

## **A Protogen's Plushie**

Lasket hummed to himself as he made his way to the toy section of the department store. The protogen was struggling with sleeping at night, and had tried many different remedies as recommended by friends. And while some solutions worked better than others, none of them gave Lasket the full night's sleep he had desired. When someone suggested that he get a stuffed animal, he decided it was worth a try.

His digitigrade sneakers tapped against the tile floor as he walked down the aisle, turning his gray visor to either side and watching the shelves with digitized eyes as he passed. The shoes were the only clothes that Lasket was wearing: blue armor-like plating which made up his waist and the upper half of his torso was considered enough coverage by himself and others. Two similar rings of plating could be found on his tail, which swayed behind him as he walked.

All things considered, the store had a fairly large selection of stuffed animals to choose from. However, the protogen found himself plagued by indecision. It wasn't that he was picky about it, but rather that he could see reasons to like every single available plushie and thus was unable to decide. He made his way all the way to the end of the aisle and frowned a little, still not having made up his mind.

Lasket turned and made his way back down the aisle to the same result. As he walked along a third time, he stopped in the middle of the aisle and sighed. He decided to just take the closest one and reached over to grab a fluffy pink unicorn. He ran his black-padded handpaws over the soft fur, gazing into its round black eyes. The protogen gently pinched the soft horn between pawfingers and squeezed, feeling the stuffing yield to the pressure.

"You really don't want that one," said a female voice.

"Gah!" Lasket cried out, startled by the sudden speaking. He looked around the aisle, spinning his body and bumping his tailtip against the shelves, but all he could see were stuffed animals. "Who said that?" he asked.

"That was me," repeated the voice. The protogen watched in amazement as an anthropomorphic corgi plushie pushed her way off a lower shelf and walked up to him. The little beige and white canine was about a third of the protogen's height, the tips of her ears just barely reaching his knees. The plushie had a little pink flower sewn on in front of her left ear, and a brown leather collar around her neck. Her bright green eyes shimmered like glass as she looked up at the protogen. "Sorry for startling you," said the stuffed animal.

"That's... quite alright," said Lasket, hit with a flash of uncertainty about the reality of the situation. "So, this might be silly to ask, but are you actually alive or am I just seeing things from sleep deprivation?"

The corgi frowned in contemplation and then patted over herself a few times, squeezing her own arms with white-furred handpaws. "Well, unless you're somehow projecting me into existence with your imagination, I'm alive," she said, followed by a giggle. "You act like you've never seen a walking, talking plushie before."

“Not without some sort of pull-string or something,” replied the protogen with a little laugh of his own. He focused his attention on the unicorn plushie he held in his handpaws, which as far as he could tell was just a regular stuffed animal. “What did you mean that I don’t want this one?” he asked the corgi plushie.

“She really mean,” answered the little dog. “Sure, she *looks* innocent enough, but she bullies the other toys.”

Lasket looked closely at the shiny black eyes of the stuffed unicorn, but saw no life within the half-sphere beads. He held the horned equine by its torso and gently squeezed, feeling the stuffing squish in his grip. “I’ll take your word for it,” he said, placing the unicorn back where he picked it up off the shelf. The protogen crouched down to the corgi with his wrists resting on his knees. “Are *all* of you alive?” he asked.

“Not everyone,” the corgi responded, shaking her head. “Like, here in the stuffed animal aisle it’s only a handful of us,” she said, before pointing at a few different plushies. “That one, that one, that one, that one, aaaaand that one.”

Lasket hadn’t been able to tell which ones she pointed out but nodded anyways. “As well as yourself and the unicorn,” he added.

“Yep!” responded the corgi, her little corgi tail wiggling back and forth. “I know I’m breaking the rules by letting you see me like this, but there’s no way I’m letting you take *her* home.”

“You’re such a spoilsport,” grumbled a female voice.

“And you’re a bitch,” replied the corgi, turning her head to look up at the unicorn.

“Takes one to know one,” the unicorn countered, leaning forward off the shelf and glaring down at the plushie on the floor.

“Correct,” the corgi replied. “I’m a female dog so I know what I’m talking about.”

“Hmph!” The unicorn turned her head away, backing up a little and going still once again.

The little dog plushie turned back towards Lasket and gestured with both handpaws at the unicorn. “See?” she said.

The protogen had just been watching the exchange with a neutral expression on his face-visor. “This reminds me of a movie I saw once,” he commented. While *all* the toys had been alive in that particular story, the fact that there was some sort of rule against being animated when seen was a common thread. “Honestly I’m just kind of surprised that she reacted, given what you said about breaking rules,” he added.

“I think I know which movie you’re talking about,” said the corgi. “And that was more of an unspoken agreement, whereas the rules here are pretty explicit and enforced by our current leader.”

“He’s going to be *furious* when he finds out,” said the unicorn with vicious glee, leaning forward again. “He was *very* clear about not coming alive in front of customers.” She grinned wide. “You’re so screwed.”

“Same to you,” countered the corgi, looking up at the horned equine. “*And* he warned you about not being such a dick to everyone else,” she added with a smirk. “So I guess we’re *both* getting exiled, eh?”

The unicorn’s smile faded into a frown and she just stared for a few seconds. “Bah,” she finally scoffed, backing away and out of the corgi’s sight. “I’m too good for this place anyways.”

“Exiled?” repeated the protogen.

“Shipped to a different store,” said the corgi, facing her head back towards Lasket. “I have no idea how Gareth makes that happen without breaking his own rules—or how any of the toy leaders at *other* stores do it for that matter—but this isn’t the first time I’ve gotten chatty in front of customers and it’s not going to be the last.”

“Do you mind if I ask how many times you’ve been exiled?” Lasket wondered.

“That’s a good question” the corgi said. She looked down a little in thought, scratching underneath her own chin. “I haven’t counted but definitely at *least* thirty,” she answered after a few seconds, her green eyes looking back up at Lasket’s gray visor. She shrugged her shoulders. “Every store’s got a troublemaker and I’m apparently the only one willing to call it out.”

The protogen simply stared at her for a few seconds before gently grabbing her torso, his handpaws underneath her arms. He squeezed gently, the soft poly-fil yielding to the pressure and making the corgi giggle softly. Lasket lifted her up, and despite how light she was and clearly filled with stuffing, he could feel warmth radiating from her. He held her close, letting her head rest against his neckfloop.

The plushie let out a soft squeak as she was suddenly held and hugged. She responded by wrapping her arms as best she could around the protogen’s neck and nuzzling into it. As the protogen gently rubbed over the back of the corgi’s head, he could feel the warmth of blushing radiating from her cheeks, and he smiled.

He held her like this for a minute or two before holding her out to look at her once more. “What’s your name?” he asked.

“Owashii,” she replied, her face glowing pink. “But you can call me Owa. Or whatever you want, really.”

“I’m Lasket,” replied the protogen with a nod. “And you’re coming home with me.”

Owashii’s eyes opened wide and her tail wagged so fast it was a blur. “Oh! Yay!” she said happily. She reached outwards and made grabby motions with her pawfingers, and with a chuckle the protogen brought her in for another hug. The corgi clung to his neck and buried her face back into the floof, emitting a soft canine purr.

“You’re adorable,” said Lasket. “But don’t forget that you can’t be alive until we get home.”

“Ah,” said Owashii muffledly. “Right. In that case, let me know when we’re there so I can move again.”

With that, she went still, her legs and arms dangling limply. The warmth faded from her body and the protogen held her out again. Her eyes were glassy and stared blankly ahead, a smile stitched onto the front of her snout. It was enough to make him wonder if he really *had* just been seeing things. Regardless, he had a plushie that was soft and felt nice to snuggle, and whether or not she really *was* alive, his decision had already been made.

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Lasket wasn’t willing to take chances when he got home, and quickly locked the front door behind himself. He raced up the front hallway stairs and made a beeline for his bedroom, with Owashii tucked under one of his arms. After entering the room and closing the door, he walked over to the bed and placed the corgi upon it. He then grabbed a chair and pulled it up, its legs shuffling as it was dragged over the beige carpeting.

“All clear,” said the protogen as he sat down and watched. The plushie’s stitched smile faded into her speaking mouth and her eyes blinked back into life. Lasket let out a sigh of relief, knowing that his senses hadn’t been fooling him.

The little corgi stood up and took a sweeping glance of her surroundings, seeing the dark blue wallpaper and the light blue quilt on the bed. She turned her attention back to the protogen and giggled. “I’m sensing a color theme,” she said. “I like it! Blue’s a nice color.”

“I agree,” said Lasket. “As you can see.”

Owashii leaned forward and looked down towards the floor. “You gonna take your shoes off, or...?”

“I’ve got reasons for keeping them on for now,” said Lasket, a glint flashing across his visor. He chuckled and shook his head. “But never mind about that. I want to know more about you.” He laced his pawfingers on his lap and gazed down at the plushie curiously. “This might seem a bit strange but you mentioned seeing a movie and that stood out to me.” He smiled. “I’m pretty sure plushies don’t go out and watch movies.”

“Ah, yeah,” said Owashii. “I’ve only been a plushie for like, three years now.” She sat down cross-legged on the bed, resting her handpaws on her knees. “I used to be organic like you, but then I took a magic marble to the everything.”

The protogen blinked a few times. “I’m sorry?” he asked.

“I was making a silly reference,” giggled the plushie. “To be more specific, I accidentally swallowed a magical piece of hard candy and then transformed.” It was clear from Lasket’s expression that this didn’t really explain much. Owashii said, “Okay, let me give you some context. I don’t know if you’ve ever been to Saffron Hills but there’s a mall there with some really wacky stores.”

“The Hightail Mall?” the protogen asked to confirm, which was met with a nod. “I’ve heard about it but never been myself.”

"I went on opening day," said the plushie. "They were giving out free samples and I got a ball of hard candy from a place called Sweets 'n Treats," she continued. "I put it in my purse and forgot about it for a few days, and when I found it again I was like 'oh, right!'" She shook her head. "Hell of a time to get the hiccups. I accidentally swallowed it and next thing I know I'm like two feet tall and made out of fabric and stuffing." She lifted her arms up and gestured down at herself. "When I went back, the sample stalls were gone and so was the stag who gave it to me." She sighed and shook her head again. "Then some bozo decided I'm an unusually talkative stuffed robot that escaped from Roy's Toys and got sent there, only to get exiled after warning a customer against a particularly douchey action figure. Then I got sent to some other store that I don't remember the name of, warned another customer, rinse and repeat until you met me."

"I'm sorry to hear that," said the protogen. That certainly didn't sound like a fun way to spend one's time.

Owashii giggled and shook her head. "It's fine," she said. "I prevented customers from getting paired off with some real fuckwads so I've got no regrets."

Lasket laughed and gently reached forward to tap the plushie's nose with a blue fingerclaw. "You've got quite a mouth on you for such a cute little dog," he mused, grinning playfully.

The plushie responded by leaning forward and closing her mouth around the pawfinger. The protogen could feel the silk lining the inside of her mouth, yet her tongue had the same damp smoothness of a real canine tongue. Owashii's bright green eyes shimmered as she gently lapped at the finger, making Lasket giggle a little before pulling his finger away. The plushie stuck her tongue out to follow and then just sat there with her tongue hanging out.

The protogen smiled brightly. "So, I'm curious," he said. "Why did you choose to warn me and put yourself in a position to be exiled?"

"Easy," replied the corgi. "I can tell you like dogs from that design on your armor, and I consider anyone who likes dogs to be my friend."

"These?" asked Lasket, looking down at circular plates on his shoulders. They were black and had a white silhouette of a wolf on them. Similar plates were on his outer thighs and on either side of his visor. "I like dogs but that's not what they're there for." He tried to figure out how best to explain it. "You can consider them a memento from a different life," he finally said.

"Ah!" said Owashii, nodding with understanding. "Like the flower I have on my head!" She pointed at the five-petaled pink blossom attached to her ear.

"Kind of," responded the protogen with a nod. "But it's a bit harder to explain than being transformed from an enchanted piece of candy."

"Fair enough!" replied the corgi. "If it's too complicated to explain, then you don't need to!" She nodded. "Point being it's what made me decide to break the rules."

"Well, I appreciate it," said Lasket. "I wanted to get a plushie to help me sleep at night and I don't want one that's going to cause trouble."

“Then you *definitely* don’t want the unicorn,” Owashii said with a few rapid nods. “Trouble is her middle name. Cotton Trouble Candy.” She giggled a little bit and then sighed. “I almost feel bad for whichever store ends up getting her, but as a wise mouse once said: ‘not my fleas, not my circus.’”

“Well, she’ll either shape up or keep getting exiled,” said the protogen. He leaned forward and picked up the corgi, hugging her close with her back against his chest. “*Your* days of getting exiled, however, are over.”

“Awawawa!” said Owashii happily. She wriggled to snuggle up against the protogen and hugged herself to his arms. He rumbled softly and rubbed his snout between her ears, which splayed out at the attention.

“Such a good girl,” Lasket said quietly. He pulled his head back from her and yawned, the nanites of his visor parting to reveal a blue-lined mouth. The protogen held the corgi against himself as he pushed the chair back to its proper place and then sat down on the bed. He leaned forward and undid the laces of his shoes, kicking them off and away from himself.

His socks were damp from the sweat of his own paws and steamy tendrils of warmth rose from them. As he leaned back down to slip them off, their rich and salty scent reached Owashii’s nose. She was unable to help but sniff at the air a few times to try to get more of it. When the protogen had removed his socks, they lay on the floor, their bottoms a well-worn grayish brown.

“This is why I was waiting to take them off,” explained the protogen. He couldn’t see the plushie blushing as she stared at his footpaws. They were surrounded by a fog of steam, visible tendrils rising from between the toes. “The smell gets pretty intense and I didn’t want to offend.”

Owashii cleared her throat. “I-I don’t mind,” she said. This was very much an understatement for her, but she didn’t want to come across the wrong way to someone she had just met. *Especially* given that he had been kind enough to get her out of that store.

“I’m glad to hear it,” replied Lasket, swinging his legs onto the bed. The eyes on his visor closed as he lay his head upon the pillow, still holding the plushie against himself. She was radiating a soothing warmth that was relaxing. “I’m going to take a nap, if you don’t mind,” he said, followed by another yawn. “You’re comfy and maybe I can catch up on some of this sleep debt.”

“Fine with me,” said Owashii, closing her own eyes. The scent of the paws gently filled the room and she did her best to ignore it, but it weighed heavily on her mind.

Lasket had no way of knowing where the plushie’s thoughts were going as he felt himself drifting off. The protogen’s thoughts became muddy as slumber fell upon him. Before long he was out like a light and snoring lightly.

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The protogen woke a few hours later to a strange breathing noise, which at first he assumed was just the plushie snoring. But when he realized that his arms felt empty, his digitized eyes blinked open in confusion. He looked down at himself and saw that Owashii had vanished.

His first thought was that she had simply fallen off the side. He saw her crouching when he leaned over, and was about to say something when he noticed what she was actually doing: she had her face buried in the soles of one of his socks and was sniffing it deeply.

“Owashii?” said the protogen.

The plushie corgi jumped and yelped in surprise, dropping the sock. Her ears folded flat back against her head and she slowly turned her head to look up at Lasket, her face hot and glowing red with embarrassment.

“I see someone likes my socks,” said Lasket, propping up an elbow and resting the side of his head against a palm, gazing down at the plushie.

“Y-yeah, I um... I can explain,” said the Owashii. “You see I thought I smelled um... w-well, I mean I *assumed* it was... er... um... r-reasons.”

The protogen snort-laughed as he sat up. “Let’s be honest with each other, shall we?” he said. He swung his paws over the side of the bed and set them on either side of Owashii, resting his arms on his thighs and leaning forward to smile down at her. “Now, why were you sniffing my socks?”

Owashii stared intently at the protogen and trembled. It was pretty clear that she was actively resisting looking to either side of herself. “Because I... um... I really like paws,” she finally admitted. “A-and I *really* like paws like yours.” She blushed even deeper. “B-but I didn’t want to be rude, so I just went for your socks and was... kind of hoping you wouldn’t wake up for it.” She spoke softly with a tinge of guilt in her voice.

Lasket simply continued to smile as he lifted up one of his paws and held it over Owashii. Droplets of sweat had formed on his black pawpads, the fur on the sole a slightly lighter shade of blue than the rest of his fur. The plushie made no effort to hide that she was staring, her head following the protogen’s toes as he swayed them back and forth. They were surrounded by a faint clouds of steam, beads of sweat forming before her very eyes. She was utterly transfixed, her focus locked on the sweaty digits.

The protogen couldn’t help but giggle at her entranced stare. “You are *precious*,” he said, lowering the paw back down to the side of the plushie. “C’mere you,” said Lasket, bending forward and reaching down towards Owashii. She let out a soft, flustered squeak as she was lifted up and placed onto the foot of the bed.

The plushie simply watched the protogen as he shifted and scooted himself a bit, laying comfortably on his back with his paws stuck out. Owashii couldn’t help but stare at those sweaty, steaming paws, a little rivulet of drool dribbling out from the side of her mouth.

Lasket pivoted his ankles slightly to gaze at the plushie and grinned at her. “If you want them, all you have to do is ask,” he offered, scrunching and curling his toes enticingly.

Owashii hadn’t stopped blushing, as if her cheeks had been dyed red. “M-may I sniff your p-paws, p-please?” she asked quietly, following her slightly stammered inquiry with a flustered whine.

The protogen nodded and pivoted his paws to a comfortable toes-upright position. He happened to enjoy this kind of attention and simply waited to feel that little snout against his paws. But when he

didn't feel anything after a few seconds, he pivoted his paws again and saw that Owashii was just sitting there with her forefingers twirling around each other.

Lasket smiled reassuringly. "Don't be shy," he said with a wiggle of his toes before resting them upright again. The plushie whined again with fluster and then crawled forward on handpaws and knees. As she approached, she could feel the heat radiating from the pawpads, and smell the salty humidity rising from the droplets of sweat. She blushed deeper as her snout crossed the barrier into the cloud of steam, and she pressed her nose up against one of the pawpads. She took a long and deep inhale of the musky sweat, exhaling in a quiet, shivering whimper of pleasure.

The protogen chuckled again at her flustered hesitation, and reached forward with his toes. He could feel her snout squish slightly as her nose was buried in the pit between middlemost toes, sweat clinging to her fur. Owashii squirmed around a little bit in confused fluster, but with her nose trapped in the steamy space between toes, her every breath was an inhale of pure paw musk. It only took a few sniffs for her to relax and melt into a blushing puddle of plushie. "There you go," rumbled Lasket softly. "Good girl."

The protogen closed his eyes and rested his handpaws behind his head. The slight rush of air between his toes each time the plushie sniffed felt wonderful, not just because of the cooling sensation but the knowledge that she was very much enjoying it. He gently wiggled his toes, her luxuriously soft fur feeling like liquid velvet against his own.

Owashii was happily huffing away, nuzzling as best she could into the toes to get the smell rubbed all over her snout. Her poly-fil was absorbing the moisture of sweat like a dessicant, the fragrant droplets slowly beginning to stain the plushie's pristine white stuffing. She shuffled forward a bit on her knees and pressed her body up against the middlemost pawpad, wrapping her arms between toes and hugging herself in place. The scent was intoxicating and she couldn't get enough of it.

As Lasket let the corgi sniff between his toes for a while, he could feel the difference in overall moisture. On his unoccupied paw, sweat steadily formed and trickled down onto the quilt. But the sweat on the other paw was absorbed by the plushie's body, as if her stuffing were a sponge. He gently tried to pull that paw away from her, but she followed along.

"I'd like you to let go now, please," said the protogen.

Owashii almost immediately pulled herself away, panting and looking ashamed of herself. "S-sorry," she said. "I got carried away, didn't I?"

"Not at all," Lasket replied with a grin. "My other paw needs to be sniffed, though." He spread the toes of that paw and the plushie opened her eyes wide.

"O-oh," replied the corgi quietly. "I... I see." She was staring very intently and she trembled, but didn't appear to be trying to move toward the paw.

The protogen could tell that shyness was still stopping her. Fortunately, he had a solution in his nightstand. He leaned over to the side of the bed and opened the drawer, pulling out a long leash made out of soft fabric. The plushie was still staring at the paw as Lasket leaned over and clipped the leash onto her collar. He leaned back down and then gave a firm tug, pulling Owashii forward.



The plushie's cry of surprise was muffled as her face was tugged between the two middlemost toes. Her stuffing-filled snout squished into itself, but without restricting her ability to sniff. With her mouth pinned shut by the pressure it was all she could do—inhale deeply through her nostrils and let that smell rush into her stuffing. All it took was one sniff for her to eagerly wrap her arms around toes again and hold herself in place.

"That's a good girl," said Lasket. He could just barely see a tuft of her fur from between his toes. "Breathe it in nice and deeply." He spread his toes to look at her, keeping her held in place with the leash. "I love when little cuties like you enjoy my paws."

Owashii mumbled something and Lasket let up the hold on the leash to let her speak. "What was that?" he asked, leaning forward a bit to look at her. But rather than talking, the plushie immediately planted her lips on one of his toepads and wrapped her arm around it, kissing deeply. "Fair enough," said the protogen with a delighted smile as he lay his head back.

Owashii stuck her tongue out as if french kissing the pawpad. When she tasted the salty liquid on her tongue she lapped it up, tugging more of it into her stuffing. She swirled her tongue around within the confines of her lips for a few seconds before pulling back and planting her mouth elsewhere, doing the same lapping swirls with her tongue.

Her nose was firmly pressed into the pawpad as she kissed the toe, and she sniffed as deeply as she could, occasionally letting out a contented groan with her exhales. She felt the slight heaviness of moisture in her stuffing and could feel the heat from within herself. The plushie shivered with pleasure at the knowledge that her stuffing was being stained with the scent, and started to suckle the sweat out of the pawpad with her lips pressed against it.

Lasket hadn't expected purchasing a plushie to lead to this sort of mutual indulgence but he certainly wasn't complaining. With a firm pull on the leash Owashii's body was squished up against his sole, and her head was buried between toes. She made no effort to resist as the protogen lifted the paw up and faced the sole towards the other. With a playful squeeze of his toes around her head, the protogen sandwiched the plushie between his hot, steaming paws. She squirmed her legs a little bit and then went limp, emitting a soft canine purr in her throat.

Lasket smiled as he rubbed his paws in gentle circles to rub his scent into the plushie. He slowly and continuously added pressure to test the waters. Even when he had his paws pressed firmly together and her stuffing was completely flattened, she showed no signs of discomfort, nor did the clear sensation of her sniffing stop.

"You make for a *perfect* paw toy," said the protogen. This was met with a muffled whine and a few wags of Owashii's tail. "Not only can I squish you completely flat," Lasket continued, "but you *worship* my paws too." He released the pressure on his paws and the plushie's stuffing uncompressed. The protogen was now simply cradling her head between toes and allowed her snout to unsquish. She chose to use her newfound freedom to plant almost desperate kisses where her lips rested, making happy mumbled noises into Lasket's toes.

The protogen lowered his paws and released the corgi from their confines, rolling onto his stomach and letting his soles face the ceiling. The moment he had gotten settled, he felt that eager little face bury itself between toes and sniff deeply, pulling back out to drag a little canine tongue in circles around a

toepad. Owashii gently placed her handpaws on either side of the toe as she spiraled her tongue inward, lapping up the sweat and eagerly inhaling the salty, humid musk of protogen paws.

Lasket tucked his handpaws under the pillow and turned his head to rest his cheekplate upon it, sighing softly and closing his eyes. He gently splayed his toes as the plushie's tongue reached the very center of the toepad, and she lifted her head to repeat the service to the adjacent toe. The protogen closed his eyes and focused on the sensation—the little tongue swirling around the circumference of the pad and making its way inward. He felt himself sinking into a deep relaxation and before long he fell into a very deep sleep.

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The protogen awoke to a small set of lips kissing the same spot of a middlemost pawpad over and over again. The little plushie was straddling a toe, but just as a comfortable resting position. Lasket felt incredibly well-rested—more so than he had felt for a very long time. He removed his arms from under the pillow and reached outwards on either side of himself, tensing up his body in a stretch.

He looked over to the digital clock on his nightstand. He blinked a few times as he realized it was morning and he had slept for an entire 10 hours. The protogen pushed himself up with a grunt and Owashii pushed herself off of the toe and rested on her knees.

“Good morning, sir,” she said, her ears tilted back in a relaxed manner.

Lasket yawned and rolled over onto his back, gazing at the plushie between his still-steaming toes. He could see that her beige and white fur was damp with moisture from sweat. He could only imagine how much she had absorbed into her stuffing. “Good morning,” he said with a smile. “You don’t have to call me ‘sir,’ you know.”

The plushie's face glowed pink and she bumped her forefingers together. “I... I’d like to. I-if that’s okay,” she said quietly.

The protogen snickered and nodded. “If that makes you happy then it’s fine with me, pet,” he said with a wink.

“Eeee,” said Owashii. She leaped forward and dove her head between the middlemost toes, quickly sniffing at the steamy toepit a few times before exhaling in a long sigh and breathing in as deeply as she could. She slipped her arms between adjacent toes and hugged herself in place, her snout smushing into itself as she crammed it in place.

“Seems someone can’t get enough of my paws,” said Lasket smugly. Owashii responded by shaking her head as best she could. “Well that makes this easy then,” he said. He squeezed to hold her head between toes and lifted his leg up, bending his knee to bring it closer. The protogen then began to wrap the leash around the plushie and his paw, tucking the loop under the leash in lieu of a knot. Owashii was left completely pinned against his paw, her legs pressed against his lifted heel. She soon stopped wriggling and just lay there happily, letting the potent musk rush into her nose with each deep inhale.

The protogen swished his tail happily as he reached down to grab the pair of socks on the floor. He easily slipped the first one over the free paw, and had to do a little bit of maneuvering to pull the other sock over Owashii. She was now just a lump in the fabric of his sock, eagerly sniffing away between

his toes. He wiggled them and enjoyed her softness against his fur. Humming to himself, he slipped his paws into his shoes and tied up the laces, standing up.

Owashii no longer had access to fresh air and was breathing nothing unfiltered paw musk. Since she had stuffing instead of lungs, there was no danger of suffocation. But she quickly became intoxicated from the smell, her other senses feeling foggy and distant compared to the rich and salty paw odor constantly barraging her nostrils.

Lasket found he had more energy to go about his day than he'd had in a very long time. He had a spring in his step and hummed to himself as he did a few errands and visited some friends. All the while, he could feel that slight rush of air when the plushie sniffed between his toes, and every so often would squeeze her squishy little head affectionately. He couldn't hear her groaning purrs but he could feel the flipping rumbles where her throat rested, tingling ever so slightly.

The protogen returned home that evening after quite a bit of walking. He hadn't *needed* to walk as much as he did, but he went out of his way to step on the squishy little plushie strapped to his paw, sensing that she enjoyed the feeling of being squashed. After locking the front door behind himself, Lasket made his way up the stairs to his bedroom and sat down on the bed.

He reached down to undo his shoelaces, kicking them off and letting them tumble away before rolling to a stop. The sock of his free paw was dripping with paw sweat and landed with a wet, muffled *thwap* as he dropped it on the rug. The other sock, however, was a bit damp but not nearly as soaked with sweat. He swung his legs onto the bed and started to unwrap the leash from his paw. When the plushie was freed, she fell onto the mattress and Lasket moved his paws apart to get a look at her.

Owashii's fur was stained a dirty gray from marinating in paw sweat for most of the day. Her mouth was open, and she exhaled visible puffs of steam with every breath. Her stuffing was absolutely soaked with hot paw sweat, steamy tendrils wafting off of her entire body. She tried to move but she was heavy from all the sweat in her stuffing and could only wriggle. It was clear from her direction of attempted movements, though, that she was trying to get back to the paws.

Lasket giggled again and gently pulled her along the bed with the leash. He tucked his legs against himself slightly and positioned the plushie so she was laying perpendicular to him, and then planted both of his paws atop her, getting her body tucked into the crevice where toes meet sole. She nestled her nose into place and resumed her greedy inhales, and the protogen clenched his toes over her. He stuck his paws out, squeezing and twisting to wring the sweat out of the plushie's stuffing. He felt the warm liquid trickle down his middle-pads and drip onto the bed.

Keeping the plushie clenched within toes, the protogen lowered his paws down before releasing the holding pressure. Now that Owashii could move again she responded by wriggling herself up into the crevice as best she could, trying to push her snout between toes. The protogen opened those toes ever so slightly and let that little squishy snout slip into place, feeling her trying to nose her way into the smelly pit between toes. He happily obliged and then closed the toes around her, playfully sealing her fate and eliciting a soft, happy whine from the canine.

"Mmm," Lasket hummed with contentment. "You know, it's funny. I *was* going to offer to find a way to change you back." He gently curled his toes around her in a hug. "But now I'm getting the sense I couldn't pry you away from my paws even if I *wanted* to."

“Mmm-mmm,” replied Owashii in negative confirmation. She was very fond of strong paw smells and Lasket’s were particularly intoxicating. She took as deep a sniff as she possibly could, and then exhaled slowly in a soft groan of pleasure.

“I’m glad,” said Lasket. “Because I don’t think I’ve *ever* slept as well as I did with you at my paws.” He gently squeezed the plushie to hold her as he brought his paws closer and started to wrap the leash around his toes and her body. “So that’s where you’re going to spend your nights from now on,” he said as he wrapped the handle loop around her ankles, tucking it underneath one of the wrap-loops and trapping her against his toes. She squirmed a bit and let out a soft, happy sigh when she realized she was stuck once again. It didn’t take long for her to melt into a happily sniffing puddle, eagerly huffing his paw musk as deeply as her little nose would allow.

The fact that Lasket was getting his paws appreciated like this felt nice enough on its own, but the fact that his little plushie pet enjoyed it so much on a visceral level made it *especially* enjoyable. He could feel how deeply Owashii savored every molecule of scent which struck her nostrils, and the way she seemed to be trying to stuff her snout deeper than it could actually go.

The attention to the protogen’s paws was also naturally relaxing to him, and with his head on his pillow he closed his eyes. Soon, his thoughts began to wander and trickle into the haze of sleep. As Lasket drifted off, he thought to how lucky he was to have met this little plushie and been able to bring her home.