

WereSpider Ch4

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The woods surrounding the valley-town of Elmstream were alive with the sound of violent war-cries and isolated battles with Aracana as 'the hunt' pushed forward into enemy territory. The military movement was made up of three 'battalions' of three hundred men, each moving in a drag-net formation to catch fleeing spiders. While the battalions moved together, however, each was self-contained in its leadership and organization.

Sam Phillips was a born warrior and leader, and although he liked to dismiss his natural talents as being commonplace the men he led nonetheless enjoyed substantial success in battle. As per usual, after having joined the main forces of the second battalion he was assigned by the higher ups to lead a small squadron of soldiers consisting of twenty men. While undoubtedly there was desire amongst the townsmen for Sam to lead an entire company, he himself had always adamantly refused the role. While he could lead a man, Sam never took to the idea of leading a people. He simply wasn't political enough to survive such an environment, and in any case his place was always on the front lines.

Of course, despite appearances Sam was no longer a man at all. To the squad he led he appeared as he always had: a strong and thickly built farm-boy in homemade clothes, wielding a hammer and shield. The reality of it was, however, that his appearance to his men couldn't have been further from the truth.

Just a week before, Sam was captured by the Aracana, and their queen had bitten him and filled his blood with her venom. It ought to have killed him, but it didn't. Instead it did something far worse, as far as Sam himself was concerned. The queen's venom changed him... and made him a woman.

And worse still, the venom gave the queen of the Aracana an unholy power over Sam. She could transform his body into that of their species... a giant spider... and back into a human at will, as well as transform him into everything in between. She even said that she could return him to normal and make him a man again... if he would but serve her.

Well, of course Sam was far too obstinate to ever obey his enemy, nor willingly give up or betray his comrades. The queen's plan, it seemed, had been faulted from the start.

As it so happened, the way his body currently was he found that he had become an even more incredible fighting machine.

While he was camouflaged by his very sensitive and photo-manipulative fur into appearing as the man everyone expected him to be, (big, strong, and hairy), underneath the illusion he had been forced to

assume the shape of a beautiful and shapely woman. He had breasts, he had skinny arms and legs, and even his face, chin, eyes, nose, and brow had all become like that of the most perfect of women...

But underneath all appearances... no matter what he carried between his legs be it manhood or vent... inside his heart Sam was still a warrior... still a man... and still a leader.

And so he used his newfound abilities to his advantage. His fur was insanely sensitive to the air, and besides mimicking the appearance of sweaty skin and thick muscles and even a beard and clothes, his fur could also feel out movement and sounds in the surrounding woodlands. This fur was part of his having been transformed into a 'Night Ward' type spider, a breed of Aracana noted for their small size and incredible stealth... and seemingly due to his other title of 'royal', meaning he was a female with the power to control a nest with his pheromones, he also seemed to have acquired the highest possible level of skill with his fur entirely by accident.

And so Sam Phillips found himself able to locate and kill enemy Aracana like he never had before.

Whether they hid in the trees to drop on their heads, or whether they disguised themselves underground, Sam could see the entire battlefield with a level of detail that would make even a general weep.... And far more importantly to *him*, despite his seemingly thin and frail womanly body, he was stronger than ever.

To the eyes of his men, he had effectively become super-human.

"God damn this fur!" growled Sam to himself as he marched with his squad of soldiers. Among the men he was leading was his own group of comrades: Bernard the blacksmith who wielded a spear, Adam's the heavy-set mace user, John the old historian who used both slingshot and quarterstaff, Thomas the quiet swordsman, and Nathaniel the youngster who swung around a claymore that seemed much too big for him.

"That 'fur' is keeping you safe Sam," whispered Bernard back, who had been standing close by and overheard him. "Frankly I still can't believe my eyes every time I look at you, knowing what's underneath."

"Well, that doesn't make it any more of a pain in the ass. The longer I need to keep this up the more tense it makes me. It's like I need to constantly be smiling or else the illusion goes away, and what's worse is to do it my damned fur has to weave itself into these crazy patterns and it's like I'm trapped inside a damn sweat-box... not that I can sweat anymore of course, which only makes it worse."

"Well, please do your best to preserver..."

Sam sighed and came to a stop. The rest of the group was spread out behind Sam and Bernard in pairs, but would soon catch up if he stood still for long.

"It's not just that I'm tired of this fur, either..." whispered Sam, looking Bernard meaningfully in the eyes. It only took him a second to figure out what Sam was getting at.

"Oh come on, again?" asked Bernard.

"It's never actually gone away," confided Sam uneasily, unable to stand still even for a moment, and so quickly he pushed forwards once again and continued stomping a path through the forest.

"It hasn't stopped since last night," continued Sam. He let out a deep breath to calm himself. He was a man after all, and he refused to let anything shake his resolve. Not even the inhuman lust that was gripping his body even as he forced himself to march deeper into the forest one step at a time. A quick mental check of his radar revealed that there were no Aracana's nearby.

"I had wondered what that smell was," chuckled Bernard.

"Wondered my ass; you got a good smell of it plenty now. I just hope that nobody else notices it."

"Yea," agreed Bernard. "If I didn't know better I'd have thought you were rubbing flowers on your balls..."

"I wish!"

Suddenly Adams came crashing up behind them, breathing heavily.

"Slow it down! We haven't found a bloody shadow for nearly an hour now! What say we pull up camp and have ourselves a bite to drink?!"

Bernard looked to Sam with a twinkle in his eye and back to Adams.

"Certainly. We'll scout on ahead a little bit, have some tea ready for us when we get back."

"Good!" chuffed Adams, as if half disappointed that he didn't get to argue a bit first, and had nearly turned around to head back to inform the rest of the squad when he stopped short.

"You two aren't going to... no funny business right?"

"Oh no! Heaven's no! For Gods' sake man we're in the middle of the woods!" both Sam and Bernard said, their words tumbling over each other's. Adam's eyed them both suspiciously before turning and jogging back to set up camp.

“Go on and leave me out of it!” growled Adams rather grumpily, his face turning a bit off color while he waved a hand as if shoos his two companions away from him.

“Well...” whispered Bernard as Adams trundled out of sight. “Now’s your chance to relax and cool off. Make it count.”

“No need to tell me twice,” agreed Sam, who was itching to lay down somewhere and let the steam out. He by no means liked what his body was forcing him to do, but it quickly became apparent to him as they had marched through the forest that intercourse was the only viable way to him really relax... and it did feel good. Sam didn’t quite know whether he was being manipulated by his female body into becoming ever the more accepting of sex with me or if he was turning gay, but he didn’t like to think about it for too long. It was easier, in any case, to just do what came naturally.

They walked a good long ways away from where their hunting party was setting up camp, and only stopped when Sam couldn’t sense the presence of anyone nearby.

“Here’s good,” he said, turning around to face Bern. He had begun to breathe rather heavily, and couldn’t wait to go ahead and relax. He was already starting to create visible heat distortion in the air above his head, but as he let out a loud sigh of relief his human disguise vanished in a rippling effect from the tips of his toes to the top of his head... and like the lid on a pot of boiling water quite suddenly heat was rising and escaping rapidly from every inch of his fur as the fine hairs acted like extremely efficient conduits for ridding his body of unwanted heat.

In one fell swoop of mesmerizing change where once a strong and barbaric man with thick muscles, home-made clothes, and a gruesome hammer stood... instead a dark grey image of naked feminine beauty rested wearily against the trunk of a tree, it’s rough bark digging into her soft and shimmering fur as she ground against it and let the wind blow through the thick fur covering her body and taking with it clouds of steam and heat.

The air quite suddenly smelled of sweet fruits and wildflowers, Sam’s musk having been trapped within his disguise along with his heat, and Bern found himself suddenly sporting a spontaneous erection. What’s more, even though he knew that the figure standing before him was his best friend Sam, he couldn’t help but admit to himself that the form he was in was extremely pleasant on the eyes... and that he wanted to screw that body for as long as Sam would let him.

Sam himself was in a rather different boat. His hormones were rushing through him, and he couldn’t help but admit that sex, even if it was as a female and with a male, was extremely pleasant. There was no denying that he enjoyed the feeling of being penetrated. What’s more, he even found his friend Bern’s robust maleness to be quite attractive. It was something that he would have balked at before all

of this had started, but by now he was getting quite used to it all. He refused to admit defeat to his body, but he was also a realist and couldn't lie to himself. He wanted that dick badly. Hell, he physically needed it, as if he were starved for sex. It was a condition that was only getting worse and worse, and Sam feared that it was part of the queen's attempt to control and subjugate him... but she couldn't have calculated for the Sam's durable nature. If this was supposed to humiliate him, or make him angry or violated, then all he had to do to take that power away from his enemy was embrace his physical changes. He didn't necessarily need to like what was being done to him, but he didn't have to hate it either.

So in the classic turning of the tables he would make his enemies strategies and turn their intended purpose against his creators. It was easy enough to do once you knew the purpose of the enemy, and it was obvious to Sam what the queen was apparently trying to do, or at least he thought he knew. In any case he was rapidly becoming almost too comfortable with recent events, even as they transpired.

Against the rough bark of the tree and in the shadow of the leafy canopy he was rather hard to see even without his 'camouflage', but Bernard was close enough not to be fooled by tricks of light and shadow. Sam's breasts were heaving as he panted with lust, powerful urges coursing through his body, and his vent was slick and sorely sensitive as his unending arousal had given him no rest down there ever since they had left for the hunt. His entire body ached to be touched, from the tips of his breasts down to curve of his ass, and while it had already been too much to bear for quite a while now it was only getting more unbearable by the second.

"Please," pleaded Sam as Bernard stood and stared without any hint of initiative about him for what seemed like seconds stretched into hours. "Let's just do this..."

"Of course..." agreed Bernard, snapping out of his trance and immediately advancing upon his good friend. He took no time in letting his hands reach out to grab ahold of Sam's body and firmly caress the curve of his breast through his sensitive and downy fur. Electric sensation raced across Sam's skin and forced all the fur on his body to stand on end as he was pulled in close to Bern's strong belly, and he could feel his massive erection straining within his pants as their bodies pressed against each other.

Their eyes connected, and Bernard noticed for the first time how intense and foreign Sam's face had become. Piercing black eyes and perfectly symmetrical features made him seem even more alien than he should have, and the sharpness of his new chin and cheekbones made him look like a foreigner from the north. Far gone was anything that resembled how Sam used to look... except for the clenching of his teeth and the strength that showed through the set of his shoulders and back despite their newfound thinness. It was that strength that reminded Bernard exactly who it was that he was embracing, and quite suddenly his conscience couldn't stand the thought of what he was about to do.

"I-I can't do this..." said Bernard suddenly, dropping his eyes ashamedly to the ground. "You're my best friend! I've looked up to for as long as I can remember, and I've followed you into battle more times

than I can count! I can't just do this! It's just plain wrong! We need to figure out some other solution, something that doesn't..."

"Shut up," said Sam sternly, forcing Bernard to look back up from the ground and face him. Bern was still confused and conflicted, but Sam wasn't interested in talking things through at the moment and instead simply grabbed a hold of Bernard's hand and forcefully placed it back against his breast while reaching up with his free arm around Bern's neck and imposing a deeply impassioned kiss upon his confused buddy. Bern quickly forgot what it was he was thinking about, much less why he was so troubled about the position he was in, and nose deep in pheromones and lust he ground against the luscious female he had trapped between him and the tree, and she ground back against him with her entire body, moaning in desire. She was so soft, and her body so burning hot, and the air around them was so thick and sweet, that it seemed as though nothing else around them existed and they were alone together within the tiny little bubble that had become their universe.

And so Bernard groped Sam with no further restraint and Sam happily groped him back and began undoing his belt, his feminine loins burning with impatient desire that made his fingers tremble while Bernard lifted him up and held him against the tree.

"Oof!" cried Sam in surprise as he found himself pinned, and Bernard took over his own preparations by pulling out his member and making ready to penetrate Sam's crevasse. He carefully aligned his dick before maneuvering it up between them and pressing the meat of his shaft up against the lips of Sam's vulva.

"Get on with it!" begged Sam as Bern ground against his aching and swollen pussy for a moment, causing him to squirm under the weight of his heavy arms while Bern torturously pleased an already overstimulated body, wetting his dick in the torrential monsoon of passion that was begging to be released from Sam's body. Sam felt as though he would burst if he wasn't satisfied immediately, but was proven wrong as moment after moment passed.

And then Bernard acquiesced, and with but a quick realignment of himself he thrust upward and entered Sam all at once.

Sam screamed in passionate ecstasy as he was violated so suddenly, his flesh pulling tight as it stretched to accommodate Bern's incredible size. He held on for dear life to Bern's thick shoulders, gripping him so hard that his fingers nearly drew blood from his back, all while Bern's human mind and will dwindled visibly, his eyes dulling visibly to be replaced by fiery intensity. He pulled out quickly, only to thrust powerfully back into Sam as deep as he could, his hips slamming up into Sam's and crushing him against the tree.

Sam cried out again, but was given no reprieve as Bern quickly began fucking him as fast as he was able. There was absolutely no restraint, his hands crushing Sam's breasts and his thrusts violating Sam's canal as if he had suddenly been transformed into a beast. Sam, unprepared for this, rolled his head back and

tried futilely to hold onto his sanity for just a little while longer as his mind was assaulted by feelings and sensations the like of which he had heretofore to even suspect existed.

Something was wrong... or, at least, something was very different.

Sam felt the familiar burst of energy and heat that he had grown accustomed to recognizing as accompanying a physical transformation. He felt his body begin the process of transforming into an Aracana before he had even had a chance to climax!

The impending transformation only seemed to heighten his pleasure, and he deliriously shouted Bern's name as he felt his legs move up higher on his body while his abdomen pinched tightly and lowered itself, with Bern still madly screwing his pussy even as it relocated and gently reshaped itself around his pounding rod, his flesh dragging and pushing against Sam's so wonderfully that it seemed beyond belief.

Four new limbs began to sprout from Sam's side as he moaned deliriously, pinned against that tree, and impassioned as they both were he wildly grabbed ahold of Bern's head to share yet another very deep kiss. Sam felt venom leak from his fangs and didn't care. This was too amazing! This was just too good! This was what he lived for! This is what he wanted!!

And as Bernard wetly pounded Sam's pussy faster and faster the thick rose-colored fur across all of Sam's body thickened further and erupted as his arms and legs segmented and extended to match the four legs that had sprouted from his ribs. His body shrank in size as his mass was redistributed, his soft breasts flattening into nothing as his chest disappeared and his head pulled tight against his body, his mouth segmenting and his vision momentarily fragmenting as the multi-eyed compound view of a spider took over. Furry fangs erupted from his mouth and long, delicate pedipalps from where his cheeks once were.

So quite suddenly Bern found himself fucking a gigantic and thoroughly furry spider in her delicate vent, which had repositioned itself to the center of the underside of Sam's abdomen. Sam's soft fur caressed his entire body like a blanket, and as Bern's hands traveled through it Sam purred and whistled in extreme pleasure, his vent's muscular structure going into a flutter as it tightly gripped Bern's fiercely thrusting dick, sucking at him as he withdrew and drawing him back in easily as if attempting to devour his cock.

"Oh Gods!" groaned Bernard. "*Ungh!* I'm gonna! Oh sweet heavenly father my balls are gonna fucking explode!"

"Fuck! Hold on! Not so fast!" chittered Sam back at him, desperately grinding back against Bern's body as hard as he was able, which wasn't terribly easy considering how well pinned he was. His motor control was beginning to diminish, causing spasms to travel down his many legs, as he felt orgasm approaching for him as well, though not nearly so quickly as it was for Bernard.

That was a bit of a problem for Sam, but not nearly so serious a problem as what was about to present itself.

“Hello?” called a voice. It was Frederick, a young lad out on his first hunt, and he was rapidly approaching Sam and Bern. It was far too late to hide or run.

“Bernard?” asked Fred as he walked through the bush. “Are you here?”

He stumbled through a small tangle of weeds to find an extremely sweaty and exhausted looking Bernard standing before him... but his pants were up and there was absolutely no sign of Sam. The reality though, unknown to the young man standing before the two lovers, was that Sam was actually right in front of him and still clinging nakedly to the front of Bernard’s body, and not-to-mention still impaled upon Bern’s steely cod... but he had managed to activate his active camouflage just in time, and as an Aracana no less! Though admittedly it wasn’t very much different from doing as a humanoid.

Fred came to a sudden stop and looked curiously at Bernard as he sweated and trembled. He had been on the verge of an incredible orgasm, but had to stop himself abruptly short due to the interruption. Sam himself clung tightly to Bern’s clothes and worked hard to erase all visual evidence of his presence... but certain things were not to be erased.

The first was that his hormones were in full overdrive, and he found quite quickly that he couldn’t possibly hold himself still. A pained expression deepened on Bern’s face as Sam couldn’t help but slide himself up and down on his cock little by little. Secondly, those same hormones were incredibly thick in the air and made the rather dull and empty glen smell like a field of fresh roses. Fred didn’t remark upon the smell, though, nor Bern’s odd expression and demeanor. Instead a daze seemed to come across his face and the sudden tension that had gripped him upon finding Bernard in such a strange state left him as quickly as it had come.

“There’s a massive Aracana force south by southeast of here,” said Fred. “Command has ordered us to close in behind them. We’re to kill any escaping bugs while squads three, four, and five attack from the front. We’re already moving out.”

“Good lad,” Bern managed to gasp out. The small and wet sound of Sam’s pussy riding higher up and down Bern’s shaft went unnoticed, but was getting more audible as Sam grew bolder and more desperate to cum. Bern himself had to ball up his fists to keep his hands from shaking. “We’ll set out at once.”

“Alright then, follow me!”

“Huh? Oh, you go on ahead lad. I’ll catch up. Sam’s gone out scouting ahead. He should be back soon.”

“Sam’s an expert tracker, he’ll catch right back up I’m sure. Just leave him a note and hurry up! We’ll miss the fighting!”

“Sure, sure,” agreed Bern, not knowing what else to say or do, and so gingerly he turned around and picked his spear up off the ground, his arms squeezing Sam tight in order to hold it properly, and using it’s ludicrously sharp point carved a quick symbol into the tree indicating direction and reason for leaving.

“*Well crap,*” whispered Bern as Fredrick took off into the forest, throwing an enthusiastic grin over his shoulder. “*Hurry up then and jump off. We can finish this up later when you’ve gotten yourself presentable. Be sure to hurry and catch up though.*”

“*Come on, just a little further! I’m almost there!*”

“*I am too, but the lad is will get suspicious if I just keep standing here.*”

“*Fine, fine... I’ll try to contain myself a little longer. Maybe I can find Chex and he can finish the job. Just let me.... nnggh!*”

“*What’s the matter? Stop squeezing me and just get off!*”

“*Ungh! I... I can’t! Oh god, am I getting tighter or are you getting bigger?*”

“*What? Ack! Ow! Fuck, what’s happening?*”

“*Shit! My vent feels like it’s swelling up around your dick!!! And what the fuck is that bulge?*”

“*I don’t know, just stop pulling on it! That hurts!*”

“*I thought you said to get off you?!*”

“You coming sir?” asked Frederick. He had stopped and come back when Bern hadn’t followed him.

“Uh, yes. Of course lad,” replied Bern shakily, taking a step forward. The sudden shifting of both his and Sam’s weight made them both wince, but he took another quick step and started to gingerly jog forward. Fred immediately turned back around to lead the way.

“*Ah! Fuck!*” hissed Sam as he couldn’t keep from bouncing up and down a little with every stride Bern took. The wet sound of his vent moving tightly on top of Bern’s rigid dick was only barely drowned out by the crashing of dead branches and foliage as they cut their way through the woods to quickly rejoin the group. Sam grabbed hold of Bern tighter and tighter but it didn’t seem to help at all. His abdomen just

had too much mass to keep perfectly still, and Bern couldn't soften his stride, especially moving quickly like he was through rough terrain.

“Oh hell,” moaned Bern to himself as he looked down and saw only the dirt passing underneath his boots where instead he knew there ought to have been his dick pumping in and out of a hot, slick, and exceedingly tight Aracana pussy. He could feel Sam's light and gentle fur had woven into an almost cloth-like material, and had formed an exceedingly downy bubble between them. The edges around where Sam's fur made contact with his skin and where it didn't made slight blurring, but far more worrisome was the increasing noise, the thick smell of pheromones that was encapsulating Bern, and by far the most dangerous both of their rapidly impending orgasms.

Sam had already experienced several 'micro' orgasms up until that point, but they were mere fluttering's of the belly compared to what loomed on the horizon. His poor pussy was becoming increasingly sore and swollen by the second, and Bern strained himself as he tried to focus on running, but alas it was futile.

He came hard, his hot seed erupting into Sam's belly and launching him over the edge as well. Bernard managed to not make a sound, although his legs nearly buckled underneath him, but he was able to recover and keep running. Sam, however, was unable to keep himself from crying out sharply.

“What was that!” shouted Frederick, coming to an immediately halt. The smell of flowers instantly washed over him, and he blinked in surprise. He seemed taken aback for a moment.

“Is someone there?!” he said after a moment of confusion.

“Did you hear something lad?” asked Bern. He struggled to keep a straight face as he felt hold cum begin to squeeze past Sam's tightly gripping walls and past his dick to drip onto the ground. How big of a load was that? Certainly bigger than he could remember ever having! Something was definitely amiss!!

“I... no. I guess not. It must have been my imagination.”

Something was definitely wrong, though, as they both resumed their crashing through the forest. Oddly, despite the noise they were making in their hurry they hadn't yet caught the attention of any rouge Aracana. Perhaps they were all caught up in the battle ahead?

“Slow down!!” begged Sam quietly. Bernard was still hard as iron within poor Sam's pussy... and he was stuck inside him faster than ever to boot. If either of them knew any better it even felt as though Bernard's equally tender and sore dick was still inflating in size while still within

“Tch-tch-tch!” winced Bern as his dick was yanked particularly hard because of a slight stumble. “What the hell is this?! Why won't it go down?”

"Your guess is as good as mine!" whined Sam as he felt his body begin to bubble forth, and before either of them knew it Sam was orgasming again, wailing quietly against Bern as he jogged doggedly after Frederick. He was still quite hard, and already felt himself recovering enough to ejaculate again, the soft-hot embrace of Sam's nether region squeezing him like a vice and locked tightly on, as if his dick was too big to come back out the way it came in... and the feeling was as heavenly as it was torturous. Poor Bern could feel his balls straining as he prepared himself, against his will, to climax again.

"It's too soon!" whispered Sam.

"You're telling me!" wailed Bern back.

But just as they both thought that nothing would save them from the torturous run they both found themselves suddenly bathed in sunlight as they entered a clearing... and the clearing was filled with hundreds and hundreds of Aracana waiting for them.

"Well this isn't right..." muttered Frederick.

"Shit!" yelled Bernard, before throwing himself forward and into battle without a moment's more hesitation. *"This is gonna suck!!"*

"What the hell have I done to deserve this?!" yelled Sam as the sudden rush of a wall of Aracana began to drown out his words with fierce screeches and screams while Bernard sprinted to meet them with bloodlust that would make any berserker proud and a smile that seemed just a little out of place.

Bern threw himself into battle, and being one of the great warriors of Elmstream he wasted no time in falling one spider after another, blowing through the Aracana's ranks like a whirlwind with his deadly spear seeming to move faster than a snake, piercing through flesh and chitin with ease and slashing a dozen legs to pieces with a single powerful sweep.

Sam himself, however, could only just hold on for the ride as he found himself bouncing up and down on Bern's dick, despite being locked tightly in place within his belly, flexing and stretching and pulling at his sensitive bits like never before as he rode the bucking bronco that was Bernard. As if the act of fighting while fucking his invisible friend gave him the strength of a god he bowled through the clearing as if it were filled with flowers and not monsters, with Frederick sprinting close behind, and as quickly as they had come they fled for their life back into the forest.

The effort had taken its toll on Bern, and as he was he quickly began to stumble as his strength left him, Sam bouncing up and down on top of him and crying out.

"Bernard!" cried Frederick out of shock as he nearly tripped over a tree root. He ran up to give Bern a hand, but as he reached out to grab ahold of Bern he instead stopped as he heard the soft but distinct

stuttering cries of something inhuman reaching orgasm... and Bern collapsed with a low bellow of exhaustion and satisfaction as he fell to his knees.

“What is going on?!” cried Frederick, but he was immediately grabbed ahold of by an invisible force. One of Sam’s legs had grabbed ahold of him in a headlock and dragged him over next to where Bern lay collapsed on the ground.

Suddenly Bern, big as he was, was forcibly turned over onto his back, and then dragged through the leaves over to a hollow in the side of a large tree, with Fred being dragged behind by the same invisible arm. Fred was then thrown to the ground and Bern thrown on top of them... and suddenly everything went dark.

Sam covered the two warriors with his body, his thick and luscious fur fanning out to cover them all and camouflage them all as part of the tree. It didn’t take long for the Aracana to catch up to them... but to everyone’s relief they all passed by in a rush, far too quick to notice the signs that their foes had stopped and hid. Sam’s pheromones extinguished their scent, and his fur blanketed them in a cushion of silence. If any of the spiders had been skilled in tracking they would have immediately noticed that the trail had suddenly gone cold, but in the middle of a war tracking isn’t usually terribly high on the priority.

Minutes passed without any of them daring to move a muscle or make a sound before Sam gave the all clear.

“I think it’s safe to get up now,” he whispered.

“Who are you?!” whispered Frederic. “And why did you save us?”

“Are you saying you don’t recognize me boy? I’m Sam! Don’t tell nobody or they’ll call you a nutter.”

And with that Fred went pale and unconscious.

“This day just keeps getting better and better,” Bernard chuckled from underneath the suffocating warmth and softness that was Sam’s body.