

*This story involves my original character, Shelby. For a quick backstory, in an RP event from way, way back in the day she became immortal which now leads to adventures that span for thousands of years. **This will be a continuation in her captivity storyline.***

### **Thursday Prompt: Upright**

#### **Story: The Study of a Cat**

“This just doesn’t seem right.” the young human doctor proclaimed as he followed the middle aged rodent into a control room.

“You’re going to have to get used to violence around her, Doctor Fiscus. I know you’ve only been with us a week and haven’t seen anything yet but at some point she is going to hurt someone,” shaking his head, Doctor Ehrlich checked and then double checked each individual safety procedure before moving on to the next, having several to go through before they could start the test.

“I thought you said she plays nice and follows the rules. Also, we have all of these safety protocols. Except for experiments like this, when could she ever get the chance to hurt someone?” sitting down in a chair, Doctor Fiscus turned to the viewing window into a room which had a large foam mat that reminded him of his karate class as a kid.

“She gets plenty of chances, trust me Doctor Fiscus,” finishing up the safety checklist, Doctor Ehrlich, turned to his associate and sighed. “We do take her toys away when she acts up, so... it’s a bit of a mutual benefit I suppose. We get to keep our lives and she gets to leave her room for some gym time, or a little entertainment. They let her watch a movie last month, and I believe they were talking about adding an atrium of some kind to give the illusion of being outside. Even with these benefits, she still tries to escape and when she tries... well...” shrugging his shoulders and then pressing a button on the control panel.

Doctor Fiscus watched as a door to the room opened up and a tall muscular feline walked in wearing nothing but boxing shorts and wraps on his hands and feet. The man had a confused look on his face, but shrugged and stepped into the circle in the center of the room. “So, what exactly is stopping her from making this man’s insides become his outsides? I mean... I know he’s a kickboxer or something, but I can’t imagine he’s winning this fight.”

“Oh he isn’t, I think all of us are certain of that,” pressing another button, a door on the other side of the room opened up as the specimen in question walked through wearing similar fashioned boxing shorts and a sports bra, but missing the wraps on her hands and feet. “We did tell her this is just an experiment, and these people are outsiders we are inviting in. We’ve strictly told her no killing, or maiming if she can help it. So, no claws, no tail, no biting... just practice style fighting.”

The large tiger looking male blinked as his opponent walked in, then turned to the two way mirror and gestured at the tiny feline in front of him with a hand. "Are you serious? I can't fight her, I'll kill her."

Pressing a button on the control panel, the rodent leaned down and spoke into a small microphone sticking out of the consol. "We are serious, and we need you to fight her as if it is a matter of life and death. We are paying you a lot of money and we expect you to do just that."

The large feline turned and looked down at the smaller one, then shrugged his shoulders and cracked his neck in both directions. "Look I don't know what this is all about, but they are paying me to kick your ass... so, sorry I guess."

The small feline's ears folded back as she shrugged up at him, then looked over to the mirror while waiting for whatever signal they were going to give to start.

A green light above the mirror flashed on, signaling the fight to begin. The tiger came rushing in at the very moment the light came on, swinging a hard right hook at the feline which she caught and stopped mid swing with her left hand. The smaller feline then took a jab at the tiger, who lept backward only getting grazed by the woman's fist, but he still found himself rubbing his chest where she grazed him.

Both of the tigers hands raised up as he turned to the mirror and shook his head, slowly walking off of the mat in the direction of the door. "No way. I don't know what this is, but there's no way I'm fighting that monster. She just blocked my best punch and I promise you I was not holding back. Also, if I was half a second... nah... a tenth of a second slower, she'd have crushed my ribs. I don't know what the hell she is, but you need to let me outta here."

"We are paying you to fight her, if you leave, the deal is off."

Letting out a deep sigh, the large feline looked back at the smaller one again, shaking his head and walking back into the circle on the mat. "Look just go easy on me alright? I got a televised fight in two weeks, I need to be able to stand upright for that."

The small female grinned slightly at the much larger male, blinking those green eyes at him and waiting for him to make another move. It didn't take long before he became impatient with her just standing there, rushing in again and giving a hard right kick in the direction of her temple.

As the kick went sailing through the air the woman just suddenly, wasn't there anymore. At first the tiger's brain couldn't process what had happened but his eyes quickly darted down to the ground just in time to see a fist heading for his chin. It was far too late for him to dodge the blow, so instead he clenched his teeth and prayed that she didn't shatter his jaw.

“Well... if we take off the time that they were just standing around, that lasted about... seven seconds,” frowning his brow while looking at the data on the screen, the middle aged rodent let out a deep sigh as fingers went up to pinch at his nose. “That's... faster than predicted.”

“What does that even mean Doctor Ehrlich? What exactly is the purpose of this study, anyway?” Doctor Fiscus fell back into his chair with a huff, watching as guards dragged the tiger out of the room. Two bracelets were slapped onto the specimen's wrists by another set of guards, who then led her back to her room.

“It means that even though we ran simulations of this over and over, while having her fight dummies and computer programs, none of that matches up with reality,” tapping some information into the computer, Doctor Ehrlich's tail whipped about in frustration behind him.

“The purpose, Doctor Fiscus, is we need to study her in real world combat situations. Of course... they have to be toned down since we can't actually have her killing anybody but this just shows the simulations we've already done don't mean very much. If we want to be able to control one of her outbursts... well, we need to understand her better. Someone had the bright idea to record her in some actual fights. I personally disagreed but was out voted.”

“So... who is she fighting next?”

“I believe we have a Muay Thai champion coming in this afternoon.”

***Muay Thai - thirteen seconds***

***Taekwondo - eleven seconds***

***Kung Fu - twenty three seconds***

***Judo - seven seconds***

***Aikido - twenty four seconds***

***Jeet Kun Do - one minute and twenty three seconds***

***Jiu-Jitsu - nine seconds.***

“This doesn't seem to be working...” the young human doctor said as he looked over the analysis that the screen showed for all of the felines' fights. “Other than the Jeet Kun Do fighter, none of them can stay upright long enough for the computer to analyze any data. Every other fight just says inconclusive in the results.”

“Guess that’s what we get for trying to reprogram a medical computer to analyze a boxing match,” sitting down in his chair and leaning back, Doctor Ehrlich let out a deep sigh. “Honestly this is just a waste of time, which I argued from the start.”

Reaching a hand up to rub at his chin, Doctor Fiscus thought for a moment before standing up and heading for the office door. “I think I have an idea. This may be an awful idea, but I’m starting to think we’ve been going about this whole thing the wrong way.”

Watching his companion walk out the door, the middle aged rodent just shrugged and looked up at the ceiling, spinning slowly in his chair. “Sure, knock yourself out.”

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“Uhhh... I know I said knock yourself out the other day, but are you sure about this?” Doctor Ehrlich asked as he sat down and looked into the room. Ears were folded back as he stared at an elderly rodent in simple kung-fu style clothing patiently waiting just outside of the circle.

“Oh not at all, just call it a hunch, really. This may go terribly but it’s not like the other plan was working.” Finding his seat next to the middle aged rodent, Doctor Fiscus pressed the button to open the doors that let the feline in, watching her step into the room and give a pause before approaching the circle herself.

As the green light went on, the elderly rodent stepped into the circle and bowed, then separated his legs into a low stance, arms flowing around himself before settling into a ready position. A kiai was released from his lungs just as he planted himself and stared at the feline.

The two doctors watched as the feline hesitated, then stepped into the circle and bowed in return. Flicking her wrists several times, she also got into a ready stance which was the first time she had done so since these sessions began. The two fighters then stared at each other a while, neither moving, or even blinking. After what felt like an eternity the doctors turned to each other with confused looks on their faces, shrugging just as the feline piped up.

“I lost.”

Doctor Ehrlich was the first to turn and look at the feline, who now stood up straight while staring into the mirror. “What? What do you mean, you lost?”

“I mean I lost. I don’t need to fight him to know I’m not going to win. This fight is already over.”

“Ummm... okay but... we’re here to conduct an experiment so, you still need to fight him. I don’t care if you don’t think you can win. In fact, winning and losing isn’t even the point. All of this is for study.” huffing a bit and whipping his tail around in frustration, Doctor Ehrlich had an agitated look on his face that had the young doctor smirking as he watched the exchange.

"I mean, I can't win. Not with my restrictions anyway. Maybe without, but you wouldn't want that," placing her hands on her hips and folding her ears back, the feline sighed and looked down for a moment, then looked back up at the mirror. "Fine, but I get two movie nights this week, or no deal. Also, I get to pick the movies, you guys have awful tastes."

"Alright... just... I'll get that approved. Please continue," taking his hand off the microphone button, Doctor Ehrlich leaned back with a huff and folded his arms over his chest. "This is ridiculous, the patient giving us orders."

"I thought it was kinda funny, not like it's that big of a deal though is it? Let her watch some dumb movies," turning back to the window, Doctor Fiscus chuckled as the feline got back into a ready stance and then nodded at the elderly rodent in front of her.

The two then started their dance, the elderly rodent easily dodging or parrying the feline's blows and even landing a few hits on her himself, which surprised both of the doctors watching. Neither of them could take their eyes off of the spectacle, with Doctor Ehrlich not believing that this was even happening. "How in the world did you know this would work? I know we said she can't use her claws but that's hardly made a difference in the past."

"Oh I didn't know it would work, but I had a hunch that some old grand master who was an expert at multiple forms of martial arts might stand a chance. All these young guys with inflated egos were never going to beat someone with over two thousand years of fighting experience. Maybe some old guy who spent his entire life studying and didn't have an ego was the answer, you know?"

The fight went on for several more minutes before the feline finally tapped out, the old rodent having forced her to the ground with his finger tips on some pressure points and one of her hands behind her back. Both men in the control room turned to look at the clock when it was finally over.

### ***Five minutes and twenty three seconds***

The green light in the room shut off, and the elderly rodent let the feline go. He'd then stepped back and offered her a gracious bow.

Grumbling to herself, the feline got back to her feet as she was released, turning to bow back at the rodent. Green eyes then glanced over at the mirror as she hissed out some movie titles. "Casablanca... and Jaws," then turned to walk out of the room.

"The hell is Casablanca?"

"Says here... some movie released... almost two hundred years ago."