The first rays of sunlight were just beginning to peek through the window shudders when Patton finally stirred from his slumber. Well, that was odd. Wasn’t he supposed to be awake before sunrise? He must have slept through the alarm Thomas set last night. Then again, it took him so long to get to sleep, it was not that much of a shock. The poor thing couldn’t help it, he was so excited! Today was the day! The big day! The day they’d both been dreaming of for years!

-AKA the Bird Sanctuary AU that literally no one asked for! Be gentle with me, this is my first fic!

Notes

I’ve had this idea stewing in my head for a little while, and I finally got around to starting it. Enjoy!
The first rays of sunlight were just beginning to peek through the window shudders when Patton
finally stirred from his slumber. Well, that was odd. Wasn’t he supposed to be awake before sunrise?
He must have slept through the alarm Thomas set last night. Then again, it took him so long to get to
sleep, it was not that much of a shock. The poor thing couldn’t help it, he was so excited! Today was
the day! The big day! The day they’d both been dreaming of for years!

As he yawned and stretched, the sound of running water got his attention, and he turned to face the
bathroom door. Thomas must have already started getting ready. What a sweetheart, letting Patton
get some extra sleep. Except now, he was restless, and could barely contain himself as he heard the
faucet being turned and the water stop.

A moment later, the door opened, and the brunette stepped out, already dressed in his uniform: Khaki
pants and a forest green polo. The left breast of the shirt proudly displayed a name tag, the name
“THOMAS” stamped clearly on the silver plate, and underneath, in smaller lettering, was the word
“OWNER”.

It was almost surreal. Thomas had spent his whole life working at his family’s bird sanctuary. His
grandfather founded it way back in the 60’s, and it had been tradition for every member of the family
to help out in some way. Thomas himself spent nearly every free moment of his childhood there. If
he wasn’t at school or studying, he was helping care for his favorite feathered friends. While most
eventually moved on to their own callings, Thomas would never find anything more magical than
watching a bird in flight. Years of schooling and a degree in Ornithology later, here he was, starting
his first day as the official owner of the Sanders Avian Sanctuary.

While his grandfather’s retirement was bittersweet, the man had nothing but confidence that the
youngest member of the Sanders family would be a most excellent replacement. Thomas, on the
other hand, hoped he could one day come close to filling his grandfather’s shoes. Patton had no
doubt his best friend would exceed all expectations. He’d been with Thomas for years, and watched
him grow from a nervous and stressed biology student to a strong and confident adult who was about
to make him so gosh darn proud!

After brushing out his hair one last time and lacing up his work boots, Thomas turned to Patton with
a grin. “Today is the day, buddy!” He stood and walked over to his dearest friend. “I know, I
shouldn’t be nervous, I’ve been working for this for years, but I can’t help it!” Crouching down to be
at eye-level, his smile never waivered. “At least I’ll have you there to help me every step of the way,
right?”

A hand reached forward and lifted the door to the cage, while the other hand hovered just outside,
finger outstretched. The little blue parakeet chirped happily, fluttering onto his favorite perch with
zero hesitation. Oh yes, Patton was sure this was going to be the absolute best day ever!
Chapter 1

Chapter Summary

The budgie was grateful for the perch, as it meant he wouldn't be confined to a cage, or have to balance on his human’s shoulder all the time. He decided earlier that the left one would be his usual perch, as that was Thomas’s dominant hand and, therefore, the one most likely to give rubs and pets. The right one would be reserved for visiting friends and those needing extra attention, though he would concede his own under special circumstances. The food and water bowls attached to it were filled, and his feathers were even and clean. All ready for the day! Thomas, on the other wing, was not.

-A few people expressed interest, so I figured why not?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chapter 1

‘Aaaaannndd…..there!’

Patton shook himself out, having just finished preening his feathers, and looked out at the office from his perch on the desk. It wasn’t much, a small room with a single window, so full of overflowing bookshelves that there was barely room for the few pieces of furniture. To be fair, though, the old wooden desk was much bigger than it should have been. Thomas’s grandfather had chosen it long before he realized how small his office would actually be. Instead of seeing it as a problem, the man decided to laugh about it, stating that a bigger desk just meant he could have two perches instead of one.

The budgie was grateful for the perch, as it meant he wouldn't be confined to a cage, or have to balance on his human’s shoulder all the time. He decided earlier that the left one would be his usual perch, as that was Thomas’s dominant hand and, therefore, the one most likely to give rubs and pets. The right one would be reserved for visiting friends and those needing extra attention, though he would concede his own under special circumstances. The food and water bowls attached to it were filled, and his feathers were even and clean. All ready for the day! Thomas, on the other wing, was not.

Muttering every step of the way, Thomas struggled to move a box of heavy textbooks onto one of the shelves, then busied himself with organizing them into the existing mish-mosh of journals and albums. “ Seriously, Grandpa, your system is terrible…” With a sigh, he simply slid them into place, vowing to categorize and alphabetize later. For now, he just wanted to bask in the glow of his new office.
He rounded the desk and looked down at his chair. There used to be one to match the dark wood of the rest of the furniture, but Grandpa had spent so much time in it, it wore down, until it collapsed from under him. Grandma was helping him pick out splinters from where the sun don’t shine for days, and no one ever let him forget about it. It was shortly replaced with a metal folding chair, Grandpa too busy to go out and choose a new one, but that Christmas everyone chipped in and bought the old man a high-end rolling office chair, complete with armrests, headrest, and memory foam cushioning. For a full week, he rolled everywhere in it.

Thomas laughed at the memory, and ran his hand over the back of the chair in silent reverence. This was it. All those years spent playing with the finches and owls and hawks and hens, all that time in university, all those nights hoping and wishing, it all came down to this. He glanced at the little blue budgie on the desk, who hopped and chirped excitedly. ‘Go on! Sit!’

Taking the hint, the young man pulled the chair out, held his breath, and carefully sat down. He’d only ever been in the chair when he was sitting on his Grandfather’s lap. He always felt so big and powerful with the old man, who would point out the things he was doing on his desk, would let the child reach out and touch whoever was currently perched there, would refer to him as ‘Doctor Thomas’ when discussing a rehab case. Sitting alone, in the large chair, behind the huge desk, beside his little blue parakeet, Thomas just felt small….

….And uncomfortable. Was this chair always so stiff?

~~~~~~~~~~

The moment the door was opened, Patton was off, flying at full speed to his favorite section of the aviary. Luckily Joan was just finishing their morning rounds, and held the gate open for the parakeet to fly in. ‘Don’t get into too much trouble, Patton!’ they called, closing the gate before walking away.

The sounds of birds chirping and squawking filled the air, the warm summer sun shining in through the top of the screened-in enclosure. This was the largest enclosure on the property, housing most of, if not all, the relatively-harmless residents. None of the birds in here were particularly predatory, the biggest prey being large grasshoppers and the odd lizard, so the little blue budgie was safe in here.

Patton greeted everyone he passed with a happy chirp. They all knew him, as Thomas had been bringing his beloved pet to the sanctuary for years. Patton would often help new patients and residents get settled, his happy nature and small size ideal for making even the most nervous of birds more comfortable.
It didn’t take long for him to spot who he was looking for, not that his brilliant plumage was hard to miss. ‘Roman!’ he chirped, landing on a twig beside the peacock. The exotic bird turned to face his little friend, and honked happily upon seeing him. ‘Patton! My sweet little songbird! How are you this morning?’

‘Amazing! Thomas just got all settled in his new office! You should see him, he looks so grown up!’

Roman chuckled. They all knew about the change in leadership, and were excited to hear the new owner would be someone so close to them.

‘He certainly has grown, hasn’t he?’

‘Uh-huh! It seems like just yesterday he was watching cartoons in his owl pajamas!’

‘Um…’ Roman tilted his head. ‘That was yesterday, wasn’t it?’

Patton sobbed softly. ‘They grow up so fast…’

The peacock rolled his eyes, and returned his attention to the mirror he’d been looking into. There were a few of them scattered in different areas, along with various other enrichment items for the birds to keep their minds engaged and have fun, but the big mirror on the far end was by far Roman’s favorite. He loved watching the way his silky white feathers glistened in the sun, the way the light caught the patches of gold and reddish-brown. Thomas would often comment about how the darker feathers looked like a ‘sash’, whatever that was. As long as he looked beautiful and regal, that's all that mattered. He used his beak to scratch out a loose feather on his neck, used a wing to adjust the crown of gold feathers on his head, and stood proudly.

‘Well? What do you think, Little Blue?’

Patton looked at his friend, both the real one and the reflected image, and trilled happily. ‘You look incredible! When Thomas sees you, he’s going to be over the moon!’

Roman shook himself out. ‘Oh, I’m planning on it! Especially when I show him the big finale!’ At that, his long tail feathers lifted slightly, hinting at what he meant.
The parakeet nearly vibrated, unable to contain himself. Roman had arrived a year or so prior. He was highly coveted for his unique coloring, and sold not long after displaying it. Being an exotic bird, his sale was illegal, and due to this, Roman never truly received proper care growing up. By the time the authorities got involved, the poor peacock was sick, molting, and missing nearly all of his beautiful tail feathers. Thomas and his grandfather had spent days with him, until he was strong enough to walk on his own, and they’d formed a strong bond. Since he was still illegal to own, Roman would stay at the sanctuary forever, though he wasn’t too upset about that.

No matter what the staff did, however, the peacock refused to show his tail. It was starting to worry everyone, including Patton, until Roman revealed the reason. He was saving it’s grand debut for this, the day Thomas took the reigns, and planned on showing him first as a sign of gratitude for everything the human had done for him, and a way of bidding him good luck on this new chapter of his life.

He turned his attention back to the smaller bird. ‘You’re looking like a treat yourself! Looks like someone took some extra time preening this morning!’

Patton puffed proudly and looked at himself in the mirror. His blue coloring, which extended across most of his body, was as vibrant as ever. Salt-and-pepper (Thomas called it ‘cookies and cream) feathers covered his back and wings, and crept around his neck, separating the blue of his body from the white of his head, and a few darker feathers surrounded his eyes. The humans would fawn over those the most, saying they made him look like he was wearing little glasses.

With a happy chirp, he turned back to Roman. ‘Gotta look my best for my best boy!’ He began to look around again. ‘By the way, have you seen Logan today? He was looking forward to this, too! I don’t want him to miss it!’

The peacock huffed and went back to adjusting himself in the mirror. ‘Blue Brains probably couldn't decide on what worms to present to Thomas.’ He shuddered at the thought of eating the dirty, slimy vermin. ‘Honestly, wild birds can be so disgusting!’

‘I heard that,’ came a voice from above. Both birds looked up to see Logan, the blue jay, hopping down branch by branch.

Roman shrugged. ‘Good, that means I won’t have to repeat it.’ He tilted his head, the crown feathers shaking slightly. ‘And what took you so long?’
The jay finally landed beside Patton, who happily rubbed against him. While Logan wasn’t much for touching, he’d learned to pick his battles. ‘Hopping is not exactly the most efficient way of getting around, though it has proven to be the safest, given my circumstances. I simply miscalculated the distance from my nightly perch to the large mirror.’

The parakeet nodded, completely understanding. Logan had been brought in three time prior to this, always with the same story. A human would be minding their own business when they heard a thunk, followed by a blue jay falling nearby. They would bring him to the sanctuary to be treated for minor injuries, whereupon he would be released back into the wild. The fourth time, however, the staff decided it was time to intervene. After some tests and trials, they determined the bird was lacking depth perception, and decided it would be best to keep him there. At least if he crashed into anything, they could quickly get to him.

Since then, the dark blue bird had learned that hopping from branch to branch was much safer than flying, and easier to do in this controlled environment. He wasn’t too fond of the humans coming near him, but Thomas seemed to have the most success getting hold of him and keeping him calm. Logan argued it was simply because he had the softest grip, but the others knew the young man had managed to win over the stubborn wild bird.

Roman scoffed before leaning over to adjust a few feathers on the blue jay. ‘You couldn’t even preen yourself? This is Thomas’s big day!’

Logan let out an offended chirp, hopping to the side to avoid the incoming beak. ‘I look the same as I always do. Besides, it is his day, not mine. The way I look is inconsequential to how the day will go.’

Patton chuckled, then turned to the gate when he heard the lock being opened. ‘He’s here!’ The parakeet took flight, aiming to land on his friend’s shoulder. Behind him, the blue jay hopped to another branch, then another, until he had a good view of the situation, and the peacock shook himself out one last time for good measure.

‘Alright, everyone, stand back! This is going to be a show he won’t soon forget!’

Chapter End Notes

What do you think? Please let me know if you like it! If there’s interest, I’ll be spurred on to continue this fic! It’s a simple AU with mostly fluff. I have plans for a bit of action, angst, and of course plenty of platonic CALM(D). Hit me up on Tumblr at perfectlittlelady and let me know how I’m doing!
End Notes

What do you think? Please let me know if you like it! If there's interest, I'll be spurred on to continue this fic! It's a simple AU with mostly fluff. I have plans for a bit of action, angst, and of course plenty of platonic CALM(D). Hit me up on Tumblr at perfectlittlelady and let me know how I'm doing!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!