

Scent of Cudach Banyo
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Lala's tongue washed her belly. Resisting the bath, Fini batted at Lala, twisting until she got on all four feet. She shook and stretched. Her siblings all found their Cudach Banyo, the two legged her kind protected but Fini didn't feel drawn to any of the two leggeds. Fini wondered about her Cudach Banyo. She felt a yearning for her, a need to make the connection and protect her Cudach Banyo. She wandered the halls of the temple but none of the visitors spoke to her, made her want to connect. She only wanted to scamper away from them.

Scrunching down, Fini watched Lala's tail twitching. Her Lala was impatient with Fini, her last offspring. Lala would not mate again until all of her offspring from this batch were settled. With a wiggle, Fini leapt three feet and pounced on air. Lala stood raising her tail high above Fini's head. She snorted her frustration. Shaking her head, she wandered out to the garden to chase and hunt.

Lala watched her. Fini wanted to make this capture. Lala no longer provided milk to her. Each time she tried to drink, Lala stood and walked away. Her belly ached with hunger. The leaf over her hid her. She scented and waited. Each morning, before the yellow ball overhead rose, the rodents scurried back and forth gathering fruits. Fini tried the fruit. It wasn't bad but it wasn't meat.

The small green creature scurried from one leaf to the next hiding underneath. In it's front paws, it held a large berry. Using a paw, it tucked the berry under its chin as it scurried back to its nest.

Fini stopped breathing, squinted her eyes. She hunkered down, eyes narrowed, nose on alert as the small rodent tucked the berry and scurried towards Fini. Stopping feet from her, less than Fini leapt to chase Lala's tail, the rodent put its nose in the air. It froze in place for a breath and then... Fini launched herself at the rodent. She landed on top of where the rodent had been. She grumbled with disappointment but sought the rodent.

Another leap, claws raked down the side of the rodent as it darted at the last moment. Fini hissed, a tiny hiss in no way intimidating the rodent. It ran to cover, tried to scurry away. Fini slipped by it, forcing it to turn, swerve. Fini followed, chased, reached for the rodent all across the patio in the garden. Close calls, the rodent escaped. Breathing hard, Fini enjoyed the chase but wanted to give up. Her belly ached with hunger. Hunkering down, she watched as the rodent scampered one direction only to realize it was blocked. It jerked away from the trap and headed back towards Fini. She leapt, landing perfectly on top of the green rodent sinking her claws deep into its sides. Fini rolled the rodent, keeping hold of it with her sharp long claws. Her tiny teeth sunk deep into the neck of the rodent. Blood jerked into Fini's mouth salty and tangy. She swallowed felt an easing of the hunger. She loosened her hold on the rodent, it lay stunned for a moment before realizing it was free.

Her stomach demanded more than the one swallow. Fini reached out, swiped at the rodent, pulled it closer and sank her tiny sharp daggers into the back of the neck severing the spine. The rodent lay dead. Lala chirruped at her happily. She lay watching her offspring capture and kill her first meal. Fini ignored her Lala. Lala wasn't feeding her, she wasn't sharing her meal.

Fini devoured the rodent. Every little piece of it, she devoured until her belly bulged and the hunger died with the consumption. Licking her paws, she watched Lala rise from the door

and come to her. Her belly full, her eyes grew heavy. She worked hard for her meal. Lala bathed the little orange offspring. When Fini tried to move, Lala put her paw on her and continued to bathe her. The warm strokes of her Lala soothed and calmed her. The loud purr hummed her right to sleep. Lala pulled her offspring close, continued to bathe the little one.

“She did well,” Jacinta said scratching Lala behind her ears where she loved to be scratched.

Lala harrumphed her agreement. Her two legged enjoyed watching the hunts.

“There will be new people here tomorrow,” Jacinta said. “Perhaps your little one will find her Cudach Banyo. Are you ready to let her go?”

Lala snorted and curled around her last offspring. Fini fussed. Lala purred to keep her little one near her, for now.

“I know it will be hard for you,” Jacinta said. “If she finds her Cudach Banyo, we will have to let her go, along with all her antics.” Jacinta sat on the ground next to Lala petting and soothing her. “There will be others. This one’s destiny lies elsewhere I think.”

Fini chased a leaf. She heard the two leggeds move into the temple. She tilted her head towards them but the leaf fluttered. She crouched, watched wiggling her little bottom, and leapt. The leaf died by Fini’s little claws shredding it. The breeze wafted gently towards Fini as she bit and gnawed on the leaf. Something new, something different grabbed Fini. She tipped her head towards the temple room. Lying where the sun hit the soft grass first, Lala opened one eye as Fini turned towards the temple room. Fini tipped her head one way, sniffed the air and tipped her head the other way.

A hunger, a need grew in Fini. She fed this morning, catching another rodent for her meal. Her belly didn’t need food. What was this new scent? Unable to resist, she chased a leaf to the edge of the garden. Peeking around the door, she saw all the two leggeds, so full?

The smell invaded her senses. Where did it come from? Who did it come from? She needed to know what the scent was. Lala lifted her head as Fini strutted into the temple room. Reluctantly, Lala followed her offspring. She watched as Fini jumped from the floor to the shoulder of a large two legged.

Fini smelled it. She hissed at the two legged who tried to touch her. She didn’t want to play. She needed to find that scent. Bunching her muscles, she pushed away from the two legged to land on the one in front of her. The two leggeds made the tittering noise which sounded like the happy sounds Lala’s two legged made.

The scent, oh, she needed to find the scent. The ache grew larger, harder. It almost hurt. From one ledge to the next, Fini jumped until she hit one of the two leggeds who felt like a wall. Muscles and bone beneath her paws, Fini thought this one must be strong. A faint odor lingered, the one she needed to follow. The young two legged on his lap reached for Fini. She leapt to the next two legged in front of her to escape. The scent was stronger, she knew her prey was close. If she found her prey, the need which drove her would go away like her hunger went away when she caught a rodent.

This two legged male wasn’t as big as the one she left but the smell, the trail of this evasive scent invaded more. The young one on his lap reached for Fini, who sniffed but leapt away before the two legged grabbed her tail. Where was the scent? She needed it, had to have it or she could not survive. Fini wasn’t sure how but her life depended on whatever this scent was.

Fini landed on Lala’s two legged’s shelf. She spent a lot of time snuggling and rubbing on Lala’s two legged. She didn’t grab or hurt. Safety. Like Lala. Safe. She jumped gently down

onto her legs. A crinkle stopped Fini. A hanging, oooh. Fini stopped to bat at it. It swung playfully encouraging more fun but the scent called to her. It was stronger.

Fini jumped down, saw her tail. Obviously, she needed to catch it. Around she went, her paws reaching for her tail. She felt her paws touch her tail and stumbled as she tried to capture it like she did the leaves. Always just out of reach, Fini stretched and tried but it remained out of reach. A two legged lay on the floor making noises. What was she saying?

The scent. Where did it come from? She hissed, let the two legged know she was hunting, didn't want the two legged near her. She needed to find the scent. Fear shivered through Fini. Her fur stood up. If she was bigger maybe the two legged would be afraid of her. The scent surrounded the two legged little thing. She needed to find the source of the scent. Keeping out of reach of those little hands, Fini strutted around the two legged. It kept making noise but Fini didn't want to be near it. Sprawled out, the two legged lay on the floor and wiggled the digits on it's hands. Lala's two legged used those digits to scratch. Did this little two legged know how to scratch?

It didn't matter, the scent drove Fini to search, to find what it was. The little two legged kept making noise. It sat up, turned away. The air movement wafted more of the scent. Did the two legged have the scent? Fini leapt to this two legged's little high shelf. Small, Fini dug her claws in to stay. The two legged didn't fuss. Fini hissed again. The two legged tittered and touched her mouth to her head like Lala's two legged liked to.

OH the scent. Fini butted her head against the little two legged. She was the scent. With a deep breath in, Fini smelled what she chased. The two legged giggled, Fini felt the tension leave her, felt safe and home. Oh, hmmm, Fini felt the need grow. She knew she needed to do something.

Lala strode through the two leggeds, inspecting them. She sought out her wayward offspring. Lala dare not follow her from the shelf to the shelf of the two leggeds, she was too big. The little two legged said, "Kit mama."

Fini chirruped in response. Lala licked the kitten, then the two legged. Fini waited for the two legged to push Lala away. Most of them didn't like being licked. This one tittered and wrapped her arms around Lala. The little two legged made noises into Lala's fur. Fini wanted the little two legged for herself. She didn't want to share. The scent wrapped around her, comforted her like Lala had done her whole life. Was this two legged something special? Lala butted heads with the two legged before washing both two legged and Fini.

The two legged reached for Fini and flopped over on Lala. Lala hissed a warning. The two legged babbled and petted Lala. Fini pushed against her digits demanding her attention instead of the two legged giving it to Lala. Lala has a two legged, she doesn't need another. The two leggeds moved, some walked into the garden. But the little one stayed near Fini.

Fini wound around the little two legged. The scent came from her. She felt a compulsion to be closer and closer. The two legged wiggled her fingers in Lala's fur. Not Lala's. Not Lala's Fini thought. Hers. She stepped nearer, scrunched down to watch those little digits. With a flash of orange paw and one sharp claw flashed and sliced open the finger. Red, the scent overwhelmed Fini as she lapped up the red. Not to eat but to cherish. Contentment rushed through her as her two legged named her.

"Kit," she whimpered from the pain. Kit licked up the blood, the bond and made the connection. This little two legged was her Cudach Banyo. Kit curled in the safety of her Cudach Banyo's lap. She felt Lala give her a final lick before turning away. For the first time in her life,

she didn't fear not being near Lala. She felt her Cudach Banyo's little hands stroke her soft fur gently as Kit cuddled contentedly into her bond mate.