

# Temptation 11 – Break In

*By Dragonien*

## Kyle

I knew this was a bad idea. Every instinct told me that I shouldn't be here, that it was just asking to get caught. Not that they could really pin anything on me, at least not anything reasonable that wouldn't read like something out of a bad sci-fi movie. But it was still asking for trouble that I should have been smart enough to avoid entirely.

Baron's house was just as I had left it. The beat up, old steel pill of a trailer house sat where it always had in a near empty field on the outskirts of town. The landscape around the mobile structure was just as half-dead and uncared for as it had been the last time I was here. I found some odd sense of amusement in seeing that the porch light was still on, still powered by the solar panels that were haphazardly attached to the top of the trailer to offer what little power they were able. At the same time, though, there was a much smaller gnaw of disappointment that I hadn't expected. It was the tiniest twinge of disappointment, of sympathy for the wolf that apparently no one had missed. It was easier these days to feel a bit more sympathy towards the little asshole. Now that he was starting to behave himself it was easier to ignore or forget about the way he had acted in the past. Oh, I could still bring up a righteous rage against him at will and still held little sympathy for what I had done to him so far, but it wasn't as readily smoldering just beneath the surface of my thoughts anymore. Intellectually I knew that our, I couldn't even call it a relationship, understanding with one another was probably a whole list of various psychotic disorders and warped perceptions. Yet that didn't stop me from having begun to feel a bit of fondness towards the little runt.

Which is how I had found myself back at his home again. I'd decided to do something nice for him, as a reward for having been so obedient and well-behaved over the last few days. Apparently my 'training' had been working wonders as he never yelled or insulted me anymore. I never even saw him glaring at me when he thought I couldn't see him. If anything, I was starting to feel like he might be building a genuine deference towards me. Either that, or that inherent fear of someone so much bigger and stronger than him had begun to solidify into something more deferential. Training him properly meant that he got rewarded for good behavior and I wanted him to know the better he acted the more like a person he'd be treated. Also, I'd gotten tired of washing the same set of his clothes every single day.

Even if this whole idea was a bad one, I was still as smart as I could at going about it. I already had rubber gloves on from the moment I'd parked my car further down the road. Careful

to disturb the home as little as possible I gently pulled the screen door open and turned the front door's handle.

Locked. Fuck.

Deciding that if no one had come looking yet they probably wouldn't anytime soon, I figured I might as well just embrace the fuck-it adjustment and break in. Bracing myself on the flimsy wooden planks of the porch, I turned to the side and rammed my shoulder as hard as I could into the door right above where the doorknob was. The door shuddered but otherwise didn't budge. I'm smart, that doesn't mean I always have a lot of common sense. Growling in frustration at my own idiocy and rubbing at already-forming bruise on my shoulder I glared down at the offending door before throwing up my hands in irritation.

"Fuck it."

Glancing around to reassure my increasing paranoia that no one was around I reached for the device in my pocket. Carefully setting the device to what I assumed was roughly the 30% mark. I flicked the switch to the grow setting, took a moment to double check the settings, then aimed it right at my chest and pulled the trigger.

Now, I knew that the device could work on both animate and inanimate objects. I even knew that it worked on people, Baron being prime evidence of that. Yet despite that reassurance to the safety of it as well as the urging that you'd expect from my own inferiority complex I had never worked up the courage to actually use the device on myself. It'd never even occurred to me the first few days that I'd had it that I didn't have to be short anymore. After thinking about it through I'd decided that It would be a risk to make myself bigger indefinitely, the chance of it being noticed and drawing attention to myself was a risk that I wasn't willing to take. I didn't even want to use it recreationally around the house as that would only increase the temptation to do it more. The thought of using it here for a practical purpose, though, had come without a second thought.

Within moments I'd felt the top of my head brushing against the low-hanging cloth awning just above Baron's door. I heard the boards of the old, rotted-out porch steps creaking ominously under my suddenly increased weight and couldn't help but grin a bit. I swore I felt my clothes pulled tighter around my larger frame but I knew it was all in my head. I'd already confirmed the device didn't change the proportions of whatever it shrank or grew and that it would grow my clothing with me but that didn't stop my mind from wandering to less believable terrain briefly.

Even with only a 30% increase I was now well over seven feet tall and over two hundred pounds. This time when I smashed my shoulder in to the doorframe it broke with ease and swung inwards with a pitiful, defeated creak of un-lubricated hinges. I almost banged my head on the door frame but caught myself just in time to remember to duck underneath it instead. I

didn't necessarily have to stay enlarged like this but I convinced myself I should in case I needed to break down another door inside. And maybe I wanted to enjoy it a bit.

Everything looked so much smaller even with just this relatively minor increase in size. The inside of the trailer wasn't particularly tall and even with me being just a couple inches over seven feet my ears nearly brushed the ceiling. It was about as haphazard inside as I would expect from Baron; from the old baron, at least. It wasn't necessarily dirty, as there were no rank smells of food sitting out or disgusting clothes thrown across the floor. It was definitely disorganized though. Clean clothes were thrown in a pile on the couch, long since wrinkled from being left unfolded, and everything from boxes to television and video game remotes to loose-change littered the living room floor. It was almost strange admirable in the way it somehow managed to be chaotic yet relatively clean.

As I started looking around I resisted the urge to flip on the light switch. While I was confident no one would be around for miles this far out in the country I still was too paranoid to tempt fate. Thankfully the moon was still out in the early-morning, cloudless sky and provided enough light for me to feel around with minimal difficulty. The clothes piled on the couch made it easy to gather up a few changes of clothes for Baron. I quickly tied off one of his wrinkled T-shirts and stuffed a few other articles inside it as a makeshift bag and tossed it by the front door where I could easily grab it later. Thinking that I'd just shrink them down later, I turned the sensitivity setting down on the device so I wouldn't accidentally shrink anything else nearby when I used it. I wasn't sure what else to grab, though. The furniture would be a pain to take. Even if I shrank it down it'd be too easy for it to break while in my pocket. He didn't exactly have a lot of decorations around the living room that I thought would be worth the time and effort. Making my way towards the back of the trailer and into his bedroom gave me no more success. A few magazines stacked on his dresser weren't worth the effort and the tablet computer on top of it wasn't going to work either. Baron had earned some trust and leeway but I still wouldn't trust him with anything that had internet access or might let him make outgoing communications. Just as I was turning to leave his room I caught sight of movement in my peripheral vision.

Adrenaline coursed through my body in an abrupt surge and my whole body went rigid. For a split second all I wanted to do was turn and run for the door. Then I remembered that I was actually pretty damn big right now. Abruptly I spun on my heels, lips pulled back with my fangs barred as I readied myself to leap towards the source of the movement the moment I detected even the slightest hint of malicious intent. I caught sight of my assailant, recognizing his hostile posture for the threat it was. Right before leaping forward and tackling what I was reasonably safe in assuming was the smaller party I stopped and nearly burst out in stressful giggles instead.

I had been looking at a mirror.

"Jesus I am way too keyed up for this. I am not cut out for a life of crime." I laughed aloud at my own expense.

The movement out of the corner of my eye had been my own movements. In the dim lighting I had mistaken the silhouette as another person. It would have been really embarrassing if I'd slammed myself face-first into a mirror trying to heroically take down the attacker that was my own reflection. I was about to turn away from the mirror and resume prowling around Baron's bedroom when something caught my eye on the mirror. Leaning closer I saw a series of Polaroid pictures taped to the glass near the top of the mirror. Granted, at my height the top of the mirror was below my chin so I had to look down at them, but anyone else looking in the mirror would have had to look up at them just above their own reflection. After a moment of trying to squint in the dark and make them out I was sorely tempted again to turn on a light. Instead I opted to pull my phone, thankfully upsized with the rest of me, from my pocket and turned on the screen to act as an impromptu flashlight.

The reason I was so drawn to the pictures, as much as I was embarrassed to admit it, was that each one was of Baron. Specifically, of Baron without a shirt on. There were seven of them in total taped to the top of the mirror in an obvious sequential order. Looking closer with my phone used as illumination I could see numbers written on the bottom of each picture indicating the year it was taken. They were almost certainly progress pictures, each one showing Baron standing in as close to the same double bicep pose in each picture as he was able to imitate. What really struck me though was his expression and demeanor in the earlier pictures. They looked like they started just a bit over seven years ago, Baron most likely not having gotten to when he would take one this year. The first picture showed the wolf, probably still in high school, and looking both scrawnier and more nervous than I ever had even imagined him much less seen him. He was absolutely puny, no definition to his raised arms whatsoever and even a bit of heft to his middle that showed the beginnings of a paunch. His darker fur hid the skin of his face but with the way his ears were flattened and his face was screwed up in a nervous smile it was easy to tell he was horribly embarrassed at taking such a picture. As I looked through the other pictures I could see that not only did he make seemingly exponential progress through each year, but his confidence grew even faster than his body did. By the third picture his stomach was entirely flat and he had a nicely defined peak to his biceps that went perfectly with the genuinely happy and confident smile on his face. That was really where his confidence started to turn to cockiness. With each picture after that his expression got increasingly smug. By the time I got to the last picture he was exactly the cocky asshole of a wolf I'd come to know perfectly portrayed by the way he stood with only one arm raised with his head turned and shamelessly kissing his own bicep while the other cupped his junk provocatively. His progress physically was beyond impressive. Even if his personality had taken a nose dive I still couldn't help but respect how much effort it must have taken for him to go from that scrawny, slightly overweight teenager to the beefcake he was now.

Once more I felt that flare of smug self-satisfaction at Baron's current helplessness. Imagining him trying to do a progress picture now where he'd be too tiny to even show up in

frame on the photo had me snickering softly to myself for several long moments. As much as that amused me, though, I still couldn't ignore my growing fondness for the little asshole. If anything, being reminded of how much of a royal douche he had been and thinking about how much more well-behaved and amicable he was now made that smug smirk morph into a more affectionate smile. Gathering up the pictures in a neat little pile and slipping them into my pocket, I thought to myself maybe I'd help him with his next progress picture. The amusing mental image of me standing there imitating his poses in the pictures with him precariously balanced on one of my own upraised biceps was more appealing than I had expected it to be.

Changing my mind about the magazines, I decided to gather up a few of them to give him something to read. Admittedly it must be pretty boring in his little cage when I wasn't around. Maybe if he was really good this week I'd see about getting him a dollhouse instead of a cage. Lastly, I gathered up the blankets and sheets on his bed and rolled them up into a tight ball to take with me as well.

By now I had finally fallen into a comfort zone of sorts, less terrified that at any moment someone was going to burst in and catch me in the act of what was technically breaking and entering. I'd even started humming some nonsense tune to myself as I prowled around Baron's abandoned home looking for prizes. Which is why it came as quite a shock to hear a creak of floorboards behind me out of sync with my own movements. I started to turn around to see what had caused the noise only to feel a powerful impact on the back of my head and suddenly I found myself floating in midair. Oh wait, no, I wasn't floating. I was falling. The thin carpet of the living room felt rough on the side of my face all of the sudden. Wait, when had I gotten on the floor? Oh, right, I had fallen over. What was that weird feeling? Oh yea, that was pain. The back of my head hurt. Fuck, actually the back of my head hurt a lot. My thoughts swam around in that disoriented circle for what seemed like an eternity that in reality only lasted a second or so. As the room was starting to dim around me I saw a pair of polished, black boots walk into view of where I had fallen.

The last thought I was able to muster before blacking out was the realization that someone had hit me over the back of the head.

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I awoke, sputtering and coughing, as a glass of water was splashed onto my face. The wetness mixed with the sharp bite of chill that the cold water provided was more than enough to drag my impact-addled mind back to consciousness. Not that it meant I was exactly running on all cylinders, but I was awake. The sun hadn't risen yet from what I could tell of light coming in the windows, so I couldn't have been out for long.

"My my my, and who do we have here?"

I didn't recognize the voice. Nor did I recognize the person standing over me when I finally regained enough motor control to look up at them. The speaker was a cat of some kind. A Caracal or a Lynx or something like that with their long, pointed ears and overall lean and almost lanky-looking body type. He was dressed in an absolutely immaculate suit, the kind of suit most people honestly never really expected to see except on television when worn by politicians or business leaders with the perfect cuts and folds to fit the wearer exactly and everything from buttons, cuff-links, and shoes polished to a mirror-shine. It was absolutely not someone that I would have ever expected to find myself face to face with, much less find out in an abandoned old trailer home. I also couldn't seem to place the accent, something vaguely European but with a more casual and crass drawl than one might expect from such a well-dressed person.

It was only after silence had dragged on for several moments that I realized he had been staring at me as I thought, expecting an answer. I tried to shift my sitting position both to get more comfortable and buy myself another second or two to get my thoughts together only to discover that my arms were tied together behind my back at the wrists. Eyes going a bit wide, I looked down and saw that my legs had been similarly tied at the ankles with what looked like duct tape. Oh right, I'd been hit over the head. This must have been the guy that did it. Suddenly I found myself a lot angrier than I was confused. It must have shown on my face as he began to speak again before I'd even had a chance to open my mouth.

"Now now, big fella. Let's not get uppity now. I don't know a big cat like you from Tom so I've got nothing against you. get it? Cat? Tom?" he chuckled at his own joke for a moment before continuing. "All I want to know is where my boy Baron is. You tell me that, and we're all right as rain. If you don't? Well. Some roads are best untraveled even for a big fella like you, ya get my meanin, boyo?"

I tried to follow what he was saying but kept getting confused every time he referred to me as big. Then my brain belatedly caught up and remembered I had never shrunk back down. I was still well over seven-foot-tall right now! Probably the only reason the guy had bothered to sneak up on me. For all his lanky body proportion I could still see enough muscle on him that I knew he would have kicked my ass in a fight even if I actually knew how to fight. But when someone sees someone else is bigger than them, they immediately got a lot more cautious. It was hard to tell with me sitting down but I was pretty sure I was at least head and shoulders taller than the cat. Again, my mind was spinning in every direction but the one right ahead of me and I realized I had gone several seconds again without answering. The cat took it as unwillingness to answer on my part and frowned.

"Now, big boy. I don't want this to get personal. You just tell me what I want to know, ya hear? Ya come in here and start riffling through his stuff as if ya knew that he wasn't going to be here. That tells me you know where he is at this particular moment. Otherwise a greenhorn like you wouldn't be riskin goin into someone's house uninvited."

It was then that he lifted up his hand. At first I thought it was a gun in his hand and I reflexively cringed away. When I saw what it really was though my eyes went wide and a whole different kind of fear ran through me. He had the device. it didn't take a genius to figure out he must have patted me down after knocking me out to ensure I wasn't armed. Though it didn't really reassure me much, there was at least some sense of lessening panic that he didn't seem to realize what it was.

"Tryin to rob a place with a toy gun? What kind of daft, teenage shite is that?" he exclaimed animatedly, waving the device around. "This ain't the movies, kid. No one's fool enough to take this thing as a real gun. Now. Here's what's going to happen. I'm going to ask you one more time where our boy, Baron, is. You're going to be a good lad and tell me. Or I'll have to give you a practical lesson in real firearms."

With his last words he patted the left fold of his suit jacket, outlining what must have been a shoulder-holster hidden inside. The threat was clear and Adrenaline was already surging through my body for fear of my life. How the fuck had I even gotten myself into something like this. Who the hell was this guy and why was he looking for Baron? They couldn't possibly know what actually happened to him, or he'd know what the device he was holding was. Which meant this was some shit of Baron's I was getting dragged into. Once again he fucks me over even now. When I looked back up at him and saw myself staring down the barrel of the size-device my eyes went wide and I cringed away in fear. Apparently I had been wallowing in my own thoughts again and he decided I needed another reminder. As my eyes locked on his for a brief moment I knew without a doubt that he wouldn't hesitate for even a second to shoot me right between the eyes if he felt like it. His eyes were cold, dead and without emotion behind them. They were the eyes of a killer. So it was surprising to see the look of shock and fear in them when he pulled the trigger of the device.

Now, I'm sure he had been doing it for dramatic effect to intimidate me. It had been working gloriously up to that point. When he pulled the trigger, though, both of us were equally surprised when a burst of colored light exploded from the end of the device and engulf me in an aura of the same color. Instantly I began to grow, legs stretching across the floor while my head raised up towards dangerously close to meeting him face to face even while sitting down. I think what really surprised both of us, though, was the sound of ripping fabric. The device should have still been set on the same 30% increase I'd left it on earlier. Unlike when I'd grown myself to bash down the front door, though, I'd turned down the sensitivity setting in preparation of shrinking some of Baron's clothes. Which meant when he fired the device right at my face it had decided to grow me, and JUST me.

My shirt split open down the front and the sleeves tore open around even my modest arms. The seams of my pants split open in a dozen different places and let tufts of my fiery orange fur fluff outwards, giving me an appearance somewhere between a recent werewolf-transformation victim and the incredible hulk minus the enormous muscles. Most importantly, though, was the sound of snapping tape as my arms and legs grew large and strong enough I

was able to rip the duct tape apart and free myself. the effect hadn't even worn off before I was scrambling on all fours in an awkward leap towards the cat.

I was running on pure, terrified fight or flight instinct. There was no grace, no skill, not even any real predator's instinct guiding my actions. There was just me, flailing almost laughably against a superior predator. Except, in this particular instance, I was actually the superior predator. If I had been my normal size my actions and movements would have been effortless for the cat to avoid and overpower. Hell, even with my superior size it wouldn't have surprised me if he had still kicked my ass somehow. The shock of seeing my already over-sized body enlarging to even more unrealistic proportions, though, was enough to shock him into inaction until it was too late. I swung arm swung with the force of a baseball bat and smacked into the cat's gut hard enough that his breath exploded from his lips in a pained gasp and I swore I felt something inside snap. His feet actually lifted a half an inch off the ground and he was sent flying backwards into the wall with a resounding THUD. The device fell, forgotten from his hand as he fell down to his knees, doubled over in pain from what I could only assume were probably a couple of cracked ribs. I wasn't a fighter nor was I wasn't particularly strong. But now that I was all of ten feet tall, I had several hundred pounds of weight to throw around.

By the time he'd recovered enough to raise his head to stare at me in a mix of fury, confusion and fear I'd already reached over to retrieve the device from where he'd dropped it. I'd tried to stand up and immediately smashed my head and shoulders on the ceiling. Surprisingly it hadn't hurt nearly as much as I'd expected, though now there was a very obvious dent in the ceiling's drywall.

"What the. What the fuck?" the cat wheezed through clenched teeth. "How did. what did. who...?"

between the impact against the wall and the impossibility of him now staring down a ten-foot-tall fox who had just Incredible Hulked out of his clothes, he seemed to be having difficulty parsing together his thoughts. Thankfully, I didn't. A cold calm had settled over me despite the adrenaline tearing through my body like a drug. Maybe it was the thought that the man had just tried to kill me, or maybe it was just the overly-rational part of my mind calculating faster than my consciousness was able to catch up with. Either way, I had already decided what needed to be done.

Adjusting the device was a bit difficult with my larger fingers, but after a moment of careful maneuvering with my claw-tips I was able to return the sensitivity setting to normal then set the intensity several magnitudes higher. By the time I had finished the cat was already stumbling his way back to his feet. He was still leaning against the wall behind him for support so I didn't really feel concerned that he was going to make a break for it or attack me again. I didn't say anything to him, I didn't feel the need too. Nothing I said to him would matter in a few moments anyway. Without a word, I aimed the device at him again and carefully pulled the trigger.



He tried to dodge, leaping to the side in an impressive show of fortitude and determination considering the pain he must be in from his broken ribs. He didn't get far enough, though. The beam struck him in the shoulder and instantly he began rapidly compressing down in size, clothes and all. Within moments the glow faded and I found myself standing over the now minuscule, terrified cat who wouldn't have even come up to Baron's hip. I could only imagine what I must look like to the feline down below. Some living mountain? a moving building? maybe even a god, who knew what was running through his head. For a split second I did feel a sense of empowerment and superiority wash through me at that last thought. He was even smaller than I'd made Baron, and I was currently about twice my normal size. I felt powerful. Then, that cold feeling washed those thoughts away as well and I turned back to the task at hand.

He tried to run when I reached for him, but it was a futile effort. My arm alone could reach farther than he could had moved at a dead run for ten seconds even if he wasn't injured. Fingers thick as refrigerators pressed in against either of his sides and effortlessly lifted him up into the air. I was pretty sure I felt something else break, even though I wasn't even trying to squeeze that hard. Again, though, it didn't matter. I didn't know who the cat was, and frankly I didn't really care. I couldn't just leave him. He knew about the device, he knew SOMETHING about Baron, and he had seen my face. It was far too much of a risk. I couldn't just shrink him and leave him, there was too much of a chance that he might eventually be found by someone else. I couldn't even just crush him and walk away as that would still leave evidence behind... whatever was left of him. So, I did the only thing I could think of that would get rid of the problem and leave no evidence behind. Walking over to the sink in Baron's little kitchenette I used my free hand to pour myself a glass of water. Then I opened my jaws wide, ignoring the panicked and incoherently high-pitched squeaking of the cat and dropped him inside my mouth. With a mouthful of water following after him to ease the transition I gulped.

I swallowed him whole.

I didn't have the time or mental energy to think about what I'd just done as I could already feel myself starting to shake a bit as the adrenaline faded. With fumbling fingers I changed the settings on the device once more and shrank myself back down to my normal size. It didn't do anything for my still half-ruined clothes but at least I could stand up straight again. Quickly rushing through the room to gather up the bits of tape that had held me and stuffing them in the bag with the bedding and clothes I'd gathered for Baron I made for the door and scampered outside. The sun was just about to peek over the horizon as I made my way down the dirt trail leading to the main road where I'd parked my car, so I had to nearly jog to get to my vehicle before first light. As I turned the car on and pulled out onto the road I tried to focus on keeping my hands from shaking. I didn't even notice the car parked in the shade of some trees on the opposite side of the road, a pair of eyes watching me from the driver's seat.