

Party

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Chapter 1

Party

Centerpiece

“Hey E,” Aaron mumbled, the cat nudging the turn signal lever up to make his way toward the right lane.

“Mmm?” Erin peeked up from her book to see how far they’d made it into their journey. Still about twenty minutes. She lowered her gaze once again.

“Put any more thought into the idea of a donor?”

Slinking lower into the passenger seat, Erin gave a half-hearted shrug. “Not really any more than before. Just want someone we know already and who we trust. Don’t want to go to a bank.”

Aaron nodded and settled back into his seat as they made their way onto the highway. “Anyone you can think of, minkypie?”

Erin caught herself about to shrug again and shook her head instead, “Only really know a few other minks out there — the Redstones from work, and there’s that Matthew guy from your office. . . Matthew Lederer, was it? — and I don’t know if they swing or not. Come on, though,” she laughed. “Figure out something sexier to talk about. We’re supposed to be getting psyched for a night of debauchery, not figuring out sperm donor paperwork.”

Erin and Aaron had been one of those couples that had been insufferably cute when dating. When they’d been friends, they’d been teased about it enough, but when it turned to romance, it all seemed a bit much.

It was the names that got most people, of course. They'd react in a few very predictable ways when they found out that the couple had homophonic names. Most folks would gush over how adorable it was, asking how they referred to each other when alone, what they'd name their children if they could have any, and so on. The rest seemed to fall into two camps: those that would ask, "doesn't that get confusing or weird in conversations?" and those that would make some lewd comment about sex, whether referring to threesomes or whether they'd ever played with another Aaron or Erin or something like that.

The answers were all fairly straight forward, too, especially after several years of being asked the same questions. They would say that they called each other by their names like regular folks; they'd joke that if they had kids, they'd name them Erin and Aaron; they'd say that conversations were made easier when eye contact signaled which individual was being talked to; they'd say their sex life was private but give a wink.

Below the surface, though, were the more intimate truths. In private, they really only used each other's first initials, going by E and A respectively. They'd done the threesome thing quite a bit, actually, and even once with another Erin, it had been really rather nice, and they were looking forward to seeing her again tonight. And perhaps the most intimate truth was just how sore a subject parenthood was for the two of them, how much being an interspecies couple got in the way.

Aaron laughed and nodded. "Alright, alright," he said. "You looking forward to being a useful mink tonight, then?"

Despite all the planning and negotiation that had gone into tonight, despite all the times she'd heard it before, being called a 'useful mink' right before the first night in far too long where she really would be useful had Erin squirming in her seat, ears pinned back against her head.

The cat in the the driver's seat laughed, "I'll take that as a yes, then. Tell me what you're looking forward to most, then."

"Being... being useful."

"Mmm, so it's more the serving others than the bondage?"

Erin felt her tail start to frizz out, something she could never seem to help when agitated. A fact that Aaron was always keen to exploit. "Mmhm... mink wants to

be useful more than anything.”

“More than anything?” Aaron asked, risking a glance away from the road to grin at his wife. “More than the pleasure of the act, you just want others to use you to feel good?”

If his goal had been to make her flustered, Aaron was succeeding. If it had been to get her more worked up, it was also very, very much succeeding. “Yeah,” she began, voice thick with embarrassment. “Yeah, I want. . . I want people to come away feeling fulfilled, I want to be a tool to help them feel that way.” The mink thought for a moment longer before adding, “The sex is good too, you know I’ll enjoy that, but being useful is what I want.”

Aaron nodded. “Not to drag us back to where we were, but is that part of why you want to be a mother so badly?”

“Mhm, at least a little part of it. It feels like the strongest, highest, and, well, purest form of being useful.”

“Well, that makes sense,” Aaron said with a chuckle. “So. . .”

“‘So. . .’ what?” Erin sat up within her seat. “What are you planning?”

“Nothing, nothing!” Unable to lift his paws from the steering wheel, the cat did his best to imply a disarming gesture with his shoulders. “Only, I was wondering, what if you got to be useful at a party like this one, and that led to a child?”

The mink in the passenger seat sat, mouth open, for a moment before finding the words to respond, “You. . . you’re sure you’re not planning anything?”

“Promise. No plans, or we’d be negotiating a hell of a lot harder.”

“Well, I. . . I don’t know.” Erin realized that she was fiddling too much with her book, bending the pages, so she set her bookmark in place and slipped the paperback into her bag. “It would be a lot to process. But I’m pretty sure all of it would be good.”

Aaron grinned toward the road, making his way over to the rightmost lane once more — they were just about to the end of the freeway stint of the trip, Erin guessed, so probably just a few minutes left. “Well, alright then. So if we wind up at a party like this and there just happens to be another mink there-”

Erin cut him off with a quiet whine, her tail bristled from base to tip and swishing against the back of the seat. “A! Come *on*!”

The cat's grin turned to a laugh. "What do you mean, 'come on'? You'd love it, you said so. You'd love to be a Centerpiece and come away with motherhood, I know you would! And you know I'm game, too."

Brushing furiously at her tail in an attempt to soothe her nerves, Erin let a stony silence fall, fighting to sort out a turbulent mixture of embarrassment, arousal, and that longing she'd always associated with her drive towards motherhood, biological imperative and otherwise.

Erin's silence and Aaron's grin lasted the next few minutes until they parked at the curb before a squat, suburban ranch house.

Aaron turned off the car and tugged up the parking break, leaning over to kiss his wife on the cheek, "Sorry if that was too far, E."

When Erin didn't respond, he reached for her paw, twining fingers with her. Looking back up to her face, he was surprised to see a bashful smile there.

"No, was just thinking," she murmured. "I *would* love that."

The cat's grin snapped back into place almost immediately, along with the start of a quiet purr. He leaned over to give another quick kiss before slipping his paw away and swinging wide the driver's side door. "Come on, then, grab the bin and let's get inside, catch up with folks."

§

Those who travel among the play parties, orgies, and swing groups often think of themselves as being sexually liberated.

However, they'll all be the first to admit that the time before the play party begins can be the most awkward part. Milling around with a plastic cup of too-sweet spiked punch in one paw and a little plate of store-bought cookies in the other sometimes made it feel a little too much like a social function put on by a group of employees.

The hosts of this party, another couple that Erin and Aaron had known for a few years now, two ferrets named Elise and Joan, had set up a few things to help alleviate that feeling, though there's not much that could make it go away entirely. For every bowl of chips or plate of cookies, there was a bowl of condoms (with several different sizes present) or lube packets (silicone or water based). The cooler

of drinks, normally holding just beers and sodas, also contained a few drinks made from stronger things. Small, printed signs listed the rules (play safe, wear clothes outside, and so on) near every doorway. The plans for segueing from “party” to “play” involved strip poker.

Despite all of the effort, there was still some difficulty in loosening up. This was due in no small part, Erin suspected, to anticipation for later. Even the most sexually liberated could be in the time leading up to sex.

Thankfully, as Centerpiece, she had little to worry about, in that sense. For her, the start and end to the night were clearly delineated. No strip poker for her. It would start when she was bound, gagged, and blindfolded, and it would end when she tapped out or was set loose, whichever came first. That would come soon, and the gear was all in the bin that Aaron had dragged in and set in the living room next to the neatly decked mattress that would be her spot for the night.

“First things first,” Aaron said, once Erin had gotten a drink. “Lift your chin.”

Erin did as she was told, letting her husband deftly swing a collar up around her neck and fasten it in front. Although she couldn’t see the collar, she knew what it looked like — black nylon webbing with some yellow nylon woven into it to spell ‘TOY’ along the back and a tag saying the same in front. Feeling the weight of it around her neck, the slight constriction of her fur beneath it, Erin tensed up and swished about, her short, rounded ears canted back.

“Finish your drink, minkytoy,” Aaron continued, waiting for the mink to down the rest of her soda before clipping a leash to the D-ring at her throat.

When the cat gave an experimental tug, Erin felt herself jerked forward an inch or two by the collar at back of her neck. Beyond that, though, she felt that latent arousal that had been dwelling within her the last few days finally begin to assert its presence, felt sub-space start to surround her like a warm blanket.

Her husband grinned at the obvious change and leaned in close enough to whisper to her, “Mmm, cozy there, pet?”

Ears pinned back, Erin gave a bashful nod.

“Going to be a good pet tonight?”

Nod.

“Still comfortable with this?”

Another nod, more vigorous this time.

“Going to be useful for everyone tonight, no matter what?”

Erin let out a low mewl, tucking her muzzle down toward her chest and hunching her shoulders as though she could hide her embarrassment that way. “Yes owner,” she murmured, tail lashing this way and that. “Will be useful.”

Aaron grinned haughtily and wound the leash around one of his paws a few times, giving another little tug to help reinforce his position over her. “Good mink. Let’s go see who you’re going to be useful for, then.”

Erin felt like they into a feedback loop of power dynamics. The more dominant that Aaron got in showing her off to the party’s other attendees, the more submissive she felt. The more submissive she acted, the more that seemed to egg Aaron on. Before long, he was encouraging her to spin and show off, to curtsy, to make small confessions to the other attendees.

This was one of the other things that Elise and Joan did to loosen up their guests. Each party — and there were several a year — included one guest who would be the Centerpiece. The Centerpiece had become a coveted role in the circles that attended this party, one that had to be applied for ahead of time.

And it was indeed a role to play. The Centerpiece was the one who had to start moving the atmosphere from party to play while the two ferrets tended to more mundane things such as maintaining snack levels and ensuring that the rules were followed. Once the atmosphere had shifted, the Centerpiece (almost always a known sub, but once or twice, a more dominant figure had surprised the group by serving) was to become literally that: a fixture at the center of the party, immobile. A figure to be discussed or a toy to be used in a public fashion.

Although this was Erin’s first time being the Centerpiece, the role fit her naturally. Elise had leapt at the chance to feature the mink for the party. To have a willing critter who was already a well-known sub (and already quite knowledgeable in bondage) made the hostesses’ jobs easier and the party more fun.

By the time they had made the rounds of the patio, Erin knew that she had done well. The timbre of the party had shifted according to plan, the curtains had been drawn, and the game of strip poker had already begun in the den. The mink was buzzing with a mixture of arousal and pleasurable embarrassment, along with a base

note of that nearly primal need to please.

Which is precisely when her smirking owner and husband tugged on her leash to get her to look up, saying, “And this is Matthew. Matthew Lederer. I believe you’ve met.”

Erin found her gaze sliding up along the slinky form before her, hidden by a half-unbuttoned dress shirt, to the soft features of the other mink. He was sleek and well groomed, whiskers bristled as if caught in the middle of searching for an intriguing scent. As everything from the earlier conversations clicked into place, she found herself tense at the end of the leash.

Another mink.

And here she was, smelling of arousal and desire: the Centerpiece, the offering to the party.

Matthew’s mind seemed to be going through some similar calculation, as his gaze shifted from shock through bemusement to hunger, grinning at the slender mink-toy being presented to him by the cat, giving an appraising glance over the rims of his glasses.

Erin watched him turn to face her husband, “Good to see you here, buddy! And yeah, I believe we have.” That grin widened, showing the mink’s pointed teeth. “Wasn’t expecting to be so lucky in my choice of toys for tonight.”

Looking positively smug, Aaron tapped the tip of his wife’s nose with the end of the leash, nodding. “Mmhm. Was my turn to bring the Centerpiece. Just about to go get her all trussed up. But here, stand up straighter, minkytoy.”

Able only to muster a soft mewl, Erin nodded and stood up straighter, her tail flitting about erratically.

“The Centerpiece should greet all her guests while she still can. Go on.”

Erin nodded and leaned in to give the other mink an embrace and a whiskery, bashful kiss to the side of his muzzle. “W-welcome...”

Matthew returned the kiss with a grin, seeming to pick up on some of Aaron’s bravado. “Thank you, ah...” he reached a paw up to lift the tag on the smaller mink’s collar to read it. “Thank you, toy. I’m sure I’ll be most welcome indeed.”

“I thought you said you didn’t have anything planned,” Erin said, still shivering from the mix of humiliation and arousal as she tugged her shirt off.

Aaron, already nude, looked up from where he had been rooting in the bin of bondage gear, “I didn’t, E, I promise. I didn’t even know he was coming until he showed up just then.”

Erin nodded, anxious. She slipped shyly out of the last of her clothes and knelt, nude, on the mattress.

“Do you want me to call in Elise? We can tap out, if it’s uncomfortable, or Elise can ask him to not interact with you as the Centerpiece.”

The mink felt herself flush beneath her fur, whiskers bristling. “Mmnf. . .” she managed, then, “N-no. I mean, now I’m all curious. I’ve. . . never been with another mink before, after all.”

Aaron grinned and sat down on the edge of the mattress, holding a pair of soft, locking bondage cuffs and a snap hook connector — two lobster clasps joined by a strip of nylon with a D-ring situated in the middle — for binding them together. “Oh, so you’re eager, then, toy?”

Erin squirmed at the pet name. She hadn’t quite left sub-space, hadn’t wanted to, and so the words played readily into that. “I. . . maybe,” she admitted, squirming tensely.

The cat’s grin widened as he turned and crawled over the mattress to her, muzzle tucking in against her cheek, his paws working to fasten one of the locking cuffs around her wrist. “Toy sure *smells* eager,” he breathed.

Tilting her cheek to her owner’s muzzle and lifting both of her paws to offer her wrists to him, Erin whined quietly in return. “Can’t help it,” she mumbled, her breathing picking up.

“I imagine not.” Aaron continued slipping the other cuff onto the mink’s other wrist, making a show of checking the locked status of each before attaching the connector to the exposed D-rings of the cuffs, effectively locking Erin’s paws together. Although cuffs were a common accessory for her, she always got a thrill out of having them put on by someone else.

“Hopefully not too obvious?” she asked.

“This is a play party, E, it’s kind of expected,” Aaron said. The cat’s laugh

made Erin lay her ears all the way back. He tugged on the strap connecting her cuffs together pulling her up onto her knees and then onto all fours, his paw pinning the snap connector to the mattress. The laugh turned into a low growl as Aaron murmured, “And besides, toy, everyone noticed.” With a soft nip to her ear, he lowered his voice further to a soft purr, adding, “Everyone.”

Any distance Erin had managed to gain from the sexual dynamic to ask about plans was quickly obliterated with the firm treatment and teasing words. She quickly found herself back in that cozy submissive space, her paws clutching at the sheets of the mattress, held only as far apart as the cuffs would let them. “Was toy useful?”

Dragging the tote of gear closer, Aaron nodded, his voice muffled slightly by the fact that he couldn’t hold back a purr. “Very useful. You got everyone up and moving. Lots of needy looks when we left to get ready.” The cat brought up another snap connector and with an insistent push, nudged Erin’s shoulders down until her chin nearly touched her paws, clipping this connector between the D-ring on her collar and the one on the first snap connector, leaving the mink with her backside hiked up and exposed. “But you’re only just getting started, minkytoy. You’re going to be very, very useful by night’s end, aren’t you?”

Erin nodded, her breathing quick and shallow in anticipation. She could smell her own arousal quite strongly, now, as well as that of Aaron, a scent she was well accustomed to. “Yes owner,” she panted, breaths tinged with a whine.

There was a bit more fumbling in the bin before Aaron lay a few more items out in front of her, close enough to see but not touch. A ring-gag. A blindfold. A small remote control type device. A bowl of condoms. Two laminated signs — one with rules, the other with a space for tallying just how the mink had been useful. A marker to go with the signs.

Kneeling before her, Aaron took the blindfold in one paw and the gag in the other and leaned in closer. The familiar scent of the cat’s arousal was filling Erin’s nostrils, his stiff shaft dead center in her gaze, but, again, just out of reach. The scent of him was overpowering the scent of herself, but she could feel that burning arousal in her belly, feel the cool air against her groin, caressing warm and slick flesh.

“Even that mink? Matthew?” the cat asked. It was hard for Erin to pick apart

whether her owner was purring or growling, or perhaps a little bit of both. “Are you going to be a useful toy for him, too?”

Erin felt her fur bristle, that perennial reaction to humiliation no longer restricted to just her tail, but creeping up her spine to her neck and ears, heckles raising. “I will,” she whimpered. “I’ll be usef-*nngh!*”

She was cut off quickly. She’d been so focused on Aaron’s words and the sight of his arousal in the center of her tunnel-vision that she hadn’t noticed the paw with the ring gag.

With one deft movement, the cat had taken advantage of her open muzzle to slip the gag in place, wedging her muzzle open with the ring of stiff rubber. His fingers quickly traced the straps of the gag to their ends, velcro straps that looped around her collar to hold the gag in place.

“I know you will, toy,” the cat growled — and it definitely was a growl this time. A commanding, possessive, domineering growl that ensured she knew her place.

Erin could only whine and pant, huff and whimper. She nodded shakily, as much as the straps restraining her neck to her wrists would allow.

Those teasing growls continued as Aaron set up, clearly leaving the blindfold in his paw until last so that she would be forced to watch. “I wonder if toy will be able to tell it’s him,” he said. “By shape or by noise. Or maybe he’ll lean forward and whisper to you how he’s taking you. Maybe he’ll just scruff the toy. I bet his teeth are sharp.”

Whimper, pant, squirm. Erin couldn’t manage a whole lot more, as she watched her owner set up the signs. “Please use condoms; no damage; Centerpiece will use buzzer to tap out” read one. “Cum count: In sex — In muzzle — In fur” read the other, the pen laid neatly at its base.

“Maybe it’ll trigger something in you,” Aaron said. He picked up the remote control and gave its single button a quick press, the small box emitting a surprisingly loud buzzing noise, annoying by design. Slipping the buzzer into Erin’s paw, he leaned in closer to continue, “Maybe your body will know him by his species. Maybe you’ll know what it is that you’re missing out by him using a condom with you, by being that close to having his kits.”

A more drawn-out whine this time, low and needy, as her owner sought out and

tickled each and every one of her kinks in turn.

She was gone. Totally lost in sub-space. And he was driving her deeper and deeper.

“Press the button, toy.”

Shaking, Erin fumbled with the remote, getting the button aligned under her thumb before pressing it. She got a loud buzz in response.

“Good. Don’t forget that, toy.” Aaron grinned and reached once more into the tote of gear. “I’ll watch when I can, but I have my own fun planned tonight.”

With that, Erin watched as the cat stood, making as if to open the door for everyone, letting the play of the Centerpiece begin, still murmuring, “Maybe toy will find herself needing him, hmm? Craving that mink within her, fitting so nicely like only another mink can. Maybe some day you *will* wind up with his kits.”

The cat paused and turned back, looking as if he’d just remembered something. Erin noticed the blindfold left in his paw and squirmed against the bed, knowing that the sensory deprivation would only serve to drive her deeper into Useful Mink territory.

Aaron knelt before her once more and lifted the blindfold, then set it to the side and instead lifted his other paw. In it was a safety pin, something from the emergency sewing kit in the gear tote. Holding his paws deliberately within her gaze, Aaron opened the safety pin, exposing the sharp point. With his free paw, he reached down to grab one of the wrapped condoms from the bowl.

“And who knows,” he said, grinning widely as he drove the point of the pin through the package, the condom inside, and clear through out the other side of the package. “Maybe he’ll get this one.”

The condom dangled briefly from the safety pin directly before Erin’s eyes. She watched, unable to speak even if she hadn’t been gagged, as the cat slid the needle-thin pin from the condom and massaged it with his fingerpads, leaving it looking intact and unmolested. He then tossed it almost casually into the bowl of condoms, mixing them up lazily with his paw. Aaron closed the safety pin and dropped it back into the tote with a small rattle.

Realizing that she had been holding her breath, Erin let out a gasp and a shaky moan before swallowing dryly, making a soft *glk* noise with the gag in the way. She

could feel Aaron hesitating, watching her for any sign that she would need to back out.

Her mind was reeling, her breath coming in ragged pants, her arousal out of control, her body coursing with what felt like electricity. But she gave a slight nod of consent.

Her last sight was of Aaron grinning as he reached down to fasten the blindfold over her eyes, clipping that, too, to the collar so that it couldn't easily be removed. Sight gone, she could only rely on touch, scent, taste, sound.

The rustle of Aaron standing, the feel of the mattress shifting beneath her.

"Remember your buzzer, toy."

Footsteps.

The scent of her owner's arousal fading, the scent of her own taking over.

The sound of the door.

Traces of other scents, other people, other species, other arousals.

Voices, soft applause.

And Aaron's voice, "The Centerpiece is ready."

Hostess

Elise was the first into the living room when Aaron opened the door, exposing his wife, the Centerpiece to the rest of the party.

In one sense, this was a rather muted presentation. Rather than an elaborate bondage setup, a feature of some of the previous play parties, Aaron and Erin had opted for something simple. Erin was blindfolded and bound, but only lightly: her wrists bound with cuffs, and her collar bound to those. That, and the blindfold and gag. The rest of the mink was exposed, letting her sleek and soft brown fur stand as its own testament — and, judging from the "In Fur" portion of the cum counter poster, an open target. Any further bondage gear remained in the tote next to the mattress, and she was sure that some of it would be added by the end of the night.

Elise rather preferred the setup, if she was honest with herself. Overt and complex bondage had its place, to be sure, but not in a play party. It worked better as a show-piece to be admired rather than a Centerpiece to be used. There had been

some grand setups (including one suspension rig, which she no longer allowed during the parties). She was pleased to see no spreader bar, given the position the mink had been left in; that would mean fewer bruised shins and more possibilities for sexual positions.

She completed a quick circuit of the scene, surveying the quality and safety of the setup as well as the willingness of the Centerpiece — there was little observation needed there, though: the whole room fairly reeked of aroused mink. As a ferret, the musteline scent tickled something deep within her and made her smile widen. Erin was a wonderful choice for the role.

The other participants had been milling about as well, taking in the sights, but all of them waited for Elise's nod of approval before approaching any closer.

She nodded.

Although the guests were at various states of arousal, or even willingness to interact with the Centerpiece, whether through preference or some other hidden reason, it was customary for the Centerpiece to receive the first sensual and sexual attention of the night from all attending.

Some folks tugged teasingly in the collar, others stroked their fingers feather-light through fur, and still others cooed soft words of praise, humiliation, or degradation into the mink's pinned-back ears. At least one finger, that of a fox Elise considered snide, if beautiful, poked through the ring gag and slipped far into Erin's muzzle.

Elise could imagine growled words about soft tongues coming from the fox later that night.

And she stood above it all. She was hostess. She was hostess in name and in reality — Joan not as much — and she wore that title proudly and visibly.

Of the twenty or so attendees, Joan was the last to move toward the Centerpiece, spurred on by a squeeze of the paw by her wife.

Slowly, the party's participants settled into a routine — there were few new folks this time around, and no one Elise didn't trust — either wandering off in twos or threes to other rooms or settling around the Centerpiece. A few moments later and Elise and Aaron were the only two left standing.

"Thank you again for having us," Aaron said. "And for the chance for Erin.

We've really been looking forward to it."

Elise grinned, "Of course, sweetie. She performed — is performing beautifully"

The crowd surrounding Erin had diminished to only a handful of individuals, seemingly having formed a lazy queue to play with the new toy one or two at a time. That fox had, of course, made his way to the mink's gagged muzzle, seeking the best way to put it to use through trial and error. Elise didn't think any knot would fit past that ring gag.

"She'll be fine, you know," Elise said gently. "Erin, I mean. This is a good crowd. If you're worried, though, I can keep an eye on her if you want to go play."

Aaron hesitated, tail swishing about erratically until he seemed to realize what he was doing and curled it around to hold onto the tip. Curious behavior for a cat, but Elise supposed that it was a deeply ingrained habit. "I, ah," he began, clearing his throat. "I was actually sort of hoping to spend some time with you, Elise."

The ferret straightened up and perked her ears. She chuckled and brushed a paw lightly along Aaron's upper arm, "Me? How come? That's the first time you've said anything like that."

"I, er, it's been on my mind for a while now, the last few parties. I've just been hesitant to ask." He swallowed visibly, "And you're right, this is a good crowd, and I do trust them. I just usually do things with Erin as a couple. This... I mean, this is our chance to do some stuff separately."

"And now that she's stuck where she is, well taken care of," Elise nodded over to where the fox was making use of the mink's muzzle while a male cat filling her from the other end and the cat's wife whispered into the Centerpiece's ear. "You feel comfortable enough to come on to me?"

Aaron smiled bashfully, one of his fingers slowly circling the very tip of the tail held in his paw. "I feel a little awkward when you put it that way," he admitted. "But it's not untrue. I just... I just mean you're really beautiful. I'd like to serve you, if I may..."

Elise raised an eyebrow and gave the cat an appraising look, admiring the play of tan and brown in his fur. "Aaron, hmm? The dommy beast who was leading his minkyttoy around by a leash not one hour ago?" she teased.

"I'm more of a top than Erin, but far less than you, I think."

The ferret laughed, easy and earnestly, “That you likely are, kitty.”

Another bashful smile from Aaron.

“Well, come. I’ll find something for you to do. I’m more limited than it may seem, but yes, you may serve me.”

Elise reached out and took Aaron’s free paw, letting the other hold onto the tail. Such a curious, childish habit, that was. The change from the haughty dom feline to the kitten she was leading through the door to the den, and from there to the master bedroom (a privilege of being hostess) was intriguing, cute.

The master bedroom was furnished to Elise and Joan’s specifications, with little belying their positions as organizers of one of the town’s most sought-after play parties, and one of the only bondage-centric ones. A simple, comfortable bed, fitting no more than two comfortably, a low and long pine dresser with an older TV on top. Earth tones were the dominant color: sandy, muted, calm.

The only concession to the couple’s BDSM lifestyle was a hint of a four-point strap peeking out from between the mattress and box spring, and a large cushion on the floor next to the bed. Elise liked her room clean, and Joan followed her lead.

Leading Aaron into the room, the ferret nudged the door mostly shut behind her with a foot, leaving it open enough to let others know they could interrupt if need be and she could hear her name if called. She nudged Aaron in front of her and, before he could turn around, reached a paw up to gather the cat’s scruff in her fingers, holding firmly.

“Kitten will give his mistress rubs, yes? His job is to make her feel good.”

Aaron gave a soft mowl, seemingly unable to form much in the way of words, nodding instead.

Elise growled pleasantly, as close to a purr as she could, and tightened her grip on Aaron’s scruff, blunt claws pressing through fur and in against the tender skin beneath, testing for any low pain tolerances in her new toy. The mowl returned, higher pitched this time, as the cat sagged in her grasp, breath catching in his throat. *Cats are so easy*, she thought, and grinned.

“Come on, then, kitty. Come sit by mistress’s bed and she’ll let you rub and nuzzle on her.”

Another faint nod.

Elise's grin widened and she half-dragged Aaron over to the cushion, deliberately placed by the edge of the bed, and dropped him neatly onto it, letting the cat crumple to his hands and knees. Taking her time, she walked a slow circle around the cat, eventually sitting primly on the edge of the bed.

Aaron tentatively reached out a paw toward Elise, who stopped him short with a sharp intake of breath between equally sharp teeth. "Not yet, kitten. Some instructions first. Use your paws only until I tell you, and then you may rub with your muzzle. And only on me, kitten mustn't touch himself at all, either. You're not wearing a collar — I've no desire to collar you anyway — so I won't have that control, but—" She straightened her leg out and gave him a push in the chest with her footpaw, then slipped it up over his shoulder to hook her ankle around the back of his neck, giving a small tug. "This ought to be enough, don't you think?"

The ferret watched Aaron nod, watched the way his body tensed and his tail gave an erratic swish, watched the way his arousal stood erect. Words, directions, commands, and only the most deliberate touches seemed to be affecting him strongly.

This served Elise well.

She let him sit and stew over the commands for a while before grinning and murmuring, "Good. Good kitty. Now, mistress's poor paws are sore, there's always so much to do before these parties, so much running around. You may start by rubbing those."

The cat reached up tentatively once more and, finding himself free to do so, began to gently stroke along the soft-furred tops of Elise's footpaws, thumbs tracing more firmly along the pads on the underside. Once he seemed to settle into a purr and a rhythm, Elise leaned back onto the heels of her palms, letting her shoulders hunch up, watching down along her front as her kitten did as he was told.

"Mmn, there we go, good kitten," she purred. "You make such a nice pet, even if only temporarily. Nice soft paws, nice quiet purrs. Obedient kitten, speaks only when spoken too, doesn't he?"

Laying his ears back, Aaron nodded.

"Mmhm, and he'll do what he's told, won't he?" The soft stream of commands and debasement continued, Elise exerting pressure on her sub. "Both paws on one foot now. Knead."

The cat obeyed immediately, bringing both paws to bear on the ferret's right foot, fingers holding it steady as his thumbs rubbed and kneaded against the leathery pawpads, pressing in against them. Elise lifted her left foot and let it rest over Aaron's shoulder: the most useful footrest.

"Kitten's quite good at this, isn't he?"

Aaron nodded.

"Does kitten like paws?"

He nodded once more, looking flustered.

"How much does he like them?"

Aaron gave a low whine under his breath, squirming and rubbing a little more eagerly.

"Ahhh, yes, good kittens only speak when permitted." Elise's grin turned cruel. "Maybe I should just leave him mute for the rest of the evening, hmm?"

Tail lashing from side to side, Aaron gave a third, tense nod.

"Alright, then. Mistress could use a quiet pet like yourself." She could see the way the words, the constant demeaning way she called him a kitten, were working on him. Not just his erection, which certainly showed that eagerness, but also with the quickened breathing, agitated swishing, and tense, jerky movements.

"Although," Elise murmured, tilting her head and shifting to a thoughtful tone. "Perhaps kitten should add his muzzle to the mix. Just some nuzzling, in against the toes, if you will."

Paws shifting down toward the ferret's ankle, Aaron nodded, leaning in to bury his velvety nose in against those soft pawpads, nuzzling in against them as instructed.

"Mmhm, like that." Time to start questing for more interests and testing for boundaries. Despite having a clean house and having showered just before the party, she added, "Mistress has been on her feet so much today, walking here, running there, inside and out. Probably a touch dirty. Kitten would help her clean those paws, don't you think?"

The response was hesitant — not a promising sign — and feather light: soft, raspy licks that only just grazed the hide on the underside of her paws.

Too far, perhaps. There probably should have been more negotiation than there was. There never seemed to be enough time.

She provided Aaron the out, giving an exaggerated, ticklish squirm and tugged her foot back road away from his blunt muzzle. “Rrf! Sensitive. Sorry kitten. You can nuzzle up higher on her leg, though, while you keep up those delightful rubs of yours.”

Aaron did a good job or not letting his relief show, but it was there. *Never quite enough time for negotiation*, Elise thought.

The cat shifted and lowered Elise’s leg enough to lean over it and brush his nose through the short, soft fur of his mistress’ calf and shin.

Elise softened her smile and gave a slight nod of recognition and approval. She carefully lifted her left leg off of Aaron’s shoulder, nudging it into the cat’s paws. Once he shift his rubbing to that paw, she moved her right leg to rest over his shoulder as before. The cat kept up his soft nuzzling against her right calf, purring adding a buzzing sensation .

“What a wonderful little kitty pet I’ve found,” Elise murmured, letting her eyes drift closed in earnest pleasure at those rubs. “Does kitten like rubbing mistress’s paws like that? He may speak.”

Aaron nodded eagerly, rubbing his cheek in against her calf. “K...kitten does. Kitten wants to do more for his mistress,” he said, sounding embarrassed. “Kitten... would like to worship his mistress, if that’s okay, to pleasure her and taste her...”

Elise froze, suddenly quite aware of the way Aaron’s gaze travelled up along her leg, seeking and searching toward her crotch. She could smell his arousal, see his nose questing for scents of hers. And she felt the urge to withdraw inside herself that came with a boundary being tested.

“No, that would not be okay,” she murmured, keeping her voice calm, pleasant, dominant.

Aaron’s ears perked then lay flat against his head, the cat giving an abashed nod. “May I step back from this for a second, Elise?”

The ferret nodded gratefully, slipping her foot from his and her paw from his shoulder. She crossed her legs and sat up, a bit stiff, prim. “Of course, sweetie.”

Aaron shifted as well, moving to a cross-legged sitting position and curling his tail around into his lap, evidently quite self-conscious of his arousal. Staring at some point past Elise's feet, he hesitated a moment before beginning, "I think I overstepped, there, and I'd like to understand why before we continue."

Elise flexed her footpaws and toes, still buzzing with the sensation of the cat's rubs and nuzzles. "So did I, when it came to licking." She held up a paw to forestall the responses she could see welling up inside Aaron, "Which I'm just mentioning to make sure we talk about that as well."

The cat nodded and settled back, still avoiding eye contact.

"I don't...ah, *do* sex. It's not something that I'm comfortable with. I don't run these parties for myself to get off, don't play around at them." She smiled wryly, "Don't play around outside of them, either. I don't run these parties for me, I run them because I see way too much unsafe shit going on in BDSM, and they're intended to be a guaranteed safe place. That's why I run them; that and Joan. She needs an outlet."

Aaron tilted his head, but otherwise stayed quiet.

"I can dom, for sure. And I love it, too. It gives me a thrill, just not a sexual one. We should've gone over that before, is all. That and what we each wanted out of this. I think we know that. I guessed on the paws thing," she said, at which Aaron began to fiddle with his tail-tip once more. "But overstepped a bit there, and I didn't say anything about this because I'm usually just all stone dom at these parties anyway, and don't let others touch me."

She shrugged, "I like you, though, you and your toy. I trust you, and figured I'd let you in."

At the last sentence, Aaron pinned his ears back against his skull, "Again, I'm sorry if I overstepped mist-Elise..."

The ferret laughed and shook her head, reaching out with a footpaw and giving Aaron another gentle nudge, "I heard that! And no, don't worry about it, I'm serious, I trust you. We just didn't go over boundaries, is all."

Aaron grinned faintly and nodded, "Alright, I-"

Soft footsteps and the creak of the door alerted the pair to Joan's presence, the other, shorter ferret peeking her head around the doorjamb. She grinned and slipped

into the room, murmuring, “Not surprised to find you both here. The Centerpiece is performing beautifully, everyone’s playing nice. Just wondering where you got off to, dear.”

Beckoning her wife over to them with a pat on the mattress next to her, Elise grinned and nodded, “We were just discussing the finer points of paws. Aaron says he likes rubbing them, I say I like having them rubbed.” When Joan was a few steps away from the bed, Elise surprised even herself by speaking up in a more commanding tone of voice, “Not here, pet. Down there, on the cushion, with kitten.”

While Joan moved immediately to obey, Aaron was a little slower to pick up on the dominant tone markers, but eventually shifted his body to the side, leaving enough room for Joan who knelt tidily on the cushion beside him. Those paws went right for his tail-tip again, thumb twirling around the very tip.

Comfortably back in stone dom mode, the ferret grinned, lacing her fingers together and resting her paws atop her knee, crossed above the other one. “Now, *we* don’t have to continue, kitten, and you have all the freedom to head back to the party if you’d like, but if you’d still like to please me,” she said, lofty. “You can please pet, here. Does that sound like something kitty would like?”

Aaron, already apparently wrong-footed by the order for Joan to sit next to him, sat and stared at Elise. The ferret grinned back toothily, her tail flicking from one side of where she sat on the bed the bed to the other, then shifted her gaze to Joan, “Does that sound alright to you, pet? Having a kitten tend to you?”

Joan nodded quickly and said, “If he’s good enough to rub your paws, I’m sure he could work wonders on mine. There are other ways to tend to a ferret, as well.” She leaned over traced her blunt muzzle along Aaron’s jawline up to the base of his ear, giving a low growl to the cat.

Elise’s grin widened.

“Ah, I . . .” Aaron stammered for a moment before continuing, “So long as mis-erf, so long as Elise doesn’t feel left out. . .”

Elise reached a footpaw out once more, this time to lazily trace one toe’s claw through the cat’s short fur from thigh to knee. “You may still call me mistress, kitten, but you ought to call Joan that, too. Kitten’s at the bottom of the hierarchy

here.” That sharp claw continued to trace short, slow lines over Aaron’s knee, “And no, I won’t feel left out. Kitten tending to pet, and me directing and controlling. And you’re sure you’re okay with it, kitten? I haven’t heard anything definitive.”

Aaron seemed to clutch all the tighter at his tail, squirming in place between the couple. Elise had watched the cat’s erection flag and arousal dissipate when they’d stopped to discuss boundaries, but it was back now, and looking quite intense. “Oh, very okay with it,” he nodded vigorously. “This... I, well, I’d dreamed of this, but thought I’d, or I’d, well. Rambling. Sorry mistress. Mistresses.”

Laughing, Elise stood, circling partway around the cushion on the floor, two sets of adoring eyes on her. She’d let her pet and the kitten play, but she had a bit more fun to get out of the power differential, a bit further to nudge Aaron into the realm of submissive.

Once she’d made her way around behind the cat, she slipped a paw down and gathered up a good portion of his scruff in her fingers, squeezing it until she got a mowl out of him before lifting. Aaron stumbled to his feet awkwardly, muscles struggling to obey him with the grip on his scruff encouraging him to go limp.

Elise held him there, half standing on his own, half dangling from his scruff, and unable to talk. “Are you sure, pet? Think this kitten could please you?” She took a step back around Aaron, letting the cat turn slightly in her paw as if to show him off to Joan, presenting him to her.

Picking up on her wife’s plans, Joan leaned back onto one paw and gave the cat an appraising look, from those ears tilted back and those wide eyes, down over his form, covered in short tan fur, to his erection, standing stiffly from his front and bobbing to his pulse, to that tail giving an occasional jerky swish.

“Mm, I suppose he’ll do, mistress.”

Elise leaned in closer to Aaron and sneered, “I suppose you’ll do, indeed, kitten.”

Another soft mowl was all the cat could manage, but Elise could sense his breathing picking up, smell his need filling the room.

“Where would you like him, then, pet?”

Joan gave an aloof, almost careless shrug and scooted herself to the edge of the cushion, “Oh, just anywhere.”

“Sure thing.” Elise was half tempted to just drop Aaron again, but given how shaky he was this time, she lowered him more carefully to a heap on the cushion.

She felt herself smiling earnestly, now, no forced expression. This was her element, and from the looks, sounds, and smells of it, it was Aaron’s element, too. She wasn’t terribly surprised that one who had done so well at degrading the Centerpiece would be so receptive to it as well — she’d known he was a switch, of course, so that was just a big arrow pointing to what it was he liked.

“Now,” she continued. “First thing kitten will do is to tend to pet’s paws, just like he did with mine.”

Aaron’s movements were jerky, nerves still all ajangle from being scruffed, but managed to get himself onto his knees and elbows. Elise watched him crawl shakily toward Joan, who offered one of her footpaws. His own paws began to work once more, fingers brushing along the top of the ferret’s paws while thumbs kneaded at the pads, nose shyly brushing along toes.

“Ohh...” Joan tilted her head back, eyes half closing. “You’re right, mistress, he is good.”

Elise returned to her seat on the edge of the mattress, swinging her legs up onto the bed this time and leaning over to rest on her elbow. “Mmhm, very good,” she murmured. “Kitten will take good care of pet, won’t he? Pet has much, much more to offer to him than mistress does.”

She heard a sharp intake of breath from the cat, and grinned. The bumpy start had been worth it. Now she had a pliant kitten and a pet willing to be a mistress for him alongside her. Everyone in their place, everyone enjoying themselves — enjoying themselves quite a bit, judging by the scent of Joan’s arousal joining that of Aaron’s.

“Kitten will make sure to rub both paws, correct?”

“Yes, mistresses.” Aaron’s voice was muffled, still nuzzling against that paw.

“Good.” She grinned, “If kitten does well, He’ll be able to move on to tastier treats.”

Breeding Pair

Matthew Lederer had been prowling around the outer edges of the swinger and BDSM party circuit for a few months now. Although he still called himself a transplant, he'd been in the area for almost three years, and the excuse had started to wear thin. He was more than past due to get back to the explorations he'd left behind with the move.

The move had been planned — long planned, even — but all the same, it came as a shock to his system to be withdrawn from a community in which he was just starting to feel at home. An introduction to bondage, an introduction to power dynamics, an introduction into another couple's relationship all had come a scant year before the move. And then the job offer.

The scene wasn't coming with him, the couple wasn't moving. With the triad broken and his boxes packed, all he had to do was to say goodbye to the life he'd built and the things he'd started to explore, and hope that he'd find more of the same soon.

There had been some false starts, as there were with any venture. The first party he'd found had turned out to be a such a bust that he'd almost given up and gone back to a regular dating scene after that. Settling, as he now thought of it. "swinger party", to some, apparently meant getting *really high* and having *a lot of sex* while seemingly trying to be *as unsafe as possible*.

Not his bag.

After that, he'd started asking around rather than simply hunting for such parties on some of the skeevier sites on the web. Having face-to-face conversations seemed to reduce the number of gross entries in the field, even if it meant reducing the overall number as well.

There were some good times and some awkward times after that, but no downright bad times. He'd played a bit here and there, exploring how to engage his dommy side. On one occasion he'd even gotten himself delightfully tied up, Shibari-style.

And always, as he asked around at the parties, people talked in an almost worshipful tone of Joan and Elise's parties, and how well they seemed to run.

His ‘in’ had been through Joan herself, let off the leash to go have some fun of her own while Elise had a night of recharging and wine at home.

Joan and Matthew had gotten to talking after the party — a long party that was half demonstration, half play — the two mustelids lounging on a couch. It had been too warm (and the couch too messy) to cuddle, but they’d made do with simply making the gestures, not needing to actually make contact. No building up heat while still remaining close felt like a good move.

She’d asked him if he’d be interesting in coming to a similar party at her place before he’d even put two and two together, and he’d said yes.

More luck than sense, but that’s how it works for worn out fools at the end of BDSM parties.

Joan had given him a feathery kiss to the whiskers at the end of the night and they’d promised to see each other a month and change down the line. Matthew had caught the bus home after that. Reeking of sex, head buzzy with pleasure and filled with endorphins from the pain (there had been *flogging*), he thought of that lithe ferret he’d had the chance to close out the evening with. She was quite out of his league, he was sure, but the kiss and the invitation had him hopeful.

The next five weeks had been a tortuous slog through work. Work itself was picking up, which sucked, and seemed to be getting in the way of all his plans, cancelling at least one tentative date between the two parties. Thankfully, the product reveal was two days before the party itself, so perhaps that would be a little treat. He suspected he’d need the release by then.

§

Matthew had long since gotten used to being greeted by the smells of arousal and stress when walking into parties like this. Arousal was obvious, but, early on, he hadn’t expected the stress. It made sense, he supposed: many were there with a goal in mind, and it was work to attain that. Pleasurable work, but work nonetheless.

Tonight, though, there was something more, something that touched him in a way those other mixed scents before hadn’t.

He’d brought an overnight bag just in case, and as he slipped through the front door, he saw that he hadn’t been alone. Lining the entryway and toward the kitchen

were several other bags, as well as totes and boxes, which he suspected were full of gear. And here he'd only thought to bring clothes.

He settled his bag down among the rest, doing his best to make sure he hadn't put it on top of anyone else's, and, unsure of the protocols of the evening, began unbuttoning his shirt. All he'd heard was that there would be a Centerpiece. A toy to parade about, a toy for everyone to use. The rest had all been left vague—

"And this is Matthew. Matthew Lederer," he heard a familiar voice. "I believe you've met."

Aaron.

Contexts clashed, work and play argued for space in his head. To be greeted at the party by his coworker — his coworker! — and his delightful mink of a wife in the midst of disrobing left him wrong-footed.

Matthew knew he was staring, open mouthed. He'd met Erin, known she was attractive. That much was obvious at the silly company party they'd all had to attend, but this was something else. Something else entirely.

She was at the end of a leash held by Aaron, a black, nylon job that was clasped to an identical collar. All the silver and black went well with her sleek fur.

She was still dressed much as she had been the first time they'd met, other than that: a plain top and simple skirt, a jersey-fabric over-shirt trailing past her waist. The incongruence brought a smile to his muzzle. Centerpiece, hmm?

It was less the clothing, then, that drew him to her, but the scent of her own arousal: that which had him bristling from entry. It felt like a complement to him.

Mink, it practically hollered. *Mink like you. Female mink.*

It felt like something that ought to be *his*.

"Good to see you here, buddy!" He forced himself to turn to Aaron and grin widely to him rather than simply leering at the cat's wife. "And yeah, I believe we have. Wasn't expecting to be so lucky in my choice of toys for tonight."

"Mmhm," Aaron nodded, brushing the handle of the leash over the bridge of Erin's muzzle. "Was my turn to bring the Centerpiece. Just about to go get her all trussed up. But here, stand up straighter, minkytoy."

Matthew grinned, found that he was tense. Far tenser than he'd remembered getting. He forced himself to relax with a slow breath and watched as Erin straight-

ened her back and lifted her head, looking bashful.

“The Centerpiece should greet all her guests while she still can,” Aaron continued, urging his wife on. “Go on.”

The other mink nodded and gave Matthew a shy hug and a kiss to his muzzle. That scent grew stronger, and he returned that kiss eagerly.

“W-welcome,” Erin said, meek.

All this mention of ‘toy’, the degrading language, it was all so easy to pick up.

“Thank you, er...” He made a show of leaning forward to check the tag on Erin’s collar. Another heady whiff of that scent — arousal, need, mink. *Mink*. “Thank you, toy. I’m sure I’ll be most welcome indeed.”

He grinned at Aaron and gave what he hoped was an approving nod.

As the cat led off his wife, his toy, Matthew slouched, leaning against the wall to support some of his weight. His fumbling fingers set to work unbuttoning his shirt the rest of the way as he struggled with a swirl of thoughts.

Erin was pretty, no doubt about it. Certainly his type, and definitely his species. And she was bound, and about to be more so, which that was another point in her favor — a subby mink such as her was one of those pie-in-the-sky sort of dreams, something he had never really expected to encounter.

Too much, too much. This was all so much. Seeing a bound and primed mink girl like that was nice, he was nearly incapacitated.

His mind swimming, Matthew shrugged out of his shirt and stuffed it into his bag. It was something to think about. Something he’d almost certainly need to think about, with Erin being the centerpiece.

§

With the Centerpiece off and getting ready, the party progressed much as Matthew expected. It was a touch awkward with so many people trying to get into the same mood at the same time, and to do so basically without talking about it.

This was always a sticking point for Matthew. He hated it. He hated the way that there was so much dancing around the topic of being at a kink party in the hours and minutes leading up to it. Few people would acknowledge the things that were about to happen, the reasons that they were there, in an open and earnest fashion.

Hell, *he* had an awful time of it: it was something within himself that he hated, as well. Something within society that afflicted them all.

He trusted Joan, though, and trusted Elise in turn, that things would work out alright. As far as parties like this went, those here in the state and those back home, this one was fairly smooth. Even though he appeared to have made a bit of a *faux pas* by taking off his shirt earlier than others, everyone seemed happy to roll with it, the mink fitting in well with some conversations about design that he was at least familiar with.

He wound up with a beer in one paw and a very small, very strong shot of something more than just alcohol in the other. The former he sipped as a matter of form, and the latter he cherished. It would be enough, he knew, to get him feeling all buzzy and loose, but not enough to incapacitate him or, worse, make him unable to perform. And hey, work didn't test for the stuff, and he rarely had the chance, so he might as well indulge.

He paused a moment to read the a sign taped up to the side of the drinks cooler, then snagged a fluorescent green wristband from the counter that would indicated that he had more than just alcohol in his system. It was a reasonable rule, he figured. Might as well follow it.

As he took tiny sips from the shockingly bitter shot and larger swallows from the comparatively bland beer, he wound his way through the party, introducing himself here and there as he felt himself loosening up.

Several times, he made eye contact with Joan, giving small smiles and little perks of his ears. She responded in kind, but would continue about her business as hostess soon after. Ah well, he'd keep trying.

Besides, he thought. Joan invited me. She's the reason I'm here, really. Erin was a wonderful surprise, but she's probably out of my league, well embedded in this group and thoroughly married to her engineer husband. Lucky cat. I ought to leave them be.

To that end, he tooled around the party, letting himself be ushered into the living room with all of the rest of the attendees for the last of the icebreaking activities before the party began in earnest.

The activity turned out to be strip poker. Matthew gave a little snort of laughter

as he accepted his hand of cards, thinking first that the idea was trite and worn, and then realizing that it was well chosen so long as it was timed right. As the Centerpiece had been paraded around, it had been to get everyone in the mood, while the wait between then and the strip poker had been to build up expectations.

Poker, then, was flipped on its head. It was a silly conceit that, in context, made everyone play to lose. Getting rid of clothing was a good way to get closer to the party itself, was something to be proud of. Get folks lubed up with alcohol and stronger stuff — the intensity it required for Matthew to focus on his cards was testament to just how strong — set their expectations with a flourish of exhibitionism, set their nerves on edge, and then make them work for it.

Well played.

Matthew, having already discarded his shirt, was teased and handicapped in the game of strip poker. Even so, everyone wound up nude at about the same time.

The mink was decidedly buzzy, but the nice thing about this is that, even though it knocked coordination down a few notches, it left perception about up where it was meant to be, and perhaps even kicked touch up a bit. Despite the fact that there was a wide array of visual arousals. Some were overt, with erections and slickness, and some were more subtle, with the ways in which people directed their attentions to each other: gazes lingering longer, touches and kisses increasing in frequency and intensity.

Above all that, though, Matthew smelled the arousal. Minks, he supposed, had a good enough sense of smell to pick up on the odors from all of those present at the party. Everyone, everyone at the party was worked up to some extent, even if it wasn't visually evident. There were musks, and the salt-air scents of the sea, and the sweet and spicy smells of forests and fertility.

Another thing to thank that bitter concoction for, being able to smell all of that.

And another thing to thank this party for, given that many that he had wound up at had left no more than half of the attendees interested and aroused. The parties containing all interested parties and not, say, those who had just shown up to see friends, were few and far between.

As the game of strip poker wound down to a close with an unlucky fox finally getting to strip his underwear and reveal a shaft standing firm and proud (no

surprise, given how it had been straining against underwear moments before), the group surged as one. There was a purpose. An itinerary.

It was Elise who stood.

“Alright, my naked friends,” she called. Laughter in response — Elise was as nude as the rest of them — which faded quickly at a gesture from the ferret. “I’m sure most of you know the rules, since you’ve either already been to one of these little soires before or you got the lecture before you were invited.”

Matthew found himself nodding in approval. An assembly with a list of rules meant good things for a party like this. No rules was a big warning sign more often than not.

“Consent is required for everything,” the hostess continued. “Explicit consent. And I mean everything. Safewords must always be obeyed — the defaults are ‘green’, ‘yellow’, and ‘red’ or ‘stop’ — and we have spare buzzers for those who may find themselves bound and gagged. I’ll be making the rounds, but if I’m busy and you need something, like help with something around the house, try and find Joan. If it’s a restraint thing, there are medical scissors everywhere. I’m always interruptible if it’s a medical emergency.”

Elise paused and gave a couple, two young dogs, a glare. “And no modifying my house.”

More laughter.

“Last, some safety stuff. Condoms always, please. We’ve got a variety here, and your own are welcome in a sealed box. Please use the individually sealed packets of lube, too. No blood, no scat, ask before watersports.” Elise’s words sped up, and then ended with a flourish, the well-rehearsed speech drawing to a close. There was a lot of nodding a few claps.

“Breaking any of these rules is a permanent ban for you as well as whomever you came with, so keep each other honest. Play safe and have—”

The door behind Elise opened, startling the ferret into turning around. A soft round of applause began. “Aha,” she said with a grin. “Here we go.”

“The Centerpiece is ready.” Aaron was standing in the doorway, nude as the rest of them and wearing his sexuality well, even if his posture suggested something between a butler and a proud artist showing his creation.

And, as Matthew stood, Aaron was right to be proud of his Centerpiece.

The bondage was simple. Erin was on all fours, held there by virtue of bound cuffs and a connector binding her collar to the center of the connector between the cuffs. There was a blindfold and a ring-gag as well, but otherwise, the mink was simply in the nude.

What she lacked in bondage gear, however, she made up for in the setup around her and the air she gave off.

Taking the meal aspect of 'Centerpiece' further, Aaron had trussed Erin up at the center of a mattress, neatly sheeted to look like a tablecloth, and surrounded her with 'side dishes' consisting of bowls of condoms, lube packets, additional toys, and even a sign for recording what all had been done with the mink.

Her bearing was one of the utmost need. Matthew could see how tense Erin was, nearly vibrating at the center of the scene. She looked as though she was doing her best to stay still, fighting the urge to squirm about. In her shaking paw, she held one of those buzzers, a single-button thing that would emit a loud noise as a means of tapping out, but it seemed nearly forgotten now. Simply something to clutch onto for support.

More than the sights, though, was the scent. Perhaps it was that bitter concoction, long finished, which had kicked his sense of smell up a notch, but it hit him like a wave. There were notes of Aaron's masculine scent, to be sure, but Matthew was nearly overwhelmed by the rush of mink; clean, healthy, aroused mink.

He'd been worried that perhaps it was just him, but he could see others in the crowd tasting the air, lips parted and nostrils flared, letting their senses be tickled.

As Aaron stood off to the side to talk with Elise, the rest of the partygoers slipped into the room with the Centerpiece. Matthew followed their lead, as there seemed to be some rule or pattern being followed, clustering with them around the bound and, now that he was close enough to tell, panting mink.

Everyone found a way to dote on Erin. Some whispered adoring things into her ears, or perhaps they were cruel things. Some stroked through fur while others tested at bounds. Some teased at the mink's gagged and spread muzzle, and others poked around behind the mink, as the position itself left little to the imagination.

And Matthew stroked lightly along her flank, fingers combing through fur. He

felt as though he was walking along some high wire, balancing between some position where he would be overwhelmed by the very urges that drove him to her — mechanical though they were; he was primed by genetics to react the way that he was — and the ones that kept him from her.

And what were those, he wondered? Was he saving himself for Joan, perhaps? Or wary of some supposed connection between him and Erin? He didn't doubt either, once he thought about them. He had indeed been thinking of Joan since their encounter at the previous party, but now here was... what? Competition?

As for the connection, he supposed he was worried of becoming attached. Attached, enamored, needing. He couldn't pin the source of this down; Erin was married to his coworker, was simply an attendee at the party, and yet here was was, worrying.

Maybe it's all in my head, mom saying I should settle down with someone like me. Maybe physical, instinctual attraction is all it'll take to tie me down, these days, he mused. Or maybe swinging's really just that lonely.

All this muttering anxiety within him was enough incentive for him to give Erin one last stroke, stand up, and seek out Joan. Simple, uncomplicated: that's what the night called for. Both were almost certainly out of his league, but heading down that path didn't lead to shattered nerves or self-reproach.

Thirsty and buzzing, planet-struck, spellbound, he took a brief detour through the kitchen for a sparkling water before wandering around the house, half aroused, searching for the ferret.

(, tries to go for joan but is rebuffed, left to fawn over erin, turning down others to hold her paws and whisper dirty things, ambiguous whether or not he gets a chance)

Hostess

By the time Aaron had been allowed up along her body far enough to bury his muzzle in the velvety-short fur of her groin, Joan had fallen into a comfortable rhythm with Elise. Using someone more submissive than her as a toy while she

remained the pet to her mistress was not something they'd had a chance to try — or even talk about — before.

It appeared to be working for the three of them, though. Joan felt the pressure of Elise's dominance as a sort of comforting blanket around her shoulders, and Aaron was quite good at what he did as a submissive: she had been brought to the bring of orgasm a few times before, as Elise spotted the signs, the cat was directed away. For her part, Elise seemed to be relishing being the capricious mistress, instructing Aaron first this way, then admonishing him that way, letting Joan get close and then taking that away. Aaron showed just enough will of his own to make things interesting: whining, pushing his limits, adding a touch of brattiness, but never going too far.

Aftercare

Chapter 2

Downtime

Couple

Triad

Couple

Triad

Couple

Chapter 3

Party

Centerpiece

Hostess

Breeding Pair

Hostess

Aftercare