

The Bet

Prologue

Kent stretched out on the bench as he watched the jackal and fox spar in front of him. The two had been going at it for a while now and Kent could already tell who was going to win. The jackal was obviously the more skilled of the two fighters, but he was holding back, and he was definitely going to let the fox take the victory. Kent didn't know the two personally so it was impossible for him to know why this was, but he guessed that he was either training the fox, or was trying to boost his confidence.

Either way it didn't really matter to Kent, since he was waiting for his new training partner to appear, and until he arrived the two could go as long as they liked.

He lay down letting his hand lay across his trimmed stomach. The ocelot had been relatively fit most of his life, but it was rare for him to sport an actual six pack. Now was one of those rare moments and he was fairly proud of it. He felt his mind start to drift with the heat from the gym, and right when he felt like he was about to fall asleep he felt a sudden cold sensation on his forehead.

He quickly sprung up and wiped his brow. Before him was a blue roo, a black gym bag slung over one shoulder and an icy water bottle in his hand covered in condensation.

"Wake up sleepyhead," Kygen said before squirting a stream of water into his mouth.

"Ha, what? Sleeping is my natural disposition," Kent smiled nervously. He had just learned recently that the roo enjoyed sparring, and going to the gym had been a bit of a spur of the moment thing. He hadn't seen or spoken to Kygen in so long that he wasn't sure how he was supposed to act

He could feel butterflies in his stomach as the roo put his bag down and started putting on his training gear. Kent normally wasn't nervous around his friends, but their previous meetings had been brief and due to the amount of time since he and the roo had last spoken it almost felt like they were meeting for the first time.

"So, how have you been?" Kent asked, shuffling his feet on the floor absentmindedly.

"Oooh, busy," Kygen laughed, "I guess we haven't really been able to talk since Callum threw me a birthday party and... that was a whole ordeal."

"Oh, yeah" Kent replied slightly smirking, "Sadly, I haven't been really able to socialize with many people that were at the party.

Kygen smiled, "yeah I guess you don't get to talk to everyone all that much."

"Yeah, I can be a bit of a recluse," Kent nodded. "Also I sometimes feel like I don't have much to say, or contribute so I kinda don't interact too much. Also didn't help that work kept me practically glued to my computer till recently."

Kygen frowned, "well maybe you should try putting yourself out there a bit more. I mean, you can't spend all of your time by yourself and not expect anything to change."

Kent bit his lip but didn't directly respond to the statement, "So... how's Gil?"

“Gil is fiiiiine,” Kygen said with a chuckle, “though you’ve never met him right?”

Kent shook his head, “never had the pleasure sadly.”

The jackal and fox had completed their match, as expected the fox had won. The fox was good naturedly gloating about his victory, though Kent couldn’t tell if he was aware that he had been given the victory.

“You ready?” Kygen asked, nodding towards the ring.

“Oh, yeah,” Kent said, grabbing his training gloves from his bag and slipping them on as he walked. He had been recently trying to learn Taekwondo, and he was slowly getting used to the primarily kicking based style.

“A few warm up punches and kicks before we get started,” Kygen said.

Kent nodded and grabbed a square punching target from the side of the ring and held it up for Kygen.

“Well, maybe we should find a good way to get you involved. Something that will make sure that you are being an active participant and are socializing regularly. I mean we all have some similar interests right?” Kygen said, while intermittently punching the target.

Kent snorted “yeah, I guess we do. Callum certain does prize himself on his “larger than life” persona, and we’ve all dipped our toes into that pool more than once.” Kent paused, “I don’t know. I’ve attempted the whole weight gain thing, and put on a few pounds myself but unless I have a reason to keep it on I usually lose it pretty quick.”

Kygen stopped punching. He silently beckoned for the target which Kent handed over.

“I think I’m going to start with kicks.”

“Fine by me,” Kygen said as he braced himself.

Kent got into his stance and began a few halfhearted kicks to help loosen up. Kent was always nervous whenever he practiced in a public setting. He wasn’t particularly adept at martial arts by any means, and he always felt like he could feel the eyes of people around him silently judging him for looking foolish.

“Mmm, maybe what we could do is have a little bet,” Kygen said, a hint of a smirk creeping across his face.

“A bet,” Kent asked between kicks “What kind of bet?”

“Well, I’d say we keep this just between us for now, but let’s make a bet that whichever of us is the overall winner of our sparring session today gets to become a trainer of sorts for the other.”

“A trainer? I’m assuming by that you mean...” Kent asked quizzically.

“A weight gain trainer. Basically they’ll help fatten the other up. It’ll give us both a reason to keep on it, as we’ll be relying on each other to continue.” Kygen explained.

“So... a social exercise but with weight gain? I mean, I’m not opposed to the idea. What are we thinking, ten, twenty pounds?” Kent was starting to get more interested in the conversation.

“Nah, it would need to be something significant. A bit more long term. I’d say a couple hundred pounds at least.”

At that, Kent kicked a bit harder than he meant to, sending the practice target flying from Kygen’s hand. “A couple hundred?!”

“I mean, yeah. It’ll need to be something that will keep us in contact. If it is just twenty pounds, one of us could gain that in a heartbeat. If it was over that fast you could slink back into obscurity and fail to stay in contact with anyone. This way you’ll have someone keeping you connected.”

Kent mulled it over in his head, “I mean I’d be grateful, and I’d definitely enjoy spending more time with you. But would you be okay with that? Would Gil? I mean that’s a lot of weight for you to gain.”

Kygen snorted, “Umm sure, but who said anything about me gaining weight? I’m obviously going to win... not that he would complain if I didn’t.” He took a step forward, outstretched his index finger and booped Kent on the snout. “I just get to fatten up a cat as my victory celebration. Prepared to say goodbye to that six pack?”

Kent smiled, “Oh is that what you think? You’ve never seen me fight before, I think you may have to rethink how wide your waist may be in the next coming months.”

Kygen let out a laugh, “then put your money where your mouth is. Cause I’ll be stuffing it with burgers soon enough.”

Kent could feel the electricity between him and Kygen. Tension filled the air as the competitive nature of both was being drawn to the surface.

“So we have an agreement? A bet?” Kygen asked.

“You bet we do. Prepared to say goodbye to your feet?” Kent asked tauntingly.

Kygen brought his hand up to his ear in a protective fighting stance, “I direct that statement right back at you!”

Kent began to crouch low, and prepare for what would be a very fun match.

“So, shall we begin?”