Moving In

“Thanks for the help, guys,” Kyobi panted as she set the last cardboard box down by the front door of her new apartment. “There’s no way I’d have gotten all of this crap up the stairs without you two.”

Jake and Jackie - a brother and sister, feline, black-furred and fit in build - shrugged their shoulders. “I mean, it was heavy,” murmured Jake. “But it’s not a problem.”

Jackie nodded her head. “Right,” she said with a smirk. “It’s not like we’re going to leave you to push a couch up the stairs by yourself.”

“Thank fuck you didn’t,” Kyobi groaned as she turned her head toward the absolute *monster* of a three-piece leather sofa that the three of them had *barely* managed to get up three flights of stairs. “Pretty sure I’d have died.”

Exhausted just looking at the damn thing, Kyobi shook her head and looked over toward her new apartment’s cozy little kitchen instead. The floorspace in there was packed with boxes - just like the rest of the place, really - but there was *just* about enough room to make it to the fridge. “Anyway. You guys want something to drink?” the cross vixen suddenly asked. “Water? Or, uh, I think the person who lived here last might have left some beers or something. That’d probably be better.”

Both felines licked their dry lips thirstily and nodded their heads almost in unison. “Water would be great,” said Jackie as she walked into the kitchen behind Kyobi.

“Yeah,” concurred Jake as he followed his sister. “I could kill a water right now.”

Kyobi set her hand on the fridge’s door and turned her head toward Jake and Jackie with raised brows. “No beer?” she asked the cats all confused. To her, the choice between booze and water… well, it wasn’t a choice.

Jackie smirked at Kyobi. “Not really a beer person,” she said to the vixen. “Plus, beer isn’t exactly all that hydrating, you know?”

In agreement with his sister, Jake nodded his head as he leaned against the kitchen wall. “Also, the guy who used to live here before, he was, uh…” The male grimaced. “He was a little… well, let’s just say I’m surprised the cleaners managed to get his smell out of here.”

Kyobi chuckled. “Well, I have no problem with a stinky beer. Let’s take a look

at ‘em and see,” the vixen murmured curiously as she started to open the fridge’s door…

… but before she did, the punkish cross fox heard a strange sound come from underneath the kitchen’s sink. It was a strange noise, a quiet noise, a scratchy little breathy sort of noise that sounded an awful lot like…

* * *

… micros. Which made sense. Because after opening up the cupboard underneath the sink, Kyobi found exactly that. Nestled in a fist-sized cubbyhole behind the kitchen pipes was a micro colony. One that felt large and advanced and teeming with terrified half-inch tall life.

Getting it out took a fair bit of effort from Kyobi, but nowhere near as much effort as pushing a couch up the stairs. After a little grunting and a lot of wrist action, the vixen managed to pull the hefty little colony out from underneath the sink. It looked like the little guys had managed to snag a small dinner plate somehow. A dinner plate that they’d used for the foundation of a village… which had turned into a town…

… which had eventually turned into the city that Kyobi was *just* about managing to hold in the palm of her hand. And it really *was* a city. One that had apartment buildings and businesses, parks and recreation, roads and infrastructure. Indeed, if it weren’t for the fact that it was small enough to get lost underneath the kitchen sink, one might have mistaken it for an actual city.

“That thing is crazy looking,” Jackie said with a hint of amazement as Kyobi carefully set the dinnerplate-sized city down on her coffee table. “Never seen a colony as big as that. Most I’ve ever seen them do is slam together a couple of houses outta toothpicks.”

Jake - who was just as enthralled and curious as his sister - took a sip of his water and nodded his head eagerly. “Same,” Jake admitted. “Didn’t think they had it in them.”

Kyobi frowned and took a seat on the center of her black leather couch, right in front of where she’d just set the city down. Like Jake and Jackie, she’d never seen micros do anything like this either… though she had a theory on how the little guys had become so advanced. “I wonder if Stinky was helping them,” she mused out loud as she leaned over the little city. Many, many tiny screams of terror could be heard as she did so… which was, of course, the sound of micro residents pissing their pants at the sight of their new and cruel Goddess.

Jackie took a seat by Kyobi. Unlike the vixen, she didn’t bother to lean

forward and display herself to the tiny city. She felt a little freaked out by the whole thing if she was being completely honest with herself… micros were pests, after all, and seeing them this organized was a little scary. “Stinky?” she asked curiously.

“Uh-huh. The guy who lived here before,” Kyobi explained. “You said he was smelly, so…”

“His name was James,” Jake said as he sat down at the other side of Kyobi. Unlike his sister, he wasn’t feeling freaked out at all… in fact, he felt rather neutral about the whole thing. Sure, the micros on display were more organized than usual, but… he could still crush all of their organization flat with one of his paws. “Or something like that.”

“*James Something Like That* isn’t as catchy as Stinky,” Kyobi murmured dryly.

Jake shrugged and took a drink of his water. “True enough,” he said. “What you’re trying to say is that James - or, uh, Stinky - was giving them supplies and stuff, right?”

“Yeah,” Kyobi said with a nod. “Either on accident because he was just letting them walk around the place, or… maybe on purpose. Either way, doesn’t really matter… point is, these guys had access to *way* more stuff than micros usually do.” Then, leaning back into the couch, Kyobi carelessly popped her fluffy paws up on her coffee table… right in front of the micro city. With a sigh, she propped her hands up behind her head and flexed her fluffy black toes casually, presenting coarse leathery beans that were slick with sweat to an audience of thousands.

Jackie shivered ever so slightly as she tried to imagine what the micros must be going through right now. To have your home wrenched from it’s foundations, to be gawked at by three giants, to then be suddenly *shoved* into the shadow of a pair of city-wrecking paws… it must have been terrifying. Completely horrifying, as a matter of fact… the kind of thing that would make one’s blood turn to ice. The apartment block you live in and the office block you work in and the city you reside in, all of it could be crushed, effortlessly, with one single press of the fox’s foot.

Jake - who was a great deal more relaxed than his sister - smirked and joined Kyobi in putting his paws up on the coffee table. With a grunt, he slammed his heels down just a couple of inches away from the city, making the plate that it was upon rattle. The micro’s quiet screams intensified as the residents were suddenly under threat from both fox *and* cat paws. “I don’t think it really matters what they had access to,” the male murmured casually. “I think what matters now is how we get rid of ‘em, no?”

“Eh, no reason to rush things,” Kyobi yawned as she idly curled her toes and flexed those deadly digits in front of hundreds upon hundreds of micros. “I don’t want to play exterminator right now. We just pushed a couch up the stairs.”

Down in the city - in the streets where little people ran, in the buildings where micros cowered in fright - the terrified denizens were beginning to *smell* that Jake and Kyobi had pushed a couch up the stairs… in the form of the scent that was coming off of both of their sweaty paws. The stench from two sets of lazily wriggling toes rolled through the streets and filled the air like thick pollutants, only… instead of being smoky and noxious, it was bitter and musky and heady. The kind of scent that burnt the eyes, the sinuses, the lungs, the *everything*. The sound of micro screams were suddenly smothered as many of the city’s residents clamped their hands over their mouths and did their best to hold their breath.

“Besides,” Kyobi went on as she heard the micros yells quieten down considerably, “we’re doing plenty to them already just by putting our feet up. You hear them screaming?”

“Yeah,” Jake chuckled as a fat bead of sweat rolled down his toe and *splashed* down into one of the city’s parks. The cat didn’t even notice it happening… that he just drowned a couple of blocks worth of greenery with a single drop of sweat. “I can hear ‘em going on about how bad our sweat stinks.”

Kyobi nodded and rolled her eyes. “Kinda mean of them honestly,” she sighed. “Bet *their* paws would stink too if they pushed a couch up the stairs.”

Jake smirked. “Right,” he said mockingly. “No wonder these guys are considered insects. Vermin. The lowest of the low. Not only do they invade your home but they also *complain* about the scents in your home. Haven’t they ever heard that beggars can’t be choosers?”

Jackie - who had, for the most part, simply been watching her brother and her friend casually taunt an entire miniature city - finally drew herself out of her shock and shook her head at the mischievous pair sat on the couch with her. “You two, uh… you seem to be really into this,” she suddenly murmured at them both.

“Oh, we’ve done this a couple of times,” Kyobi explained. “Not with a city this big or anything, but…” The vixen looked over her shoulder at Jake. “I mean, the two of us met because of a micro.”

Jake smiled fondly and lifted his eyes up to the ceiling as he reminisced. “Kind of, yeah. It was a couple of years back. We were both in the same pub… total strangers… when all of a sudden this micro goes running across the bar,” the male recounted. “I went to smush it with my hand, and she…”

“… went to catch it with my mouth,” Kyobi finished off with a nod of her head. “I won, of course. Was down my throat before his hand even hit the bar.”

Jake smirked and rubbed at his chin. “Yep. Then I was so damn impressed with how she’d just… *swallowed* the thing that I sparked up a conversation,” he said. “Next thing I know, the two of us were hanging out all the time.”

“Huh,” Jackie murmured with a couple of blinks of her big feline eyes. “I thought I was the one who met Kyobi first.”

Jake shook his head firmly. “Nope,” he said, “that was me.”

Jackie pursed her lips and pulled a face at both Kyobi and Jake. “Well… whatever. Suppose that doesn’t matter,” she sighed, sounding all disappointed.

With her footpaws still on the table, Kyobi reached out with one of her arms and wrapped it around Jackie’s shoulder, sensing that her friend was annoyed for some reason. “What’s wrong?” the vixen asked.

Jake sighed and wriggled his toes so fiercely that his heels bounced on the table beneath him, sending shockwaves through it and into the city not so far away. Buildings started to shake on their foundations - some even began to crumble and fall - but neither cat or fox noticed it happening. “She’s feeling left out,” the male murmured wryly. “Aren’t you, Jackie?”

“I guess,” Jackie admitted as she lifted her shoulders in a lazy shrug. “Just… never knew you two were into…” The female gestured across the table - at the shaking city - at the two pairs of paws that were propped up around it like great walls of bean and pad and fluff. “Well, this. You could have told me.”

“Didn’t think you’d be into it. Most people aren’t,” Kyobi murmured as she squeezed at Jackie’s shoulder in an attempt to reassure. “I mean, these little specks are just pests. Vermin. Not many folk want to be near them… much less bully them, you know?”

Jake nodded his head. “And she was right,” he said as he cocked a thumb at Kyobi. “You aren’t into it, Jackie.”

“What makes you say that?” Jackie asked.

“Well, you haven’t put your paws up on the table yet,” Jake said as he twisted his thumb toward his and Kyobi’s proudly presented paws.

Jackie frowned… and then, snorting, she kicked her paws up and dropped

them onto the table with such a ferocity that the table *rocked* underneath her heel's impact. This time, the earthquake that shook the city was intense enough to topple several buildings… specifically, a couple of blocks worth of poorly constructed apartment building and office block. A cloud of dust shot up from the table and into the air…

… and as the city's streets filled with smoke and ruin, the already terrible stench of paw *doubled* as Jackie's toes came to hover just inches outside of the city's boundaries. As Kyobi and Jake let out an impressed whistle, the sound of choked screaming rose from the city, amplifying as a burn more bitter and musky than anything that they'd ever felt struck the micros bodies. Which made sense. They were surrounded almost completely by it now… paws to the north, to the west, to the east. There was no escaping their musky scent.

Jackie let out a purr of satisfaction and leaned back into the couch. Spreading her toes, she grabbed her glass of water and took a long drink. She had been hesitant to put her paws up on the table… in front of Kyobi, in front of Jake, in front of oh-so-many micros… but now that she had, she didn't regret doing so a bit. In fact, she felt fucking *glorious*. Like a Goddess. Which made sense… with how many people there were in the city begging for mercy right now, it was hard *not* to feel like a deity.

"I was wrong," Jake said. Despite being incorrect, though, he sounded quite happy. The last thing that he wanted was for his sister to be uncomfortable. "You *do* like bullying micros."

"Yeah, sure, maybe," Jackie said with a shrug of her shoulders. "Might have done it once or twice," she admitted reluctantly. "Or… four or five times. Who knows?"

Kyobi lidded her eyes and exhaled a long sigh through her nostrils. "Let's relax a bit," the vixen suggested happily. "Take a break. We've worked hard. Then, when we're done catching our breath from all that moving in we've done…" She cocked her thumb at the city on her coffee table. "We'll start moving these guys out."