works dear; he takes care of you, and you need to take care of him.”

Judy nodded and took a deep, steadying breath. “Mom, do you think my dream is going to cost me my fox?”

Bonnie looked thoughtful, but before she could answer, Nick spoke up. “Never.”

Bonnie smiled at hearing Nick’s voice. “Well, I look forward to meeting my new son-in-law next week. I’ll talk to you later.”

“Nick!” Judy exclaimed seeing him lean against the wall still in just his carrot print boxers. “I'm sorry I didn't mean to wake you…”

“It's fine, Carrots. I didn't want to sleep the day away anyway.”

“How much…” Judy started to ask.

Nick shook his head and walked toward her. “Nothing you can say or do will drive me from your side, Judy. You're stuck with me.”

Judy rushed to him, and he gave an exaggerated “Oof!” as she wrapped her arms around his waist.

Nick held her tightly, his tail wrapped around her thighs. “I love you Judith.”

“I love you, too. We got at least two weeks off; is there anything you'd like to do?”

“Well, I did say we can choose a…what was it again?” Nick asked before answering himself “An engagement ring…”

Judy sat in the Zuber, fighting hard to keep her foot from thumping against the floor of the car. Nick hadn't said a word about where they were going, only gave an address to the driver. She cast a glance over at him; a mildly smug smile was stretched across his muzzle. His eyes were hidden behind his sunglasses. He was dressed in dark slacks with a blue Hawaiian shirt and a dark grey tie. The tie almost reminded her of her own fur. He didn't even bother to look out the window or at his phone.

“Relax Carrots,” Nick said softly.

“But…”
“Do you trust me?”

“Yes but…”

“No buts, I know you’re excited; it'll just be a few more minutes.”

Judy nodded and looked out the window.

Nick watched her out of the corner of his eye. She was all but vibrating, in excitement for going. He was pretty sure she set speed records for getting ready and somehow made his coffee pot make coffee faster than usual as well. She was dressed in what he liked to refer to as “country bunny”: blue jeans and a green plaid flannel shirt.

The sedan pulled over, and Judy got out while she waited for Nick to pay their fare. She looked around, seeing that they were somewhere downtown, but not in an area she had been before. It was older; the buildings had a more gothic style of architecture than the more modern skyscrapers in the newer sections of the city. It felt lived in, but not run down.

Judy turned her attention to the storefront they had stopped in front of. The window was full of beautiful pieces of jewelry, some of which she was confident cost more than she made in a year. The signage was rather simple as well; it just said Buccellati’s, and behind that was a stylized outline of a wolf head. Upon closer inspection, she thought it could have been any of the dozens of species in the Canidae family tree.

Judy’s ears perked up as she heard the car door shut behind her and the Zuber drive off.

“So…why here Slick? Why not Zoole’s or Harold’s?”

Nick rolled his eyes behind his sunglasses. “Please, Carrots, I would like to think I have much more class than taking you to those chain stores. Besides, this is tradition.”

Judy looked up at him. “Tradition?”

Nick nodded. “I’m not sure about other cultures, but Vulpes…” He paused as he searched for words. He took off his sunglasses and looked her in the eyes before he continued. “We take commitments extremely seriously.”

“How seriously?”

Nick’s ears pinned back as he looked up and down the street. “Multiple lifetimes seriously. If you follow Vulpine tradition and religious customs to the letter, my mom's ring isn't yours because she said to put it on your paw; it's yours because you owned it before.”

Judy was quiet as she looked up at him. He continued to explain. “Typically rings in my family are passed down every other generation. Her ring should have gone to our kit. My grandmother's ring should go to you. But my grandmother's ring went to my Uncle Terry. My mom's ring is technically my great-great-grandmother's ring.”

Judy thought about it for a moment. “So you're saying that by Valupine traditions this isn't our first time together?”

Nick nodded. “If you follow tradition and religious customs, yes.”
“So foxes believe in soul mates?” Judy asked quietly.

Nick nodded.

“What do rabbits believe?”

Judy thought about it for a moment. “We believe Serendipity brings mammals into our lives that will teach us surprising lessons.” Judy turned back to the storefront. “You said your mother's ring is technically your great-great-grandmother's ring.”

Nick nodded. “The only thing truly passed down is the gold, and possibly the stones if there are any. The rings are remade for each paw they grace. It's all part of the cycle for something new to grow; sometimes we have to leave our pasts behind.”

Judy nodded thoughtfully.

“Ready to go inside?” Nick asked.

“Sure,” Judy replied, her previous exuberance now tempered with a bit of solemnity.

Nick opened the door and waved her inside. She wasn't sure what to expect when she stepped inside the store. The store wasn't large. It was obviously meant for canines, but from the look of some of the jewelry, they catered to felines as well.

Rows of stainless steel and glass cases filled the large space. The sound of a small hammer striking metal could be heard in the background.

“Hello and good afternoon. Welcome to Buccellati’s! How can we help you today?” the female wolf greeted them from behind a display case. “Can I interest you in anything?”

“Good afternoon, ma’am, We are here to see Pawlovski.”

“I’m sorry, Pawlovski is quite busy at the moment.”

Nick nodded understandingly, “I’m sure he is quite busy, and will be very cross with you when he finds out you turned us away.”

“Nick it’s…” Judy started to interrupt.

“Wait…Wilde?” the female asked hesitantly.

Nick nodded.

“Our condolences about your mother, Mr. Wilde. Pawlovski will be out shortly,” she said before stepping through the staff door in the back.

“Pawlovski?” Judy asked. “Was he a friend…”

“I am the only jeweler in the city that will deal with heirloom gold, Miss Hopps. Nicholas’s mother informed us he would be coming by eventually before she passed.” An aging Ethiopian wolf stated as he emerged from a staff only door. He was drying his paws on a paw towel; jeweler’s glasses were pushed high up on his forehead. His fur was a dark red, almost brown, but grey had replaced the fur around his eyes and along his muzzle. He was dressed in a white button-up shirt and black
Judy looked at the wolf and nodded.

“Pawlovski,” Nick greeted and bowed his head slightly.

“Nicholas, so it is true?”

“It is; this is my fiancée, Judith Hopps.”

“Judith,” The old wolf greeted.

Judy smiled up at the wolf. “Hello, sir, it’s a pleasure.”

Pawlovski smiled at her. “So what can I do for you, Nicholas?”

Judy’s eyes darted from the wolf to her fox. She relaxed a bit as Nick’s tail wrapped around her hips.

“My mother requested that her ring goes on the paw of the love of my life,” Nick started to explain as he reached into his pocket and pulled out a small wooden box, setting it down on the counter in front of him with a folded up sheet of paper.

“Do you have a design in mind?”

“I do,” Nick said as he unfolded the paper.

Judy’s ears folded back as she listened to him explain what he wanted. The overall design of the ring was simple; it was shaped like a heart. The right side of the heart was to be shaped like a rabbit head, with a single amethyst in place of the eye. The left side was to be shaped like that of a fox, with a single emerald as the eye. The point of the heart was to face her. The heart was to be split into two rings; the rabbit side, or the engagement side, was to be made first and delivered as soon as possible. The second, the fox side, was to be delivered no later than Wednesday evening. The two rings, when placed on her paw, were meant to lock together in a way that made it impossible to remove one without the other.

“This is an unusual design, Nicholas,” Pawlovski said as Nick finished.

“It's a blending of traditions. I would hate for my betrothed to be robbed of the memories of having an engagement ring.” Nick explained.

“An admirable goal, even given the timeline involved. Now, Miss Hopps,” Pawlovski started as he turned his attention to her. “As you are soon-to-be the matriarch of his house, is this design suitable for you?”

Judy nodded. “More than suitable.”

“Good, now if you'll hold out your left paw…”

Judy looked up at Nick as they walked paw-in-paw down the sidewalk. The afternoon had been spent in Buccellati’s getting measurements for Judy’s rings, and then it was sprung on her that she still needed to pick out Nick’s. The ring she ultimately picked for her fox was simple. Nick had spent
the time leaning against a display counter on his phone.

“Whatcha thinkin’, Slick?” Judy asked.

“Wondering if Lorie might have a free table for us this evening,” Nick said as his tail wrapped around her waist.

Judy smiled as they crossed a street. The evening foot traffic was light for a Saturday. Her ears perked up a bit as she heard the buzzing of his phone. Nick seemingly ignored it.

“You going to answer that Slick?”

“Nope.”

“Why not, it could be important.”

“It's not.” Nicks ears pinned back.

“How do you know? You haven't even looked to see who it was.”

Nick cocked his head to the side and looked down at her. “I would assume it’s stalker bunny, as he's been trying to get ahold of me for the last hour.”

“What did he want?” Judy asked.

“No clue, haven't answered, I would assume, though, it’s to call me disparaging names and tell me how I'm not good enough for you,” Nick answered, his eyes going back to watching the mammals that they passed.

“Maybe he's in trouble?” Judy said.

“Then he should call 911,” Nick answered dryly.

“Nick…”

“Judy we are on rest and relaxation, and saving a movie star from a flock of fans is anything but restful and relaxing,” Nick said.

“Yeah but…”

Nick sighed and looked down at her again for a moment. “Would it make you feel better if I answered the phone? Need I remind you we only have tasers at the moment?”

“We did the Nighthowler case with just fox away,” Judy reminded him.

The look in Nick's eye easily conveyed his annoyance with that. “Yes, and Buffalo Butt almost lost his job over all that.”

Judy nodded. “Well if you won't answer it then I will.”

“Fine, fine, fine.” Nick pulled his phone from his pocket and hit the answer call button. “This better be good….”
“Nick! Is Judy with you? I need your help,” A panicked sounding Jack all but yelled over the phone.

“Look, stalker bunny, if you have an emergency hang up and dial 911.”

“Look, look, I…I know I haven't been gracious about you and Judy, but I really need some help here…” Jack said, sounding more panicked and out of breath. Nick rolled his eyes at the dramatics.

“Nick?” Judy said looking up at him. “If he's in trouble we’re duty bound to help him.”

“Fine, where are you at?” Nick asked.

“The Natural History Museum. Please, come quick…”

“I swear, Jack, if this is a waste of time I'm going to arrest you and forget where we put you.”

Nick eyed his phone as the line went dead. “I…”

“Come on Nick, let’s go!” Judy said as she took off running down the sidewalk.

Nick huffed as he took off after her. His pace may have been a bit slower than hers, but she couldn't maintain the sprint and slowed as he closed the distances between them. Something about this didn’t feel right, and Nick couldn’t quite put his paw on what. Their pace easily chewed up the distance to the Natural History Museum.

“Come on, Nick!” Judy yelled as she bound up the stairs.

“Judy, wait!” Nick called as she disappeared through the doors.

Nick huffed and hesitated a moment as he fished his phone back out of his pocket and dialed the number for ZPD Dispatch.

“Dispatch.” The voice on the other end answered.

“This is Detective Nicholas Wilde, badge number 573824. Detective Hopps and I are responding to a citizen in distress report at the Natural History Museum. Possible backup need,” Nick said as he walked up the stairs.

“Are you sure detective? We have no reports…” The dispatcher said.

“Citizen called my personal cell. Just send backup.”

“All units are currently busy; backup is at least thirty minutes out.”

“Just get them here,” Nick said as he hung up his phone and opened the door slowly.

Nick drew his taser as he entered the museum. It was quiet as he padded silently up the staircase, his eyes darting around. The gloom of the museum made it difficult for him to see as his eyes adjusted to the dimmer light.

“Judy?” Nick called softly.
“Ahh, Detective Wilde. So nice of you to join us,” a posh sounding voice said.

“NICK!” Judy screamed. “It’s a...MRPHMPH!”

Nick's eyes swept the scene before him. A zebra with an abnormally thick stripe across his right eye stood beside a tiger in a three-piece suit who held Judy up off the floor, his paw dangerously tight around her. He trained his taser on the tiger and silently cursed regulations that wouldn't let him carry his heavier pistol off duty.

Nick's ears perked up, and his eyes slid to his right as he heard the metallic clicks of the hammer being drawn back on a revolver.

“Drawn into a trap, your dead bottlebrush!” He heard in Major's voice.

Nick swallowed nervously.

“Now, Detective, drop your weapon, or my associate here will start to squeeze and we’ll see if your partner’s head explodes or pops off.”

“HEY!” Jack yelled. “That wasn't part of the deal.”

Nick's eyes were drawn to Jack as they narrowed.

“Shut up, you entitled little arse! You’ll get what's coming to you soon enough.” The zebra all but yelled at Jack. “Now Detective, which will it be? You can see if you are faster than my associates in killing you and your partner, or you can do the sensible thing and put down the weapon.”

Nick looked into Judy’s eyes; he could see her mouth at him don't do it. He closed his eyes; a million solutions to the situation went through his head, but in none of them did he see Judy making it out alive. He sighed as he loosened the grip on the taser and slowly placed it on the floor in front of him before standing back up.

“Good boy,” the zebra said in a condescending voice. “Maybe you are not as stupid as Mr. Savage made you out to be.”

“What's this about, Martin? Or should I just call you The Stripe?” Nick asked.

“Ahhh, so you do remember me. You know, it took me a while to know where we first met,” the zebra said.

“Yeah, well, let's say you and your friends made a lasting impression,” Nick said.

“Yes, about that. I had hoped all those years ago that you had learned your lesson. You can't imagine how amused we all were when we learned you ran away from home,” the zebra said as he turned to look down into the pit. “Come here, Detective Wilde, let's have ourselves a chat.”

The second tiger holding the large revolver motioned for Nick to move. Nick slowly walked over to the pit and looked down into it. The exhibit hadn't changed much from almost a year ago. The stuffed deer that Nick had torn apart had been replaced, and a feral looking stuffed wolf had been added to the tall fake grass.

Martin nodded to the tiger holding Judy, who then hopped down into the pit with her.
“I had hoped that you learned your lesson all those years ago, Detective Wilde. That you would stay safely under your bridge and out of the way of your betters. Yet here you are, a thorn in my side.” Martin said as they watched the tiger in the pit produce a set of pawcuffs.

Nick felt the cold barrel of the revolver press lightly against the back of his head.

“I hope, ol’ buddy, that you will enlighten me on what's going on here.”

“You, your partner, and the ZPD have cost me an inconsiderable amount of time, money and resources, Detective. A lesson must be taught,” Martin explained.

Nick swallowed again nervously as he watched the tiger pawcuff Judy’s right paw to her left foot. And sit her down.

“Hey, this wasn't part of the deal!” Jack yelled and pushed up in front of Martin. “You said I would…”

Martin back hoofed the rabbit, who fell into the pit as well. “You really are a dumb bunny Mr. Savage if you really think I would help you rape Detective Hopps.”

Nick’s eyes narrowed and shot to the striped rabbit.

Judy knelt in the center of the artificial clearing. She wouldn’t be able to stand with her paw cuffed the way it was, and her defensive options were even now more limited. Her eyes locked on Jack as he slowly shook his head and started to get up.

“You see, Detectives, all it took was the promise of Jack here getting to…” Martin paused as he thought. “How did he put it? Oh yes, rail Miss Hopps into the middle of next week, even if it would feel like tossing a carrot down a hallway now.”

Judy’s eyes narrowed as she now knew where her father had gotten the exact phrasing for that.

A woodchuck walked up and whispered something to Martin. Judy couldn’t hear it as she watched Jack stagger to his feet, their eyes locked. She backed up as best as she could on her knees.

“Well Detectives I wish I could stay and watch the fun, but I have been reminded that I have a plane to catch. Best of luck to you.” Martin said just before he reached a hoof into his inner jacket pocket. He produced a syringe filled with a powdery light blue liquid and jabbed it into Nick's neck and pressed the plunger down.

Nick could feel himself fall. His mind slowly clouded over with rage and fear. His eyes snapped open once the round pupils of his eyes gradually reshaped. His nose was tucked in close to his chest he could smell her on him from that morning. Faint maybe, but still present.

She flashed before his eyes, happy and smiling, with bright purple eyes, as his mind clouded over in a red haze. His eyes snapped open a second time, his pupils now more vertical slits than round. Faintly he could hear her scream his name.

She's not food, He told himself rather forcefully, the darkness closing in over his conscience.

Nicks sense of smell sharpened considerably as he smelled the other rabbit in the still air of the pit.
His mouth watered and his empty stomach rumbled. His eyes closed again as Nick fought against the rage.

“NICK!” Judy screamed as he heard the distinct sound of a fist or foot connecting with flesh.

Judy backed away from Jack, her eyes darting from Jack to where Nick lay crumpled in the bottom of the exhibit. She knew she was at a severe disadvantage. While Jack had only movie fighting experience, she was used to being able to move freely, though with her paw cuffed to her foot, she had a huge disadvantage.

She attempted to block and duck as Jack sent a vicious kick at her head. She was able to redirect most of the energy up over her head, but was still clipped by it enough to make her feel dizzy.

Nick felt as if he knelt in a sea of darkness. He could hear Judy’s cries for him as he struggled against the rage that slowly consumed him.

Feed… the voice rumbled through his head.

She’s not food… he all but screamed back at himself.

Pain… The dark voice rumbled. Nick could feel the pain in his muscles as they tensed and coiled, as if a spring ready to snap. The pain where the needle was still stuck in his neck. The pain from where he landed in the exhibit.

Images of his time with Judy flashed before his eyes. One image settled in his mind. The first time he woke up with her in the hospital curled against his side, the look in her eyes giving him hope that she could possibly love a fox.

The pain he felt slowly subsided, leaving only the rage.

She didn’t cause this! he railed at the darkness.

Images of Judy flashed again, this time of the look in her eyes when she first marked him, of the look in her eyes just a while ago when they ordered her rings.

Mate… the darkness rumbled.

A new pain flashed, this time as he felt something click inside his mind. He screamed from the pain; he couldn’t tell if he screamed just inside of his mind or if it was a real physical scream.

Jack paused as the fox on the other side of the exhibit screamed. His gaze turned momentarily from Judy to Nick.

It was all the opening Judy needed. She pushed her free leg toward her chest and kicked as hard as she could. She caught Jack in the stomach just above where his paws were undoing his belt and launched him from the tall artificial grass back toward the center of the exhibit.

“Nick?” She swallowed and called out for her partner, her best friend, the love of her life. She pushed herself back until her back was against the wall of the exhibit. Her nose twitched, and her eyes darted around. Her pants and panties dragged halfway down her thighs, her shirt mostly torn.
open from her struggles with Jack.

Silence now reigned in the exhibit. Nick’s screaming had stopped.

“You really are a dumb bunny” She heard Jack from somewhere behind the tall grass. “Thinking that dumb pelt would save you.”

“Why couldn't you just let me go?” Judy yelled back. Her heart was pounding inside of her chest.

“WHY COULDN'T YOU ACCEPT YOUR PLACE?” Jack yelled back. She heard a rustling of the plastic grass to her right and started to move as quietly as she could to her left, keeping her back to the exhibit wall.

“OF ALL THE DISGUSTING CREATURES, WHY A FOX?”

“That's rich, coming from you!”

“She's different; she understands her place!”

“Oh yes, I understand quite well what her place is…” she said as she stood the best as she could on one leg and hopped from the spot around the edge of the exhibit as fast as she could.

Judy’s breath was knocked from her as she was tackled to the ground. She felt Jack press a forearm against the back of her head and push her face painfully into the stone of the exhibit. She tried to kick him off of her again, but she was tired, and the disadvantage was too great as her free leg was trapped under his.

“Don’t do this, Jack!” she pleaded.

“Shut up!” Jack answered menacingly as he reared back with his free hand to deliver a punch to her face.

The punch never landed.

Nick’s eyes opened as the pain subsided. The stench of fear fermented the stale air of the exhibit.

“You really are a dumb bunny,” Nick heard Jack say.

Nick’s eyes narrowed as he slowly got up on all fours and shook his head as if to clear it of the haze that had once settled over his senses. His nose picked up the ribbons of scent. A wobbling at the edge of his vision alerted him to a movement to his right, and his head snapped in that direction.

“Thinking that dumb pelt would save you.” Nick fought hard to suppress a growl. His head lowered closer to the floor and sniffed the deep purple ribbon of the scent of his mate leading into the scentless grass in front of him.

Nick ignored the rest of the words spoken; he stalked through the grass of the artificial clearing silently, his ears turning this way and that, directing him just as well as the scent would to his mate.

“Shut up!”
Nick sprung forward; his mouth opened and snapped shut around the upper arm that Jack had raised to strike his mate. The momentum of his charge pulled Jack clean off Judy’s back and deeper into the tall plastic grass.

Jack screamed and started to punch Nick repeatedly in the neck with his free hand, almost to no avail. The angle was wrong for Jack to get any real leverage for the strikes to do any real damage, so he started to kick and claw with his feet, ripping Nicks shirt and gouging deep furrows into his belly.

Nick twisted his head, and Jack’s arm popped out the socket with a sick, wet popping sound. Jack screamed as Nick dropped him to the floor of the exhibit. Jack attempted to kick and back away from the fox, only to have Nick snap his jaws around a foot and pull him back into place. Jack reared back with his free foot to kick Nick in the face, only to have Nick give a vicious shake of his head. Nick’s teeth tore at the flesh of Jack’s leg, rendering muscle and tendon to ribbons.

Jack screamed as Nick planted his left paw square in the center of his chest and reared back with the right one. A sound almost like that of drawing a blade from a sheath could be heard as the claws of both paws fully extended. The claws of the left paw dug painfully into Jack’s chest.

Jack’s blue eyes were wide with sheer terror as he looked up into the baleful green vertically slit pupiled eyes of the fox over him. Nick’s face moved closer, staring the rabbit down, and for the first time since the fight began growled low and menacingly, his lips pulled back to reveal the rows of sharp pointed teeth. Nick swiped his right paw down across Jack’s face and for Jack the last thing ever saw was the near-savage visage of Nicholas Wilde, the mate of the bunny he attempted to rape.

Judy’s nose twitched; the air had taken the very distinct coppery tang of blood. Moments ago the air had been filled with a high pitched wailing scream, and then an eerie silence settled over the exhibit.

*I’ve really done it this time,* she thought to herself. *My impulsiveness has gotten me killed when I have everything to lose.*

Tears streamed down her face as she laid on her stomach, her right paw and left foot still painfully cuffed together. Her pants and panties were still pulled down to mid-thigh, but she was just too exhausted mentally and emotionally to care. She knew that she was supposed to die in this place. Not to keep a mad mammal in power, but because she and her partner did their jobs, perhaps a little too well.

Questions flooded her mind about the zebra, but she ignored them. Her eyes remained focused on the artificial grass in front of her.

Judy knew Nick had been hit with Nighthowler. More tears poured freely from her eyes. She remembered from the debriefings that the previous victims remembered what they did while under the influence of the drug. The effects on the victims of the Nighthowler Crisis were still being felt to this day, almost a full year later.

*Multiple lifetimes seriously,* Judy heard Nicks voice in her head. She closed her eyes and hoped that Nick hadn’t given her that level of commitment yet. How would he live with himself knowing he killed her?

Judy swallowed nervously as the grass rustled.

*This is so different than the ruse we played on Bellwether,* Judy thought to herself. During the ruse, Nick was loud and played up the savagery of tearing up the stuffed deer. His silence now was
unnerving.

Judy stared forward and waited as the grass rustled some more. Her heart pounded in her chest, sounding like a war drum calling troops to battle in her ears. She tried to steady herself as she breathed slowly in through her nose and out through her mouth.

Judy’s breath caught in her throat and his head pushed between the strands of grass. His vertically slit pupils locked on her eyes. He didn’t snarl or growl at her; his eyes, for all their savagery, looked hurt, worried, and remorseful.

Judy rolled to her side and lifted her chin, baring her throat to the fox. Hoping that if he killed her, it would at least be a quick death. Her nose twitched at the clicking his claws made as he stepped closer to her. She could hear a faint wet slapping sound as his right front paw made contact with the stone floor of the exhibit.

Judy closed her eyes. This was it, she was going to die. Her heart raced in her chest, and she trembled. Her eyes shot open when a familiar warmth wrapped its way around her protectively, her vision blocked mostly by russet and creme fur. His tail tucked up under her chin. Her heart rate slowed, and her left paw gripped his tail to her.

*How? was the only thought that went through Judy's mind as they waited for help to arrive.*

End Notes

10-00 Officer Down  
10-28 Registration request  
11-54 Suspicious vehicle

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!