

DOWN FOR THE 3!

PART XI

STORY BY TETSU & KOKOJI

ART BY TETSU



DESPITE EVERY BUMP AND ROCK OF THE CAR SENDING PAIN JUDDERING THROUGH ME, THE UBER RIDE WENT SURPRISINGLY QUICKLY. WHEN WE PULLED UP OUTSIDE OF THE APARTMENT, I TRIED TO STEER MY ACHING BODY AROUND, WINCING WITH EVERY MOVE. SARAH PULLED ME BACK INTO A SEATED POSITION, ADAMANT THAT SHE WAS GOING TO CARRY ME. EVEN THOUGH I'D TRIED TO REASSURE HER OVER AND OVER AGAIN ON THE RIDE, SHE STILL FELT TERRIBLE ABOUT MY INJURY AND REFUSED ANY OTHER OPTION. "I'M TELLING YOU, YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY ME. JUST GIVE ME A SHOULDER TO LEAN ON!" SHE IGNORED ME, DISEMBARKING AND RUNNING AROUND THE CAR TO YANK OPEN THE DOOR ON MY SIDE.

"NOPE. CLIMB ON." TURNING HER BACK TO ME, HER ASS FILLED THE SPACE I COULD USE TO DEPART FROM THE UBER. AT LEAST THIS TIME IT WAS A PIGGY BACK AND THE DRIVER WASN'T GOING TO SEE ME BEING CARRIED AWAY LIKE A NEW BRIDE...

SHE WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO CARRY ME UP THE STEPS AND TO THE FRONT DOOR SEAMLESSLY. "ARE YOU STILL ALRIGHT?" SHE ASKED AFTER TWISTING AND TURNING TO GET THE KEY INTO THE DOOR AND OPEN IT UP.

"YEAH, STILL GOOD. UM... THANKS FOR CARRYING ME." I WAS SMILING AS I SAID IT, STILL AMAZED AT THE NOVELTY OF MY GIRLFRIEND BEING ABLE TO CART ME AROUND EFFORTLESSLY.



"DUH. OF COURSE I'M GONNA CARRY YOU AROUND. IT'S MY FAULT YOU'RE HURT."

"N-NO IT'S NOT!" I SPUTTERED. "I MADE THE DECISION MYSELF. I LITERALLY ASKED YOU TO DO IT." LIGHTLY BOUNCING ON HER BACK IN RHYTHM WITH EVERY FOOTFALL, I FELT LIKE A WHINY TODDLER.

AGAIN, SHE IGNORED ME. "SHUFFLE AROUND. I WANNA PUT YOU DOWN HERE," NODDING TO THE COUCH, SHE LEANED TO ONE SIDE. I DID AS SHE SAID, BRINGING MY LEG DOWN SO THAT I ALMOST TOUCHED THE FLOOR. MY INTENTION HAD BEEN TO GET DOWN COMPLETELY BUT SHE HAD OTHER IDEAS. DIPPING HER SHOULDER SHE BROUGHT IT AROUND MY SIDE, ONE ARM STEADIED ME, AROUND MY BACK, WHILE THE OTHER HOOKED MY LEGS BACK UP SO THAT I WAS ONCE MORE THE BLUSHING BRIDE. I WAS AWED BY HOW STRONG SHE WAS. CARRYING ME WAS ONE THING BUT MANOEUVERING ME AROUND LIKE THAT WAS SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY. SHE'D DONE IT SO FLUIDLY THAT I HADN'T EVEN BEEN JOSTLED. BEFORE I COULD PRAISE HER CORE (AND EVERYTHING ELSE) STRENGTH SHE SPOKE AGAIN. "I KNOW YOU ASKED ME NOT TO HOLD BACK, BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT I HURT YOU. BADLY." HER VOICE WAS LEVEL BUT SOLEMN. NO LONGER AS EMOTIONAL AS SHE HAD BEEN BEFORE BUT STILL CLEARLY SAD AS SHE PUT ME DOWN GENTLY, LAYING ME ON THE BED. IT PAINED ME ON A WHOLE OTHER LEVEL HEARING HER LIKE THIS.

"SARAH, WAIT." I REACHED OUT TO GRAB HER WRIST BEFORE SHE COULD STRAIGHTEN UP. "YOU NEED TO STOP BLAMING YOURSELF. YOU DON'T BLAME A GUN FOR MURDER."

SHE SCOFFED. "AM I A GUN?"

"NO, BUT..." I CLIPPED HER CHEEK, SIGHING. "STOP BEING AN IDIOT. PLEASE. IT WAS MY FAULT." HER EXPRESSION FALTERED AWAY FROM STOIC. "PLEASE? IT... HURTS MORE THAT YOU'RE THIS SAD. IT'S MY FAULT."



HER LIP TREMBLED FOR JUST A SECOND, FLICKERS OF 1000 EMOTIONS PASSED OVER HER FACE BEFORE SHE PUSHED THEM DOWN AND LET OUT A LONG SIGH. "FINE." SHE FINALLY RELENTED, STANDING TALL OVER ME AND POUTING. "FINE, I'LL TRY... BUT I'M STILL SAD SO YOU NEED TO CUDDLE ME BETTER." CROSSING HER ARMS OVER HER CHEST SHE LOOMED OVER ME HAUGHTILY, WAITING FOR A RESPONSE. IT WAS GOOD SEEING HER BEING MORE HERSELF.

"DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE." I GRINNED. "EVEN THOUGH YOU'VE BEEN CARRYING ME AROUND I STILL HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO CHECK YOU OUT PROPERLY." I RAISED MY HANDS AND WRIGGLED MY FINGERS, EYEBROWS BOBBING UP AND DOWN, GAZE GLUED TO THE SOFT, SUPPLE TITFLESH OVERFLOWING HER TOP.

"WOW, NOT EVEN BEING HALF CRIPPLED COULD KEEP YOU DISTRACTED FOR LONG, HUH?" SHE QUIPPED WITH A FEIGNED UN-IMPRESSED LOOK. "WAIT HERE, LEMME FIND SOME COMFIER STUFF FOR US TO CUDDLE IN."

WHEN SHE CAME BACK IN PAJAMAS I FELT MY HEART SKIP A BEAT. SHE WAS POURED INTO THOSE CLOTHES, AND ONCE AGAIN I COULDN'T GET OVER HOW MUCH BIGGER SHE'D GOTTEN. SARAH HELPED ME CHANGE BEFORE CLIMBING ONTO THE COUCH WITH ME, CURLING HER LARGER BODY AROUND MINE. I SNUGGLED MY BODY INTO HERS AS BEST I COULD, EAGERLY SMOTHERING MYSELF IN AS MUCH OF HER AS POSSIBLE. HER LEG WRAPPED AROUND MINE, HER BOOB SPILLING ONTO MY CHEST - I FELT BEYOND COMFORTED.



FROM THEN ON, EVERY SECOND SARAH WASN'T BUSY COOKING OR CLEANING OR WORKING OUT, WE WERE CUDDLING. SHE WOULDN'T LET ME RAISE A FINGER, REFUSING TO ALLOW ME ANY ACTIVITY OTHER THAN RESTING AND RECOVERING. I MEAN, SHE EVEN CARRIED ME AROUND FROM BED TO COUCH AND BACK. EVERY MORNING AND EVERY EVENING I'D BE TRANSITED BACK AND FORTH TO BE SMOTHERED IN HER EMBRACE. I FELT GUILTY BUT, HONESTLY, I PROBABLY NEEDED IT... AND DIDN'T MIND THE SMOTHERING.

IT TOOK DAYS FOR ME TO BE ABLE TO MOVE AT ALL WITHOUT PAIN WRACKING EVERY NERVE IN MY BODY. AFTER 3 DAYS I MANAGED TO CONVINCE SARAH TO LET ME HOBBLE BETWEEN THE BED AND COUCH WITH HER SUPPORT. THAT DIDN'T STOP THE CUDDLES THOUGH. I WAS GLAD. I JOKED THAT HER HEALING TOUCH WAS NECESSARY FOR MY BOUNCE BACK AND SHE AGREED, EVEN IF IT WAS WITH A SMUG, KNOWING SMIRK. I CRAVED HER BODY LIKE AN ADDICT DID A NEEDLE. FEELING HER AGAINST ME - SO, SO MUCH OF HER, WAS INTOXICATING. I PRAYED FOR MY BACK TO RECOVER FASTER SO THAT I COULD ACT ON THE CRAVINGS, TO TEAR THE CLOTHES OFF HER FLAWLESS BODY AND BURY MYSELF IN HER FIGURATIVELY AND LITERALLY.

OUR BODIES MASHED TOGETHER CONSTANTLY WAS DRIVING ME MORE AND MORE INSANE THE LONGER I COULDN'T ACT ON THE URGES.



HER ALWAYS BEING IN PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH ME - LITERALLY PRESSED UP AGAINST ME CONSTANTLY - ALSO MEANT THAT I NOTICED WHEN THERE WERE DIFFERENCES. IT WAS GRADUAL BUT NOT GRADUAL ENOUGH TO IGNORE. CARESSING HER BACK, HER ARM, HER ABS, IT ALL FELT JUST SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT DAY BY DAY. DEFINITION WAS DEEPER, LINES AND CURVES MORE PRONOUNCED. THERE WERE EVEN A FEW VEINS ON THE SURFACE THAT HADN'T BEEN THERE BEFORE. BUT THOSE WERE ONLY THE FIRST SIGNS. IT WAS NEARLY A WEEK OF THOSE CUDDLES WHEN SOMETHING IMPOSSIBLE TO MISS SLAPPED ME IN THE FACE. SNUGGLED ON THE COUCH LIKE WE NORMALLY WOULD, I COULD FEEL THE CURVE OF HER LEG WAS DIFFERENT. THIS WAS THE SAME WAY WE ALWAYS CUDDLED BUT IT WAS JUST... OFF. THAT LEG WAS BENT DIFFERENTLY, LONGER, LAID ACROSS ME IN A SUBTLY DIFFERENT WAY THAN IT HAD BEEN BEFORE... AND IT FELT HEAVIER. I PUT A HAND ON HER QUAD, RUNNING MY HAND UP AND DOWN HER THIGH. IT WAS GIRTHIER AND MEATIER AND EVEN MORE MUSCLED THAN BEFORE.

SITTING UP, USING AN ARM TO GUIDE HER OFF OF ME SLIGHTLY, I LOOKED HER UP AND DOWN, MY LIPS A TIGHT LINE, EYES DARTING ALL OVER HER SHAPE. "WHAT'S WRONG?" SHE ASKED ME, CONFUSED BY MY SUDDEN ACTIONS AND PROLONGED SILENCE.

I STARED AT HER CHEST. THAT TOP WASN'T THAT TIGHT A WEEK AGO. MY HEART THUMPED HARDER IN MY CHEST AS I VOICED THE THOUGHTS THAT HAUNTED MY MIND. "SARAH... HAVE YOU GROWN AGAIN?" HER BODY WENT TENSE. SURPRISE, WAS FOLLOWED BY A GUILT THAT I COULD READ ON HER FACE. THEN THIS LONGING, TORN LOOK REPLACED IT. "YOU HAVE, HAVEN'T YOU?" I PUSHED, A SENSATION UNDER MY SKIN TELLING ME THAT SHE'D BEEN TRYING TO HIDE HER NEWEST SPURT FOR SOME REASON.



"WEEEEEELLLL." A LITTLE, EMBARRASSED LAUGH SLIPPED OUT. "I GUESS IT WOULD BE BETTER TO SHOW YOU." BASHFUL BUT GRINNING, SHE GATHERED HERSELF UP, MOVING AROUND ME ON THE COUCH. I MOVED WITH HER, SHIFTING, THE PAIN IN MY BACK A DULL TWINGE RATHER THAN A STABBING, ELECTRICAL SEAR. SHE CLAMBERED DOWN AS I SWIVELLED AND MOVED TO THE EDGE OF THE COUCH. SARAH STAYED CROUCHED, KEEPING HER FACE LEVEL WITH MINE AS SHE STARTED TO SPEAK. "I KIND OF WASN'T DONE GROWING WHEN YOU GOT BACK. I GUESS - UH - MY BULK HAD A BIGGER EFFECT THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD."

I LEANED IN, HANGING ON EVERY WORD. HOW SHE'D JUST PHRASED THAT HAD MY BRAIN CHURNING IN SLOW MOTION. HER BULK HAD A BIGGER EFFECT THAN SHE'D THOUGHT? IT SOUNDED LIKE SHE'D PLANNED THE GROWTH SPURT. "WHA-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?"

THERE WAS SOME THOUGHT BEFORE SHE CONTINUED. "WELL, YOU FED ME A LOT AND IT MADE ME A LOT BIGGER THAN ANY OF THE GROWTH SPURTS BEFORE. I MEAN, I KNEW THIS SPURT WOULD BE BIG BUT..." AGAIN, HER WORDS MADE MY BRAIN CHUG ALONG SLOW, THE WORDING FORMING AN ODD TENSION IN MY CHEST. "I'VE GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU. IT'S SOMETHING I'VE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT FOR A WHILE, OKAY?" SHE SAID IT SO CALMLY, A SERENITY IN HER VOICE TO SEEMINGLY KEEP ME CALM TOO. SLOWLY STANDING UP, SHE TOOK MY HANDS IN HERS - HER LONG FINGERS MAKING MY SKIN TINGLE - AND GENTLY LIFTED ME UPRIGHT WITH HER.



I FELT STATIC IN MY LIMBS, FUZZ IN MY BRAIN. SARAH STOOD WITH HER FEET UNDER HER SHOULDERS, HANDS BEHIND HER BACK. SHE WAS TALLER. AT LEAST A COUPLE OF INCHES BUT PROBABLY MORE. IT WAS SO OBVIOUS STANDING UP TOGETHER - SOMETHING WE HADN'T DONE MUCH FOR THE LAST WEEK. I WAS LOOKING INTO HER NECK, HER CHIN SLIGHTLY ABOVE MY EYES. HER SHOULDERS LOOKED LIKE CANON BALLS WELDED TO HER ARMS, HER BREASTS ZEPPELINS STRAINING THE VEST, HER ABS CHISSELLED OUT OF GRANITE.

HOW HADN'T I NOTICED IT? HOW HAD I BEEN SO OBLIVIOUS WHILE RECOVERING? NO, IT WASN'T BECAUSE I WAS OBLIVIOUS, I'D JUST NOT EXPECTED IT. AFTER THE MASSIVE INCREASE IN SIZE, SHE'D GROWN EVEN MORE, EVEN MORE IN JUST A WEEK. THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION FOCUSED IN MY MIND AND I AGAIN COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT HOW INSANE THIS ALL WAS. MY EYES STRAYED TO THE LINE BEHIND HER, THE MEASUREMENT FROM WHAT FELT LIKE A LIFETIME AGO. SHE WAS SO, SO MUCH TALLER NOW.

NO MATTER HOW STUNNING, HOW GORGEOUS, HOW FUCKING LUST INSPIRING SHE WAS, WORRY CREEPT OUT OF THE BACK OF MY MIND, FROM THE CORNER IT HAD BEEN SHUT AWAY INTO. "HAVE YOU... TALKED TO THE DOCTORS AGAIN?" I ASKED.

"THAT'S ACTUALLY THE SURPRISE I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT." I ALMOST RECOILED PHYSICALLY. THE RESULTS OF HER EXTRA GROWTH SPURT HADN'T BEEN THE SURPRISE? "I NEVER ACTUALLY... UM... TALKED TO A DOCTOR." MY HEART LURCHED, STOMACH SCRUNCHING INTO A PAPER BALL CLOSED IN A FIST.

"WHAT?!" SARAH WINCED AT MY RESPONSE BUT HELD UP HER HANDS, SIGNALLING FOR ME TO STAY CALM.



"I NEVER TALKED TO A DOCTOR BECAUSE MY HEALTH WAS NEVER AT RISK! I KNEW I WAS 100% SAFE." SHE ADDED, SQUINTING AT ME TO SEE MY REACTION. I WAS STUNNED INTO SILENCE, MOUTH HANGING HALF OPEN AS I PROCESSED THIS. "I..." SHE SIGHED, TREADING CAREFULLY THROUGH THE CONVERSATION, SLOWLY, PICKING HER WORDS MORE CAREFULLY. "I HAVE BEEN MAKING MYSELF GROW."

I WASN'T SURE WHAT AN ANEURISM FELT LIKE BUT I WAS STARTING TO WONDER IF I'D HAD ONE IN THE GYM, IF THIS WHOLE WEEK HAD BEEN A MIRAGE AND I WAS NOW IN A COMA. "HOW... HOW IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?" IT WAS THE ONLY VALID RESPONSE I COULD GIVE.

"J - JUST, ONE SEC, I'LL SHOW YOU." SHE STAMMERED, MOTIONING FOR ME TO STAY AS SHE DARTED AWAY. WHEN SHE CAME BACK SHE WAS HOLDING TWO PILLS AND A PILL BOTTLE. "I GOT THESE ONLINE. FROM THAT GKS OR WHATEVER COMPANY - THE ONE THAT OWNS ALL THE PHARMA STUFF. I GOT AN ADVERT A WHILE BACK, BEFORE WE STARTED DATING, FOR PILLS THAT CAN MAKE YOU BIGGER." I WAS REELING AS WORDS STREAMED OUT OF HER, EYES GLUED TO THE BOTTLE AND TWO ALTERNATE COLOURED PILLS. THIS WASN'T POSSIBLE. THIS COULDN'T BE REAL. "THEY WERE MARKETED TO ATHLETES. PEOPLE IN SPORTS WHERE BEING BIGGER WAS IMPORTANT... SO I GOT SOME. A-AND THEY REALLY WORKED." IMPOSSIBLE. THE CONCEPT RATTLED AROUND IN MY HEAD. THIS MUST BE BULLSHIT. OR AT LEAST I'D BELIEVE THAT IF I WASN'T STANDING HERE LOOKING AT THE VERY REAL RESULTS. "WE'D JUST STARTED DATING WHEN I STARTED TAKING THEM A - AND I DIDN'T WANT TO LIE. REALLY, I... I HATED KEEPING IT FROM YOU." THE REMORSEFUL SADNESS IN HER EYES TOLD ME SHE WASN'T LYING. "BUT I KNEW HOW CRAZY IT WOULD SOUND AND I DIDN'T WANT TO SCARE YOU AWAY! I THOUGHT YOU'D THINK I WAS INSANE... AND... AND THEN YOU SEEMED TO LIKE IT AND I LIKED IT AND..." SHE TRAILED OFF A BIT NOW, WAITING FOR ME TO TALK AFTER THE VOLLEY OF BOMBHELLS SHE'D DROPPED.

IT TOOK ONE LAST PROD FROM HER TO GET ME TALKING. "ARE YOU MAD AT ME?"



WAS I? GENUINELY I WASN'T EVEN SURE HOW I FELT MYSELF. "SO IT WAS NEVER DANGEROUS?" I ASKED QUIETLY, MY VOICE STARTLING EVEN ME. SARAH SHOOK HER HEAD SO HARD HER HAIR FLIPPED ALL OVER. SHE TOLD ME HOW SHE'D CHECKED WITH THE COMPANY, HOW SHE'D READ REVIEWS, HOW SHE'D DONE EVEN MORE RESEARCH WHEN I'D VOICED MY WORRIES. MY CONCERNS HAD HER READING RESEARCH PAPERS AND DIVING DEEP INTO THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE PILLS - MAKING SURE THEY WERE AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE BEFORE SHE TOOK THE NEXT DOSE.

I COULDN'T KEEP UP WITH ALL THE JARGON BUT SHE EXPLAINED IT ALL TO ME. ONE PILL WAS SOME TYPE OF CHEMICAL COMPOUND THAT ATTACHED ITSELF TO FAT RESERVES IN THE BODY. YOU TAKE IT AND HAVE A WINDOW TO GAIN AS MUCH FAT AS POSSIBLE. THE SECOND PILL YOU TAKE AFTER A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TIME - A METABOLIC SWITCH THAT DOES SOMETHING I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND BUT SOMEHOW USED THE STORED, CHEMICALLY ALTERED FAT TO MAKE YOU GROW. IT WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE MY HEAD SPIN BUT I TOOK IN AS MUCH AS I COULD.

"SO... YOU'RE NOT MAD?" SHE FINALLY ASKED AGAIN AFTER MORE SILENCE.

"NO. NO, OF COURSE NOT." I FINALLY MANAGED. TRUTHFULLY I'D KNOWN DEEP DOWN SOMETHING WAS WEIRD BUT TRUSTED HER TOO MUCH TO KEEP DIGGING. "JUST... I WISH YOU'D TOLD ME SOONER."

"I KNOW." OUR EMOTIONS MIRRORED ONE ANOTHER. MELANCHOLIC, GUILTY, SAD. "I... I REALLY PLANNED ON TELLING YOU EARLIER BUT... I'M SORRY I DIDN'T." SHE SUDDENLY THRUST THE HAND HOLDING THE PILLS OUT TO ME. "BUT THERE'S ONE THING I CAN DO NOW. THESE ARE THE LAST TWO I HAVE. I WANT YOU TO DECIDE WHAT I DO WITH THEM." CAREFULLY I REACHED OUT TO TAKE THEM FROM HER HAND, AWED BY THE EFFECTS THESE TINY THINGS HAVE HAD.



STARING INTO MY PALM, AT THE TWO LITTLE PILLS, I SPOKE ALMOST ENTRANCED. "THESE THINGS MADE YOU THIS BIG..." IT WASN'T A QUESTION, JUST A STUNNED OBSERVATION. SARAH RESPONDED TO ME BUT IT WAS PRACTICALLY BACKGROUND NOISE AS MY THOUGHTS WENT RACING. SHE'D BEEN MAKING HERSELF BIGGER. A BIG PART OF THE MOTIVATION WAS SELFISH BUT, UNDENIABLY, MY REACTION HAD PLAYED A ROLE IN HER CONTINUING. I'D TOLD HER HOW HOT HER BEING BIGGER WAS - HOW HOT I FOUND FEEDING HER BULK AND HER GROWTH. SHE'D BEEN AFRAID TO TELL ME. SHE'D WANTED ME TO BE A PART OF IT, BUT SHE'D BEEN AFRAID TO LOSE ME. BY THE TIME SHE WAS SURE SHE COULD SHARE IT, SHE WAS TOO DEEP INTO THE LIE AND THE GUILT... I GNAWED ON THE INSIDE OF MY CHEEK. THE BLUE PILL WAS FIRST, THAT'S WHAT SHE'D SAID EARLIER.

SARAH WAS MID WORD WHEN I PLUCKED THE PILL UP AND PUSHED IT PAST HER LIPS. HER EYES SHOT OPEN WIDE, HER MOUTH PUCKERING AROUND MY FINGERS. WORDLESSLY I RETRACTED THEM, THE PILL IN HER MOUTH. HER EYEBROWS MADE A TRIANGLE, RAISED IN THE MIDDLE, SHOCK PAINTED ACROSS HER BEAUTIFUL FACE. "I LOVE YOU. IF TAKING THE PILL IS WHAT YOU WANT THEN I WANT YOU TO TAKE IT. I'LL SUPPORT ANYTHING YOU DO AS LONG AS YOU'RE SAFE TOO."

THERE WAS AN AUDIBLE SWALLOW. TEARS SPARKLED IN HER EYES AND THE WEIGHT OF THE CONFESSION BLEW OUT OF HER. SHE USED THE BASE OF HER PALM TO WIPE AT HER FACE, TO STOP FROM CRYING BEFORE IT BEGAN. SARAH LAUGHED. "I FEEL LIKE SUCH AN IDIOT. I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D BE SUPPORTIVE WITH THIS TOO."

I WANTED TO HUG HER, TO CRADLE HER IN MY ARMS THE WAY I USED TO WHEN I COMFORTED HER BEFORE. INSTEAD I WRAPPED MYSELF AROUND THE TITAN SHE'D BECOME AS BEST I COULD, RESTING MY HEAD AGAINST THE TOP OF HER BUST. SHE ENVELOPED ME IN HER AND I ENDED UP BEING THE ONE FEELING MORE WARM AND COMFORTED AND REASSURED. ALTHOUGH, THANKFULLY, IT SEEMED TO WORK BOTH WAYS.



EMBRACED TOGETHER THE TENSION EASED AND THE EMOTIONS THAT WERE FRAUGHT AND TAUT AND STRAINED ALL RELAXED. AFTER GIVING HER AN EXTRA LITTLE SQUEEZE WE BROKE THE HUG AND I STEPPED BACK TO TALK TO HER. "SO WHAT NOW?" I ASKED, CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT WE SHOULD DO. "YOU'VE GOT TO EAT, RIGHT? HOW LONG DOES THE PILL TAKE TO WORK?"

LAUGHTER ROLLED OUT OF HER, A SMIRK ON HER FACE AS SHE READ MY PERVERSE THOUGHTS. "EAGER TO MAKE ME GROW, HUH?"

I BLUSHED SLIGHTLY. "N-NO, IT'S... PURELY SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY." I LOOKED AWAY, FEIGNING AN ARISTOCRATIC AIR OF SUPERIORITY AS I DID.

SHE CUPTED MY CHIN IN HER HAND, PULLING MY FACE UP TO FACE HERS. "NO. NO MORE LIES ABOUT THIS. WE'RE BOTH TELLING THE TRUTH. THERE'S NOTHING TO BE EMBARRASSED ABOUT. YOU WANT ME BIGGER, RIGHT?" I NODDED A YES INTO HER FINGERS. HER SMILE STRETCHED WIDER. "HOW'S YOUR BACK?" SHE ASKED, RELEASING MY CHIN.

BEFUDDLED I ANSWERED. "UMM, IT'S A LOT BETTER. BASICALLY FINE."

"GOOD." SAUNTERING OVER TO THE COUCH SHE TOOK A SEAT, STRETCHING HER LEG OUT, GETTING COMFORTABLE AND NONCHALANTLY CONTINUING. "IN THAT CASE, I'D LIKE TO RE-HIRE MY LIVE IN PERSONAL CHEF." MY EYES LIT UP. SHE SUPPRESSED A SMILE. "I TOLD YOU I WANTED YOU TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH THE PILLS, DIDN'T I? WELL, I WANT YOU TO DECIDE HOW BIG I GET TOO, MR. CHEF. THE MORE YOU FEED ME THE BIGGER I'LL GET." THAT LAST PART WAS PRACTICALLY PURRED TO ME. I MUST HAVE LOOKED LIKE A KID ON CHRISTMAS MORNING LOOKING AT HER BECAUSE HER COMPOSURE BROKE, THE COOL, ALOOF VISAGE SHATTERING INTO LAUGHTER. "OHHHH, I CANNOT WAIT TO SEE HOW BIG I'M GONNA GET."