

“Hey dude,” Ben called meekly to his sluggish roommate as Cory came home and headed straight to his room without a word in response. Ben sighed, going back to his video game with barely a moment's hesitation. It had been a familiar pattern lately. He didn't know why he even bothered talking to Cory anymore. All Cory did was go to work, come home, and get high. Whatever. So long as he had the rent money and occasionally did the dishes, though the latter was a rarity nowadays.

Cory had another shitty day at work. His restaurant job was hell. Today he'd almost been fired on the spot for a minor infraction. He didn't need that level of bullshit in his life. The promise of a steady paycheck was the only thing keeping him going in every morning. The customers were annoying, the bosses were overly demanding and greedy, and the environment was absolutely soul-sucking. It was all he could find in the current economy; his college degree as worthless as his current job made him feel.

He was happy to be home, to unwind, to lose himself for a time, forget his crappy job, his life. He picked up the mask on his table, checking the tiny attached vial underneath. Almost empty. He'd be running on fumes today. He'd have to make the dreaded trip to his dealer's tomorrow if he wanted his daily fuck you to life. Oh well. That was a problem for tomorrow.

He placed the mask carefully on his head, savoring the moment, awaiting the cool rush that came with the amazing high he was about to experience. The smell was a bit strong, unpleasant, especially in those first few moments. No worse than the weed he'd smoked before. This shit was way better. Some sort of new chemical, evidently untraceable in blood tests. He didn't give a shit about that. It smelled vaguely of what he recalled to be skunk musk. His childhood dog had once come home reeking unlike anything he'd ever known possible after an unfortunate encounter with the small creature.

The heavy scent gone from his nostrils, he lay back in his room, relaxing as the euphoric floating sensation overtook his body. Why had he been so worried about work? It was all worth it, to feel the release that this drug gave him. It wasn't addiction; he did not need it to feel normal. Rather, the calm release it gave felt different each time, feeling more refined. The side effects while sober, aside from longing for more of that sensation, were relatively mild. So what if he didn't give a shit about doing anything under the drugs' effects? He worked hard, he deserved it damnit!

Cory came down from his euphoria to see it had been almost two in the morning. He'd been on a trip for more than seven hours. Oh well. He went out into the main room and washed up, his roommate having long since gone off to bed. He would only get about 5 hours of sleep for his next morning's shift. It was hardly unusual for him to miss shifts from oversleeping. Yet, he

couldn't afford to miss another one. Money was tight and with the need for a refill looming he needed every cent on his paycheck.

The next day was even worse. He'd been fired on the spot, citing attitude, tardiness, appearance, and a host of other reasons that Cory didn't give a fuck about. It was a lousy fast food job; there were dozens in the city. He had rent paid up. He deserved a few days to unwind. He came home, throwing his uniform in the trash as he headed out.

“Hey, you do too much of that shit man,” his roommate called as Cory headed out. Fucking hypocrite. Ben was also stoned out of his mind on the stuff most days. He might not indulge as often, able to hold down his steady desk job, but fuck. Just because he had a career didn't make Ben better than him, right?

Cory arrived at one of several meeting places set up in advance from his dealer. They were in relative public view. Though the drug was new and technically not illegal, its producers preferred to keep the drug's presence lowkey. He would text a code in advance, a cryptic series of numbers and letters that translated to his desired quantity. He would then arrive at the specified location and be given his bill, to be paid in cash, and the stuff would be delivered to his home under a false label. No paper trail, no evidence of illicit activities.

He spotted the now familiar car in the parking lot and casually headed over. Though his supply was run by multiple individuals, he was regular enough to recognize most of their vehicles and he'd gotten this guy on more than one occasion.

“What the fuck man! This is double what I paid last time! I don't got a job right now!” Cory yelled, staring at the unreasonable figure the man had requested from him.

“Quiet, you idiot, or you won't get any at all!” snapped the man in the car, casually taking a wide-angle view of the area. It had appeared that no one gave them notice, at least. Still, it was foolish to take chances with a client so brash as this one.

Fear overtook Cory's mind. He hadn't envisioned a day where he wouldn't be in his bed, lost in the wonderful misery of the substance. He *had* to have it, to have his evening of peace so that he could think, he could look for another job. His mind raced with millions of conflicting thoughts. What would he do if he was actually denied his fix?

“Look, I'll do anything... you know I'm good for it, right? I can't afford it right now, but in two...three weeks at the most. Come on man,” he pleaded, shocked at the desperation in his voice.

Cory wasn't sure what he was expecting. He'd always snubbed his nose at those less fortunate, those who had to beg and plead for their next release. Was this what he had been reduced to?

To his amazement, the man in the car did not simply drive off. In fact, it was quite the opposite. He simply smiled, paused for a moment as he reached into his pocket. After a few moments, he produced a tiny vial, looking very much like the standard hit Cory received, though rather off-color.

"You're in luck, my friend. We do have a particular service you can provide. We need a test subject for a new product. And it's completely free of charge. Provided you inform us daily of its effects. There will be...shall we say, repercussions should you choose to ignore us," the man said, now oddly calm despite his previous outburst.

"Y-yeah I'll try!" Cory exclaimed, reaching for the vial in desperation.

The man held it slightly out of reach for a moment, looking up and down over his eager client, as if deciding his worth. Finally, he nodded and handed the vial to Cory. Without a further word, he drove off, much to Cory's relief. He hadn't thought it odd to question why he'd been given a vial in broad daylight.

Cory fled the spot in a hurry, lest his suppliers headed back and decided to change their minds and take back their property by force. He headed home, ignoring his roommate once more as he dashed into his room, loading the vial into its cartridge and placing the mask over his head.

Falling back on his bed, Cory clicked the tab, eager to forget all about this shit day and lie back in ignorant bliss. Yet, instead of the euphoria he normally felt, a particularly rank, pungent scent hit his nose. Yuck! It was as though he'd been sprayed directly in the face by a skunk. The drug normally smelled off-putting, but this was downright repulsive.

He didn't remember much of the following evening. He was high, certainly, but not in the way he so desperately craved. Frankly, he was stoned out of his mind, barely able to feel through the heavy blanket covering his mind. A fading thought reminded him to give the dosage a negative review. But he was far too stoned in his current state to make a note of it!

He had extremely vivid dreams that night. The thick, heavy musk was chasing him, enveloping him in a cocoon of bliss. It was as though the musk filled every pore, every crevice of his being as he floated away, lost in a tranquil sea of the somehow increasingly palatable stench. He hovered outside himself, watched as he waddled, and strode through a beautiful forest.

Sauntering along slowly without care, it felt as though nothing could harm him. He had his beautiful tail, luscious black fur, sharp claws casually digging at the earth for tasty bugs.....

Cory awoke the next morning, the reek of skunk heavy in his nostrils. Fuck, the after-odor was far worse than any other trip he'd been on. Well, it was free. Did he have any right to complain?

He slowly rose from the bed, needing to wash the stench from his body. He took one step and fell over in agonizing pain. Every cell in his body flared with sensation, as though he was burning up. What the hell had been in that vial?

Cory stood for a moment, panting, waiting for the pain to subside. His efforts were in vain. No matter how he reoriented himself, the sensations did not dissipate. Quite the opposite; with every second that passed the agony enveloping him only grew worse. He reached for his phone on the table, thankful it had not lost its charge during the night. He called the number, hands trembling as he waited with bated breath as the phone rang twice, three times.

“Fuck I-I feel like...I'm fucking dying!” He shouted, for once wishing Ben was home, that maybe he could help him. He'd be given hell later of course, but did that matter? He was seriously in danger of overdosing.

“No need to worry my friend. We are en route to your apartment. We can cure your condition. Sit tight, it will all be over soon,” said the eerily calm voice on the other end.

“W-wait!” Cory cried as the phone instantly hung up, leaving him stunned and speechless. Had they not thought to question the symptoms he was experiencing? Worse, had they expected this?

He didn't think it safe just to stay in his apartment. A part of him questioned if years of drug use had heightened his paranoia. However, any doubts were overridden with a primal fear for his existence.

Putting on his shoes, Cory was hardly able to bend over from the pain in his backside. His skin prickled and tingled as if something just beneath the surface was stretching and groaning, trying to break its way free. It was as though his spine was extending, threatening to tear at his skin any second now!

He felt suddenly hot, itchy, as though his clothes were irritating him. True, he had passed out with his sweaty garments from yesterday, but that was not nearly sufficient to explain his discomfort. It was as though his body hair had multiplied, spreading up between his follicles and making him sweat under his clothes.

Cory made his way out of his apartment, cautiously looking around for signs of pursuit. Quickly heading towards the wooded area across the lot, he tried his best to remain inconspicuous. He knew he should try and get to a hospital but was worried about charges from what the doctors would find in his system. The best course of action he could conceive of was hiding in the woods, laying low until he felt decent enough to get his bearings.

Yet, the insistent ache in his spine made it difficult to keep moving as something pressed tightly against the seat of his sweatpants. The more he ran, the more he felt the growth swelling, desperate to free itself. Cory waited until he was out of sight then reached to undo his pants and tried to free the irritation. Yet nothing could prepare him for the shock at what his fingers reported. They brushed against something hairy, not unlike a dog but far more coarse.

Cory tried to pull at it for a closer look but an itch in his hand made him let go. He was afraid to see what was happening but needed to know all the same. Looking down at his hand, Cory stared in horror at the thick patch of black fur that had appeared. The irritation from his upper arm was an indication that the black hairs were spreading. Some sort of goddamn hormone imbalance? What the hell had those bastards put in their drug?

The pain in his back became unbearable as Cory tripped over a fallen branch. What the hell was happening to him? His body ached as muscles popped and twisted. His entire body was burning, changing as though the drug he'd taken had spread throughout his core, infecting every cell of his body. He whimpered in pain and fear, sounds becoming more high-pitched as the changes hit his chest and neck.

He felt his nails ache and grow, thickening into curved claws. The skin on his hands felt rough as thick pads grew on his palms and fingertips. Yet still, his hands retained their primate features. Four articulated fingers and an opposable thumb gave him some hope that he was at least not becoming a mindless animal.

A tightening in his shoes made him aware that his feet were changing, making him pitch over even more as his heels stretched. The pain was undeniable as his nails grew into claws that were poking into the inside of the shoe. Growing paw pads made it uncomfortable to wear them, but Cory was hardly in a state to take them off!

His face began to itch and burn, robbing him of his visage of humanity. He held his face in his paw-like hands as it pushed outwards, nose moist and black as it expanded in his field of vision. He could feel thick hairs press up against his paw pads, almost like whiskers, shockingly

sensitive to his touch. His ears were situated on top of his head, amplifying his moans and whimpers.

After what felt like an eternity the strange discomfort stopped. Cory hunched over, panting as the aches and pains slowly faded. He felt weird, strangely overheated from the fur and off-balance from the massive growth above his rear.

Grabbing his phone from the pockets of his torn pants, Cory was desperate to see what he looked like through the camera function. Gone was the familiar human face he had gazed at in the mirror for the last 25 years. In its place looked for all the world like a giant humanoid skunk!

Cory had never seen a skunk up close and curiosity won out as he gazed at his new muzzle reflected in the screen. His eyesight was terrible. He had always needed glasses he was too poor to afford but this was much worse than he remembered. He was now even more nearsighted, needing to hold his phone screen close to his face to read the bright text.

His sense of smell was something else, however. He could smell himself, smell the musk leaking from his backside that made him shiver from the disgust that he had those glands now. Yet, he soon became mesmerized by the scents of millions of animals and people readily identifiable in the surrounding forest alone. He raised his nose, sniffing the air, his human brain struggling with sensory overload as he tried to process the information.

A series of scents stuck out, reminding him of his former human odor still fresh on his clothes. Did that mean there were still other humans in his immediate vicinity?

A sudden prick struck him in the neck and he winced, body suddenly feeling heavy as he whirled around. A familiar sensation raced through him, as though he'd been hit with something he'd been on before. Ketamine? Oh shit. Had someone drugged him? His dim eyesight detected movement, other humans closing in on him. He tried to run but fell over, legs like lead as he hit the forest floor hard. He struggled against the weight in his mind but knew it was no use as he passed into unconsciousness.

Cory awoke slowly, opening his eyes and gazing at his surroundings. He was in some sort of prison cell, the only amenities a single cot and rudimentary toilet. He sniffed the air, the lingering odor of an occupant similar to himself hanging in the cage, barely covered with the chemical stench of disinfectants.

It was then he was reminded he was still a skunk-man. Cory stared down at his paw hands, head lowered in shame at what he'd become. He was half animal, like some kind of freak!

"It was fortuitous that you were not detected. We would be rather amiss if others discovered our operation," came a voice from down the hall. Cory turned to look, seeing a bald man in a lab coat accompanied by two security personnel, one of whom had been the dealer who'd given him his infected dosage.

"What the hell did you do to me!" Cory yelled, flinging himself at the bars as he was filled with rage. Though instead of the urge to tear or bite with his claws and teeth, he felt a desire to turn his back, raise his tail in disdain at the man who had condemned him to be this...this thing!

"The science is beyond your comprehension, I'm very sure. Regardless, we were in need of additional specimens to expand our production. Business is booming, after all."

"Too high a concentrated dose before the body has time to regulate it can have...unforeseen side effects, such as your new form. But don't worry my friend! You will be well cared for here. Food to eat, entertainment. Only if you cooperate, of course," the man in the lab coat carried on casually, as though talking to a skunk-man was second nature to him.

"W-what do you want me to do?" Cory asked, stunned at the revelation.

"It's quite simple. The new anal glands you've developed will produce us an ample supply of a new formula for our product. You need only allow us to harvest you once or twice a day without resistance and we promise to make your life more comfortable. Fail to comply and well, your fate will be the same as the last occupant who shared this cell."

"Goodbye for now. We will give you a day to acclimate to your new environment. We shall return tomorrow for the first round of testing and collection. Be happy! Someone's finally made something useful out of you!" He laughed as he turned to walk away.

Cory slept most of the day, drifting into despair as he bemoaned his fate. What had he done to deserve this? His life may have been wasted by this man's standards, but it was his, damnit! What right did they have to turn him into an animal, a freak?

The sound of a door unlocking stirred him from his misery. A man quickly walked in, shutting the door behind him. Cory looked up, confused to see the other men that had accompanied the boss earlier. Hadn't they said they'd come back in the morning?

“I’ll make this quick. Boss makes us pay. A lot. So I’m gonna get it straight from the source. He says your dosage is special. A nice little escape from the shit I gotta deal with. Camera is off in this wing, so don’t bother making noise, or you’re gonna regret it,” said the man gruffly as he grabbed Cory’s shoulders and roughly turned him over. Cory instinctively tried to struggle but his smaller frame was no match for the muscular man as he reached down, feeling around below Cory’s ass.

Cory had no idea how he’d done it. Maybe it was the fear, the anger of having his human form and now his dignity taken from him. Perhaps it was simply instinct, a reaction to a threatening stimulus. Whatever the reason, it made his tail lift and contracted muscles he didn’t know he had. With a quick motion, he felt something fire out from his backside, a thick fluid that was not unlike taking a piss. It felt strange having a spray coming from an orifice, not his member or anus, though oddly pleasant.

“W-what the fuck!” the guard screamed, falling over and gagging from the force of the thick fluid sprayed all over him. He vomited all over himself, unable to move as all senses were overwhelmed by the powerful stench of noxious fumes. Cory had no idea what the man was so upset about. Certainly, the musk was strong, though not nearly as bad as the man-made it seem to be. What an overreaction!

A loud series of snaps made Cory turn around. He gazed in horror as the man began to shrink before his eyes. The guard’s eyes widened in fear as black fur sprouted all over his face and hands. He hunched over from the pain of his tail confined in his pants. Was he turning into a skunk-man like Cory?

It soon became obvious to them both that the man’s changes were progressing far beyond Cory’s. He had shrunk down to under half his size in a matter of minutes. He tried to stand but the pain in his back made him fall over, the position much more comfortable with shorter legs. His cries of pain faded into a series of frantic squeaks as his face reshaped.

After a few moments, a fully formed skunk stepped out of the former guard’s pile of clothes. The skunk sniffed around its new environment, unconcerned with Cory’s presence or the heavy scent of spray still thick on its fur.

How was this possible? Cory knew that a high enough dose could change someone halfway, but could not fathom how a direct shot could change someone completely. The former guard seemed for all the world like a total skunk, in mind as well as body. What had he done? More to the point, what *could* he do now with the alterations to his body?

Cory realized in his stunned stupor his would-be assailant had the card key in his discarded pants for unlocking the cell. He raced to the door, leaving the former man to his fate. He had a weapon now, a way to get revenge against his captors. Regardless of whether he'd brought it upon himself, Cory had to use it to prevent them from doing the same to others.

He made his way through the darkness, his sense of smell a blessing in disguise. He had the bald man's odor in his nostrils and nothing would deter him from his goal. It was fortuitous that his foolish assailant had turned off the cameras in the wing. Using the guard's keycard, he could easily escape his confinement, even explore the complex where the drug was made. However, he had only one objective in mind. The stink of the scientist was all over the place, particularly concentrated in choice areas Cory was certain he would frequent. Cory had ample time to choose a vantage point from which to strike. He could wait, bide his time until his target inevitably returned.

He didn't have to wait long. The scientist was an early riser, it seemed. The thick scent of chemicals and the man's now-distinctive odor gave away his approach long before he was in range. Cory knew he had to act quickly. He recalled something about skunks having a limited supply of musk at one time and he needed to ensure he had enough to escape should more guards be present. He took a position out of view of a locked door the man was sure to enter. He'd hopefully get his weapon off before the man had a chance to react.

The bald man wasn't alone. Cory could also scent the now-familiar identity of the man he knew to be his dealer. This was perfect. His new hearing could pick up bits of their conversation, a simple back and forth regarding football scores. Neither realized that they were living the last moments of their humanity before Cory had his revenge. A passing thought made him wonder if he should hold the men hostage, force them to find a way to turn him back. No. It was very unlikely he'd have another chance like this. He couldn't afford to let it slip by, regardless of what happened to him later.

The door clicked, key card activating the lock as Cory tensed. He wanted to say something witty, something to make the men remember him before he doomed them to a fate worse than they had done him. He couldn't think of anything in the heat of the moment. It was no matter. They wouldn't be human long enough to remember it anyways.

Neither man had a chance to scream, to cry out, to draw a weapon as they were hit with Cory's noxious stink. Part of him wondered if he should hold back, conserve some for his escape in case he was pursued. Instead, he let loose, emptying his glands with torrents of musk. He had no idea how much was needed to trigger a total change and he would take no chances.

Both men gagged and fell to the floor, staring up at the skunk man with rage in their eyes. Did they not know what was about to happen to them? The fur sprouting on their hands and the aches and pains in their spines quickly revealed their fates. The boss tried to run, tripping on his coat as he fell over onto his new hand paws. He squeaked in frustration as he reaped the rewards of his product firsthand.

The former dealer simply stared up at Cory, face awash with regret as it steadily became overrun with skunk-like features. It was his own fault for giving Cory the tainted vial that he had ended up here, doomed to become a mindless beast. Cory grinned in satisfaction as he got to watch the man spend his last human moments lamenting his poor decision.

Soon enough two newly formed skunks waddled out of their former human trappings and began to explore their surroundings. They strode slowly, confident in their ability to keep themselves safe, and were unconcerned with the presence of their bipedal brother. Cory knew all too well the potency of the musk they now possessed. He took this opportunity to leave before he was caught by anyone else stumbling upon the scene.

A bright flashing light caught his attention, and he walked over to what appeared to be a control panel situated behind the door of the room from which the former men had entered. He squinted, new eyes having trouble reading the flashing words until he was almost on top of it. Primary release?

Cory pushed the button, a green light blinking and triggering a series of mechanical clicks his sensitive ears picked up far away. What had he done? The bald man's words rang in his head, the knowledge that he was currently not the only captive here. He had not scented others on his journey here, though his thoughts had been solely focused on locating his quarry. He knew he should at least check for others, to save them from a fate intended for him. Yet as guilty as he felt, he had to go, lest he be found and darted by other guards while he was still without his own means of defense. He would be no good to anyone if he was caught again.

He exited the building quickly, the boss's keycard allowing him easy access to the exit. He was in some sort of compound, well off the grid from the looks of things. He didn't bother to take the time to get his bearings. He simply raced into the woods until the scents of man were long gone from his nostrils and he could, at last, breathe a sigh of relief.

It turned out to be a profitable venture in the long run.

Cory had some difficulties contacting his former roommate but once he managed to arrange a face-to-face, Ben was more than eager to be his new manager. For a tidy sum of the profits, of course. Add in the fact that without the main operation in effect, Cory's pungent glands were the only way Ben could get his fix and the deal was sealed.

Ben was a bit off-put from knowledge of what his roommate had become and what he had been truly inhaling all this time but got over such trivialities quickly. The buzz was great, the money was grand, and he had free access to his high of choice whenever he wanted.

It was perhaps ironic that in the end Cory still wound up being a walking drug factory. At least this way he had his freedom instead of being locked away. Ben of course knew better than to piss Cory off, lest he share the feral fate of Cory's captors.

Cory's dose quickly became a hit among the drug's usual clientele. Given the limited amount Cory could produce from his anal glands, he was able to mark the price steadily up. Cory always kept a ready supply for himself, of course. He was fortunate that he had not become immune to his own treated scent glands as he'd expected. It had been a dream come true. He needed only to agree to a periodic collection of his fluids and an added fee to have someone completely human run his errands.

There was no way to know if others like Cory had fled the compound, or if there had even been others, to begin with. No reports on sightings surfaced in the media as near as they could tell. It certainly ensured that he had the market cornered, at least!

No one from the operation pursued him, at least to his knowledge. Perhaps the operation was truly small and what remained of the human populace had no knowledge of how the drug was manufactured. Cory kept his guard up in those following few weeks, expecting to feel another dart in his neck that would signal his return to captivity. However, as time went on, he found himself able to relax more, the likelihood of pursuit diminishing with each day.

He spent those first few weeks convinced that he'd inhaled a bad batch, that he was on an extended trip from which he could not awake. There was no way the events of the past few weeks could be real. The longer time went on, however, the more Cory became confused. Any time now, he could wake up in his own bed, or perhaps a hospital from the duration the high induced fantasy had gone on.

Yet, Cory slowly came to realize that it didn't matter. Whether or not he was truly a skunk-man or still in a drug-induced coma, he had what he'd always dreamed of. A purpose that made him happy and provided him with what he'd enjoyed most. He could, at last, spend his days adrift in

a sea of escape provided from his own musky designs! And make a decent sum of money in the process!