

The Friday night party was in its peak, while Alan stood to the side talking to his friend Max. Alan looked at the small package Max got him as requested.

"Are you sure this stuff is the safest you could find?" Asked Alan.

Max rolled his eyes.

"As safe as can be. It was your call to try some drugs to relax, despite always declining when I offered."

"It was never a good time and I didn't need it. What's this stuff anyway?"

"Just some modified catnip, so it works on more than felines. Either way, it's yours now. Just read the note and have fun with it."

Max walked off, leaving Alan all by himself. Alan glanced at the package in his hand and built up courage to open it. He scratched at the tape holding the paper outer shell secure, until he could grab it with his fingers and peel it off. Inside it was a box with bags of the substance and the note Max mentioned earlier. He started by reading the note first.

|Nepeta Cataria: strain modified for human use
|Can be used dry or for brewing
|Smelling dose: one bag or less
|Brewed dose: 2-3g
|Consumption dose: 2-3g
|Dry leaves used for smelling can be reused for brewing
|-Limit usage to 6 smelling sessions, 3 brews or 2 consumptions per day
|-Opened bags should be used within 2 weeks.
|-Keep bagged when not in use
|-Store in dry space
|-Keep away from sunlight
|-Don't use leaves left damp for a long time
|-DO NOT DRIVE AFTER USE
|-DO NOT BURN

Seems simple enough... although quite vague about time. He can't really brew it right now and eating it seems kinda uncomfortable, being dried leaves. That means the smelling option is the fastest and convenient way to go. Alan grabbed one bag and moved the rest into his pocket. Inspecting the bag, it looked like a regular unassuming herb.

"Let's see..."

Alan opened the bag and lifted it to his nose. On first breath, it was just an herb smell with some hint of mint to it. On second breath, he felt something. On third, it finally hit him. A wave of relaxation and happiness that wasn't quite like anything he felt before. He took one more breath and closed the bag, to stuff it in another pocket. The effect lessened after half a minute, but it was still present. With the high lifting him up, he proceeded to have fun at the party.

However after just a few minutes of talking to other people, the high became just a light buzz, then just a memory. Using more was tempting, but while the time frame between uses wasn't specified, it definitely wasn't less than an hour. Nothing else to do, but rely on a beer or two for the rest of the night.

Eventually the party started to die out. People got either tired, blackout drunk or hooked up. Alan looked at his phone and saw a text from Max, saying he left to take care of something and will go home after. Seeing that he's solo now, Alan called a ride to get him back home. It wasn't far and he could just walk there, but he'd rather sleep as soon as possible.

After a few minutes of waiting for the car to get to him and another few of riding, he got to his apartment building. Drowsiness was catching up, Alan rode the elevator, walked through the door and started stripping right away. The bags of the drug fell out of the pockets of limp pants, reminding Alan of their existence. A thought of smelling it crossed his mind, but he was too sleepy to enjoy it, so he just hid the bags in a drawer and slumped on the bed.

Alan woke up and looked at the time on his phone, showing 10 AM. He had a light headache, most likely caused by sleeping late and last night's fatigue. Pain killers sounded like a good idea right about now before the headache gets worse, but on the other hand, taking it on an empty stomach was a bad idea. He stretched, got out of bed, dressed and went into the kitchen.

Out of all food options, he picked his usual 'ol reliable: toast and scrambled eggs. Quick and nutritious, which meet all the requirements right now. He grabbed toast bread and put it in a toaster, then started heating up the pan, while cracking eggs into a bowl to whisk. After pouring it into a pan, he proceeded to pick out tea to brew, which turned out to be a bigger task than picking out breakfast.

Looking at all the teas and herbs, made Alan remember about the catnip. It was also brewable and he was curious about it after the first high. He quickly stirred the eggs and went to the drawer containing the drug. With the bag he used yesterday in hand, he returned to making breakfast and boiling water. With the eggs and toast plated, he got the scale to measure the catnip.

"It was 2-3g... a bit more... ok, got 2.7g."

The herb went into Alan's favourite mug and scalding water from an electric kettle joined it seconds later. A wave of aroma burst up into his nostrils and a relaxing shiver ran through his body.

"Man, it's already working and I didn't even drink it. I hope getting it wasn't a bad idea."

Scrambled eggs, with toast, catnip tea and painkiller pill for the headache were moved to a desk, where Alan's laptop was already waiting. After all, can't eat without something to watch. With a video playing, he ate the food slowly, bite by bite, until the plate was empty. The smell of the tea was teasing him, but it wasn't until a 3rd video, when it had cooled down. Finally he grabbed the mug, bringing it closer and then inhaled.

The intoxication swelled up again, making Alan relaxed. It was still hard for him to believe he is enjoying it so much, despite never using anything like that before last night. Eventually, he took a test sip and it definitely needed sugar... at least until it hit. The relaxation from before wasn't even close to drinking it. Just holding the mug and not sliding down the chair was a challenge.

"W-woah..."

That's all he could say, before downing the entire thing. His muscles turned to liquid, making him slump in his seat, something like drowsiness crept in and yet, he was far from sleep. The video kept playing, providing something extra, while he didn't want to move. Understanding all of it was a different story, but it wasn't much of an issue. Nothing was much of an issue, for the next ten minutes. After that time, Alan stretched and fixed his position in the chair.

"Damn, it's way better than just smelling it." He said aloud, since his thoughts were still somewhat clouded.

He waited a bit more, until it was mostly out of his system and put on another video to listen, then opened his code. He didn't have to work today, but he liked to be ahead of schedule and not have a deadline threatening him. Hours and background videos ticked on, until it was time to eat. There was just a little bit more work to do, but the hunger was getting more prominent, so he ordered food instead of making it.

Just as he finished, his doorbell rang, announcing the arrival of food. Alan paid with a tip and set the box of pizza on the desk. After the first slice, he felt like he needed some more of that catnip. It was an unexpected craving, since he used it just two times. Due to concern, he decided to just smell it, instead of other options.

Just one sniff was enough to make him feel good and stop the need for more of the herb, while making the pizza even more appealing. The bag went into the desk drawer for now, while he ate and browsed social media. When he was done, he got back to programming. This time however, it was for his game, not work. Just a hobby, which took the rest of his day.

The lack of sleep last night was catching up now, so he stood up from the desk and as he did, he spotted a pill.

"I didn't take it?"

He scoured his memory and it seemed like the headache disappeared after the catnip tea. Alan took it as a good thing, after all, the drug seemed to have some purpose, besides the high. The pill was cleaned up and then Alan went to shower, which he probably should have done earlier, after the party. He took more time than usual, as if making up for today's delay.

With washing and drying done, he grabbed fresh boxers to wear tonight and retrieved the open bag of catnip from his desk. He really wanted another catnip tea before sleep, even if a weaker one to not overdo it for one day. While the water was boiling, Alan measured the

catnip to just a bit under 2g and dumped it into a new mug with sugar. Hot water was poured in and he waited, while enjoying the catnip mist raising from within. Cooling was taking too long though.

"Looks done brewing. I'll just cool it with ice this time."

This felt wrong, but he promised to himself it's the first and last time. With a mug of herbal tea, he sat on his bed and downed the liquid. The effect was as relaxing as before, maybe even stronger, despite using less catnip. Alan's mind floated in bed for some time, until the sleep took him.

Alan woke up in a good mood and well rested, which he attributed to the catnip tea before bed. The day seemed up to a good start, until he checked his phone. He got messages from his family, guilt tripping him into talking with them. It was the very same reason why he asked Max for something to take the edge off, despite never even considering drugs. Alan sighed and left the phone at the nightstand to get dressed up. The need to reply was eating him away, but he knew that wouldn't help.

Making breakfast seemed like a chore now, so he just grabbed milk and cereal. The mood really took a turn and as much as he didn't want to, he grabbed the catnip to make tea. The first bag didn't have enough, so he grabbed a second and ended up measuring 3.8g.

"Whatever..."

He poured the drug and boiled water, with sugar, to make the tea and while waiting, he inhaled the smell from the bag of catnip. The anxiety faded, making way for the relaxing feeling he was growing used to. With the breakfast made, he watched videos on his laptop like usual. When the catnip was wearing down and the tea was still too hot, Alan took another sniff. The note said he could smell it six times, so it's not a big deal, he needed it just for today.

By the time the last high went away, Alan was sipping the tea. This time around, he was gonna take it slow to extend the effect, for as long as possible. The high wasn't the same, but it was enough to make him feel better. In the end, the high lasted for an hour, but the anxiety passed. Till dinner, it was just a normal lazy Sunday.

Today, he was gonna make food himself. Just tomato sauce from a jar and spaghetti, nothing special. While heating up the sauce, the basil in it gave him an idea to use catnip. It was edible after all and he kinda wanted to try out of curiosity. That's how another 2g was added to catnip used today.

As the spaghetti was all done and plated, there was no catnip smell to it and it was hard to tell catnip apart from other herbs. This time around, he sat in front of the TV to watch a movie, while eating. Upon trying the food, taste also didn't change and the high was shallow. Maybe it wasn't that big of a deal to cook with it.

After eating and watching more of the movie, his phone called. The mild discomfort came back, when thinking it was his family, despite them only texting. Alan sighed in relief when seeing it was just Max.

"Hey, you need something?" Asked Alan.

"Hey man, just checking up on you. How's the stuff I got you?" Max replied and gave a question back.

"It's working, that's for sure."

"Uhh... good to know, that's all I needed. Got to go."

Max hung up. It was kinda weird, but maybe he was just concerned, since it was Alan's first time. Alan shrugged and got back to watching movies. By the time he was done, he drank one more tea and smelled the catnip thrice. He was kinda pushing the daily limit, so he promised himself to cut it for today and go easy on it tomorrow.

Alan decided to take a shower now and watch another movie with a snack later. He went to the bathroom, stripped and went into the shower. Warm water dampened his hair and dripped down his body, spreading under his touch. Shampoo was poured onto his hair and he began massaging it in with closed eyes. The sensation was normal at first, but became somewhat different the longer he rubbed, while the process became harder.

Alan washed foam from his face and opened his eyes. What he saw under his was a mix of his hair and foam, entire clumps of it. He quickly moves his hand back to his head, but couldn't realise what's wrong. Water flow was turned up, to wash away the shampoo as fast as possible, so he could look at this head. Out of the shower, he looked at his hair in the mirror and froze.

"What the fuck?"

His hair was shorter, thicker and orange. Not only that, it had markings reminding him of a tabby cat fur. It wasn't hard to deduce the cause from there.

"Did I over use it? What was in that drug, to cause this?!"

Frustrated, he finished showering and spent a few minutes unclogging the drain. Properly dried with a towel, he looked for anything else being off. All he found was the rest of his body hair being thicker and recolored. Alan pulled boxers on and called Max, but got no answer. Just his luck that all this happened after Max has checked up on him. The next idea was looking at the note and searching the internet for answers, but that turned fruitless too.

Alan took a deep breath to collect his thoughts.

"Ok, it's just hair, nothing big. I can just dye it or cut it."

Annoyingly enough, the shock made him want another dose of catnip. With nothing to be done right now, he grabbed a pack of chips and beer, to resume his earlier plans. Having a movie and snacks to focus on helped with catnip withdrawal, but afterwards, the need was worse. Another call attempt to Max, was met with no answer again. Chances are, he was asleep already and help from him will have to wait till morning. For now he went to bed, but sleeping was a different matter.

"Damn it..." Said Alan as he grabbed a bag of catnip and sniffed it. The relaxation brought him to sleep in a minute.

Monday morning arrived and Alan could feel something was wrong. He looked over himself and found nothing new, besides his hair being a bit lower down his neck. On his phone there were new messages from his family, which he promptly ignored to call Max. This time, there was just an automated message saying the number called wasn't available.

"Hmm... Maybe Will is back?"

Alan called Will this time, his friend and Max's roommate. There was a chance it was too early, but the concert turned out to be unfounded, as Will picked up.

"Hey Alan, you need something? I'm still visiting my grandfather." Said Will.

"I hoped you'd be back."

"Nah, I'll be back on Wednesday. Grandpa wanted to fix the shed and I'm not letting him do it alone. So, did you need me for something?"

"Just wanted to ask about Max, cause his phone is out."

"Haven't talked to him since I got here, sorry. He probably just got high on something and misplaced his phone. Again."

"Guess I'll check up on him. Anyway, have fun in there."

"Yeah, thanks. As long as grandpa does fall off the roof." Will hanged up.

Alan set his phone down and headed into the kitchen. This time he decided on a sandwich for breakfast, with whatever was left in the fridge and a regular, non-catnip tea. After some assembly, he ended up with tuna, cheese, tomato and cucumber sandwich, on a bit stale bread. It honestly wasn't good in taste and texture, except for the tuna. The tea washed it down, but the lack of catnip in it made it somewhat inferior, even if it tasted better. The catnip craving had to be satisfied with just a short sniff from the bag.

Max, empty fridge and lack of exercise, meant Alan had to go outside today. At least the programming work was done in advance, so that didn't hover over him. Alan put on some shorter clothes and grabbed a pack of catnip just in case, then exited his apartment door. New hair was making him a bit selfconscious, but he told himself it's not that bad. The first stop for today was Max.

It took around 20 minutes, until Alan was at Max's apartment building and rode the elevator up. Alan knocked on the door and even after waiting and trying again, there was no response or a sign of life. He didn't think of grabbing a spare key Max gave him for convenience. There is a chance Max got an early work shift at the market today, so since Alan needed groceries, it lined up perfectly. Next stop, the supermarket.

The path there led back the way he came from, since it was more or less in between the apartments. Upon arrival, Alan grabbed a shopping basket and started picking up what he needed, while being on a lookout for Max. As the basket filled in, Max was nowhere to be seen, leaving Alan to figure out a solution on his own. When going to the checkout, he cut through the pet aisle and his eyes lingered on one of the shelves. There was catnip, cat food and other cat stuff, which he felt a need to get.

"This is not good." Alan said under his breath, before swallowing nervously. Or maybe because he salivated.

It was a similar feeling to when he tastes the tuna in his sandwich. Back then, he didn't think much of it, but now he clearly sees his tastes got warped in a wrong direction. He turned away and took a few steps, but then he bit his lip and stopped.

"Damn it!"

Alan turned on his heel and grabbed five cans of pet food. On the way to the self-checkout, he felt his cheeks burn in embarrassment and avoided anyone alive. One by one, he scanned the items in a rush, to pay and GO. With two bags of groceries, he walked through the city towards his home. The cans were under other stuff, but they still made him nervous... and hungry. There was also the need for the catnip in his pocket, which he suppressed as much as he could.

Back at his place he rushed to the kitchen and set the bags down. The breath he took was long and deep, with a fast exhale, as if trying to get rid of the feeling inside him. One can was fished out of the grocery bag and cracked open. Reaction to the "food" was a mix of positive and negative. It was hard to tell if the slight nausea was due to the meat-like jelly or nervousness. One way to find out.

With a fork, Alan got some of it out of the can and hovered it in front in smelling range. Just as he feared, it smelled good and edible.

"I can't believe I'm doing this. I'm never taking shit to relax from Max ever again."

The first piece went into his mouth, filling it with... weird taste, to say the least. Now that he tried it, he had to finish it. While the cat food was scooped one fork at a time, water was boiling for the catnip tea. It was out of his control. He eyed the catnip dose amount and poured the water over it in a mug. Alan finished the food and took a few sips of the tea. It felt even stronger than before, making him focus for a few minutes on the taste, mixed in with the pet food. He took another sip and recoiled at the scalding pain on his tongue.

"What...?"

He left the tea and went to the bathroom mirror to see his tongue. He grabbed it and instantly felt the difference, before even seeing it. Holding it in full display in front of the mirror, he saw the rough barbs on the now thinner and longer tongue. Compared to some hair color change, this was way worse. However, the catnip high certainly muted the proper reaction. He was almost... fine with it? Just like the curiosity about the cat food, the barbed tongue intrigued him, made him want to try it out.

Alan went out of the bathroom and back to the kitchen, where the rest of the catnip tea was waiting for him. He blew into the mug, making its content cool bit by bit and providing some catnip fumes. In one big gulp, he drank the rest of it and went to sprawl on the bed, stretching his limbs in various angles.

His judgment was clouded by the high and something else entirely, making it easier to use more catnip, despite the side effects getting worse. The halfway used up pack of catnip went straight into his mouth, the pieces of it snagging on the hooked barbs of his tongue. The stretching went on, the angles getting wider and more satisfying with each one done. Whatever was going on in his head, could barely be called coherent thinking. When the best laying position hit, he relaxed and took a nap.

Alan stirred awake after a few hours and sat up, still drowsy and with something like a pressure inside his head. He rubbed his eyes with the back of his hands, trying to wake up properly and recenter his thoughts.

"Shoot... what was I doing yesterday? I still feel high."

His mouth felt dry, probably because he barely drank anything today, besides some tea. Alan's bare feet thumped on the floor softly, after he pushed himself off with force. While the drowsiness refused to leave him and his vision was still fogged, he made his way to grab a glass of water, scratching himself absent mindedly. Using muscle memory, he reached out to the hanging cabinet with glasses and... he missed completely.

"Hmm?" He hummed with confusion.

He opened his eyes properly and reached out again, only to see his arm barely touch the cabinet. That sight woke him right up.

"No no no!"

The clothes that were always a perfect fit, now were too big. The shirt hung loosely on his frame, boxers were barely holding without a stretch, pants were laying down on the way to the kitchen and socks were nowhere to be seen. Everything else around the kitchen looked bigger and taller as well.

"A-am I even 5 feet tall?" He asked himself, with a bit of resistance from his tongue.

In panic he snatched the water bottle and drank from it to get rid of his thirst. Flakes of catnip danced in his mouth with each gulp. Next he ran to the bathroom, his feet softly tapping the floor on the way. However, the mirror proved to be out of reach now. His thoughts raced for an alternative, until he remembered the mirror on the inside of the wardrobe door, he barely used.

Without turning the light above him, Alan opened the door of the wardrobe and was met with his reflection. His eyes shined with green glow, ears turned halfway to furred points, tufts of orange fur appeared here and there and when he turned back, there was a twitchy nub at the base of his spine. A starting of a feline tail. All packaged on a short frame of a bit more than 4 feet.

"That's... me?"

There was panic, the most understandable emotion right now, but there was also bizarre detached excitement, as if it wasn't his own. That's when a sudden purr escaped his throat. The soft alien rumble he couldn't stop, no matter how much he tried. This was him now.

"Why do I look like this? Why do I FEEL like this? Like it's... ok..." He said slowly, making the barbs tickle the roof of his mouth.

As Alan was pondering the pointless questions, his stomach rumbled. Looking at the time, he realised the nap was so long, it was already dinner time. He had to eat, before figuring out the hopeless endeavour, but couldn't cook like this and even more so he couldn't go out like this. This left ordering as the source of proper food. He looked at the options he had and didn't even notice the moment he licked his lip and ordered chicken.

The food was left at the door for him to pick up, unseen by the delivery guy. A box of chicken was carried to the sofa like a hunted prey, and set down between Alan's legs. The smell of cooked meat made him salivate and want to sink his teeth into the warm flesh. Eventually he compromised between eating like a person or an animal, by eating with his hands. His teeth ripped and chewed the generous bites of poultry, leaving only a box of bones and satiated purring mess.

It's been a while since he was so satisfied with a meal, maybe even the most he's ever been. However there was still a need left over, the need for the drug that got him into this mess. If things are already bad, it won't make a difference if they get worse. He wanted to embrace it so, sooo badly, even if he knew this was wrong.

Alan sat on the floor and popped open another bag of the substance. This time, the smell was slightly different and even more enticing. Half of it went into his mouth, the other went on the floor, spreading the smell across the room. He laid in the spillage and rubbed his back against the floor, until he felt something new. Upon looking at his hands, he saw the change in action, nails loosing roots and giving way to slits at the tip of his fingers, next to pink beans. Alan was mesmerized by this sight and tensed his hands a couple times until the new sharp claws slid out.

The fur spreading on his arms was interesting, but the familiar sensation in his feet announced something even better. With anticipation, he looked down at his big toes shrinking and moving up in sync with the raising heel. Similarly to the hands, pink pawpads appeared on the bottom and claw pouches formed. When the fur came in, Alan couldn't stop himself. His tongue brushed the fur and moved slowly along the paw, tracing the shape over and over. Like in a trance, he continued giving himself a cat shower, wherever fur was present.

The slipping shirt was starting to be uncomfortable, so he ditched it all together. Tabby fur was far better in his catnipped mind anyway. There were still 2 bags of catnip left, so he grabbed one more and got on the bed. The ziplock refused to yield to the pads on his fingers, so instead, he put the claws to use and cut the soft plastic. The catnip covered bed was perfect for nuzzling into and taking a nap. Alan pushed his back into the air and scratched the bed a couple times with his claws, his half grown tail danced behind him. He planted himself on the blanket and fell asleep.

When the sun raised and shone upon his tabby fur, Alan stretched close to the edge and accidentally sent himself down to the floor. He looked around confused and disoriented. He stood on his legs for a second, but returned to the floor soon after. His face felt all weird and full of teeth, thinking was slowed to a crawl by the catnip and his guts kept moving under his skin. His tummy rumbled and he can't have that.

"Mrrroow? Hu- hummgrry..." Meowed Alan as he trotted to the kitchen.

The counter was really high and his jumping attempt did work well with his body being too heavy for half kitty legs. Luckily for him, the cans were right on the edge and eventually claws hooked on one of them, pulling them down and even loosening two of them. Hazy memory of how the lid worked allowed Alan to bite the pulling tab and take off the loose lids. Now he could eat the meaty jelly like a king.

The rest of the day consisted of napping in the sun, scratching furniture, zooming around the apartment and sniffing the catnip scattered around the bed. No worries, just relaxing on what felt good. The issues started when he was hungry again. He scratched and bapped the cans on the floor, but they refused to open.

"Meeow!" Alan cried for help to no one.

He looked around the apartment and scratched the exit door, but he was all alone. In desperation, his afternoon meal was the last bag of catnip, which put him into a deep sleep and finalized his fate.

The next day, the door to the apartment opened. It was Will. He looked around, seeing a mess and smelling something that made him feel weird, giving him an idea on what's going on. The confirmation appeared when a tabby cat ran up to him, meowing hell.

"I knew Max gave you something weird. First he didn't pick up for days and overdosed, then you."

Alan rubbed on Will's legs, urging him for attention. Will lowered himself and scooped the tabby into his arms.

"Ok lil guy, I'm taking you in, so you don't sit in here and stay high."

Will looked around the apartment just in case, carrying Alan, who was purring.

"I see you ate some cat food... well, at least you didn't go hungry. I'll grab the ones left."

The cans, some of the scattered catnip and Alan's phone were packed into a backpack and then, Will walked out with Alan in his arm and locked the door with the spare key.

"Ok, Alan. Just sit tight and I'll take you to the other idiot. The things I have to do for friends..."