

Disappointment.

Pure, unadulterated disappointment.

There are few emotions that bring as much of a gut wrenching frustration to Alec's mind, and even fewer that bring more than that; but that sickening feeling of disappointment has a habit of lingering for hours, days at a time. He felt it when he got passed over for an accolade at his college, when he watched that fat bear's face as he went up to accept it. That was a few months ago. In the back of his mind, he knew the bear probably- no, definitely- deserved it, but it didn't change that primal feeling in the pit of his stomach that he should've gotten it instead. Alec felt it again when his favorite professional baseball team lost the International Series, when he knew that they should've won. Even thinking about it now infuriated him to no end, watching those opposing players in their pinstripe jerseys hoist their short stop player and best batter, a lean cheetah, while he held up that glorious golden trophy in celebration.

Pah.

As he stomped into his dorm room, Alec was thankful that he had a single. It allowed him to have his own space, unobstructed by some random guy that he'd be forced to have niceties with every time he came back from baseball practice. That, and he could cover the walls in all of the baseball posters, flags, and pennants he wanted to without worrying that he might upset his roommate. The rabbit set down his gym bag by the door as he glanced in the mirror. He ran a tawny paw through his shaggy head-hair, slightly darker than the fur that covered the rest of his body, then straightened the fur on his long ears, which draped down to the small of his back. Alec let out a breath as he felt his stomach and his sides, which were firm underneath his tank top. He was proud of himself. He always hit the gym after class, but recently, he really felt like he had hit a stride on his training. Plus, considering the college season was already shaping up to be a good one for him, it made him all the more excited to wallop the living daylights out of their rivals.

Alec plopped down into his desk chair, catching a small whiff of his own scent as he did so. Ugh, he *really* needed to shower. That was fine, though. The communal showers were never that bad around this time of the early evening, since everyone was usually either studying or adding a couple extra inches to their waistline at the dining halls.

As he reached down to unlace his tennis shoes, that pang of disappointment began to lurk in the bottom of his stomach once more. Damn. It frustrated him to no end. Pushing away the feelings, he slipped his massive footpaw out from inside the shoe. He grabbed it with his hands and stretched a bit, rolling his ankle a bit and popping his large, fluffy toes- curling them up and then splaying them out, over and over again. After he pulled off the sweat-stained sock with a deep imprint of his paw in its sole into his laundry basket, he massaged his paw-pads and his toe-pads until they felt completely relaxed.

*Damn piece of shit, not doing its job.*

He sucked in a breath before setting his footpaw back down on the ground- repeating the entire process with the other paw. He couldn't imagine how lucky his friends with hooves

must be. Some of them had paws like his, even if they were cows or horses- but that was really quite rare. Most of them had hooves, which were infinitely more rugged than paws.

However, you couldn't really wear tennis shoes if you had hooves. Alec supposed that was the tradeoff when you were born bovine.

Alec massaged the bridge of his snout with his hands in a vain attempt to calm himself down. He knitted his fingers together and popped them, a ripple of noise pulling through his handpaw as he calmed himself down. He didn't need to get so angry. Well- and what was there to get so mad about, anyways? It wasn't like that time when he got passed over for the award or whatever- instead, he was just disappointed in the performance of a product, a good. No need to get so mad, he told himself.

As his anger began to melt and harden into a slightly frustrating annoyance, he reached down and picked up his right tennis shoe. It certainly didn't smell great, that's for sure- perhaps he could throw them into the wash sometime? That might help. He slowly peeled the thin insole set inside the shoe. He'd have to get a new pair, that's for sure. When he held up the floppy brown insole, it groaned softly. You'd think someone that fat would make for a longer lasting insole. It had only been a few months since he put him in there.

Whatever. He draped the insole over top of his right sneaker and peeled out the insole of the left one. This one was previously red, though a few months of being his insole had faded and smeared the red and white until it was mostly uniform. Alec chuckled. Nerds like the fat fox which made up this insole also didn't seem to last long.

He draped that insole on his left shoe and stood up. He'd have to start looking around for some replacements. He knew a few linemen on the football team... maybe they would work well. Hefty enough to be nice and soft, but strong enough to last. That was smart. Maybe relying so heavily on some nerds to cushion his steps was a mistake.

He strips off the rest of his clothes and grabs a towel. This one was new. You could still see the embarrassed expression of the former tiger on one side of it. His stripes made for a pretty striking design, too. He wraps the towel around his lean waist. Yeah... a nice hot shower might be exactly what he needs to calm down. Then, he can start scoping out some new insoles. Alec left his dorm room and headed for the showers, his game plan set. No more disappointment for him.