**Warming Up**

As Markus stirred awake he felt a wave of unobtrusive, lazy joy slipping into his mind and enveloping it in a soothing cozy feeling. The human shifted, ruffling around within the huge puffy sheets of a huge bed that clearly wasn't his own.

The little guy could still hear the snoring, a rather loud, though not altogether grating sound. He flipped over and opened his eyes to come face to face with a big round snout of the Conductor, a loud, rude man with slightly concerning homicidal tendencies but... The Conductor was somebody Markus appreciated nonetheless. The young man just couldn't help but have a bit of a soft spot for the... Owl? Bird? Whatever he was…

That was actually how the little guy ended up falling asleep beside the Conductor in the first place, cooped up in a huge pile of blankets and pillows. Markus had come over to deliver a bit of a belated Christmas present, partly as a joke and partly out of genuine affection he felt for the feathery loudmouth. It was a sweater, a puffy comfy thing, one that read “Big dick is back in town” on the front and one that – after the attempted murder – Markus felt the Conductor deserved. However before the human could head back home, a heavy snowstorm rolled in, urging him to stay.

The little guy rolled over and stood up on the bed sheets, giving his body a well-deserved stretch before he hopped from the bed onto the windowsill and looked outside. Just as the howling wind outside would suggest, the flurry of white flakes still raged on, just as the clouded sky was still shrouded in the dark of the night; it was far too early for the Sun to begin rising.

Markus didn't mind particularly mind any of that, with another light hop he found himself back on the bed. He lay down curled up and with a contented sigh, deciding to wait for the sleepy movie director to wake up.

As his eyes fell on the Conductor, Markus chuckled; he hadn’t actually realized until that moment, but the goofy bastard was still wearing the sweater. Truth be told, the little guy wasn’t used to seeing the Conductor in anything but his usual suit. It was a little odd, but then again the Conductor’s current state was not something Markus would call normal anyway; throughout the entire time they'd known one another Markus had never seen the man quite so... peaceful.

The Conductor snoozed heavily, warmed to the perfect temperature by the cozy duvet and the sweater his little alien friend had provided. His mouth hung open with a small amount of drool dribbling from the between those peculiar jagged jaws. His feet were sticking out awkwardly from under the blanket, covered by a pair of thick white socks that only added to the endearing visage.

Eventually though, he stirred awake, with his snore sputtering and stuttering. His big purple tongue extended out a bit, slurping on the large jagged ridges of his beak. He let out a bit of a coo, sitting up from his bed and looking down to admire his warm sweater. Despite the rather vulgar caption on it, the Conductor seemed pleased with it.

He turned to look at Markus but before he could speak, a yawn overtook him. His massive beak parted wiiiiide open, showing the plump purple tongue inside as well as the gaping gullet ahead. As soon as it appeared though, it was snapped away by his jaws. The conductor's sight fixed on Markus once more, and a soft chuckle came from him. "Aye, would yah look at that. Looks like yer gift from last night kept tae weather away, and kept me all nice and cozy for tae evenin'."

Still groggy, the Conductor pushed himself up, swiping up Markus in his feathered hands and bringing him to sit on his short-legged lap. "I trust that yah slept just as cozy, right laddy?"

Markus yelped as he found himself suddenly scooped off the windowsill, chuckling as he settled in the big bird's lap. "Mmmnnnghhh..." He moaned softly as he stretched, hugging onto one of the Conductor's legs and nuzzling it with his cheek. "I *so* did~" The little guy flipped over. "And to think that we started off with you trying to murder me multiple times~" The human stood up reaching higher and patting the Conductor's silly-looking beak. "I think you're a good egg, big guy". Markus assured. "I really do."

"Yah know that's a peculiar phrase there, laddy. I can't recall when eggs are good or bad. Though I guess a mammal like yerself ain't had much experience with those..." He trailed off, clearly pondering about all of those little tikes he's had to care of for so many hours. Without thinking, he stood up, causing Markus to tumble on down along his leg. With a bit of a caw, he reached down and caught the little human. "Peck me softly, I almost forgot ‘bout yah... Guess I can't function without me mornin’ coffee aye?"

Haphazardly, the Conductor leaned down, letting Markus roll out onto the floor from his hand. The still groggy movie director put his hands on his hips, cocking them to the side as he inspected the puny little human. And the next second a foot emerged, normally shrouded with his fine shoes, but now with just the thick white socks covering them. They did little to leave anything behind them to the imagination though, as they outlined the bird's three toed feet. One toe would reach out, gently pushing on Markus' shoulder, tipping the little human over.

Surprising nobody, Markus let out a rather shameless moan as he fell to the floor and felt the tip of the Conductor's toe lowering itself down onto his chest. It rested there for just a moment, sliding atop the little human’s body as the giant up above let out chuckle. “Of course, it's easy to forget ye were sittin' there. Heheh… Yer such a wee scrawny little lad, ye are. I could barely even feel yah!” And then without a hint hesitation the entire mass of the titanous movie director flew overhead, leaving Markus to contemplate whether or not he wanted to admit how much he enjoyed that kind of treatment.

After a quick moment of hesitation Markus decided there wasn't any harm in it though. The little guy got back to his own feet and quite quickly made his way towards the Conductor's. He grabbed hold of one of the big socked toes and exhaled as he leaned his cheek against it much in the same he did to the big guy's leg a few moments ago. Nuzzling against the tip of it shamelessly, the little human yawned, wedging himself deeper and deeper into the faintly musky fabric between the digits. "Well it's no wonder!” He exclaimed. “It would be quite difficult for a man of your stature to notice the tiny insignificant efforts of a tiny insignificant man like myself~" Markus looked up laughing at the little callback to the Bird Movie Award.

The sound of a buzzing coffee machine filled the room as the Conductor's gaze travelled down, a smirk evident upon his visage. "Now yer gettin it! Imma famous director. I ain't got tae time fer underlings like yerself!" He boisterously proclaimed, raising a hand into the air. He chuckled happily, kneading at Markus between his toes for a moment, letting him sink into the fabric of the sock, while those powerful toes pushed left and right, a constant sway of forces.

"I'm glad you’re warming up to the idea though, big guy. It's... nice to be around you, to spend time with you." Markus responded, as he buried his face deeper in the Conductor’s toes

The coffee machine beeped though, and the Conductor let out a surprised and happy chirp. He pivoted on his heel, swinging Markus around and laying him flat on the floor while the foot rested on top of him, draping his form in a blanket of the bird's socks. With unprecedented speed, he plucked a mug from his cabinet, and poured the piping hot beverage. The bitter, chocolatey odor of coffee filled the room, intensified even more when the bird uncorked a flask of whisky, dumping a noticeable amount into the mug before mixing it in with a finger. "Well seems yer in luck... neither of us are gettin' outta tae house any time soon." To hammer his point home, the Conductor pinched Markus up between his toes, taking a step towards his couch and plopping into it. He raised the foot that held Markus up high, showing the little guy a view of the window. Massive dunes of snow seemed to cover everything outside, thought it was hard to tell with barely any visibility at all.

"Heheh, lucky me! And hey, the outside world's not going anywhere, right? Besides, when else would you get to spend so much quality time with someone, eh?"

It was then that both of them noticed how cold it was in there. With a big swig of his coffee, the Conductor let Markus drop to the ground, playfully stepping on him as he stood up. The foot held him tight against the floor, but Markus could tell that the Conductor’s full weight was nowhere close to being applied.

Leaving a slightly roughed up Markus behind, the feathery giant walked over to a nearby drawer and pulled out a small blowtorch. He grabbed some small logs and tossed them into the fireplace before blasting them with the flames. Soon enough, an orange glow overtook the room as it began to warm, a cozy sensation spreading throughout. "Ahhh, now that's more like it!" The Conductor exclaimed before returning to take his place upon the couch again, a socked foot planting itself right back in its rightful place on top Markus.

Markus’ joy at such treatment knew no bounds, as the human squirmed about within the socked foot’s grip. The little guy looked up and thought to himself that the Conductor really was one surprisingly agile fellow, especially for someone claiming to have grandchildren. The human chose not to push that subject though, instead pushing his hands into the soles of the big guy's feet. Rubbing and massaging at the feet through the thick white fabric of the socks that covered him. "Oh and uhm... Sir? How would you like it if I slipped these socks off and showed some proper respect by treating you to a nice massage? I mean... admittedly it wouldn't be an entirely joyless endeavor for me but... uhm..." The human blushed. "I just... really like the idea of... y-ya know."

"Lad, yer gotta be joking. How would I not know at this point? Heck, lemme make yer job easier!" The Conductor took another swig of his drink, chuckling to himself as he felt the burn of the whisky on his throat. He coughed a bit, reaching forward and tugging at the tip of his sock. It peeled off of his foot completely, revealing the three-toed foot. The ridged surface, rough with the prideful director's odd skin, the plump toes with small talons protruding from the tips… "Well massage away, lad. Ya won’t hear me complainin’!"

Without waiting for Markus to begin though, the foot pressed hard against the little guy, rubbing him into the soft carpet. Markus could only hear the sound of it against the floor, rustling the soft surface as well as against his own skin. It smelled faintly of fabric, and a hint of leathery musk, acquired from the well-worn leather shoes that always covered the Conductor's feet. A joyful chuckle could be heard above Markus, who could see the big guy pouring the rest of the flask into his mug of coffee. He chuckled again and took another sip as he squeezed the human's head, the little face turning red as blood rushed to it.

Markus let out a noise that was somewhere between a squeal and a gasp as he found himself easily forced into the carpet fibers by the Conductor's weighty foot. The human squirmed underneath it, rubbing up against the flesh, kneading it just as it kneaded him. He closed his eyes and surrendered himself to its sway for a few moments, losing himself to the rhythm of it pulling him this way, then the other...

"I must say, treatin’ me feets is a weird way to pay respects though, wouldn't yah say? I could think of quite a few different things truth be told. But I find yer method... peckin’ adorable! And wee bit pathetic."

Markus was in heaven, and truth be told, he was surprised the Conductor was so eager to oblige him. Must have been the whisky, unless... "A few different ways, sir?" Markus asked, his tiny head popping up from between the lovely yellow toes to look up at the big bird. "Any particular ones that suit your fancy? I mean... it's not like I'm in a hurry to get anywhere, might as well use the time."

"Aye, and yeh got a whooole other foot to be servicin' too. Might as well complete the set, eh?" The Conductor shot back and continued to softly moan at the pleasing sensations underfoot. He stretched his toes before clenching them tightly over Markus, gripping him and dropping him back on the floor again. Then the other foot presented itself, still covered with a sock, one toe poking at Markus' chest expectantly. "Yah mind gettin’ the sock on this one? I said I'd make yer job easier... not that I’d do it for yah!"

With a chuckle Markus grabbed hold of the fabric that stretched over the lovely foot that placed itself before him. With a grunt he pulled, tugging at it until he managed to finally slip it off, revealing wiggling toes that remained hidden until then. He pulled the sock off to the side and got back work, running his tiny little hands up and down along the Conductor's toes, around them, between them...

The Conductor couldn't help but admire the way Markus skittered about on the floor. His tongue inched out of his mouth, slurping along the ridges as he pondered about... He took another sip of his drink, wondering if it was more coffee or whisky now. He didn't mind either way. With a flustered and slurred remark, he squeezed Markus again. "Heavens Markus. Yer lookin like an itty bitty bug... I coulda just snapped yah up like yer a weeeeee little grrrrub! Yah'd certainly be tastier than one of 'em at least.~"

The big guy's comment perked Markus' attention up though as he snapped away from his task and looked up. "T-taste?" Markus shivered a little, both excited and a little unnerved. "You wouldn't just eat up your little itty bitty buddy, would you? A-although... I can't... I can't say I'm not interested in your opinion on my flavor... Nor would I particularly mind exploring that glorious maw of yours." The human admitted, blushing as he finally showed just a little shame for once.

"Yah wouldn't mind eh? Now I know for certain yer a weirdo!" The Conductor laughed a bit too aggressively at this, his maw open a little wider now, letting Markus see the pillowy tongue for a moment until the bird caught his breath. He then calmed down though, and his expression shifted to... one of affection.

"Oh look who's talking!" Markus pouted playfully after the Conductor's boisterous laugh finally ceased, though the little guy’s remark seemed to have been completely overlooked as the Conductor reached down, his fingers wrapping gently around Markus and bringing him up to his face.

With a warm smile, the Conductor opened his mouth and his big tongue shot out, pressing hard against Markus. Saliva seeped from it, soaking the little guy's body, completely covering every inch in it while he was sealed between bird palm, and bird tongue. Markus shivered at the tongue’s touch, it seeming both hot and cold at the same time. The world around him smelled of coffee and booze, filling Markus' lungs with their potent odor. With a slimy slurp, the tongue peeled off of Markus, dragging strands of spit along with it. "Mmmhh, with a taste like that, yer gonna be explorin’ more than me maw, lad... if yah want of course? That way yer nay gonna be in such a rush tah leave."

The Conductor rubbed the back of his head, clearly a little too nervous to ask this question, but too intoxicated to think better of it. He shook his head, he might as well go for it. "I suppose it could be me repayin yer. This sweater will keep me feathers warm and cozy for a long time. Might as well give yah the same... also I suppose I'd better get some food in me anyways considerin' me beverage of choice."

"Oh... uhm..." Markus hesitated for just a moment, looking up at the movie director as he contemplated the offer. "I... I suppose if you'll have me, big guy?" Markus chuckled, a rosy blush immediately evident on his cheeks as he too rubbed at the back of his head. "I uhh... Gosh... You know, with Snatcher around I really didn't think that a handsome movie bird would be the one to eat me up. N-not that I'm complaining!" The human smirked. "But before you plop me in there, since I’m uhh... ya know... gonna be there a while... Could I get just... one last whiff of that lovely foot of yours?" Markus asked, growing a slightly darker shade of red. "O-other than that I'm all yours!" He hurriedly added.

"Ahhhhh… I suppose I should give yah a little send-off." The Conductor chuckled, leaning down to drop Markus onto the floor right before his feet. The bird indulged the human, planting one of his soles tight against the human, gently rubbing at him. Indeed, from the warmth of the room around them, the foot was producing a bit of a more profuse odor. It’s rough, well-worn scent hung in Markus' lungs heavily, staying there for a lengthy amount of time. "Best yer enjoyin the smells down there. I doubt it'll be the most pleasant in me belly when I tuck yer hind inside.~"

“Oh I…” Markus mumbled, struggling to speak in his flustered state. “Wouldn’t be so sure about that.”

The Conductor chuckled again, wiggling his feet left and right joyfully as he was caught up in the thought of eating Markus up. Just the idea of playing around with the little guy in his mouth, and then keeping him all nice and cozy in his stomach was… "Hmmm… Probably best I'm the one gettin' yah. Yer spooky ghost mate isn't exactly isn't exactly in need of calories now is he?" This quip made him laugh again. He lifted Markus up by the collar and gently dropped the little fellow into his coffee, the bitter brew smelling of beans and booze. He swirled the cup, splashing Markus with the mixture and chuckling as he watched the little guy going around in circles.

Still feeling a bit dizzy from the fantastic sensation of being toyed with, Markus looked up, the world spinning out of control around him until finally the coffee settled within the cup, and Markus found himself staring at the Conductor, chuckling at the notion of Snatcher gaining weight; the ‘spooky ghost mate’ was a rather lanky fellow, wasn't he? Markus shook his head to chase the though away and instead leaned forward, reaching out a hand and all-too-happily pressing it against the beak that was about to engulf him.

"From one mug to me own mug. Yah ready to get tucked away to somewhere nice and cozy lad?

Markus laughed and lowered himself back into the cup, sitting down and allowing everything but his face to submerge within the hot liquid. Eyes closed, Markus thought about his adventure up to that point and sighed in relief. "Yeah." he nodded. "I'm ready." He opened his eyes. "Peck me up, sir!"

The Conductor let out a soft, gleeful little noise as he saw Markus settle down inside of his cup. With little hesitation, He brought it up to his face. He paused, gently breathing, taking in Markus' scent for a moment. But now wasn't the time to wait. He tipped the cup to his maw, causing its contents to spill out into the tongue. The human would roll close to the back of it, soon being stopped by the muscle holding him tight against the roof of the maw. Markus would watch the pool of coffee sink beyond the back of the tongue, gulped away and never to be seen again. "Oh! And if you do run into Snatcher, do send him my regards."

The Conductor played around with Markus inside of his mouth, sliding and swishing the tasty fellow about inside of his maw. The little guy would see the modest yet cozy home just beyond the jagged boundaries of the beak that cast pointy shadows over the purple innards of the maw. This would go on for a moment more, until Markus spilled over the back of the tongue himself, and was swallowed away by the Conductor. He let out another happy chirp, feeling his friend slide down his neck, and into his body. "Ahhh, I'll be certain to tell 'im yah said hi... Now enjoy yerself in there, peck neck.~ "

Within moments, before the Conductor was even done talking Markus found himself within the tight yet surprisingly cozy gastric chamber, spilling into it much like the Irish coffee did just seconds before the human himself did. It was dark, yet with the little flashlight he brought along Markus was able to make out his surroundings. Smooth purple walls flexing on all sides, shifting with the Conductor's every breath, every heartbeat.

Markus gasped as the reality of where he was began to sink in, inside... inside the Conductor. The human gulped and sighed in relief, allowing himself to sink down into the pool of hot coffee, breathing in, feeling the distinct putrid scent of the stomach hanging in the air, mixing in with alcohol to form a concoction that was as comforting as it was foul. The human chuckled, leaning onto one of the walls and giving it a long, loving rub from the inside, moaning and groaning every time the body around him would make a squelch or a slurp.

But as he finally grew tired, Markus sat down, sliding along the wall and onto his back, he wondered just how long the Conductor would keep him in there. Either way, he was glad that they had warmed up to one another, glad that they could spend time together like this.