

CHAPTER-12

Thomas shook his head in amusement as his father jumped to his feet as on the football field Roland caught a pass. Eric wore a football jersey with the number 23 on it; Roland's number, confirmed by the name on the back. The rest of the crowd joined him, sheering as Roland ran for the end zone. Only to groan when he was tackled down.

Thomas sat and noticed the rat making his way to him and his family. "Victor!" At the yell, Eric shifted his focus off his son on the field to his approaching son. They hugged. Victor hugged Nadia, then Judith, where she introduced him to Yating, then Thomas hugged him.

"Sorry I'm late," he said, "the kids wouldn't quiet down. How is the game going?"

"Didn't Dad tell you? We're up four points. What?" Thomas added when Victor took his bicep and squeezed them.

"You've bulked up."

Thomas's ears burn. "Yeah. I've..." he trailed off, thought of the workout sessions always accompanied by the fun afterward. Even when Madoc wasn't there to supervise him, there was always someone in the locker room who knew him and indirectly Thomas and it was getting easier to nod to the sauna, smile, and let things progress.

Thomas turned and motioned to the other rat, seated by the armadillo. "Madoc is who got me into it."

The rat stood. "Madoc Lewiston." They shook hands.

"Victor Hertz. How did you get Thomas to work out? When it didn't happen after the prom, I figured he was a lost cause."

Madoc glanced at Thomas with a tilted ear, but Thomas wasn't telling that story here. Then his eyes went wide as Madoc grinned and opened his mouth. He was going to tell his brother how

he'd gotten Thomas to enjoy it.

"I can be quite persuasive when I want."

"Those are Gilbert and Laurence Rowling," Thomas said to keep Madoc from adding anything else. "They're more of my frat brothers," He added with pride. "And they're cousins."

"Sigma Theta Gamma," Victor said with a knowing smile. "Judith called and let me know." He shook their hands. "One of my boys is names Gilbert."

"Keep him away from explosives," Laurence said, not reacting to the punch on the shoulder Gilbert gave him.

Victor looked at Thomas, eyebrow raises, but he shook his head. He wasn't going in the Rowling's collections.

They sat and Victor leaned forward, looking at the other. "Are you guys friends with Roland too?"

"Fan of football," Gilbert said. "I love the mid-game show."

Laurence and Madoc stared at him. "Where are they?" his cousin demanded.

Gilbert gave them an innocent look. "Where are what?"

"This is a high school, Gil. Not the university. You aren't blowing anything up."

"They're just fireworks." Gilbert leaned forward and looked at Thomas. "They're what you were asking about the other day."

Thomas had to dredge up the memory of Limbani trying to talk the armadillo into assisting him with talking over the safe sex class. "How did you know we'd be celebrating today?"

"He didn't," Laurence said. "If it wasn't your brother's birthday, he'd have found another excuse to detonate them."

"You don't really detonate fireworks," Victor said.

"You don't know Gilbert," the armadillo said. "You can't use them here."

Gilbert grinned. "You can't stop me."

Laurence looked up in exasperation, then smiled as he leaned into his cousin and whispered something. Gilbert swallowed, then smiled, standing.

"We'll be back in a while," Laurence said. "I'm going to go keep him from doing something stupid."

Thomas shook his head, having a good idea of how the armadillos were going to pass the time. He looked beyond Victor and noticed two other empty seats.

"Where did they go?" Thomas asked his mother when she noticed him looking.

Nadia smiled. "Oh, Judith and her boyfriend left to 'refresh' themselves."

"He's not her boyfriend," Thomas said. At least he was pretty sure they weren't.

"He's a boy," Nadia said. "Well, a man, definitely a man, and he's her friend. So her man-friend."

Thomas groaned. Why was he even surprised his mother had checked out the panda?

"Should we go rescue him?" Victor asked. He too, knew their sister well enough to understand what they were up to.

"Yating can take care of himself," Madoc said.

"And of her," Thomas grumbled.

Victor grinned. "That's good."

"Thomas," Nadia called. "We will be back in a bit ourselves." She indicated Eric, who was heading for the stairs. "I need to distract your father before he gets into an argument about benching Roland."

She hurried after the rat, catching up to him as he was starting down and pulling him up to the exit instead.

“Are you two going to vanish and leave me alone to enjoy the game?” Victor asked.

“You can come with us,” Madoc said.

Victor stared at him, then burst out laughing. “Thanks for the offer, but I’m married.”

Madoc nodded. “How much working out do you do?”

Victor’s response was interrupted by the bleachers cheering. Thomas stood to look. With Roland on the bench, he looked for the player who’d taken his place. He wasn’t in time to work out who had scored. But he found number 18, Neil, Roland’s best friend, on and off the team, as they regrouped.

“I’m trying to get back into it, but the boys are keeping me busy when I’m home.”

Madoc nodded and got one of his far-away looks. “I can imagine. I can’t wait to graduate to get back to my boy.”

“You have a son?” Victor asked. “Sorry, you just seem young.”

Thomas could only stare at his frat brother. Why had he never mentioned that?

“He wasn’t planned, but he’s definitely a joy.” (if you feel this wouldn’t work as the way Henry altered Madoc’s memories, feel free to change it)

“So he’s with his mother?” Victor asked.

Madoc frowned. “At my family estate. I couldn’t see taking care of him here, not with my course load.”

The crowd was up again, this time booing whatever had happened. Thomas didn’t care. Madoc had a son. Wow.

“Alright everyone,” the team’s coach called as the team’s families settled into booths and tables. “We might have lost the game, but you all gave a great show. I want you to remember that. It’s still early in the season, so Saturday we’re going to go over the game and see what we can learn from it. Until then, enjoy yourself.”

Cheers erupted. Even tables who’d been occupied before they’d arrived joined in. Thomas enthusiastically joined in the cheering. “Great game,” He told Neil, shaking the raccoon’s hand.

“Thanks, glad you made it.” He hugged Roland. “Happy birthday.”

The rat rolled his eyes. “It’s on Sunday and you know that. We’re going to the movies to celebrate.”

“If the coach lets you.” The raccoon pointed to Eric, deep in discussion with the wolf.

Roland sighed, then grinned. “At this rate, I’m going to be the youngest professional player, like, ever.”

“Maybe not,” Thomas said, indicating their mother latching onto their father’s arms and nibbling on his ear.

“Well,” Roland said as Neil joined his father at their table, “looks like it might just be us for a while.”

“Great game,” Madoc said, seated across from Roland, between Victor and Thomas. The rat had been the only one of his brothers to stick with them for the celebratory and birthday dinner. Yating had ensconced with Judith after they’d wished Roland a great birthday party. Laurence had excused himself and Gilbert saying he still had to make it up to his cousin for keeping him from enhancing the mid-game show.

“Thanks, but it’s mostly Coach Robinson’s doing. I just run and catch the ball.”

“And avoid getting hit,” Thomas said.

“Most of the time,” Roland replied with a grin.

"It still looked like you're good on the field," Madoc said, smiling. "You also look good off of it."

"Thanks?" Roland replied uncertainly.

"I've been training your brother," Madoc continued, "Thomas, take off your shirt so your brother can see how you're coming along."

"No," Thomas replied, ears turning red. He wasn't showing off to his brother, who surpassed him anyway.

Roland looked from one to the other, then grinned. "I'm going to pass. I'm sure you're great, Madoc, but I already have a fitness trainer." He nodded toward where their parents had vanished. "My dad's read everything about it and he's getting me to stick to it all."

Madoc eyed Thomas. "Out of curiosity, how buff do I need to get your brother to convince you I can do a better job?"

"No," Thomas stated forcefully, glaring at Madoc.

The other rat grinned. "What?"

"You are not..." Thomas trailed off as he realized what he was about to say. He knew Madoc wanted to get into his brother's pants. His straight brother's pants, but he couldn't say that in front of Roland.

"You aren't dragging me into the gym more than you already are," He said instead. "I'm more interested in getting through my classes than winning a mister universe contest."

"Can you get him to that point?" Roland asked.

"Not with my body, he can't," Thomas replied dejectedly, which earned him a stunned look from Roland and a speculative one from Madoc.

"What can't he do to your body?" Nadia asked, taking her seat. Eric finished buttoning his shirt before taking his. "You know that so long as it's pleasurable, you can let him do it, right?"

"Mom," Thomas whined, sinking into his chair.

“Oh, I haven’t heard him complaining,” Madoc said with a grin, which only caused Thomas to sink down further. “If you’re going to end up under the table,” he added. “There are a few things you could do there.”

“Someone kill me,” Thomas whined as Nadia burst out laughing.

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CHAPTER 1.5-12

Thomas shook his head in amusement as his father jumped to his feet as, on the football field, Roland caught the pass. Eric wore a football jersey with the number 23 on it; same as Rolands. Of course the rest of the crowd joined him in cheering as Roland ran for the end zone. Only to groan when he was tackled down.

Thomas sat back down, and then noticed a rat making his way towards him and his family. "Victor!" At the yell, Eric shifted his focus off his son on the field and towards his approaching son. They hugged, and then Victor hugged Nadia, and Judith who introduced Yating. Finally he got around to Thomas.

"Sorry I'm late," the eldest child said, "The kids wouldn't quite down. How is the game going?"

"Didn't dad tell you? We're up four points," Thomas said cheerfully, only to add a "What?" when Victor broke the hug by running his hand down Thomas's arms.

"You've bulked up," the eldest brother said as he gave Thomas's biceps a squeeze.

Thomas's ears burned. "Yeah. I've..." he trailed off, thinking of the grueling workout sessions followed even more intense sessions of sex afterwards. Even when Madoc wasn't there to supervise, it was like being Madoc's new project got him into some exclusive sex club located right at the school's gym.

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Thomas turned and motioned to the other rat, seated by the armadillos. "This is Madoc, the guy who for some reason saw promise in these skinny bones of mine."

The rat rolled his eyes as he stood and took Victor's hand. "Madoc Lewiston."

"Victor Hertz." the elder Hertz said as he returned the shake. "How did you get Thomas to workout? It was like prom happened and he suddenly became a shut-in?"

Madoc glanced at Thomas with a tilted ear, but Thomas just rolled his eyes. He was not justifying Victor's second hand stories from Judith with a comment. Then Madoc just shrugged and put on his best smile as he said, "I can be quite persuasive when I want."

"And those are Gilbert and Laurence Rowling," Thomas quickly piped in to keep Madoc from becoming his mother with lurid details of what that persuasion entailed. "Cousins, not brothers. Though they are both my frat brothers." Despite tripping over his own words, Thomas felt a surprising amount of pride at that last part.

"Sigma Theta Gamma," Victor said with a knowing smile. "Judith let me know in her weekly call." He shook their hands. "One of my boys is named Gilbert."

"Keep him away from explosives," Laurence said, not reacting to the punch on the shoulder Gilbert gave him.

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Victor looked at Thomas with a raised eyebrow, but Thomas just mouthed a later; a highschool football game was not the time to get into these men's eccentricities. As they found Victor room to sit with them, the eldest brother asked "So are you guys friends with Roland too?"

Laurence waved that thought, "Haven't met him yet. We're just fans of football. Gilbert's own younger brother is on path to join the Houston Texans."

"I'll admit it was kinda a war of attrition at first," Gilbert said before getting a slightly wild grin. "Though I do love the mid game shows."

All three of the other members of the frat stared at him. "Where are they?" his cousin demanded.

Gilbert washed his grin away with a look of pure innocence, "Where are what?"

"This is a high school, Gil. Not the university." Laurence said as he ran his hands down his face. "You aren't blowing anything up."

"They're just fireworks." Gilbert finally relented with rolled eyes. Then looking at Thomas he winked. "They're what you were asking about the other day."

Thomas had to dredge up the memory of Limbani trying to talk the armadillo into assisting him with taking over the safe sex

class. "How did you know we'd be celebrating today?"

"He didn't," Laurence said with a huff. "If it wasn't your brother's birthday, he'd have found another excuse to detonate them."

Victor scrunched his brow. "Aren't fireworks launched, not detonated?"

"That's the difference between a normal person and Gilbert," Laurence answered before redirecting his attention towards his cousin. "You can't use them here."

The other armadillo just crossed his arms and blew a raspberry. "You can't stop me."

Laurence sighed with exasperation... and then smiled. He leaned close to his cousin and whispered into his ears. Gilbert swallowed... then smiled... and then stood up.

"We'll be back in a while," Laurence said as he stood up as well. "I'm going to go keep him from doing something stupid."

Thomas shook his head, not seeing having public sex in a highschool a smart idea. Even Judith was smart enough not to. "Where did Judith and Yating go?"

Nadia glanced at the empty seats Thomas was staring at before smiling. "Oh, Judith and her boyfriend left to 'refresh'

themselves.”

“He’s not her boyfriend,” Thomas said. Or at least he was sure Yating didn’t see it that way.

“He’s a boy,” Nadia started to say before reconsidering. “Well, a man. Definitely a man. And he’s her friend. So her man-friend.” Thomas groaned; why was he even surprised his mother had checked out the panda?

“Should we go rescue him?” Victor asked. He knew his sister too well to not understand what she was getting up to wherever she was.

“Yating can take care of himself,” Madoc said with a small smirk.

“And her,” Thomas grumbled. Fuck, he hoped she didn’t recount the act during Roland’s birthday dinner.

Victor blinked before breaking out into a grin, “Well that’s good.”

“Boys,” Nadia called, “We’ll be back in a bit ourselves.” She indicated Eric who was heading for the stairs. “I need to distract your father before he gets into an argument about benching Roland.” She hurried after the rat, catching up to him as he was starting down and pulling up to the exit instead.

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Victor looked about at the mostly empty section of bleachers immediately surrounding them. "Are you two going to vanish and leave me alone to enjoy the game?"

"You can come with us," Madoc said, causing Thomas to choke on his own tongue.

Victor stared at him, then burst out laughing. "Thanks for the offer, but I'm married."

Madoc nodded, not seeming at all bothered. "How much working out do you do?"

Victor's response was interrupted by the bleachers cheering. Thomas stood to look to what happened. He couldn't see who scored, but he spotted number 18, Roland's best friend Niel, regrouping with the players on the field.

"I'm trying to get back into it," Victor finally answered, "But the boys are keeping me busy when I'm home."

Madoc nodded, and got one of his far-away looks. "I can imagine. I can't wait to graduate to get back to my boy."

"You have a son?" Victor asked as Thomas's brain blue screened. "Sorry, you just seem young."

* * *

“He wasn’t planned,” Madoc answered with a light smile, “but he’s definitely a joy.”

Victor nodded, “So he’s with his mother?”

Madoc frowned, eyes once again looking distant. “He’s at my family estate. I couldn’t see taking care of him here. Not with my course load.”

Victor stared for a moment, as that wasn’t exactly the answer to his question, but then the crowd started booing whatever just happened on the field and he was pulled back into the game. Madoc took a bit longer, but eventually shook his head as his eyes refocused and he was back in the present.

Thomas was hopelessly lost, just staring at his frat brother. He’d been getting fucked by a father. And Madoc of all people; he could imagine Henry maybe having a secret family out there with how mature he was, but Madoc?

“Alright everyone,” the team’s coach called as the team’s families settled into booths and tables. “We might have lost the game, but you all gave a great show. I want you to remember that. It’s still early in the season, so Saturday we’re going to go over the game and see what we can learn from it. Until then, enjoy yourself.”

Cheers erupted and the players dispersed to their families.

Thomas enthusiastically joined in the cheering. "Great game," He told Neil as he shook the raccoon's hand.

"Thanks, glad you made it," he said before turning around and landing a solid hug on Roland. "Happy Birthday."

The rat rolled his eyes as he hugged back. "It's on Sunday, you know that. We're going to the movies to celebrate."

"If the coach lets you," the raccoon pointed to Eric, deep in discussion with the wolf.

Roland rubbed the back of his head and smirked a half smile . "At this rate I'm going to be the youngest professional player, like, ever."

"Eh, I think you have someone willing to play interception when it counts," Thomas said as they watched their mother latching onto their father's arms and nibbling on his ear.

"Well," Roland said as he watched Niel go off to join his father at their table, "Looks like it's just going to be us for a while."

"Great game," Madoc said, seated across from Roland, between Victor and Thomas. The rat had been the only frat brother to stick around for the after party. Yating and Judith wished Roland a happy birthday before esconding who knows where. And Laurence still had to make up to Gilbert for keeping him from livening up the mid game show.

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“Thanks, but it’s mostly Coach Robison’s doing,” Roland said dismissively. “I just run and catch the ball.”

“And avoid getting hit,” Thomas added.

“Most of the time,” Roland replied with a grin.

“It still looked like you’re good on the field,” Madoc said, smiling, “And you certainly look good off of it.”

“...thanks?” Roland replied, uncertainly.

“I’ve been training your brother,” Madoc continued, “Thomas, take off your shirt so your brothers can admire how you’re coming along.

“No,” Thomas replied with his best poker face even as he felt his ears flushing red. Even if this wasn’t a public place, Roland surpassed him by lightyears.

Roland looked from one to the other, and grinned. “I’m going to pass. I’m sure you’re great, Madoc, but I already have a fitness trainer.” He nodded to where their parents had vanished. “My dad’s read everything about it and he’s getting me to stick to it all.”

Madoc hummed, bit his lower lip, and then slowly turned his

eyes hungrily towards Thomas. "OK, how about a bet. How big do I need to get your brother to convince you I can do a better job than your father?"

"No," Thomas stated forcefully, glaring at Madoc.

The other rat grinned, "What?"

"You are not..." Thomas paused for a moment, searching for words that wouldn't cause a scene. "You are not going to use my time and my body as leverage to get my sixteen year old brother to join you in your after workout tradition." Thomas's ears were burning red as he could feel his brothers' eyes on him, but he kept his own eyes fixed on Madoc. "Those three days a week are all I can give you; I'm not sacrificing my grades or the rest of my free time just so you can enter me into the mister universe contest or something."

"Can you get him to that level?" Victor asked.

"Not with my body," Thomas muttered dejectedly, thinking of all the hunks who praised Madoc as their trainer. This got him a confused look from Roland, while Madoc and Victor had a silent exchange with their eyes .

"Anyway," Roland said, "What's so wrong about this after workout tradition?"

"Oh, nothing wrong at all," Madoc said with a devilish smile, "In fact I haven't heard him complain once before now." Thomas

whined as started to sink down into his chair; he was not going there. "Oh, but don't worry about time, Thomas. Just means we'll have to up the intensity. In both the workout and tradition, of course." Thomas's whine grew higher in pitch as he continued to sink further; yes, yes he was. "You know, if you're going to end up under the table, there's a few things you could do down there."

"Someone kill me," Thomas whispered as Victor burst out laughing and Roland's ears went red as he finally caught on to what was going on .

OUTLINE-12

Chapter 15

###

Highschool Football Field, Thomas, Hertz Family, Madoc, Yating, Gilbert, Laurence: Mood: Didn't we all come here to watch the game?

There was no way any of the Hertz Family was going to miss Roland's first home game of the season. Even Victor found time to drop by for the big event. It was only a light surprised Madoc would want in on gawking at a bunch of buff football players, or that Yating wouldn't turn down an excuse to hang with Judith again.

The bigger surprise was the two Rowlings deciding they wanted to tag along. Football and Texan isn't the biggest connection to make, but Laurence is pure jock and despite being pure nerd Gilbert [We keep on talking about ways to show off the guy's character/power... and I get the feeling Gilbert should bring fireworks to the game. Not just sparklers, but really fireworks, and have to be talked down from using them... after all, these are Gilbert grade fireworks, so it's not going to be just a small roman candle going off in the parking log.talked down by security or the friends?Most likely friends. Security might involve handcuffs.]has a younger brother who's already dreaming on a spot on the Dallas Cowboys. So they are both here just for the football.

Ultimately it's just a football game, Hertz family hanging out, and the fraternity boys slipping off for sex. Victor shows that he and Thomas get along well enough, while Eric is in full "support his future NFL star" mode so he won't be badgering Thomas tonight. The Rowlings will likely sneak off to do it in the locker room at some point, and goodness knows where Judith and Yating will do the same. Nadia won't mind, and will in fact regale the remaining boys on some of the

things she and Eric got up to back in the day... only to nip at Eric's ear slightly and drag him off temporarily for a quicky of their own.

That just leaves Thomas, Victor[what is victor's physical build?That has never actually been a question I asked myself.AKA I just don't know.], and Madoc cheering in the seats around three quarters through the game. Madoc surprisingly doesn't appear to have any interest in dragging Thomas away for a quicky. Instead he's chatting up Victor, getting to know more about Thomas and Roland. Though in mention to Victor's two boys, Madoc will mention his own son, which will of course be a double take for Victor and Thomas. Madoc shrugs and says that it was a requirement of the manager of the Lewiston estate[Remember, this is Madoc with memory alterations from Henry in place. Which may differ from his Thanksgiving appearance.], though he does hope to graduate in time to spend some time with him.

Head spinning from that revelation, Thomas almost doesn't notice everyone else filtering back to the seats and the game being won by [choose winner here]. With that, it is just a matter of..

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Restaurant, Thomas, Victor, Roland, Madoc, Eric, Nadia: Mood:I'm not the way you're going to convince my brother to sleep with you.

Win or lose, the team needs a reward for a hard fought game. It's mostly for the team, but a lot of families and fans are on the outliers as well. And of course Eric manages to pull Roland over long enough for him and Victor to say high. After which, Eric will head off to ask the coach about furthering Roland's training regime, with Nadia in tow to keep him under control.

This just leaves all the rat boys, where Madoc will compliment Roland on his form, his precision, and of course his physique. With that he'll transition to talking about how he started training Thomas recently,

and he's showing a lot of promise. Roland sees where this is going, and says that the last thing he needs is another fitness coach. To which Madoc replies, how big does he need to get Thomas for him to change his mind?

Thomas stops things there, both because he realizes what Madoc training Roland would imply, but also because maybe he should get a say in how often he's dragged to the gym between classes and studying. The group, of course, responds to this with some form of levity.