Less Can Be More

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Less Can Be More

by FallLover

Summary

After Maat made Seth tiny as punishment for his crimes at the end of the trial, Seth started living as a slave in Horus' rooms. One day, he decides to go exploring. It doesn't go well.

Notes

This was originally published on Archive of Our Own, as a gift for Ace_Of_Clubs. The fanfic title is from the song of the same name by Maury Laws and Jules Bass, performed by Glenn Yarbrough for the 1980 animated movie, "The Return of the King", based on the novel by J.R.R. Tolkien.

Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It was really Seth's fault that he broke his left leg.

But he decided to blame Horus. And Maat. And Isis. And Thoth, too, while he was at it. And Ra, who'd birthed them all. And Sekhmet, because all of this was really her doing.

He didn't think about Osiris. As a general rule.

But the short of it was this: Isis was away, as usual, and Horus had stepped out of his rooms for a moment, without bringing Seth with him. Probably to piss or something. More than likely he forgot Seth was there. It was something Horus was doing increasingly often these days.

Oh, he made sure Seth was locked up for the night. Brought him to meetings. Took him on walks. Fucked around with him in his spare time. But the meeting field trips were fewer these days. And Seth had more time to himself. Not like he could do much trapped on a table or a bookcase inside a locked room on an upper story of a building, but still. Horus was quickly adjusting to being pharaoh, and his duties were many. Even tormenting his captive uncle and defeated enemy wasn't high on the agenda *every* day.

It had been late morning, and Seth decided that today he was going to *really* explore instead of laying on his mini couch until Horus recalled he existed and returned to stick him on a necklace or tie his ankle to a string.

Of course, exploring required that he get *down* from the table Horus had left him on when he'd left. Horus *had* left some of his scrolls behind when he left, but Seth quickly read them all, and wanted to do something else with his time. He admitted he was curious about Horus' room, and the various treasures the man no doubt kept hidden around it.

When he'd first started living here, the place was filled with old memories, though Horus had taken up residence in a larger room since becoming pharaoh, far from the guest quarters he'd had during the trial. Now time had passed, and Seth had decided he wasn't afraid anymore.

Plus, maybe there was a hole somewhere he could sneak out of. Horus never left him alone long enough to do much. But *today*…

Unfortunately, he'd misjudged the distance from the tabletop to the chair, mostly because when he'd been a god, the leap would have been nothing.

It was *not* nothing now.

So when he landed and immediately *heard* and *felt* something break, he cried out in shock and fell over.

Unfortunately, this meant that he fell off the edge of the chair. Backwards.

He *might* have screamed.

Thankfully, Horus' fancy footstool was relatively soft, high, and close to the chair, so Seth didn't break his head or spine when he fell on it, and probably saved himself from a worse fate if he'd fallen to the floor.

But he still lay, dazed, on the footstool, for an unknowable amount of time.

Even when his eyesight cleared, and he could take stock of where he was and what happened, and that his arm was broken, too, that didn't help. Pain was everything, and he groaned miserably.

He wasn't used to injury like this. Even when he'd been injured badly in the past, he could just focus on other things until he could heal.

Now, his mind refused to fall unconscious, and he didn't have the strength to get up. The pain was too overwhelming.

He finally tried to sit up on his good leg, but even that twigged both his broken limbs and he cried out and fell back, grunting as he hit the cushion of the footstool again.

So, he couldn't move. No one was close enough to offer help: Isis had instructed the servants to ignore him even if they were close. He didn't know how long Horus would be gone for, but as this was Horus' bedroom and office, Seth knew he'd be back soon.

Perhaps Isis would come to visit looking for Horus, or to torment Seth somehow. Though the chances of her helping were slim, even after her help with his tooth. And she might simply suggest *amputation* as a solution, just to be cruel, probably citing something about Anubis—

Seth didn't think about Anubis, as another general rule. His son hadn't visited him in all the time Seth had been transformed, nor had Nephthys. He wagered Isis and/or Horus had forbidden it.

Sometimes, he didn't know if he was sad or happy about that. He assumed they were happier, though.

So he was just *stuck* here. Waiting. Even if he *could* get off the stool without breaking something else, *and* made it to the door, so what? It was too heavy for him to move. And if he somehow managed to climb up a wall to a window, what would he do then? Jump to his death? Get picked up by a bird as food?

Would he die here, waiting for Horus to return? It was an odd consideration. He wasn't used to having to rely on someone else, and never had to in the past, Osiris be damned, and Horus be damned. Helplessness never meant anything *good*.

Though at least Osiris couldn't reach him here. Hopefully. He hadn't been successful yet, anyway.

Seth wondered what would happen if this tiny body died. Would he be sent to Duat? And if he was, would he be back to his original size?

It was an odd idea, though it would probably make Ammit's job easier when she devoured his heart…

But surely if he entered Duat, Osiris would ensure he would have control over Seth? It had seemed to be Osiris' goal before. Drag him down to Duat so Osiris could… do whatever it was he wanted, away from the prying eyes of other gods. Again.

The idea was terrifying. Not only to be at Osiris' mercy, but to also potentially not even be big enough to attempt *some* resistance…

Seth was shocked to realize he was crying. And wished he hadn't lost his headdress in the fall. He could sense it was close by, but he would have appreciated some cover for this embarrassment.

How pathetic, to be reduced to this?

The pain returned, drowning out everything else.

Surely Horus will return soon? The thought was desperate, now. He didn't know if he'd been thinking over this for seconds, minutes, or hours.

He tried to get up again, only this time he moved his broken leg even more and the burst of agony made him half-scream and fall back down again.

He tried to calm his breathing. Getting panicked wouldn't do him any good.

He tried to think of something else to focus on other than the futility of his situation. But the pain was too distracting. So of course his mind would either get increasingly angry at Horus taking his *damn time*, circle on the pain, or think of some new torment Osiris might have cooked up for him when he finally died of starvation or thirst or infection.

Seth was in a groggy daze when he heard the door open and Horus' familiar footsteps and voice approaching.

"Uncle, my apologies for taking so long, I—"

Horus stopped and Seth assumed he was looking at the empty table.

"Uncle…?"

"Here!" Seth realized his voice sounded odd, and a bit scratchy. *Perhaps* he'd yelled a few times, hoping it would get someone's attention, even if they wouldn't have checked things out. So he cleared his throat and projected louder, "Under the table!"

He watched as Horus stepped around and pulled the chair out, then crouched down, blocking out much of the sunlight.

Seth had never been happier to see the tall, muscular oaf.

“Uncle, why are you laying down here?”

Horus reached out and Seth barely had time to say, “Wait, don’t—!”

But then Horus had nudged his broken leg and Seth *screamed*.

Horus yanked his hand back.

Seth gasped and tried to get himself back under control. “My left leg is *broken*. As is my right arm.”

“What happened?”

“I fell off the table.”

“…You are very clumsy, Uncle.”

Seth snorted.

After a moment, Horus reached out again, this time carefully cupping Seth’s head and moving his hand under Seth, to support his back. The movement jiggled Seth’s arm and he bit back a cry of pain.

“Bear with me, Uncle,” Horus ordered, but quietly. “This may hurt, but I must move you to a gentler place, and then I will call Mother for help.”

The movement jiggled Seth’s broken limbs more, and the pain *did* make Seth black out, and when he next came to, he was laying down on something soft, staring at the ceiling. Everything still hurt, so he assumed Isis hadn’t arrived in the time he was out. He did check to make sure he still had all his limbs, and yes, he did.

Horus’ face appeared above him. “Uncle, you are awake again.”

Seth sighed. “Unfortunately.”

“I sent a servant for Mother. She should be here soon.”

“Okay…” Seth replied, quietly. He felt nauseous.

“It will be okay, Uncle,” Horus said. “I won’t leave you alone.”

For a moment, Osiris’ face appeared superimposed again over Horus’. That familiar smile. Taunting him. That disturbing sense of ownership in Osiris’ eyes, like Seth was a toy he could play with as he wished.

“There’s no use trying to escape,” Osiris said. *“Your body is now mine.”*

“No…” Seth murmured. He began to shake. “*No.*…”

“Uncle?”

Seth sobbed as he fell into the dark.

When Seth next woke, he was laying somewhere soft, staring at the ceiling, lit slightly by moonlight. His headdress was still gone.

He pushed himself up and looked around, blearily. Though it was dark, he could tell he was in Horus’ bedroom, still.

It was only then he realized his limbs didn’t hurt.

He looked down at them. They both looked perfectly normal. And when he touched them, they felt fine.

He looked back around. He’d been returned to his small “room” – *cage* – by the side of Horus’ bed, where he had a small bed of his own. The cage itself was made of thick wooden bars and always locked when Horus slept. It afforded Seth little privacy, save for a small closet area with curtains that Horus had crafted, where Seth could change, and where Horus placed the many outfits Horus had designed for him, all of which Seth chose to ignore. The bathing area was less private, but Seth was used to it by now, and thankfully Horus had stopped *staring* all the time, which was far weirder. It was one thing for a servant to bathe him, but Horus seemed to *stare* at every part of him, all the time, and it was… strange.

Like Osiris, on that night, and every time since.

Seth’s headdress rested on its stand nearby. Since he couldn’t craft it from sand anymore, and didn’t wear it when he slept, Horus had also made the stand for him to place it at night, rather than putting it on the floor, the bed, or just leaving it over his head, which made him grouchier in the mornings.

Seth wondered if Horus would make a whole mini palace the longer this dragged on.

“Uncle?”

Seth twitched when he heard Horus’ voice, then looked over to see the man staring at him. Horus had apparently been sitting on his bed, and all Seth could tell was that his head was turned in Seth’s direction.

Horus got up and walked over, unlocking the door to the cage and leaning in closer to get a better look at the tiny former god. “Uncle, you should be careful when you move. Mother says you’re healed, but your body needs the rest to recover.”

Seth brushed his arm with his fingers thoughtfully. So Isis *had* helped again. So strange. And it was true, he did still feel a little groggy.

“How do you feel?” Horus asked.

Seth shrugged. “Fine.” A little tired, but the pain was gone. Isis knew what she was doing, at least.

“…Try not to fall off the table in future, Uncle.”

Seth rolled his eyes. Horus might be able to guess what Seth had been up to, given even his tiny brain worked sometimes, but it wasn’t like Seth had to *admit* to it.

After a time, when Seth didn’t say anything, Horus continued, “Your hair is beautiful, Uncle.”

Seth flushed and turned to glare at him, but when he looked back up at Horus, all he saw was Osiris’ green smiling face.

Seth scrabbled back on his bed, his heart racing.

After a moment, he realized he was looking at Horus again. With Horus’ back to the moonlight, and given he was mostly standing over the cage, the dark left his expression mostly in shadow.

“Uncle? Are you all right?” The question was oddly gentle, perhaps worried.

Why is he worried about me? Seth ignored that and tried to calm his breathing, then glared. “Yes, I… I’m fine.” He swallowed, then said, louder, “I’m just tired, that’s all.”

Horus’ expression was unreadable as he eventually said, “I understand. Rest, Uncle. Call me if you need anything. I’ll be here.” He locked the door to Seth’s cage again and went back to bed.

Silence filled the air.

Seth lay carefully back down on his bed and pulled the covers up, oddly afraid for the first time in a long time.

Horus was not his father, Seth reminded himself. No more than Anubis was.

Seth looked over at his headdress stand again, recalling watching Horus whittle away at the tiny stand, while Seth and Isis both watched with amusement and confusion. The first time in a long time Seth had felt some kinship with his sister. And then seeing Isis’ annoyance that it was actually just a gift for Seth.

No, Seth reminded himself. *Osiris would never do something that kind.*

Seth frowned at the thought. Horus? *Kind?* Was he thinking of the *right Horus?* He turned back over onto his side, realized he was facing Horus’ bed, then rolled back on his back, glaring at the ceiling.

He shut his eyes. And prayed to forget this whole cursed day.

Chapter End Notes

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Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

This chapter was published for Day 4 of ENNEAD Week 2022.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Why don’t you just drop me in the water so I can be eaten by one of Sobek’s priests?” Seth said as he again tried to somehow wriggle out of the bracelet Horus had bound him to for their journey. “It’d be less bad than this shit!” But the metal bits holding his wrists and chest were strong, and he made no progress, and kicking Horus’ forearm made no difference.

After a day of Horus almost never letting Seth out of his sight – which had only made Seth angrier and more paranoid, even if it meant he at least got to leave Horus’ rooms again – Horus seemingly suddenly decided they were doing this out of the blue, not even bothering to give Seth the option of deciding which piece of jewelry to be trapped on this time, and simply sticking him inside the bracelet's bonds before heading off for whatever outing Horus had come up with.

Seth was still enraged that Horus had dared it all, though thankfully Isis hadn’t been involved in the bracelet part, so far as he knew, anyway. That helped keep the panic of being trapped again down just a little.

It didn’t help that even though Horus was flying with his giant brown falcon wings mostly straight and calmly along the edge of the Nile towards some mysterious destination, Seth still bobbed up and down slightly on his wrist with the wind, which made him a little sick, which made it harder to focus on freedom. Seth didn’t know what would happen if he somehow managed to escape the bracelet while they were so high and he was so small and weak, but he’d rather freedom than the indignity of being trapped like this.

Horus had taken his headdress away as well, which Seth was half-enraged by, and half understood as somewhat practical. Without his powers, it was just a headdress, and would have flown off, unless Horus somehow tied his head to the bracelet, which Seth supposed he was grateful Horus hadn’t done. Seth detested being grateful to him in any capacity, when things were like this.

Still, he had to keep his eyes shut against the wind most of the time, and his long red hair often flew in his face.

Horus, of course, looked calm and unbothered as he flew along, and simply smiled, glancing down to his left hip, where Seth was trapped in the bracelet. “Don’t worry, Uncle. We’re almost there.”

Seth opened his eyes narrowly, to protect them against the wind, and growled, “I *despise* you.”

Horus simply smiled at him and replied, “Yes, Uncle,” before turning his gaze ahead once more.

Seth would have screamed in frustration, but imagined he’d choke on the wind somehow.

Horus finally descended at what appeared to be an arbitrary strip of the Nile absent of humans or large land animals.

Seth wondered what would happen if he tried to call his sha. He hadn’t been able to sense them since he’d been depowered, but he had also never been brought out this far from the palace since then, either. Horus had either been too busy or too careful.

But right then he was a bit too busy trying not to bang his head on the metal bracelet too much as Horus landed and walked around a bit in the grass, looking for… whatever it was he was looking for. Horus’ movements made his wrist bounce back and forth, knocking Seth whichever way repeatedly.

Seth started thinking about ways he was going to murder his nephew to pass the time.

“You’ll probably lose patience with that one after a while,” Horus commented at one point as they reached a bit of open ground.

Seth hadn’t realized he’d spoken aloud. But he didn’t care. “It’s the time I’d take that would make it worth it,” Seth muttered back.

Horus lowered the bundle he’d carried with them in his other hand onto the grass, allowing it to unroll.

Seth was able to watch as what had been some blob-like bundle turned into a spread of food: fruits, vegetables, a platter of meat, a plate of aish baladi, a jug of wine…

“What’s this for?” Seth demanded. “Going to canoodle with Hathor?”

Horus laughed and sat in the dirt, facing part of the grass. He raised his right hand and wind whistled through the air, snipped at the grass a bit.

Then Horus raised his wrist so that Seth was “standing” up and said, “No. Look, Uncle.”

Seth frowned, not comprehending, but supposed it couldn’t hurt to see what stupidity Horus was up to. As he gazed ahead, he realized the wind trimming the grass had given them a better view of the water, which looked bright blue and calm this time of day. In the distance, a small boat piloted its way ahead on its course. Around them he could see trees, more healthy grasses, and even small birds wheeling in the sky…

He felt a strange longing in his chest, seeing all this. All he’d had since his demotion had been rooms in the palace, cages, being tied to a string and toted around a courtyard, and sometimes accompanying Horus somewhere in the city, usually a temple (but thankfully

never *flying*). Before his demotion, sometimes he'd just leave the palace and the city just to get away from all the noise of people. Go racing in the sands, either with his chariot or under his own power, or walking along the Nile, sometimes chatting with Sobek or just to be alone, daring anyone to come after the God Supreme. Even before he *was* the God Supreme, he felt better *beyond* where people were a lot of the time. His temples were okay, and he liked being amidst soldiers sometimes, but here…

He frowned. *Here what?*

"Uncle?"

Seth blinked. He had the sense Horus had spoken to him a number of times before Seth noticed it.

Well, it's not like he's not used to me ignoring him. Still, he added, "What?"

"Are you all right? You're quiet."

"Even useless tiny demigods can just think at times, oaf."

Horus didn't reply to that, but turned his wrist around so Seth was facing him. Horus' expression was unreadable, as usual. "Uncle, I brought you out here to enjoy the day. Let me know if you are upset by something."

"Let me go."

"If I let you down, you'll run away and get eaten by something. Or fall in a hole and break your leg again. You know how fragile you are now."

Seth glared at him and wiggled again. "You think… what? We can have some romantic outing eating food out here by the water while I'm bound up like *this???*" Why did Horus and his damn father think non-consensual bondage was a way into his shendyt??? Had he secretly had a sign on his back saying as much??

"Well, I thought you'd like the air."

After that awful flight and how it seemed a veiled comment on Seth's own fall from Horus' desk, like it was something Seth had *wanted*, Seth almost *hissed* at him.

Horus laughed and started eating. He offered some of the food to Seth, and was ignored. Seth refused to be handfed crumbs, as he literally couldn't feed himself. Not only was it undignified for Horus to do it and continue to treat him like a pet, it was too similar to…

He forced himself not to think about it.

At one point, Horus got up and walked to the water, and Seth half hoped something would rise up and eat them both. Perhaps it would be a change of pace. But they simply stood near the water's edge, gazing out. As Seth peered down, he could see the medjed as they swam along, wiggling slightly, their long snouts cutting through the water.

Eventually, Horus returned to the food and lay down, setting his wrist on his chest so that Seth was facing up and not crushed.

Seth of course still bumped his head a bit on the damn bracelet, and grumbled curses at Horus. But after a time, when Horus didn't move more, Seth relaxed a bit. There was nothing he could do but hope something ate them while Horus took a nap. Perhaps a mortal would come across them and Seth could spook them into freeing him or something.

"Are you enjoying anything about this, Uncle?" Horus asked abruptly.

Seth snorted. "*No.* Idiot."

Horus sighed. "Well, enjoy the air a bit more. We'll head back soon enough."

Seth rolled his eyes. He could barely enjoy anything tied like this!

But still, as he continued to stare at the open sky and Horus didn't pull anything, he realized that familiar feeling of being out in the open returned. The longing in his gut for more of this. As much as he could take.

But it was all beyond his reach, with the bracelet. His tiny size, that would make him prey for literally anything he came across, or even just his own weakness if he fell into a hole or became trapped in weeds… Or was too slow to escape the Nile flooding…

He laughed, realizing, despite the meager comfort he'd thought he was getting out of this, it was almost *worse* than being stuck in the palace. It was like giving him a sniff of something good, and not quite snatching it away, but holding it just beyond reach.

And wasn't that just like…?

Seth stiffened, and then whispered, "I hate you," glaring at the open sky and how it mocked him. "You couldn't have picked a better punishment. I'd take the damn wardrobe again over this." For a while he'd forgotten, with the overwhelming nature of the flight, being free of the palace and Horus' rooms in particular… but of course, Horus would always be Osiris' son. There was never any way to forget that. Open air and nature be damned. Even if he didn't see Osiris in the flora and fauna around them, he had a close embodiment beneath his ankles.

After a moment, Horus replied, "I'm sorry, Uncle. I'll do better next time."

Seth blinked. "What the hell are you apologizing to me for??? I'm your slave!"

Horus didn't reply to that, and simply lay there.

After a time, Seth shut his eyes, assuming Horus was just being *weird*. He might as well nap. Avoid any more foolish questions from Horus. If this was all they were going to do then… then that wasn't the worst, he supposed. He couldn't escape and whatever Horus was going to do, he could just *do*.

If his fall had taught him anything, it was how powerless he was to do anything in his current state. At least if he slept, he wouldn't be *morose* about it.

“I always wanted to do something like this with you,” Horus said, quietly.

Seth frowned and opened his eyes again. “What?”

“Something peaceful. Like this. Or maybe in a boat.” Horus smiled ruefully. “Where we’re not racing or fighting.”

“Always…? You mean you imagined us doing this when I was kicking you around the palace or during any of our other duels?”

“…”

“And what, you expected me to *enjoy* being bound like this?” Seth scoffed. “You’re more of an idiot than I thought you were.” He frowned. “…Or more cunning and sadistic, I suppose, wanting your prisoner with you during times like this.”

Horus didn’t reply to that, and Seth settled back down, too, imagining the conversation was over.

Foolishness, all of it.

A soft breeze blew over his skin, smelling of greenery and animals, and he couldn’t resist a soft sigh at it.

The panic of it all – being bound, being reminded again of how much Horus was like his father – had receded just a little somehow, and he could acknowledge that this *was* nice, in a way. Not that he’d ever admit it aloud. And his jailer throwing him little nothings meant nothing at all.

Nothing. At all.

Chapter End Notes

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Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"…You didn't think very hard about this did you?" Seth was standing on Horus' desk, a deeply unimpressed look on his face under his headdress as he watched Horus holding Simba, Seth, Nephthys, and Anubis' large golden cat. Currently she had a kind of harness around her legs and back, with a modification over her shoulders that made a sort of chair. A very tiny one.

"It would allow you to travel around faster, Uncle," Horus said, putting Simba down on the counter next to Seth. Simba had been surprisingly okay with the treatment, though she'd initially been a bit wary of Horus. But Horus coaxed her around, and after the harness was in place, which had clearly been something of a challenge, even for a god, she eventually managed to settle enough for Horus to fix it up a bit.

Seth stood in place, half-glaring, as Simba approached him curiously. She sniffed him a little, and after a moment Seth, who acknowledged he had a soft spot for her, put his hand out, which she also sniffed. Then she lightly bumped his fingers, and he rubbed her forehead before moving around to scratch under her cheek.

"Ah, she remembers you!" Horus said, smiling.

"Of course she remembers me! She's smarter than you."

Horus frowned.

Seth scratched Simba some more, looking askance at Horus, who was still watching. "And what happens when you strap me to that chair and she decides to randomly lay down, making me fall over and whack my head into the floor? What if she rolls over and crushes me?!"

"…I thought you said she was smarter than me."

"She's also a *cat*, you oaf!" He scoffed. "Cats get bored and sit down wherever they please, or roll around in sunshine for no particular reason other than it's warmer than where they were a moment prior…"

Horus sighed. "I could train her, perhaps…"

"You can train a cat in many things. *That* isn't one them." *Unless Bastet did something, maybe, but I'm not going to give him stupid ideas!* "Unless you want me to die, you're not putting me astride her back like some kind of strange horse. It wouldn't work!"

Horus studied Simba and Seth for a while, frowning.

Seth thought he could literally see the wheels in Horus' head turning. It was an extremely uncomfortable sensation.

"I'll talk to Bastet," Horus said, standing up and walking away.

"Wait, no!" Seth called, but Horus was already out the door.

Seth was glaring so hard he didn't even realize he was shaking until he felt something bump his back and nearly knock him over. He turned to see Simba watching him still.

Seth sighed and reached out to give her more scratches. "At least whatever gets decided you'll be with someone who knows what they're doing. Who knows what that oaf would get up to with an attempt at cat training…"

Simba lay down so Seth had more access to her chin, and she began to purr. At this size, it was nearly deafening, but he adjusted to it.

"I'm surprised Horus got you away from Anubis and Nephthys," Seth said, quietly, recalling how close they both were with Simba. "You always loved them." He smiled. "And me, for some reason. Even when I didn't spend time with you, and ignored everyone and everything I didn't try to destroy." His petting slowed a bit, and he looked down at his hands. They were so small and weak now. Powerless to do anything.

At least they were powerless to hurt people by and large. Save Horus, if Seth was able to poke him in the eye again, or poison his food.

Simba, of course, being a cat, said nothing.

Seth had sat against Simba's side and started dozing when he was startled awake by the door opening. He looked up and saw Horus leading Bastet into the room.

The goddess walked around to get a better look at them, and snorted. "Aww… Isn't that adorable?"

Seth glared at her, and knew it wouldn't matter.

"Can you do it?" Horus asked her.

Bastet made a thoughtful noise and said, "It is an *odd* request, but I admit it would be kind of funny to see Seth sitting on the back of a house cat like she's a mount…"

"Oh fuck off…" Seth snarled.

"Watch your language, Uncle," Horus said. "Bastet is being very gracious."

"Yes," Bastet said, clearly suppressing laughter, "I'm being *very* gracious."

Seth growled. "I'm going to *murder* you…"

It was early evening by the time she was done, but eventually Seth had to work at moderating his breathing as he glared at Horus and Bastet, both keeled over for different reasons after seeing Seth sitting on the seat on Simba's back while she lay on her stomach peacefully.

Horus had cried out "too cute!" and now had his hands over his eyes to cover his tears.

Bastet was laughing too hard to get up from where she'd fallen over.

"I'm going to murder you both!" Seth snarled. When that had no effect on them, he looked down at Simba, who seemed quite relaxed through it all. He flexed the makeshift reins Horus had made for him, and Simba stood up easily enough. She stretched a bit, and it was difficult to hang on, even with the straps keeping him in the chair, and he had to grip her shoulders with his legs, but he figured he'd get used to it.

He led her around the desk, testing using the reins some more. Simba walked slowly enough, and the bouncing as she walked along wasn't too bad.

"Well it seems to work fine, anyway," Bastet said, observing with a smile.

Seth ignored her. He directed Simba toward the edge of the desk, wondering what it'd be like to jump down.

Simba braced herself, and then leapt.

As the wind came up in a rush, and the approaching ground below it, Seth immediately regretted all his life choices.

"Uncle!"

A gust of wind caught Simba mid-fall, and Horus was there, plucking her from the air.

Seth had to take a moment before realizing how hard he was breathing and shaking. Then he grew red in the face.

If he'd still been a god, such a leap would have been child's play. But as the floor approached, it was like he could see how exactly he would die once Simba landed. Even if he'd stayed in the seat there was the chance his neck could have broken, or… or…

Horus had him out of the chair all at once, and set Seth back on the desk.

Seth sat down, trying to calm himself, hoping his legs would stop shaking. His heart was still beating fast.

"Uncle?"

Seth blinked and looked up to see Horus kneeling slightly to look at him.

"Are you all right?"

“I… Of course I’m all right!” Seth glared at him, annoyed that Horus was worried, of all things! “I’m your slave, anyway, why do you—?!”

Horus’ hand wrapped around him and picked him up, making Seth yelp. “Unhand me!!!”

And then he was being squished against Horus’ cheek – it was always warmer than anything else, and smelled faintly of ozone – making him yelp and push back, for all the good it did.

“I was worried about you, Uncle!” Horus said. “You need to be more careful.”

“You were the one who stuck me on her back!” Seth snarled.

Horus hummed and pulled him away again, moving his hand around so Seth could more easily sit in a way that was comfortable, even as he said, “Thank you Bastet, that will be all.”

She murmured a goodbye and had one last chuckle before heading out the door and letting it shut behind her.

Seth was grateful for the smaller audience, frustrated he’d been afraid in front of her. Not that Horus had kept Seth’s various humiliations from the other gods, but it still rankled every time.

Seth also had a moment to be annoyed at himself for having an expected “sitting” position on Horus’ hand to feel comfortable. One he was used to because he’d used it so much.

After a while, Seth finally looked up at Horus, and saw he looked just a *little* contrite.

Seth felt his cheeks warm. He knew Horus seemed to spend far too much of his time on things to screw with Seth, whether it was making those silly doll outfits, working on the mini “house” Seth lived in, various patronizing games… But still. This seemed…

“…What did you *think* would happen?” Seth demanded, quietly.

Horus was quiet for a bit before responding, “I thought it would give you some more freedom. You like being able to explore more.”

“…And what if I’d tried to escape?”

“I’d have caught Simba before she got that far.” Horus looked down and as Seth turned to see what he was watching, he saw Simba wandering around the floor, away from Horus’ ankle.

“Of course you would,” Seth growled.

“Consider, Uncle,” Horus said as he walked over to where Seth’s “house” was, and then let Seth down there so that Seth could sit on one of his tiny chairs, “that given your tiny size, if you’d escaped, things would not have gone well for you.”

Seth scoffed. “I *know* that!”

“So what’s really bothering you?”

Seth shook his head, and then lay down on his side on his couch so his back was to Horus. After a time, when Horus didn't move away, Seth said, grudgingly, "Thanks for catching me."

After a while of silence, Horus' fingers wrapped around him and quickly lifted him into the air.

Seth yelled, "What the fuck?!" His arms and legs were trapped.

"Uncle are you well?" Horus turned him so that Seth was practically right up against his face so that Horus could study him critically.

"Put me down!"

"You've never thanked me for anything before. I think maybe something about this made you sick."

"I shouldn't be thanking you now!" Seth struggled, trying to claw his fingers into Horus' damnably strong skin. "I'm your toy, not a person! It's your fault I nearly fell to my death!"

Horus blinked at him, then nodded, and set him back down again.

Seth walked – he didn't *flee* – into his room. Not that it would stop Horus if Horus wanted to get to him, but he lay down on the bed, at least a little away from Horus' prying eyes, willing his heart to stop racing. *Damned oaf! Always jumping to grab! Surprised he hasn't yanked one of my limbs off yet, just by accident!*

One of the walls on the house was removed, and Seth refused to get up, glaring ahead. Horus would have to grab him again if he wanted anything. As usual.

Then he heard a soft "meow" and the sound of something large being set on the counter.

Seth turned to see Simba walking over through the new opening. She sniffed around a bit, then settled by Seth's bed, within reaching distance.

Seth grimaced, then moved over to be closer to her, and reached out to scratch her side.

She lay her head down and began to purr.

"I'm sorry for endangering you today, Uncle," Horus said, quietly. "I'll leave you be."

Seth snorted and continued to pet Simba, listening to her loud purr. He hadn't spent much time with her over the years. Bastet had managed to massively increase her lifespan, and Anubis took good care of her, and sometimes she'd come to visit Seth, in quiet moments, but this was the longest he'd been around her in months, particularly since the trial.

He was honest enough with himself that the events of the day *did* rankle at him – it would have been nice to be able to move around faster, but it *was* too risky, even with whatever Bastet did for the training – but he also had to acknowledge that here he was with something else he thought he'd lost forever. Something he hadn't *entirely* ruined. Something that maybe

wouldn’t be out of his reach, only available at Horus’ whims. Though of course, Horus could easily keep Simba out of the room.

At least for now he could pet Simba, almost like he used to.

As Seth’s thoughts drifted, he wondered why Horus had decided after Seth’s yell to set him back down, and not move on to some other weird game. Putting Simba here seemed like even more of an apology. Unless it *was* another hidden punishment: reminding Seth of what could be given and easily taken away again at any time.

But that look of contrition earlier… Horus knew what had nearly happened. And he’d been afraid, and embarrassed of his mistake in not planning for it. And… seemingly rather worried for Seth’s health.

Seth grimaced. “…Thanks,” he finally said, quietly. “Even if you’re still an oaf.”

After a time, a soft and contented, “You’re welcome, Uncle,” came back to him.

Seth scoffed and settled down some more, then finally shut his eyes as he let Simba’s purring drown out everything else.

Chapter End Notes

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Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

This was originally published for Kinktober 2023, Day 1: Macro/Micro.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Nephthys said you liked doing this,” Horus said, looking out over the large bathing chamber, with a huge bath filled with some steam.

Seth flushed from his position on Horus’ hand. “I would easily be overwhelmed if anyone were to get in the water and start up even the smallest waves.”

Horus sighed and Seth wondered what *he* had to be annoyed about. He was Pharaoh, ruling alongside Isis over Egypt. He had the former God Supreme under his control. The people loved him.

Seth, meanwhile, continued being small, waiting out his days either sleeping or dealing with Horus and Isis’ games.

Though… Horus’ games had grown less of late, and Horus often left him be if Seth grumbled enough about it. It was quite strange. Horus would even talk to him a bit, just normally, usually about his work.

Horus set him down on a step and said, “I have a surprise for you. But you have to listen carefully, all right?”

Seth frowned. He expected nothing good of a “surprise”.

Horus opened his hand, and a small glass like vial floated in his hand. Within, sand seemed to be moving.

Seth felt oddly drawn to the object, like… His eyes widened. “Is that my power?!”

“Yes,” Horus said, calmly. “As Pharaoh, Maat gave it to me, to safeguard. Under the terms of your punishment, I can restore part of you to your original form, for a temporary time.”

Seth tried not to let his giddiness show. He hadn’t fully thought what he’d do once he got out of here, since it seemed like such an impossible dream. He’d been trapped in the small form for months, now, and that seemed to never have an end. Then he blinked. “What do you mean, part?”

“I’ll restore you to your normal size. But you won’t have any of your other powers.”

Seth blinked, then frowned. “And the point of this…?”

“You can take a bath.”

Seth scowled and turned away. “Don’t bother then.”

“You don’t want to go back to your normal form?”

“We went over this. Giving me a taste of something I want, but which can be taken away at any time, is worse than never getting it at all.”

“…What if I told you if this goes well, I could restore you to this form for longer periods? And maybe, if you are good, you could get your powers back. Slowly.”

Seth blinked and turned back to him, and then his eyes narrowed. “Longer periods? You’ll change me back to this size again?”

“Yes, unfortunately. This is a test phase. If it doesn’t go well, Maat will take your powers back, and then you may be stuck in this form for even longer.”

Seth grimaced.

“…Uncle?”

“…Fine.” He could admit he wanted to be his normal size again, even if he couldn’t get away. Horus would easily overpower him like this.

Horus shut his hand on the vial, and a golden glow filled the room. In barely any time at all, Seth was blinking around at the room, a bit offput by how everything seemed different.

“How do you feel?”

Seth turned to see Horus standing, well… as tall as ever, and still taller than him, but not enormous anymore.

Seth took a step back from him, and patted his sides and legs, as if checking to make sure everything was normal. “I feel… fine, I guess.” He reached for his powers anyway, and felt nothing. It was infuriating. He made a grimace.

“Good!” Horus smiled cheerily at him, and Seth only frowned in reply. “Let’s take a bath then.”

Seth rolled his eyes. “You lived too long among humans.”

“And whose fault was that?”

Seth only twitched at that.

Horus chuckled and undid his shendyt before placing it aside and hopping into the water.

Seth huffed and looked around. They were still alone in the room. Seth considered fleeing now that he was back to normal. But he imagined he wouldn't get fair with a god who could control air currents.

Seth dropped his shendyt and hopped in the bath, staying away from Horus. He glared at the water, annoyed it was nice. If Nephthys had suggested this…

"So you and Nephthys are friends now?" Seth asked, sharply. "I thought your mother avoided her."

Horus, for his part, kept his distance as well, though he seemed to be a bit more relaxed. He leaned back on an edge of the pool. "Mother and Nephthys are working out their differences, slowly. I've been seeking out her advice on how to deal with you. Nephthys that is, not Mother."

Seth scoffed. He could already tell agreeing to the bath was a mistake. They always made him tired. He wondered if that's why Nephthys had suggested it. He looked to the entrance to the room, almost expecting Anubis to run in and…

He looked away. Of course Anubis wouldn't run in.

"Seth? Is something wrong?"

"Everything's fine." Seth lowered himself into the water, closing his eyes. "Just fine."

Chapter End Notes

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