**February 22, 2021 Grown-Up Time**

*Continuation of November 7, 2020 “Little Explorer”*

Mason laid the boy out on the bed next to his clothes. A button up shirt. A red tie. A blue blazer with matching trousers. The boy stared up at the ceiling, his eyes vacant. He was in a diaper and a cartoon dino t-shirt. Mason had to work fast. Get him out of his diaper and into boxers. Out of his t-shirt an into his dress shirt. He quickly tied the tie, cinching it snug, and then tugged the boy upward slightly where his lips could reach the boy’s ears and said three little words.

And just like that, little boy became boyfriend. Blinking and shaking his head, Jacob sat fully up, supporting himself with his hand. He didn’t notice the diaper bag beside him, just as he wouldn’t notice the stroller parked and waiting by the front door. They were invisible to him when he was a grown-up.

“Ugh, what time is it?”

“It’s almost 2:30, Jacob. Those power naps really do a number on you, don’t they? Are you sure you can’t take a little more time for yourself?”

“No can do, hon, he who snoozes loses. I’ll be in the office! Don’t disturb me!”

“Well… alright. Do you want me to bring you up a snack on your break?”

“Yeah, sure, whatever you can bring me. We’ll have a break at…”

“Three-thirty, I know,” said Mason, echoing his boyfriend’s words. “Same as always. Go on then, I’ll see you…”

His boyfriend zipped off to the office and shut the door behind him. Poor Jacob. Such a workaholic, and for what? Just to be downsized out of existence in the next big merger. No, no, Mason couldn’t have that. He brought the phone up to his ear and waited for someone to answer.

“Hey, it’s me…”

“Oh, hey Mason,” said the man, sounding like he was just waking up. “Hold on a sec…”

Mason waited. After about 30 seconds the voice came back on.

“Ahh, much better. So, how are things with you and Jakey?”

“Going much better than I could have ever hoped for, thanks to you,” said Mason. “He’s in the office right now. Thinks he’s in a meeting.”

“Oh he does does he?” said the man, chuckling lightly. “That means he’s ready for the next step. Are you?”

“Yeah, I’m ready, I’m ready,” said Mason. He was impatient, is what he was. He’d wanted to transition his boyfriend completely out of his adult life and back to boyhood, where he would be happier, healthier, and interested in something other than just work work work.

“Okay, as long as you’re sure. Once you use this last program, there’s no going back. Even my boy gets to go back to baseline some of the time.”

“Trust me, it’s better this way,” said Mason. “I want to always have my little guy around, not shut up in some office somewhere working his life away.”

“Okay, okay, I getcha. I felt the same way about Craig. You know, I’m sure he’d love a playmate…”

“The playground at West and Murray.”

“What?”

“The playground at West and Murray. That’s where I bring him every day from noon to two o’ clock.”

“Is that an invitation?”

“Sure, it is. I’m sure little Jakey would love to meet a new pal closer to his age. You’ll have to forgive him if he doesn’t recognize you, though. So how much do I owe you, Ken?”

“Three hundred.”

Mason whistled. “Steep.”

“Hey, this isn’t to be taken lightly, bud. I wouldn’t even be giving this out to you if we weren’t like this.”

“I can’t see you,” said Mason. “What are you doing when you say ‘this’?”

“Come on, you know. I’m twisting my fingers together. Okay, okay. I know we’ve never met. But you know what I mean. Right? Don’t leave me hangin’ here bud, I’m embarrassing myself!”

“Haha, yes. I know what you mean,” said Mason. “Sorry, I’m just really really excited to do this.”

“Does he remember what happened back in the board room?”

“No, that’s been wiped clean. He still thinks he’s working for those blood suckers. Doesn’t remember the huge severance package he got or anything. Three hundred k will be a drop in the bucket once the big payment clears.”

“I wish I coulda seen everyone’s face when he came on the table in a loaded baby diaper in front of all those assholes in upper management. Must have been priceless.”

“Well, the price *they* settled on was about-“

“Don’t tell me. I don’t want to know. You’re just going to make me jealous. \*Ping\* Ah. I see you’ve just sent the money over. Okay bud, here you are. I hope you know what you’re doing.

“I know what I’m doing, Ken. Thanks for looking out.”

“No problem, Mace. Oh, and one last thing… in order for it to work fully, it’s going to remove the previous memory effects. He’s gonna remember everything and *see* everything for about 30 seconds before the mind eraser section kicks in. At least in theory, that’s how it should work…”

“I got it. Just long enough to press the abort button if we need to.”

“Yeah, that’s right. You know the phrase you need to say to make it permanent.”

“Yeah, I got it. Ken, you’re worrying too much. I’ve got this, buddy.”

“Okay, okay, you’re right. Oh boy, the little pup is waking up again… is it time for round three already, pup?”

“Haha, now I see why you were asleep at 2:30 in the afternoon!”

“Having a live-in boy’ll wear you out, I’m telling you. Hope you don’t like having a regular sleep schedule! Ciao, bud.”

Mason’s phone pinged back. He had received the encrypted hypno file from his friend. Now all he had to do was load it up on Jacob’s computer and press play. He smiled to himself, went down and made some snacks.

*-Written by Champ*