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Animal Café

Chapter 15 - The Creation of Pets

Just as Misti finished dressing up as a human, Lucy entered the changing room, not looking too happy. Immediately, Misti restarted sobbing of terror. No matter how reassuring I tried to be, it was useless; the poor girl had convinced herself that Lucy would make her pay for the broken costume and kick her out of the pethouse. It was irrational at best, but I understood why she was reacting this way; similar to me, her friends were her whole universe.

Lucy didn't say a word at first. She grabbed the damaged black cat costume, folded it carefully, and placed it in a box along with the detached tail. We watched her going to her desk to write something on a piece of paper. After folding the note in half and placing it into the box, she sealed it using some clear tape.

She then retrieved one of her Cakes & Pets business cards and wrote something on its back before handing it over to Misti.

"I want you to go to this address and explain what you have done to the person who lives there. Bring the box with you."

"..."

"Don't make that face, Misti. You didn't want to listen to me when I asked you to act responsibly while wearing the costume, well, now you don't have a choice. Go now. I have to take care of the café."

"But... Lucy..."

"No buts. You come back here after. End of discussion."

Lucy turned heels and went back to her business, leaving Misti in a distressed state.

"Bwaaah! She hates meee!"

"Misti! No! She is just a bit angry."

"But... I don't know that place! I don't know who lives there!"

"..."

I really didn't know what to tell her. She was scared and very sad. Not only having made Lucy angry felt awful, but on top of that, an onerous burden landed on her shoulders; going to a stranger's place to possibly have her costume repaired.

My hugs were not powerful enough to stop her from sobbing.

"Misti... I'll go... with you."

"... What? No, Clara... You have to go to work."

"I... I'll take a day off."

"But, you won't get paid if you do that."

"I know. But I won't have rent anymore. I'll be okay."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. I want to help you."

"Haaa! Clara! Why are you always so nice!?"

What I hoped happened; her cries stopped, and her smile came back, at least for now. When something terrible happened to me, I always went to the café to feel better. Being supported by Lucy and the pets had always been the only thing that cheered me up. Not feeling alone while facing a distressing event was priceless, and this is why I made up my mind; I would risk angering my boss to help my friend.

Misti and I exited the café, and then I called work to leave a message; at least I didn't have to explain myself to anybody directly, but the boss sure wouldn't be impressed. I still hoped it wouldn't get me too much in trouble. That was not something I would have tried if I had not already told my landlord that I was moving out; my leash didn't feel as tight anymore.

While Misti carried her box, I looked up the address Lucy gave her.

"Oh... That's very far."

"How far?"

"Close to an hour and a half. Look."

I showed Misti my phone, and she whined at the incredibly long bus ride awaiting us.

"That is at the other end of town in the suburbs... It's so faaar!"

"It's okay, Misti. We can make it."

"Yeah, at least you are coming with me. Thanks so much again!"

Misti didn't have a bus pass like I did, so we dropped by the convenience store to buy her some tickets; of course, I had to buy them for her because she did not need money while working at the café; her pockets were empty. Right after that, we headed to the nearest bus stop.

Our first ride was not fun, it was crowded and smelly. Protecting the most precious object in her life, Misti had her arms tightly wrapped around her box, pressing it to her chest. If someone were to take it away from her, she would probably die of despair.

Thirty minutes later, we transferred to another line. This time we were able to sit and chat a little.

"So, Clara, I wanted to ask... When you came to the pethouse, and you saw me having fun with Trixie. How did you feel?"

"I... I don't know."

"Were you jealous?"

"Jealous?"

"Yes. I know you like Trixie a lot. And, well... I was kind of having sex with her."

"I don't know. I don't think so. I like Trixie, but I know she likes you too."

"So, what did you think, then, when you saw us on the couch?"

My face turned all red at that point. Misti was asking me questions about things I usually didn't discuss, and it was definitely embarrassing. I wanted to answer the truth but needed to find the right way to describe my feelings to her.

"Poor Clara. Why are you so shy? Tell me!"

"I... I liked it."

"What?"

"When... you played in her hair. It made me feel good."

"Haha. What do you mean? When I was playing in Trixie's hair, it turned you on?"

"... Yes."

"Really? That's hilarious. How come?"

"I don't know... Trixie's hair is so soft... yours too. Mine isn't like that."

"Trixie and I have the exact same hair type. It's a coincidence, but we decided to get the same haircut for fun last month. That's why we look so alike. Hey, why don't we dye your hair at some point? Let's die it blonde like ours and get you the same haircut. I think it would look great on you. And Trixie would lose her shit."

"..."

That was an odd proposition. Trixie and Misti got the same haircut for fun, and now she wanted me to do the same. I couldn't help it but feel fuzzy inside at the thought of changing my hair. I never had the money to do such a crazy thing but always wanted to. If I had no rent to pay, perhaps it was something I could entertain.

"Maybe... I'll think about it."

"Yay! We are going to turn you into a cute blonde!"

"... I didn't... say yes."

"You didn't say no either! So, where are we now?"

"Another ten minutes, and then we will transfer again."

As I looked at my map on my phone, Misti leaned her head against mine. She didn't do it on purpose, but her soft hair brushed on my cheek, sending a little shiver down my spine. Why did her hair turn me on so much?

It took another forty-five minutes for us to arrive at our final destination. I was not familiar with this kind of rich suburban area. It felt all weird to see those big houses that so many people could afford. My tiny apartment downtown felt even smaller all of a sudden; perhaps I had been insane for living in it for so long.

As the bus moved away from behind us, Misti and I stood side by side on the walkway, her holding the box and me tapping on my phone.

"So, where are we going now?"

"It's a five minutes walk... It's this street over there."

"Okay, let's go then."

I knew something was wrong with Misti. She played it cool until now, but knowing that she would have to do what Lucy had asked her earlier, explaining to a stranger what she had done to her costume, it was scaring her to death. If she had not been carrying that box, her hand would probably have held mine.

The more we approached our destination, the bigger the houses were getting, and the more intimidated we got.

"Misti... It's this one on the corner. 379."

"Of course, it had to be the biggest one with the giant garage."

"I don't know. Maybe it's going to be... fun?"

"Clara! You are not very good at cheering me up."

"S... sorry."

"... but, thank you!"

Misti kissed me on the cheek before heading to the front door. Not wanting to be on the front line, I stayed a few steps behind her. Holding the box on top of her knee, Misti reached the bell with her small finger. And then the excruciating wait began.

The door cracked open. I was in the wrong angle to see who had answered, but a feminine voice greeted Misti.

"Yes?"

"Hi... Hum... I... I was told to come here and..."

"Misti?"

"... How... How do you know my name?"

"Lucy called me earlier. She said you'd drop by. Please, come in."

"Oh... okay. But, I brought a friend with me. Is it okay if she comes in too?"

"Of course."

Her voice sounded so lovely, and it was such a relief to know that Lucy had at least warned her about our arrival; it was a load of pressure off our shoulders.

But then the door swung open fully, revealing who owned the voice. The lady must have been the most naturally beautiful person I had ever seen. The petgirls at the café were a bunch of cuties so far, but this was something else. However, I wasn't sure if that was the most shocking thing about our host. She was wearing this incredible green maid uniform, which was pretty much the last thing Misti and I could have expected, yet, it started to make sense.

We stepped inside the house, and she led us to the kitchen area before finally introducing herself.

"My name is Elizabeth. So I know you are Misti, but you are...?"

"Clara."

"Nice meeting you. So, what can I do for you?"

"Oh? Lucy didn't tell you?"

"No, but I have an idea of what it could be."

And that was the embarrassing part for Misti.

"Well... I have this... box. It's... It's my costume. I... I think I have to... give it to you."

"Okay? And..."

Now Misti was really looking at the floor while twisting her foot left and right.

"Well... So, I was... I was playing with a friend... and... I... I ripped the tail off... And... Lucy was furious. It... It was an accident."

Once more, Misti's lower lip started to shake uncontrollably, so I rushed to rub her back.

"Oh, that's too bad. Can I take a look?"

"Y... yes. Here."

Elizabeth, not disturbed the slightest by the pet tale she had heard, grabbed the box and placed it on the kitchen island. She pulled a pair of scissors from one of the drawers and cut the tape that sealed the brown box. After opening the flaps, she reached in to pick up the note that Lucy had put in it before we left the café.

Her beautiful blue eyes moved side to side quickly. Elizabeth also had short blonde hair, which felt a bit too coincidental after the discussion I had with Misti on the bus. Perhaps it was the universe that tried to send me a message.

"Alright. I will go to my workshop to inspect the damage. You can stay here in the living room, or you can relax outside next to the pool. I'll get back to you in a moment.

"Okay. T... Thank you."

The maid left the kitchen, carrying the box under her arm, leaving me alone with Misti in this luxurious house. I smiled at her.

"See, Misti. Everything is good."

"I don't know... She didn't say much but... SHE IS SO PRETTY!"

"Shhh! Shhh! Don't say that out loud!"

"But, Clara. She is so beautiful."

"... I know... But now is not the time. Let's go sit in the living room and wait."

We turned around toward the living room, and we both had the same reaction when we saw what was in the corner. Misti voiced her thoughts first.

"Why is there a big pink crate in the living room?"

"I... I don't know. Maybe Elizabeth owns a big dog?"

"Oh, no! Clara... I'm terrified of dogs."

"Mmm... Dogs don't scare me."

"Is... is there one inside?"

"I don't know... I'll go check."

"Clara! No! What if it bites you?"

That was news to me. It was kind of funny that Misty the cat was scared of dogs, but I would not make that joke here. I just wanted to see if there actually was one in it.

I carefully approached the pink wooden crate. Only the top half of the door was made of bars, so it was quite dark inside, preventing me from seeing well if there was an occupant or not.

"So, Clara... Is there a big dog in it?"

"I don't know... I don't see anything. If there is a dog, it's a quiet one. I'll open it."

"NO! Clara! Please! I'm scared!"

"I just want to take a quick look..."

There were two metal latches that I flipped open, and then I slowly pulled on the door.

It was empty... but... I could recognize this smell anywhere. There was no doubt in my mind that the crate smelled like my petgirls from the café. Rubber... And more caught my attention... The floor was cushioned, and there was a heart-shaped pillow in the far corner.

"Claraaa..."

"There is no dog in it."

"Aaaah... Feeew!"

"Come see this, Misti..."

"Uh? See what? I don't think we should be nosing around."

Reassured that she wouldn't get feasted on by a large canine, Misti approached and crouched next to me to look inside the crate. I couldn't help but share my twisted theory.

"Misti... Do... Do you think this box is for..."

"Hey, I thought I heard something weird!"

"AAAH!"

"Eeeeaah!"

Just as I was going to explain my idea, a tiny voice from behind caught us snooping. Misti tumbled down on the floor, and I tried to close the crate door at the same time that I was stepping away from it.

"Haha! Relax! Who're you?"

"I'm... I'm..."

Having a communication disorder didn't mix well with panic. I couldn't utter a word. In front of us was a small Asian girl with long black hair. She was smiling from ear to ear, but it was clear that I was trespassing and that I got caught in the act. My body couldn't take it; good thing Misti was more social than I was and took the relay.

"This is Clara, I'm Misti... We are sorry. We thought there was a dog in the crate."

"Haha. No, there is no dog here. Are you Syr's friends?"

"Syr? No, we were here to give a cos... a... something to Elizabeth."

"Oh, okay. I see. Where is she?"

"In her workshop, she said. She told us to wait here."

"Okay, thanks!"

Without another word, the unknown Asian girl turned around and trotted away happily, leaving Misti and I perplex.

Not pushing our luck anymore, we rushed to the couch, sat on it, and stayed still. The last thing we wanted was to cause more trouble than we were already in. Yet, Misti leaned toward me and whispered in my ears.

"I think that crate is for a human. Not a dog."

"... It... It smelled like... latex."

"Really!? Do... do you think this small Asian girl is Elizabeth's pet?"

"I... I don't know, Misti. I think we shouldn't think about that right now."

"Oh, I can't do that! Imagining this small Asian girl having sex with Elizabeth! It's so hot!"

Why was I not surprised? Trixie and Misti were two pervs, so, of course, she would think about things like that, and it was contagious. Her warm breathe brushing on my ear, combined with the erotic scenario she had described, made me feel funny in my lower belly. And she added oil to the fire...

"Clara... I'm a bit turned on right now."

"Mistiii! Stop! It's not the time..."

"Mmm... Maybe if you kiss me, it will calm me down..."

"Nooo! Stop!"

"They are not around... just a little kiss... Please..."

"Mistiii!"

I had no backbone; Misti moved even closer and grabbed my wrist to make sure I wouldn't interfere, and her lips touched mine... oil to the fire.

Whenever I kissed a girl, I couldn't think straight anymore, and time slowed to a crawl. Misti got me. Before I knew it, her tongue caressed mine, and I was as helpless as a bird soothed by its cage cover.

And then, her hand crawled up to my breast and started massaging it. I may have moaned a little when she did that.

"Hey, are you having sex?"

"AAAAH!"

"Eeaaah!"

It was a nightmare! The Asian girl was back, so soon, and startled us. We didn't even hear her coming back. It was so ridiculous that my throat clamped shut, so, once more, the onus was on Misti to explain what we were doing just now.

"N... No... we... we are just friends."

"Uh? Friends are fondling each other's breasts?"

I wanted to die. Misti was just making it worse.

"No... No... I mean... yes. We... we are just co-workers. Okay?"

"Oh? Where are you working?"

Misti was just making it worse.

"Mmm... I... I don't know..."

"You don't know where you work?"

"I mean, yes... We work at a... café..."

Misti was just making it worse.

"A café? That sounds cool? Maybe I could go check it out one day?"

"NO! I mean...yes...I mean...maybe..."

Misti was just making it worse.

"You two are so strange. So, Elizabeth said I couldn't get in her workshop right now. She also said I couldn't offer you drinks or snacks because it's bad for her business."

"It's... It's okay... We are good."

Then a familiar voice saved us from this strange girl. Elizabeth showed up as she needed Misti for something.

"Aaah, Kitty! Leave them alone, would you! Misti, would you come with me to the workshop for a moment. I need you for something."

"Oh... Sure. You want to come, Clara?"

"No, just you, Misti. My workshop is rather private."

"Okay. Sorry, Clara. I'll be back in a sec."

"..."

Nooo! She couldn't leave me behind with the inquisitive Asian woman. And did Elizabeth just call her Kitty? There was no way I could survive this encounter without Misti at my side.

I was now alone in the living room with that stranger who restarted probing me.

"So, you work at a café?"

"... I... don't..."

"What? But your friend said you were co-workers?"

"..."

"What do you do, then?"

"I'm... packing items."

"Packing items?"

On the verge of hyperventilating, I had to navigate through the lies that Misti had weaved before abandoning me. I wanted this girl to stop asking questions and walk away, but it was not something I could possibly ask her to do; it wasn't her fault, and I couldn't be that rude.

Facing my inability to answer, she bounced from her couch to mine, and before I could even react, she was sitting at my side, trying to read my mind.

"You don't like to talk... Right?"

"... I... I have... a communication... disorder..."

"... Really?"

"... Yes..."

"No. I don't think you do."

"..."

What was that about? She didn't even know me and she was trying to assess my condition already?

"I heard you talking to your friend earlier. You were talking just fine. I just think something is bugging you and that's why talking is not easy for you. It's okay. I was pretty much like you before. Things weren't going very well for me, but then recently, I made some new friends, and it gave me tons of confidence. Now I'm talking all the time!"

"O... okay."

Could she be right?

"So, are you here to get uniforms for your café? Elizabeth makes costumes for a living, but she doesn't want me to know what you guys are here for?"

"Y... yes... uniforms."

At this moment, I thought it was a good idea to run with her flawed suggestion. In restaurants and coffee shops, waitresses often had work uniforms, and there was nothing weird about that. Perhaps if I were making it sound like it was a boring place, she wouldn't dig deeper and find out that they were latex pet costumes.

"Are they cute?"

"... Yes."

"Are they maid uniforms?"

"... No!"

"Hehe. Okay. Because Elizabeth LOVES maid uniforms. She always wears one. So, what kind of café is it then?"

Why did she have to ask that? If I didn't answer, it would look suspicious, and telling her the truth would be too embarrassing. I was stuck. Perhaps the best way to survive this would be to tell her a truth devoid of meanings.

"It's... an animal café..."

"AN ANIMAL CAFÉ? Sooo cool! Nobody told me there was one around here."

"It's... It's very far from here."

"What kind of animals are there?"

Oh crap!

"Mmm... Cats..."

"Meow! I looove cats! What else?"

Now I've done it. Misti wasn't the only one who could make it worse.

"..."

"Come on! I want to know!"

"We... we have a raccoon..."

"No way! Seriously?"

"Yes... and a bunny."

"Nice! And we can pet them?"

"Yes... they are... very cute."

Please! Please! Misti, come back and save me!

"Do they climb on you to cuddle while you are eating?"

"Yes... all the time."

"That's so awesome. I MUST go there! What is the name of your café?"

Oh no! Dead. Just dead. Contrary to my belief that I was sneakily zigzagging my way out of trouble, I had cornered myself nicely instead.

"..."

"... You don't want to tell me?"

Just as I was about to start crying, Misti and Elizabeth entered the living room, rescuing me from this nightmare.

"Kitty, I said not to bug my clients. Go put your swimsuit on, instead. It's time for your swimming lesson."

"Aaaah! Fiiine!"

Without insisting any longer, Kitty walked away and headed to the basement, which allowed my heart rate to go down a bit.

Elizabeth gave Misti a box along with some instructions.

"Sorry about her. She can be a bit intense. So, as I said, I cannot fix your costume today. It's going to take a bit of time. This box contains the new costume Lucy had ordered a while ago. I finished it earlier this week. It's your size, so maybe she will let you use it until then. Please don't open it. Lucy needs to inspect it first. Once it is worn, the sale is final."

"We won't. Thank you."

"Misti, it's not my place to say this, but I would appreciate it if you were more careful about your costumes from now on. It's not because I sell them that I don't care about them anymore. I spend countless hours on these, and it makes me feel sad when they get damaged."

"Sorry... Yes... I understand. I will be extra careful from now on. I learned my lesson."

"Thank you. At least it is nothing I can't repair. Your costume will be like new in a week or so. "

It had been such a strange day so far, but it ended on a somewhat good note. Misti had realized how important those costumes were for more people than just Lucy and her, so she would be more careful in the future. It was probably the lesson Lucy hoped to teach her by sending her over here.

In my case, I got to spend a long day with my new friend and learned a bit more about her out of costume personality.

Sure, our unexpected encounter with Kitty had not been very easy, and I hoped that I had not sent her on a path of further investigation. If she were to show up at the café expecting to see small furry critters, she would be in for quite a shock...or not; there was still this latex-smelling crate mystery that we were not sure what to think of.

As we walked out of the house and headed to the bus stop, Misti seemed happy. Squeezing her precious box in her arms, I could tell she was curious about what it could contain.

"What do you think it is, Clara?"

"In the box? I don't know."

"Do you think it's another cat?"

"Lucy already has three cats."

"I know... but I think it would be nice to have one more. Maybe it will be yours, Clara?"

"..."

"Yeah... I'm sure it will be yours..."

I stopped walking, but Misti just continued... Was she serious, or was she just teasing me?

"Hey!... Wait up, Misti!... Don't say things like that!"

"Haha! Claraaa will be a cuuute caaat!"

Looking back at me with her big smile and her short blond hair hiding one of her eyes, she jogged away, giggling.

"Mistiii! Stop teasing me!... Wait for me!"

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