A Brother's Duty

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Chapter 1

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"But you just got Carcosa for your birthday last week! Why don't you want to play it?" His brother's button nose wrinkled and he looked away.

"I just don't want to." He muttered.

"C'mon. I tried to play it and it was tough, but I've seen you do awesome at it." He knew that the real reason his brother did not want to play was because of how difficult it was. "I need my big brother to show me how it's done." He smiled as his brother perked up a bit at that. Being so small all his life, he loved any reminder that he was big. He had just turned fifteen after all, even if he looked closer to a third grader in so many ways. Not like his little brother, who towered over him and was nearly as tall as their dad despite only being eleven.

"Okay." He took the controller and turned the game on, his little brother holding his breath as the haunting music of the yellow loading screen came up. If all went well, his brother would notice nothing out of the ordinary, despite his modifications to make it super easy for the teenager. Of course, that was hardly the only change he had made to his brother's life lately.

It had all started just a few days ago. He had been coming from his nightly shower and saw his brother storm past him in just his underwear. "Stupid parents, making me shower every fugging night." He muttered to himself. There was

something odd about his older brother's appearance, but he could not quite put his finger on it.

As he went to the room that they shared, he was so distracted by the thought of just what had been weird that he accidentally opened his brother's underwear drawer instead of his own. He chuckled at his own distraction, but something made him stop and look at his brother's underwear. His brother still wore the same underwear that he had for as long as he could remember. He himself had switched to more mature underwear the moment he hit fifth grade, but his brother? He still dressed...

"Like he's my little brother." He realized, gently touching the briefs in the drawer before him. That was what had been bothering him since his shower and for a good deal before that, he realized. In every way he could think of, other than age, his older brother was his little brother. Obviously, he was physically smaller, but he also acted more like a little boy. Tantrums whenever he did not get his way, asking his parents to tie his shoes for him or tell him what time it was. It was lots of little things that added up to a little boy who had never grown up. "Well, since I'm the big brother, I guess I'd better act like it."

Over the next few days, he very subtly began to behave like a big brother under the pretense of doing nice things for his little brother. He made his bed for him, he got him snacks. Every morning, he set out clothes for his brother, which was a good way to make sure he only ever wore the most brightly colored, boyish items he had in his dresser. The stuff that he

deemed definitely too mature for his little brother was quietly spirited away to be donated. His brother had no idea, but sitting there on the couch in his red t-shirt and red shorts, he looked a great deal more like a six year old than he had back when he was dressing himself. If he could find a way, he would start dressing him exactly like a six year old, but that could wait.

The thing that convinced him he was doing the right thing was that his brother accepted everything without question. Even when he kneeled down to tie his shoes, he allowed it. Even when the little guy started fussing, he would gently point out it was better to hear it from him than from their parents, right? Of course, he would always agree and go wash his face or whatever his brother had suggested. They were suggestions, nothing more, and always the epitomé of common sense. Of course he should go potty before a long car ride. Of course he should always put on clean undies, every morning.

"Oh, nice!" He exclaimed as his brother cleared the first stage. "See? You're doing awesome." Modifying his new video game to add in a super easy mode had been easier than expected and it made him so happy to see his brother beaming. He was about to start the next stage when his brother grabbed the controller. "Oh, I've heard the next stage is really long and it doesn't let you pause. Maybe you should go potty first, just in case."

"I don't need to go."

"It's very long, bud." He said gently. "Why don't you go try?"

"But"

“Do you need me to pull down your pants and undies for you?" He playfully reached for the boy's shorts.

"Fine. I guess I need to go..." He smiled as the boy walked off. How had he ever thought that that little moppet was his big brother? He smiled to himself. No one else may realize it yet, but he was clearly the big brother.