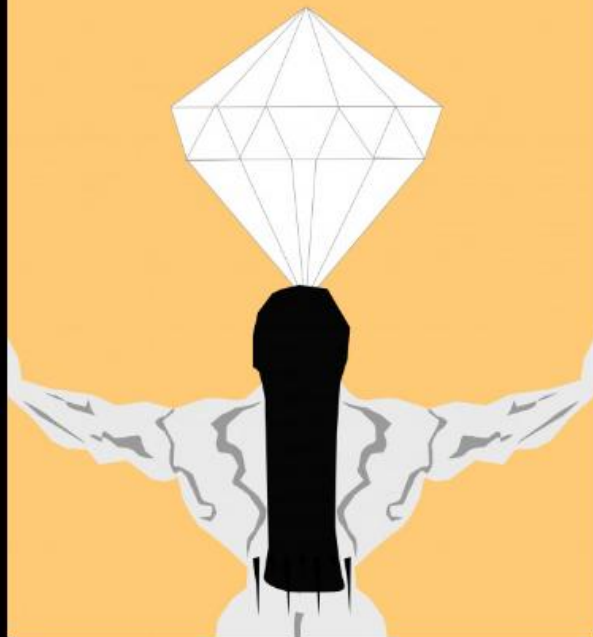


Mar-Mar and Ophi

Roy Ellison



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by Roy Ellison

Smashwords Edition

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Marcy took a deep breath. This was going to end badly. She knew it already, but if she managed to make her mother understand, then maybe ...

She opened her eyes. Marcy Lang's mother stood in the kitchen, busy with the chicken, and frowned at her. That frown had appeared on her mom's face one day, and it felt as if it never left her. Then again, Marcy found it hard to blame her. She was a disappointment on every level.

When Marcy's dad died suddenly of a stroke when she was seven, her mother had fought on, working two, sometimes three jobs, always busy, always eager to do that extra bit of work to pay for rent, food and Marcy's school. Of course, she went to a moderately prestigious Catholic private school, one of those that attracted all the children of parents who wanted their kids to do better.

Marcy had been ... okay.

And okay wasn't enough.

When her mother was home after a day of work at some fast food joint or cleaning in a hotel or tutoring someone in Chinese or ghostwriting some rich kid's homework or ... really, just any job that earned them money, she had usually already chatted with the other parents and found out that their kids were, well, better.

Her disappointment had expressed itself in glares and frowns. There was little else she could do, tired as she was.

Marcy was raised by the TV, the internet, some strange "aunties" that probably were related to them in some way, and second- and third-hand comic books she got in yard sales and from older siblings of schoolmates.

At some point, she probably concluded that with no power came no responsibility, especially not for herself.

By the time she hit puberty, she was a plump two-hundred-pound teen, with bad skin, bad posture and, honestly, bad grades.

That was the moment when her mother met Charles Mou, real estate millionaire and charming weirdo. It had been a surprise falling in love when her mother worked as a shoe-clerk at the Chinese-American Dance Club. Her job was to make sure the regulars had their shoes taken care of and got them handed quickly and diligently when they arrived. She also had to send them to the shoemaker and get them re-soled in time.

Anyway, Charles wanted to participate in a competition, but his partner had failed to show up after some trouble at home. He was quite

frustrated by this, after all, he loved to win, and had asked her mother whether she would be willing to dance with him.

She had said no at first, but then he had pleaded for her to help and she had told him that she would do her best, but that she couldn't promise anything.

And they won.

One thing led to the next, and soon, they were married and Marcy ended up with a stepbrother.

Wei was ... okay ... at first. He was mostly lonely and awkward, and he didn't mind having Marcy around. She was five years older than him and actually tried to be an older sister for him. They had a few common interests at first, such as mythology and fantasy stories, and nerdy stuff like astronomy, minerals and computers. They even saw a falling star, probably some meteorite one night. They wanted to go looking for it, but her mother decided it was better to learn for the exam the next day. The business got delayed further and further, and then, they forgot about it.

Living with Wei mostly worked, though he was relentlessly favored by his father, and, to Marcy's shock, by her mother. This did go to his head, and soon, he started behaving that way. If he was better, than it was up to her to do what he wanted. When she refused, he started bullying her.

As he hit puberty too, the situation worsened. While Marcy got fatter and fatter, Wei shot up and turned into a huge dude. He played basketball and soon made the team, turning from "who?" to the number one jock.

From then on, Wei publicly distanced himself from her, and as his fame got more impressive, he started involving the other jocks to bully her. Of course, once that dam broke, the rest of the class joined in. Marcy was lonely and frustrated. She barely managed to survive with a couple of co-victims that stuck together with her. Their nerdy interests helped her cope with the horror.

Eventually, Marcy was just happy to be done with school and to leave him behind. She started studying computer science and had managed to get by, but now, it was the moment of truth.

"Mom ..."

"Yes, daughter?"

Marcy hated it when her mother talked to her like that. The only thing that was worse was when she switched to Chinese mid-sentence.

"Mom, I have bad news ..."

The older woman's eyes narrowed. It was obvious that there she was already running all kinds of scenarios in her mind, and that none of them were positive. Her mother frowned at Marcy, her look full of judgment of her pudgy, helpless daughter.

It took her a moment to compose herself, and then, she said:

"What is it?"

The disappointment already oozed from her words.

"Mom ... I ... I ... I have dropped out of college."

There was silence. It was the kind of silence that didn't even cause that faint ringing in her ears. It was the terrifying silence of absolute contempt. Her mother had expected a lot of failure, but a disaster like that? No. No.

The other woman's eyes opened a bit wider, then she ruminated what she just heard. Marcy saw those bumps appear on the side of her mother's face as she clenched and unclenched her jaw. She took a deep breath. Then another one. And one more.

Marcy could feel the tension and cold anger radiate from her mother's skin like the heat of the deeper hells.

"Mom, I'm sorry, but ..."

Her mother cut her off with one look. She took another breath and then asked:

"What are you going to do?"

Marcy had expected a furious explosion, screaming, curses, kitchen instruments being thrown at her ... She had wondered what she would do if her mother went completely berserk and literally tried to kill her because of the shame.

Instead, she was hit even worse by this brutal pragmatism.

It also showed her that she didn't have a plan, and that she should have thought about this beforehand.

"I ... I don't have a plan yet, but ... I think I will ... think about it and ..."

"This is not good enough."

"But ..."

"I doubt that your stepfather will support you if you don't have something to show. Qinqin, you will have to do something at least. We will not tolerate you just being lazy, understood?"

The chubby young woman stared at her mother. Somehow, this was bad, but not ... terrible. She said:

"Okay. I'll try to figure this out and find something ..."

The tiny older woman scowled at her.

"You will not try. You will do something. And you will succeed."

"Mom, I ..."

The expression on the older woman's face made it clear that the discussion was over.

Marcy sighed and left, feeling even worse than before. Even if she had this college thing finished, she wouldn't be allowed to relax and reduce

her stress.

Her intuition had been right. The next morning, she found a stack of pamphlets of various companies in computer-adjacent fields on the breakfast table, as well as a ton of printed websites of schools that offered quick entry-level coding classes. There was also a prospectus of some diet coaching service. Marcy really wondered how her mother had managed to gather all this up so fast.

She did her best to ignore them and poured some sugar-frosted dinosaurs into her bowl, then added the milk and the cocoa.

The breakfast of champions.

She had spent all night chatting with Ophelia, her only remaining friend from school. She hadn't bothered going to college and had instead started working at a tattoo parlor even while in school, then set up her own.

"Lolita Needles" had been a bit intense as a name, but she had attracted a fair number of customers and people liked her goth-y designs. Marcy had thought about maybe getting one, but with her skin and her figure, this would distort and look stupid in no time. Ophelia never had these kinds of problems. She was always slim, and quite good looking. She loved to wear fishnets and tight pants and corsets and other goth apparel, and Marcy was kinda jealous?

Of course, Ophelia had offered to give her a makeover, but Marcy had declined in panic. This wasn't a look she could afford to wear, not with her figure! And even if she only put it on in private ... She couldn't bear the revelation of the full catastrophe.

Ophelia had done her best to support her yesterday, and she had done her best to keep her spirits up. Marcy decided to honor the faith her friend had put in her. She would try to improve her fitness!

So, after she was done with her breakfast, she got into her very roomy tracksuit her mother had bought once to shame her into training, got on the bike she still had from one of those awkward birthdays, and set out into the woods close-by.

To her surprise, it was somewhat nice.

Okay, it was hard and she barely built up any speed. Plus, she occasionally had to push that stupid bike because she was too exhausted and it was starting to wobble under her. But the cool of the forest was nice, the green leaves above her, the sunlight dancing between them ... All of that was good.

Now all she had to do was finish this track and head home ...

She reached the top of the climb now. The sweat was running into her eyes, soaking her long black hair and making her deeply uncomfortable with that stupid helmet. Then, the salt started burning and she had to close her eyes to push it out. It was a deeply annoying thing and she lost focus for a moment.

She tried to open her eyes, but it burned and her body was aching, she was breathing hard, and then, she lost control.

Suddenly, the bike went faster!

Marcy only understood she had passed the top of the hill when the bike started accelerating uncontrollably. Afterwards, she knew she should have braked. However, panicked as she was, she released the pedals and the wobbling bicycle rolled off the track.

She screamed in panic, which didn't help the situation, then her bike disappeared into a hidden gully under a huge mass of brambles. The thorns tore into her skin. Happily, she was too shocked by the sudden loss of control to really notice this.

Then she broke through the bottom of the shrubs and fell two yards into some dusty, dark mass of old leaves and broken twigs.

It hurt, but not too much. However, she wasn't able to enjoy this surprise "mattress" that broke her fall, because she sank in the thick tide of leaves. Everything turned dark around her and she was afraid she would drown in this, but then, she pushed herself up and emerged under the roof of brambles she had broken through. Her bike was hanging above her from the thick, thorny branches. She looked around in the twilight. This place was somehow ancient, and it didn't look as if any human being had been here in years, or even decades. She felt some rustling movements in the leaves and squeaked in panic.

Marcy started pushing through the waist-high "waters" and waded towards the shore. She constantly felt something tickling her legs, working its way into her tracksuit's pants. Maybe it was just an illusion, but she found it terrifying.

At last, she reached the edge of the "pool" of leaves and climbed out, resting on some sandbank by the side of the hole. She wondered how she would be able to get through all those brambles, and how she would get her bike out from above her.

Just then, one of the bushes broke down and dumped the bike into the leaves. It disappeared under them.

She sighed. This changed the situation without improving it.

Marcy leaned back and tried to catch her breath. She was completely exhausted now. The biking was bad enough, but the crashing into a hidden cavern and working her way through a heap of dead leaves with no clear exit certainly ruined her day.

"Okay", she said to herself, "This is it. Never again. I tried getting fit, but if this is literally the first thing that happens, I'm not doing this again. I

learned my lesson.”

She dropped on her back and looked up. The ceiling of brambles was dark and closed out most of the light. Suddenly, she thought: Why can I even see anything down here?

Indeed, there was light enough for her to see even the individual thorns, which made her shiver. She was covered in scratches and bruises, and now that the initial shock wore off, she started to feel them. She winced.

“Ow ...”

She looked around to distract herself. There had to be a reason ...

That’s when she discovered some white light illuminating emanating from a part of the cave. It was on the other side of the sea of leaves, but maybe it was a way for her to get out? She decided to rest some more and then, as she summoned enough courage, she dove back in and pushed through the creepy mass of dried vegetation. She could swear that every creepy crawly in this cave was trying to get to her now, and she felt their touch all over her.

Then she struck the bike.

Marcy was pretty sure that her scream could be heard all the way home. Not only did she bump her knee badly, but the simple touch of something invisible under the leaves made her panic. Only when she realized it was the bike did her heart stop beating like crazy. She took a deep breath and reached down into the depths and clumsily pulled out the frame. Then she dragged it noisily through the pit and hoisted it out. Then she crawled after it and laid down for a while. Her clothes were sticking to her body and it felt absolutely disgusting.

She rested for a bit, then stumbled to her feet and went looking for that light source. She turned a corner, and saw a white crystal half-stuck in the wall. The stone was shining brightly, almost too much to clearly see. She wondered where that thing had come from. It did look fascinating, though, once she got a good look of it.

Marcy thought about it. No one must have cared about this in decades, if the mess in that hole was any indication. Maybe ... No. Screw this, she wanted compensation for this mess. Without further hesitations, she grabbed the crystal and wiggled it until the earth around it crumbled and she could hold it in her hand. It was warm to the touch, but not in a bad way. For a second, she thought that it could be some radioactive mineral. Maybe she should check this later. For now, she just wanted to have it.

She stuffed it into her jacket’s pocket and returned to the bike, then started the long and arduous climb to get back to the surface.

Marcy returned home much later. She was completely exhausted from the walk back. She had tried riding the bike again, but she had turned so wobbly that she was afraid she’d fall over again. Instead, she had pushed it all the way, pulling it angrily over roots and rocks. She was tired, she was angry, and she was frustrated. If this was what getting fit was like, then she didn’t want to get fit. She just wanted to be dead.

This way, the pain would stop.

At least, the bike wasn’t broken. That was the only good thing about this whole catastrophe. Then again, it was also a bad thing because it meant she wouldn’t have an excuse to never, ever try this again.

For a moment, Marcy thought about maybe just losing the bike in the woods, or maybe rolling it on the road at a red light. Some passing car would maybe solve her problem and she could go back to her normal, frustrated self.

She didn’t do it in the end. Instead, she pushed on, happy to at least be able to use the tarmac now. Less bumps made the effort somewhat acceptable. She still didn’t ride it, though.

It was the early afternoon when she finally reached the mansion's gate. She fumbled for her keys in the depths of her tracksuit's pockets, couldn't find them, and barely managed not to cry. Then she rang. There was no answer.

She slipped down at the gate, leaning against the post and just sighing. She didn't know what to do anymore. Where did her keys go? Did she really lose them in this stupid, stupid, stupid! hole?

She fumbled for her phone and wanted to call her mother, but couldn't summon the courage.

Instead, she called Ophelia.

The other girl answered pretty much immediately.

"Marcy? How do you do?"

"Ophelia, do you have time?"

"Yeah, sure, next client is due in half an hour or so. What's up? You sound sad and exhausted!"

"I am sad and exhausted. I hate my life. I rode that stupid bike, I fell and I lost my keys! I'm tired, I hurt and I'm still fat!"

She started to sob, and then, the tears started streaming down her face.

She howled and cried and Ophelia couldn't do much more other than going "You did it, you didn't hide, you'll see, it was a good thing to do it and everything will be better ..."

Eventually, the chubby girl managed to calm down enough to stop crying and wiped her snot into the sleeve of her tracksuit. She sniveled and Ophelia said:

"Don't worry. The first time is always bad, and it can only get better. But you took the first step, and remember the bomb."

That made Marcy sigh, and then laugh.

Back when Ophelia had started tattooing, it was all very experimental and stupid. While other tattooists started an apprenticeship of sorts at a studio, Ophelia somehow came up with the idea to try a more hands-on approach.

The thing was, she decided to try tattooing herself first. She got herself the ink and some needles, and then tried to ink an ankh on her hand. She was a goth after all, and the design seemed easy enough. It wouldn't be much trouble and she'd figure it out. Besides, she could show her work to a master and convince him to train her.

Everything would be wonderful.

The problem was that Ophelia couldn't deal well with pain then. So the first prick was okay, but by the fifth one, she couldn't summon the courage to continue anymore. As a result, she called Marcy, who came over to help her. It wasn't much support since Marcy was shocked by the whole needle business, but then, they ended up taking shots of cheap whiskey, and before they knew, they were both tipsy.

Marcy tried to stop Ophelia from continuing the tattooing, but since it didn't hurt much anymore and she felt both reckless and motivated, she tried some more.

In the end, there was something on the back of her hand. It just didn't look too much like an ankh. Very little, actually.

It looked more like one of those old-timey bombs. The black round ones with fuses.

And it only did with a fair bit of imagination.

When they sobered back up, Marcy felt terrible because she hadn't stopped Ophelia from doing this, but the young woman shook her head and declared this to be her first tattoo, and that she had done what she could.

It was a beginning, and she would improve.

She never had it covered up. Ophelia had a wonderful sleeve tattoo, but there was a kind of capsule in it, just to make space for the "bomb".

Marcy couldn't help but smile at the mention of the tattoo. She took a deep breath.

"Thank you, Ophelia. That was ... Oh ..."

She sighed happily and dried her tears.

"It's alright. You'll be fine. Now, let's look for your keys. Maybe they are around here somewhere?"

Marcy left the bike, hoping in the back of her head that maybe someone would steal it, and retraced her steps. To her immense relief, she did find her keys on the curb a few blocks away. All the while, Ophelia did her best to keep her spirits up, and now that Marcy had them back, she thanked her friend again and again.

She trotted back, then said goodbye.

"Thank you again. Thank you so much! You saved my butt. I owe you one. No, screw that, I owe you two."

"Hey, relax, it's what friends are all about. Now go and relax a bit."

"Okay, but I owe you close to infinity. And you gotta accept that."

"Fine. I accept that. Don't worry, Marcy, everything will be well."

Marcy almost finished their conversation with "Thank you, I love you, bye!", but she instead just said "Goodbye."

As the words crossed her mind, she wondered where that had come from. She could also swear that Ophelia had started a similar sentence. However, it all ended with "My client has arrived. See you and good bye!"

At last, Marcy unlocked the door and pushed the bike inside, then dumped it carelessly by the door and headed inside. Without bothering to undress or shower, she just lay down on her bed to relax a bit. She'd do that later on, not right now. Just shut her eyes for a moment and rest, she'd do everything else in half an hour or so.

Marcy was wide awake. Where was she?

The place was hard to distinguish. The light was so bright ...

She could hardly see anything.

Maybe there were some shapes around her ...

Were those people?

She couldn't really see them.

They were singing, though. Singing ... no ... chanting.

What was it they were saying?

Was this even a language she knew?

It felt familiar, on a deeper, visceral level.

It sounded like a language she had never heard before, but which still resonated inside her on a kind of metaphysical level.

It seemed to her as if she knew it from a life before this one ... From a time before being born ... A previous incarnation?

Maybe it was even stranger.

It might be something from before life itself.

Were those even sounds?

They seemed to be waves that didn't need to pass through her ears to be understood by her mind, not even formulated in an actual language.

"Rise ... rise ... rise ..."

The chant passed all around her, enveloped her, filled her insides, echoed through her body and her mind.

She opened her eyes wide, the white light hurting, but she had to overcome the pain.

Marcy saw an enormous crowd of white shapes or creatures moving chaotically like grains of salt in a tornado.

And yet, they all seemed focused on her ...

"Rise ... rise ... rise ..."

She now managed to deal better with the light, but her first realization was that she was somehow naked.

Why?

Why would she be naked in front of a crowd of thousands?

What kind of demented fantasy was that?

Why did she feel awake, even if this clearly was a dream?

She realized that the whole hallucination was becoming even stranger. She had only the vaguest idea of sizes and distances, but she could swear she was getting bigger ...

The idea was even more ridiculous than the rest of the situation, but she was already so confused it barely mattered anymore.

"Rise ... rise ... rise ..."

The crowd seemed to like what was going on and intensified its chanting. They were now starting to move in a more orderly pattern. As she floated above them, she could swear there were some individual beings she could distinguish.

They did not look human.

Marcy struggled to find words in her mind that would allow her to describe what she saw.

Smooth?

Holey?

Bumpy?

Opaque?

She was so confused ...

She opened her eyes.

She was in her bed, still wearing the tracksuit and feeling covered in dry sweat. The chubby young woman rolled over to her nightstand and glared at the alarm clock.

Apparently, it was seven o'clock. She had thus slept through the afternoon. Hm. That was okay, she guessed. After all, she had been exhausted after her bike trip.

Then she noticed that the sun was shining through her window which opened to the east.

That was, to say the least, unusual for evenings.

Shocked, she sat up.

"Fuck."

Then she shook her head to reprimand herself for randomly cursing.

It didn't change the fact that it was early morning, though.

Marcy wasn't even feeling bad.

Far from it.

Actually, she felt great. Sweaty and sticky, but great.

She walked over to the bathroom and undressed, then threw the tracksuit in the trash. She checked it out once more to make sure she didn't throw anything away she still needed. That's when she found the crystal in the remains of the tracksuit. She took it and set it on her nightstand. It glowed dimly. It was a comforting, friendly light ...

She only now realized just how many rips and tears that suit had. Her whole body was covered in bruises and scratches. And still, she felt okay. Good, even.

She got in the shower, cleaned herself, washed her hair and relaxed in the warm water. Then she dried herself and carefully cleaned the little wounds, disinfecting them with little wincing of pain.

With trained hesitation, she stepped on the scales.

She stared at the number. What had been 312 for quite some while now was now 308. She stepped off the scales and tried again. 308.

In just one day? Okay, she had skipped dinner yesterday, and she had that stupid bike trip, but still ...

308.

She nodded to herself.

"Maybe it's true?"

She bent down awkwardly, lifted the scales and gave them a shake, then set them back down.

308.

"Wow. That can't be right."

Deciding that it wasn't the time to question this any further, she went downstairs to grab some breakfast. Maybe things would make sense after this ...

She walked into the kitchen, heading for the big box of unicorn sparkle sugar crunch she usually had for breakfast when she suddenly stopped. Maybe, just maybe, this wasn't such a good idea ... If she really had this success early on, why not push on?

She hesitated, then looked around. She found her mother's jars of nuts and grains, and an apple. Then she got busy, slicing everything up and putting it into a bowl, before grabbing the milk from the fridge.

She tried it.

She took another serving. This time, she added a tiny teensy spoon of honey. It was wonderful. Marcy was surprised. Normally, this wouldn't have been a pleasure, but somehow, she enjoyed eating this. She finished it and sipped the rest of the milk.

"Aaah ... That was surprisingly good! I dunno what's going on, but ... yay!"

She got dressed and ready to go out when she noticed that the bruises and cuts on her body had already faded. She was surprised. This was nice. Marcy wondered why this was happening, but she decided that this was a sign of the heavens. Time to train and stick to it!

As a result, she got everything ready and then actually went out on the bike again. She was a bit wobbly at first, but this time, things went way better.

She struggled along the trail, clenching her buttocks and her jaws as she went over an especially bumpy bit. She was sweating profusely, fighting her way upwards, holding the bike on track with all her rather minimal strength. The whole procedure was terrible, but all the way, she kept her hopes up. This was bad, but she would prevail. She had survived yesterday, she would survive now.

Even more, she would be successful!

It went well enough at first, but when she reached the apex of the trail, she gritted her teeth and hissed to herself:

“Okay, here goes nothing!”

She started rolling downwards, her feet firmly planted on the pedals, her hands clenched on the brakes. She would do this. She wouldn't crash again ...

The bike went faster. She hit the brakes, it started to wobble, she did her best to compensate. Releasing the brakes a bit, she let it gain some speed and fought to keep her eyes open. The next thing she would buy was a sweatband. She needed one of these. A lot.

She assumed she was looking pretty awful right now, her hair sticking to her face, the helmet looking stupid, the sweat, the tears, the whole expression ... but she was managing to go through that part without losing control.

She dodged the ravine easily, actually, she couldn't really see it as she rode by. There was no time to look around. She was in control, but the bike was still going pretty fast, and her position was, well, precarious.

She passed the last part and emerged from the forest like a very sweaty, rather exhausted wild beast. Marcy stopped the bike and managed to remain standing. There, she suddenly raised her arms and shouted in triumph.

“Yes! Yes! Yeeees!”

A lady with an annoyed little dog stared at her as if she had gone mad. Marcy couldn't care less. She was a disgusting blob of tired fat, and she had managed to beat the trail that had beaten her first.

“Revenge!”

The woman walked away faster, trying to both not look at her in disdain and stare at her in disgust.

Marcy picked the bike up again.

“Again! I need to do this again!”

She got on the bike once more, pushed herself off clumsily and then, rode back along the trail again. It was now or never. She had to prove to herself this wasn't just a coincidence.

Hours later, she returned to the mansion. If she had thought she had been exhausted yesterday, she could only laugh about her naivete today. She had somehow managed to do three laps of the circuit, the third one coming close to being very dangerous once again. She had slowed down a lot, and the bike had become extremely unstable. She had succeeded only because of dumb luck and sheer focus, but she had succeeded.

What more could she ask for?

The answer was easy.

A bath.

Seriously, she felt disgusting. She peeled off the tracksuit which clung to her rolls of fat like saran wrap and stumbled into the bathroom. While the tub filled with warm, enticing water, she tried to do some stretches she had seen on the phone once. They had been in one of these pictures one would save and never look at again.

Besides, she didn't manage to do even half of the exercises.

The bath, however, was wonderful.

She let her sweaty body soak in the big bathtub her stepdad had had installed. It was amazing. She felt herself float in the water, just enjoying the relaxation. She even turned on the little sprays in it, getting them to massage her tired body.

She never wanted to get out, but eventually, the water did feel a bit cold and she climbed out with a grunt. She took one of the huge towels her mom loved, wrapped her chubby body into it and stumbled off to her bedroom.

Moments later, she flopped on her mattress and somehow fell asleep instantly.

Marcy awoke two hours later from the mighty rumble of her stomach. The sound was shockingly loud, more intense than she had ever heard. She was immediately wide awake, and felt a little ashamed. Also, she noticed how her hair felt horrible, having dried stupidly against her mattress. She groaned, slipped out of the bed, stared at the train wreck that was her haircut and got her brush, then carefully untangled that monstrosity.

At last, she was done, and her stomach kept protesting. She grabbed her phone absentmindedly and fired up the fast food delivery app. A nice big pizza should be enough, with an extra bottle of soda.

Just as she was about to hit the order button, she stopped. Getting pizza now would be stupid.

She had done splendid work up until now. Having this carb bomb now would ruin her efforts. Maybe ...

She slipped her bathrobe on and walked down to the kitchen and plucked the business card of the health deli her mother liked to use from

the fridge. Moments later, she ordered a whole week of deliveries. This way, she would have to stick to it. At least, she hoped she would ...

Once the order got through, she returned to her room and slipped on her comfy clothes. She went over to Wei's room, found a box of protein bars and picked one. He wouldn't miss them, and maybe, she could make good use of them.

As she bit into it, she groaned. Okay, that stuff was ... nasty? It tasted like cardboard and old chewing gum. She hesitated. Was it really worth it? Marcy was sure she could find a nice chocolate bar if she rummaged around in her room for a bit.

She took a deep breath and ate the rest of the bar. It flaked in her mouth, the disgusting structure only making the whole thing even more gross, but then again, this kind of stuff had worked for her stepbrother, right? She just had to stick to it, and she would get her results.

She sincerely hoped she would.

A little later, a rather cute delivery guy showed up on his e-bike and brought her two boxes, one for now and one for the evening. She smiled at him, he did too, though he was probably just being polite. She thanked him, he nodded vaguely, and then, he was gone. She carried the food inside.

Up until the door, she was careful, slow and measured. She didn't want it to look awkward should the guy take a look back. Then, the moment she was inside, she stormed to the kitchen, stuffed the lunch box into the microwave, zapped it and tore it open.

The chicken and steamed vegetables combo, the soup and the salad side tasted like heaven. It was the hunger, Marcy was sure, but it was a good feeling nonetheless. She finished eating, and, to her surprise, she felt pleasantly full. Not stuffed, just sated.

She leaned back and said to herself:

"That was good. I don't know why or how, but ... yeah. I think I could get used to this!"

She put away the box which would be returned with the next delivery, then got back up to her room. All of this action deserved a little playtime as a reward! She booted up her computer, a rather impressive setup she had had her parents pay for back when she was still going to major in computer sciences. As soon as it was ready, she went for her favorite game, a rather complex, thoroughly moddable piece of software that she loved to screw around with. She wanted to start a new game and see how her gnomes would fare in their next attempt at building a castle, but the driver of her graphics card acted up.

She groaned.

Fuck.

She rubbed her temples and said to herself:

"Seriously? Okay, back to the old drawing board ..."

Moments later, she was immersed in discussion boards and documentations, trying to fix the driver problem. It took three hours to figure this out, but she wasn't angry. Instead, she felt proud. She had even had to assemble a bit of code from bits and bobs to make it work, and she had enjoyed this.

After an hour of gnomish castle-building, she found herself drifting back to her ancient wish of creating her own games, and then, she loaded up the coding tutorials the college dudes had suggested. She was absorbed again ...

Two months later, Marcy was jogging through the park, her feet skipping over the ground at a reasonable pace. She had somehow managed to

lose 140 pounds, an absurd amount of weight that had her visit the doctor simply to see whether she was actually healthy. The doctor had examined her and declared that she was surprisingly fit, and that her vitals had all improved. She had previously been at risk for diabetes and cardiovascular problems, and that had somehow fixed itself. She was quite happy by the change, though she wasn't quite sure how her exercise routine would have achieved something like that.

Still, success was success and once the doc declared that she was light enough now to jog, she had taken this up too. Lately, it was more of a run than a sprint. She couldn't explain it, but she could enjoy it. Her skin had cleared up, her hair was glossy and strong, and she didn't even mind that people looked at her as she passed by. The main reason was that their looks were no longer judging, but more friendly. All in all, Marcy was having fun!

Maybe that was the big thing: She was having fun. She was doing the things she now enjoyed doing, and it helped her tremendously. Just as she was rounding the fountain and heading for the hill at the far end of the park, she was thinking about that coding problem that had stumped her yesterday evening. After getting her programming groove back, she had found a few guys who needed help with their big game project, and she had read up on Unity and was now contributing daily. They even hooked her up with other guys and she was earning a bit of cash like that!

Life was good again. No. Life was good for the first time! At last, she felt strong and in control.

That was another thing. After switching to jogging, she had started some strength training, mostly isometrics and a few exercises using household implements. The thing was, she was now able to do five pushups in good form, and she could squat nicely, which, combined with her fitter butt, made her feel even better.

She still had to get some new outfits, but since she was still losing weight rather quickly, she didn't want to "spoil" it by settling in too quickly. The

only thing she had gotten herself was a smaller tracksuit, simply because the last one had become unpractical. Also, Ophelia had insisted to accompany her the moment she felt ready. They hadn't had time to meet up since, but they texted each other constantly, encouraging each other and having fun.

After ten laps in the park and a well-built-up sweat, Marcy returned home, her body soaked, but feeling great. She had stretched already and was now looking forward to hit the showers, get her post-workout protein shake and then get that piece of code to work. She had jotted down her ideas on her phone and all she needed now was to see whether her intuition on that thing was good.

The cars in front of the mansion were the first sign of trouble. She spotted Wei's Maserati on the ramp. Fuck. Those cars presaged trouble. She was pretty sure Wei was up to no good and he would have his jerk friends around too. Then came the music. The sound was pretty awful, loud and pumping. Compared to the nerdy soft pop she liked, this kind of noise made her tired and frustrated.

She decided to just stick to her room, close the door and put on her noise-cancelling headphones.

Then she opened the door to the main hall, and the smell of weed, the perfume, the girls in skimpy outfits, the jocks, the noise and the laughter and splashes from the pool made her decide that no, she wouldn't take it anymore.

She wouldn't let Wei spend the next weeks being a jerk to her. Especially as the "guests" started making rude comments in her direction, laughing at her and pointing. Apparently, Wei had talked about her in college. Some of them were even people from her old school, and they were just as shitty ...

She walked to the pool. Wei was in the water with a gaggle of girls that were all over him. Marcy had to admit that he was big and hunky and that it was unsurprising they would adore him. She tried to get his attention, but he couldn't even care to ignore her. After a bit of waving and calling, she went over to the massive sound system, and switched it off.

The party took a few seconds to grind to a halt, but once it did, they all stared at her.

Wei emerged from the water and strode over to her looking down on her:

"What the fuck do you think you are doing, 'big sis'?"

The last words came out slathered in disdain. She was about to turn and run, but she forced herself to stand her ground.

"This is my home and I need to study and work. You can't be so loud!"

"You? Study and work? When did that happen? And what's with the clothes, lard girl? Did you finally stop to be less of a pig?"

He poked at her midsection and Marcy instinctively flexed her abs. They weren't strong or anything, but they were there now, and despite Wei's massive biceps, she felt quite powerful in that moment. She could see the surprise on his face.

The other people were staring at them now, but Marcy decided to go on the offensive. She grabbed the soft layer of flab on top of Wei's abs and pinched it.

"Not looking so tight anymore, huh? Too much partying, too little working out?"

She couldn't believe she was just saying this, but she had obviously hit a weak spot and her brother seemed quite furious at this.

"Stop that, piggie! Don't touch me with your fatty fingers!"

Marcy grinned smugly and raised an eyebrow. The other people seemed unimpressed by Wei's reaction and his taunt. She pressed on.

"The way this is going, I'm gonna beat you in athletics at Christmas."

"What? Are you seriously doing this?" Wei lost his cool for a moment, then recovered. He got his phone and started streaming. "Okay, ladies and gentlemen, this here is my chubby failure of a sister. She has just issued a challenge: Apparently, she believes she can beat me at athletics. Cute. Well, if she wants that, she can have it! We're going to compete at three events: Weightlifting, arm wrestling and running. And we will do this by Christ ..."

She cut him off:

"Thanksgiving!"

He stared at her for a moment, unable to believe what she just said. He managed a rather stumbly "Okay, Thanksgiving it is ..."

Then he continued:

"Yeah. Anyway, we will stream it, I will win, and the loser", he pointed at Marcy, "will obey the winner", he gave the camera a smug grin, "for a year! Got it?"

Marcy was a bit surprised by this, but she suddenly had that crazy glint in her eyes and said:

"Fine by me. Looking forward to it."

Wei stopped the stream and silence fell. He scowled at her and hissed:

"You just signed up for your funeral, lard girl."

Marcy did her best to keep a calm face and said:

"Cute. But I'll give you a better reason to cry."

Then she walked away briskly to get a shower and try to figure out how and why she had just done this, which was quite obviously the dumbest

thing she had ever done.

At the same time, Marcy somehow felt confident that she could do it. No. She knew she would be able to do it! She would make her brother regret his stupid words!

When she came out of the shower, the party had collapsed on itself and the rich kids had packed up, probably to cause chaos and confusion somewhere else. Marcy fought hard within herself to stay calm. The doubts came back and pushed against her, making her feel stupid again.

She shook her head to clear it.

Enough.

She had to start somewhere, and she really had no time to waste. As a result, she went down to the basement to see whether Wei's stuff was still there and usable. She slipped on a fresh set of workout gear and opened the door to his former refuge. As the lights went on, she nodded to herself. This could work ...

Wei had accumulated a massive set of fitness equipment down here, having run their dad's credit card to its limit at one point. She had no idea whether all those machines were actually useful, but she was sure they were the best one could get for money.

She explored the room and found a large freezer full of protein-charged food, boxes and bottles of supplements and whey protein, and even a smaller fridge of injectables. No wonder Wei had had such an amazing growth spurt ...

Marcy finished her round and sat on one of the machines, moving its steel arm. Alright, she would figure this out ...

One month later, Marcy was just completing her final set of lat pulldowns, going to exhaustion as an intense finisher. It was impressive how easy she was now able to motivate herself. She was training every day, usually putting in two rounds, one in the morning and one in the evening, she had her favorite podcasts ready, and she would follow her fitness channels, perfecting her routine and improving her technique easily.

The effects were amazing. She had managed to lose massive amounts of weight, somehow dropping down to 135 pounds, but at the same time, her skin hadn't turned all loose. She had no idea how that had happened, but it was way tauter and healthier than before. To her further surprise, her chest had improved too. Despite losing so much weight, her breasts had grown rather than collapsed. Where they used to be small, depressing sacks of skin before, they had tightened up and become amazingly perky.

For Marcy, this transformation had the surprising effect that she started to like looking at herself. After her workouts, she would enjoy looking at her bulging muscles and her tight waist and smile happily. Of course, she wasn't a bodybuilder or even a fitness model yet, but she was slim now, and the muscles stood out nicely. It was an amazing sensation to feel light and strong. She hadn't been this relaxed in all her life.

Marcy still wondered how she managed to maintain her motivation, though. The training was tough and painful, and it could be boring and repetitive. She stuck to it, and she could deal with the strain without thinking about complaining ... It couldn't just be her needing to deal with Wei being a jerk, could it?

She pushed herself some more, forcing her muscles to go on beyond her usual maximum. She groaned and grunted, but only when her body couldn't continue any further, she slowly released the machine's bar and stretched.

"Wow ..."

Just then, her phone burped, telling her about a message.

Marcy reached over to the phone and looked at it.

Ophelia. She wrote:

"Hey. You've been ghosting me for almost three months now and I don't even know anymore what you look like. I gotta see you!"

Marcy chuckled and wiped her sweaty hands, then answered:

"Me too. Sorry for being a stranger. I got a lot on my plate."

"Oof! You're here. I'm so glad. I was afraid something had happened to you."

"What? No. I was just busy. Where do we go?"

"Lestat. We play tonight and after that, we can hang out. Please come. Please!"

Marcy rolled her eyes ironically. Of course. Lestat was the local goth club, with a name like that, you had to be. It was really nice, both for the old geezers and the kids, and the drinks were affordable. The music was ... not really Marcy's style, but looking at Ophelia doing her thing was definitely going to sweeten the experience.

"I'm coming! I missed you a lot and I hope it will be nice!"

"Hey, we're the Weeping Angels! We're never nice. We're tragic!"

"And also terrifying."

"Oh yes. I so hope they're going to manage an episode as terrifying as that one."

"I will never forgive you for making me watch that."

"Hah! See you later. Gotta run, the customers won't tattoo themselves."

"Okay, that is also terrifying. See you tonight!"

This brought up an interesting problem for Marcy. She never had much in the way of club wear and had usually just gone in her normal street clothes, which tended to make her overall style problems even worse and made her feel even more awkward.

If she put on her normal street clothes now, she would have to find another person on the internet to share those clothes with her, simply because she had basically halved herself. She couldn't hope to look good in those, even if that was possible given their overall sack-like shape. Also, walking in those was even more impossible because she could tie her pants around herself twice now.

She had to find something to wear.

For a moment, she thought about just pulling one of her old hoodies over herself and tie a belt around it, declaring it a dress, but then she decided that she didn't want to spoil it for Ophelia. That girl deserved the best-dressed fans in town!

Marcy started digging around in her wardrobe. Under a layer of outfits she had used to conceal her blobbish figure, she found a few older strata that had been gifts of sorts, and sometimes shows of optimism.

Then she found it. It was a fishnet t-shirt Ophelia had given her a few years ago, as a kind of motivation. It hadn't motivated Marcy, and it would have been frustrating if it hadn't been a gift from Ophelia. With her, Marcy was willing to accept things like these without feeling insulted.

She held it against her chest.

Okay, this could actually work. It could even look good ... She just needed something to wear under it. Ophelia would probably just take some black tape and stick it on her nipples, then pull that mesh over it all, but Marcy didn't have that kind of confidence.

So, she found a black sports bra, put that on, then tried the shirt for size.

Wow. She looked at her reflection.

The semi-visible four-pack on her waist was shaded just right, her fuller breasts were nicely supported by the sports bra, and while the look was way too intense for regular Marcy, new, fitter Marcy couldn't help feeling excited by it.

She grinned. So this was what it felt like to be in style ...

Now she just needed something for her lower body, but ... Nice!

Later that evening, Marcy got out of the cab and adjusted her jacket. She had to go out shopping in the end, but it had worked out well enough. She had opted for a pair of black cargo pants that left her now rather buff thighs enough room, and had put on a pair of Converse. She had first thought about trying heels, but after two minutes of walking around in a pair at the shop, she had dropped the idea and settled for flats instead.

Still, she felt great. She had also picked a new leather jacket to go with the fishnet shirt, and she had tied her long black hair which had regained its luster lately into a big loose knot with two chopsticks. Her makeup was very reduced. She didn't want to screw this up, so all she did was a bit on her lashes and some red on her lips. Marcy felt this was too much already, but what could she do?

Moments later, she was inside. The bouncer had just nodded at her with a smile, and with a few quick steps, she was down in the basement. A wave of weed, beer and angsty vocals washed over her.

The place was moderately crowded, but people seemed excited for Ophelia's band. She even spotted occasional band shirts with the Angels' logo on it.

She got herself a glass of mineral water, which caused the guy at the bar to seem vaguely disappointed, but soon, it was time for the show to start.

Sasha, the dude on guitars, ripped into a stirring intro, then Maya, the lady of the synths, started the drums and hit the keys, while Arioch, the bass player, let her fingers dance on the fretboard.

Ophelia strode on stage, wearing a long black dress that clung to her slim, pale body. Her ashen pixie cut changed colors in the stage lights, and she was wearing absurdly high heels.

“Eyes see you in icy glare ... You’re frozen and broken and I can’t care ... Our hearts are still pounding but will you dare ... To come back to life, break free from despair ...”

A pause, then the band hit hard, with Ophelia leaning back and screaming:

“I die inside to let you come back to life! Be my mirror, be my love, be my anchor!”

Marcy was shocked by the intensity. She had heard Ophelia sing her songs back when they were still at school, and Ophelia had occasionally shown her bits and pieces of her tracks, but the Weeping Angels had definitely grown into a professional act.

Ophelia completely dominated the stage, the rest of the band supporting her, but it was clear they liked this. She would dance around Sasha and give them space to show of their moves, but the two other members appeared to be more comfortable in the background.

They roared through their set, switching to a calmer part after a bit. The audience loved it and Marcy went along with it, even ending up getting

pushed around in the mosh pit when Ophelia brought the band into the final power drive!

Marcy could feel Ophelia’s eyes on her as she finished her final song. The goth prodigy was smiling at her, and Marcy was pretty sure there was a hint of desire in that look. The crowd roared for an encore, people starting an “Angels – Angels – Angels!” chant.

A very sweaty and exhausted Ophelia, her makeup already runny from the stage lights and the intensity of the show, checked with her bandmates. After a round of nods, she launched into a “just for the heck of it” encore set, with just stupid covers.

They finished up with “Cruel Angel’s Thesis” and “I was made for loving you”, before finally leaving a sweaty but happy audience.

As the rest of the band started putting away their equipment, Ophelia sat on one of the monitor speakers and smiled at the buff young girl with the big tits that had done her best to look cute in her starter goth outfit. She looked happy and all red and blushing, her hair in a bunch and her makeup runny, and yet, glowing cheeks and everything. The fishnet shirt and sports bra combo was nice, the yoga pants and the plaid miniskirt were a bit experimental, but yeah, this girl was super cute.

Ophelia took another swig from her bottle to get her mouth wet again after all the singing. From the looks she got from her, Ophelia decided she wouldn’t go home alone tonight. After all, a little rock ‘n’ roll in her life was more than required.

Now the girl turned to her and walked over and Ophelia couldn’t help but getting “I recognize that cutie”-vibes. Who was that?

Just as her mind understood, she heard her go:

“Hey Ophi, sorry for dropping off the face of the Earth for so long, but I had sooo much on my plate, and ...”

This was accompanied by gratuitous waving of her arm and bouncing up and down.

"Mar-Mar? What happened to you?"

"Oh, a lot!"

Moments later, they were at a secluded table, each one with a drink in hand. Ophelia had picked a beer, but Marcy had surprised her by getting some tea. Normally, Marcy would have ordered some sticky limo, but Ophelia began to understand how her transformation had happened.

"I still can't believe Wei did that.", Ophelia said, "What a jerk! I saw the video, cos everybody saw the video, but that was the first time I really wanted to kick someone's ass through the internet!"

Marcy took another sip, happy to know that Ophelia understood the sentiment.

"Yeah, I think that technology would be awesome. I mean, either people would get more courteous, or cushion salesmen would make a fortune!"

Ophelia snorted:

"Yeah. I sent you a message right after. Didn't you get it?"

"I guess I did, but somehow, I was so focused ..."

"For a month?"

"Kinda ..."

To Marcy's shock, Ophelia reached over and gave her shoulder a little squeeze.

"Wow. This is ... wow."

"Too much?"

"Nah. It's amazing. I never would have thought ... It looks great on you. You were always cute, don't get me wrong, but ..."

"I was always cute?"

"Totally. Yeah." Ophelia realized she had already said too much and backpedaled as fast as she could. "Cute in that awkward kinda way, right?"

"I think we can settle on 'awkward', right?"

Ophelia did her best to be a little more aloof.

"Yeah. Sure."

Then she added:

"Anyway, the offer stands. If you want me to kick Wei's butt, name the time and place, and I will put on my biggest, spikiest boots! You kinda have a choice ..."

She pulled out her phone and showed Marcy a pair of the most monstrous high-heeled boots ever. They were made of black leather and covered in spikes, while also going up mid-thigh.

"Got them recently as a reward for myself after tattooing my first celebrity!"

"Who was it?"

"Torben Gilgamesh."

"Who?"

Ophelia chuckled.

"I always forget you're a normie. They're the singer of In Tears Forever. You wouldn't know them, I guess, but you can come over any time and I'll play you their best songs!"

Marcy blushed a bit.

"I'd love to do that."

"Also, sorry for calling you normie, I mean you really rock that shirt!"

"I do?"

"Totally. You look like the cutest little starter goth, and it fits you so well!"

"I don't think I'm ready for advanced bootsmanship yet."

Marcy pointed at the picture, then Ophelia declared that she hadn't seen nothing yet and showed her another pair which made her gulp.

"How can you even walk in those things?"

"It takes a little practice, but ... badly. Also, it's more of a trophy. You buy them, you set them up in your closet, and then you look at them and fantasize."

There was an awkward silence. Somehow, the "fantasize" cue had brought them both to look away.

Marcy felt super-awkward as she sipped on her tea. Even though the music was still playing loud enough in the background, she felt as if the tea-sip screeched through the room like fingernails on a blackboard.

At last, Ophelia managed to say:

"So you have been working out?"

"Every day. I'm even doing weights now. Wei got so many of them back when he prepared for college, and I've been using them since then. No point in having them lying around, gathering dust."

"Good idea. He probably got the best equipment, right?"

"Sure. Look."

Marcy took out her phone and showed Ophelia a video of her doing lat pulldowns. Ophelia took a deep breath to try and hide her blush.

Watching her friend move that weight in her surprisingly tight workout clothes was ... nice? Very nice, even.

"Your brother definitely has good taste in equipment."

"He does?"

"Totally. This is a Steinmann setup ... They're from Germany, and they're amazing!"

"How do you know anything about this?"

"Weeeeell ..." Ophelia grinned: "The thing is, my older brother used to bodybuild. For real. He did competitions and he won quite a few of them. He even had sponsorships and the consensus is he had a shot at the Mister Olympia."

"What happened?"

"The usual. He got injured and they tried to fix it, but it didn't work, and he had to stop. I mean, he still is pretty buff, but nowhere near his previous level. It was probably for the best, though. He was really ruining himself like that."

She showed Marcy a picture. The guy in question was a kind of massive Viking bro, grinning at the camera, all shiny and oily. He wore a kind of loincloth and was just doing a very impressive double-biceps pose. There was a certain family resemblance.

"And this is him now."

Ophelia swiped and Marcy saw the same guy, still looking like a Viking, but now more of a surfer dude one. His muscles were still big, but nowhere as ripped. Also, he was standing next to Ophelia and she was wearing a cute black swimsuit with an inverted pentagram made of straps covering her chest, and another one over her tight waist.

Marcy kinda managed to notice the big guy, but Ophelia's pale little vampire look with her frilly umbrella next to him was way more

interesting.

Ophelia took the phone back, which Marcy let go of reluctantly.

"Anyway, I picked up a lot of stuff on the whole training subject, so if you ever need a coach ..."

Marcy's eyes shone:

"I ever need a coach. Like absolutely."

"No. No. Sorry. But no. Do it again, slowly, and straight."

"But ... on the video ..."

"Screw the video. The guy you've been watching is not even a quack. Do it right."

"But there's no weight on the bar! How am I going to get a pump?"

"Marcy, listen. This is important. If you want to build up your strength, you need to challenge your muscles. You need to get them used to the extra weight, and that means exhausting them. So ... If you do the movements in a wrong way, you get injured. Seriously. This is why we do this without weights first, and once the movement becomes intuitive, you can start packing on the iron."

Marcy was a bit nervous now. Having Ophelia around was great, but it was also making her a bit awkward. Ophelia was close to her now, correcting her movements. Of course, she was looking great in her own workout outfit, today, it was a pair of black yoga pants with white roses curled around them and a crop top that included a matching motif around her neck.

Marcy still felt like the pudgy bag of meat she had been before and having this slender beauty all close to her made her feel inappropriate.

At the same time, Ophelia was feeling the tension too. Her friend had somehow managed to amazonify herself, and she was looking ever more incredible every day. Sure, Marcy lacked the technique and the finesse to make it all work, but she had endless energy and excellent discipline. It felt as if the girl had finally found a way to make this work for her and that her success only boosted her confidence more.

Even back in school, Marcy had had this in her. Ophelia remembered it clearly. But back then, she had used this focus mostly on learning and helping Ophelia through the dangers of math and science. In a way, Marcy had been her private tutor, and now, Ophelia could give something back.

"Alright. Let's do it again."

Marcy nodded eagerly and got back in position. She felt happy to have Ophelia as her teacher. It was really nice, even if she had to deal with the constant tension ...

They continued the workout for a while. When it was over, Marcy was surprised to be even sweatier than before, despite so little weight. Somehow, doing it like this was way more exhausting than ever before. Ophelia obviously knew her stuff.

She finished, and Ophelia helped her clean everything up, then the goth girl said:

"Usually, you would get a massage now to really improve the growth of your muscles. You should probably hire a masseur ..."

Marcy hesitated:

"Uh ... Ophelia ..."

"Yes?"

"Do you know how to do it?"

"Sure. I'm no professional, but ..."

"Would you help me?"

Ophelia was a bit unsure for a moment. This was getting more intimate by the second. Then she nodded:

"Of course!"

"Thank you."

After a bit of cleaning up, Marcy ended up on the massage bed and Ophelia started working through her muscles.

Suddenly, the goth girl asked:

"Say, Marcy, how tall were you again?"

"Five feet. No need to rub it in! I mean, with parents like these ..."

"That's not what I mean. Get up."

"Why?"

"Just get up."

Marcy did as she was told and looked at Ophelia. Then, slowly, she understood that they were at each other's eyelevel. Ophelia said:

"You know I'm 5'4", right?"

"Uh-huh."

"And I didn't shrink."

"Nah."

"So why are you as tall as me?"

"This is a joke, right?"

"I dunno. I really dunno."

"Okay, so ... how is this possible?"

"Marcy, I have no idea. I ... maybe you are a super-late bloomer? Is that possible? Is that even a thing?"

"Maybe it's the exercising?"

"I don't think so. I mean, my brother stayed the same size, and he really put in a lot of work, and he took a lot of ... stuff? I think he would have tried to get taller if there was a way to do that."

They exchanged glances. Yeah. Boys really seemed to be obsessed with the whole height issue.

Marcy sighed:

"Okay, so maybe I grew. A little. Things happen!"

"Marcy, you grew four inches in a couple of months. The last time anyone of us two grew four inches was ... never?"

"Hm. Fine, so ... what do I do now?"

"Maybe get your pituitary gland checked?"

"Mhm. Okay. Yeah, I guess I'll do that. It's just super-weird, right?"

Ophelia nodded. Super-weird.

"By the way, do you even have a baseline for your weight?"

"Kinda? I started at over two hundred, but I got down to 135 last week."

"You should definitely record that. Data is super important when building towards something. Wait, I'll get you a good tracker app ..."

Moments later, Marcy had it on her phone and it turned out it could connect to the scales Wei had bought for the home gym.

"Okay, those scales must be broken."

"What do you mean?"

"They're wrong. I was at 135 last week."

"And now?"

"It says 145 pounds. That can't be real, right?"

Ophelia looked at her again and said:

"Well ... It shouldn't be ..." She looked at the scales, tried them on her own, but they matched her weight. Then she lifted them up, looked under them, found that they were okay, and had Marcy stand on them again.

145.

"What is going on ..."

Marcy tapped the scales again, but Ophelia said:

"Maybe it's the same thing that made you grow?"

"Yeah, right! This is absurd."

Ophelia tried to suppress a blush. She had to ask:

"Okay, you know what, let me take a look at you."

Marcy, a little oblivious made a presenting gesture at her body:

"Here I am?"

"No, I mean, take off your jacket."

"Okay ..."

The former chubby girl unzipped her jacket and pulled it off carefully. Ophelia's throat went dry. Alright, it was obvious where those extra ten pounds had gone to. Somehow, all that training had given Marcy a set of full, well-trained muscles that filled out her stretched skin quite nicely.

She had been fat once, but now, all that extra weight had been replaced by tough, intense meat.

She wasn't ripped or anything, but it was undeniable she was buff and she had packed on the beef in all the right places. Also, her bra was well-filled with a pair of nice tits. She was looking more or less superheroic, and the thickness of her muscles only accented her style even more. In a way, she looked like a shorter version of She-Hulk, but only after She-Hulk had taken up CrossFit.

Ophelia's throat went very, very dry. Seeing her friend which she had adored before now looking like a hunkette only made things worse. Her heart beat against her chest and she struggled to stay quiet and relaxed.

"Yeah ... looking ... okay, I guess?"

Marcy blushed. Exposing herself in front of her friend like that felt odd. The reaction was a little weird too. What did she mean by that? Not by her words. There was something about Ophelia's gestures and the way she looked that made Marcy not ... uncomfortable, but unsure of how to deal with it. Of course, having Ophelia so close to her, after a massage, and with that look on her face ... She shook her head to clear it. She needed to focus and not go off on some wild tangent and seeing things that weren't there.

They were friends, it was nice to work out together, and Ophelia was helping her win that stupid challenge by Wei. That was all.

That was all.

She repeated it internally to herself. Then she noticed that she must have made movements with her lips, because Ophelia was looking at her even more intensely.

September came and the situation was getting way more intense. Marcy was on the leg press machine and she was glistening with sweat. She

had ditched the sweatpants and jacket a while ago, simply because she had outgrown it, and had instead picked a set of white and purple gym shorts and a matching top. This was making things even worse for Ophelia, who was having a harder and harder time dealing with her friend's mounting sexiness. It was difficult for her.

The thing was, Ophelia was coming full circle. She came from a family of super-fit people. Her father was a rather famous personal trainer and former Olympian, her mother had been America's sweetheart during her tenure as a cheerleader and had then gone on to be a household name in gymnastics. Even now, there were two standard moves of gymnastics that were named after her! She was a kind of living legend.

Of course, her brothers had both joined the family business as did she. Her older brother, Caleb, had become a personal trainer after the end of his bodybuilding career and her younger brother, Enoch, usually called Eric, was just finishing his law degree after a successful football career. His goal was to work for players' rights and to improve their security and health on the pitch.

So, of course, her mother had made sure Ophelia also had an athletic upbringing. She had started young, as was necessary, and had trained as a gymnast from age four. At eight years old, she had decided to stop this and had instead spread out, excelling in all sports that came her way.

Then puberty struck, complete with depression, self-doubt and eating disorders.

It had been a stressful time. Ophelia stopped sports altogether and only her mother's insistence on a "soft landing" allowed her to maintain the health of her joints and ligaments. Other people that just stopped from one day to the next would end up very sick and even struggling with mobility problems for the rest of their lives.

Ophelia withdrew and ended up being Marcy's best friend and rediscovering herself as a rather preppy goth. She spent her days drawing long, thin figures in fancy, complicated outfits and generally

being romantic and depressed. All this California-style fitness and bimbo stuff made her furious. To her relief, her parents let her be.

Suddenly, birthday presents included vouchers for goth shops, sketchbooks and a collection of fifty classic horror movies, most of which turned out to be ridiculous in their own entertaining way. She watched them all with Marcy, and things went well until they reached some Italian craziness that really made them reconsider the whole scary movie business.

Anyway, after almost a decade of loving the dark, pale and thin look, Marcy's growing muscles and ever improving fitness were making Ophelia shockingly unsure about her desires.

Somehow, Marcy was now 5'8", and she was packing on the pounds again, only this time, it was all muscle, and she was looking like a goddamn mythic heroine. She was closing in on two hundred pounds again, but this time, most of that was muscle, and she looked incredible!

Marcy was just pushing up the sled again, her thighs swelling up and her calves hardening with the effort. She was incredibly sweaty, and even with her friend's porcelain skin, Ophelia could see just how ripped and hard Marcy had become. For the goth girl, the whole situation was getting hard to deal with. Somehow, her friend managed to not be gross and disgusting in her sweaty way, but instead, she was hot and cute at the same time. Sure, she was sweaty, that was clear, but her whole expression was so adorable, even when she was struggling to finish her set ...

At last, it was done, and Ophelia quickly locked the sled. Then she handed a towel to her friend. Marcy wiped herself down and smiled at her, just happy to be done with it. Then she asked:

"Hey, Ophelia, you really look ... red? Are you okay?"

"Uh ... yeah? Yes! Yes. Totally. I'm fine ..."

"You have to be careful. It's getting cool outside, and here, it's all hot ..."

Ophelia's mouth was dry as Marcy obliviously patted up the sweat from her cleavage. When did it get so big? Why did she have those magnificent tits?

"Yeah ... Maybe ... maybe I'm getting sick? You know, I wouldn't want to ... you know ... infect you or something? I'd better ... go and get in bed? Mhm ..."

Moments later, Ophelia was out of the mansion, feeling extremely stupid and horny at the same time. She decided not to ride her bike home. Now was not the time for ... bumpiness.

But she still had to have her privacy, and soon!

It was three in the morning, and Ophelia was lying on her bed. She was still awake. Okay, late hours weren't all that usual for a gothy, witchy young woman like her, but still, this was getting out of hand! She had taken a cold shower and tried to distract herself by watching some reaction videos to a few new songs of bands she adored. The frustration at the reactor's stupidity was a good way of dealing with her ... thoughts.

Eventually, she had slipped into her favorite nightshirt, a cute long black number with white frilly edges and a sleepy bat on it, and had dumped herself on the mattress. She had even drunk a glass of warm milk, just to take the edge of that day.

Yeah.

Well, that hadn't worked at all. Like, not in any way. Instead, she was still randomly pulling her blanket over herself, getting all hot, and pushing it away again. Then, moments later, she would be freezing again, or at least she felt that way, and she pulled it back over her.

Bah.

Bah!

At last, the final noises of the day had died down outside. Now came the two hours in which this part of the city got disturbingly quiet and one could hear one's thoughts in one's head. That made things even worse.

"Fuck."

Ophelia kicked the blanket away once more.

"Look at yourself, Ophelia! What are you doing? You ... you idiot! You can't be doing this. It's Marcy. Mar-Mar. The tiny, chubby girl that is constantly in trouble and needs to be saved. She's your best friend, you're her best friend, and you can't start having a crush on her. You're supposed to be at her side and help her like you always did. You can't go around and be horny at her. Nope."

She said those words out loud, and she knew they were stupid lies she told herself. She pulled that stupid blanket back up, bunched it into a big lump, and cuddled her slim body against it.

"Stupid Marcy. Why ... why can't she stay all chubby and cute and ..." She sat up again: "Fuck! Okay, Ophelia, you can't be doing this! You can't just ..."

She stared into the darkness. Outside, some critter started chirping. A faint breeze pushed some trash around.

"Was it always this way? Did I always ... love her?"

The answer from outside was just some concentrated chirping. Ophelia glared at the window. The chirping stopped.

She had to smile.

"Behold! I am Ophelia, Mistress of Crickets!", she said with a dramatic voice, raising her arms in a matching pose. Marcy would instantly burst into laughter at this performance. Marcy ...

"Okay, Ophelia, time to be honest to yourself. Maybe ... maybe it's true ... Maybe I've been loving her for a while now. Maybe that's why I didn't want to be with her ... I just ... It felt wrong."

She looked at her reflection in the mirror. Without her makeup, she looked weird. Her eyes were all tiny and usually shaving her eyebrows to paint them back on all dramatically meant that her night face was a bit ... unstructured?

Then again, this was the real, the raw and honest Ophelia. The Ophelia her love would wake up next to every morning ...

Wait, where was that train of thought heading?

Fuck. She couldn't be doing this!

"The thing is, if Marcy goes on like this ... she's going to be really ... sexy?" She shook her head. "Oh, who am I kidding! She already is. I don't know what is going on, but ... that girl is turning into a goddess! I ... I just hope it continues like that. I just wanna be by her side!"

Suddenly, she realized that her hand had hiked up her nightshirt a bit, and had also found its way into her panties.

She grunted. Before her mind's eye, there appeared images of Marcy training, Marcy getting massaged, Marcy stretching, Marcy showering, Marcy just being cute and ...

"This is sooo bad ..."

At four o'clock, she woke up again, and it was even worse.

She was all sweaty, the blanket had disappeared somewhere, and the cricket or whatever insect that had been, was busy again. Okay, that was the least of her concern. Her dreams were already fading, but the

afterimages were still with her, and it had been bodies. Bodies moving in unison. Soft, yet strong, intense ... Beautiful ...

She cursed.

Sleeping was going to be impossible.

The memory of her dream was disappearing into darkness, but she still felt that she had touched ... her.

That's when she noticed that she had messages on her phone. She took it and looked at them. Maybe this would help ...

"Hey, it's me, I was just worried ..."

"Did you make it home alright?"

"Ophelia? Are you okay?"

"Should I come over?"

"Do you need me to get something?"

"I could come over right away!"

"Are you okay? I'm getting dressed!"

The last one was from five minutes ago. Maybe this had woken her? She quickly replied:

"Don't panic, I'm fine. I'm home and I took some medicine and fell asleep. Everything is alright and I will see you tomorrow. I'm feeling better already."

Moments later, the answer popped up.

"Oof. Alright. Sleep well!"

"I will. You too."

"Thank you. I'll try."

Ophelia looked at the screen. "I'll try?" Was she in the same situation?

Nah. Couldn't be. Marcy was not into her. Ophelia was seeing things that weren't there. No wonder. Not sleeping could do this to you! She just had to relax and maybe everything would clear up in the morning.

She leaned back on the mattress, then twisted around to get out of the sweaty little pit she had created in her previous attempt at sleeping. Marcy had checked on her. That was so Marcy. She had kept asking for her until she had replied. Marcy had been worried about her.

Maybe ...

She drifted back into sleep.

There were shapes around her. Strong, heavy shapes that seemed to be friendly, helpful even. Tender. They touched, her caressed her, kissed her. She looked around in the darkness of her dreams, and above her, taller, broader, stronger than her, there was Marcy. Suddenly, Ophelia felt incredibly relaxed, her mind just acquiescing her desires.

Was it a lucid dream?

Ophelia wasn't sure, but she enjoyed what little control she had none the less, letting the strong arms hold her. She cherished the closeness, cuddling against those strong muscles and soft breasts. It was incredibly soothing and she felt safe and loved.

She awoke again, struggling to wake up. It was tough. The bed's attraction was strong and she had to really fight to get out. At the same time, as she got her eyes open, she sensed an incredible sadness. It had all been a dream, and she missed whatever had happened in it.

She rolled out of the bed, landed on the floor on all fours and crawled to the bathroom. There, she stared at the horror in her mirror.

She chuckled. Like most goths, she preferred vampires to zombies. But she could definitely pass as one today. Okay, except for the teeth, she was quite the Max Schreck impersonator. Or Beetlejuice. Wow, it was bad.

Ophelia got to work to maybe reassemble her face. Once that was done, she got herself her big mug of coffee and got the pre-packaged breakfast out of the fridge. Ever since she started to support Marcy, the other girl had gotten her on the same delivery service, and now Ophelia was eating healthy. Well, most of the time. Sometimes, it was just too healthy, okay?

She still adored her sugar-frosted sugar loops with extra chocolate.

Fuck.

Even getting her food meant thinking of Marcy ...

She finished as quickly as she could and headed to her shop, getting everything ready for her first client.

Now the day went into a strange, boring flow. People came to discuss designs, which wasn't that big of a deal for Ophelia, but usually meant listening to the other person constantly arguing with themselves and trying to make up their minds.

Some dudes showed up to get their big projects worked on, and she managed to clear her mind while the needle was buzzing, but then, there were those breaks when nothing at all happened.

She sighed. Normally, she liked this alone time, since she could go ahead and think of new, interesting designs, but this time, it felt just ... empty.

And the Devil, as they say, finds work for idle hands.

She let her pencil dance over the paper, starting out with the usual random geometric shapes, lines and flowers, then slowly shifting into knots and tribals. Usually, those worked pretty well. She let the lines pass around and over each other. Normally, this cleared her mind

quickly, and would open it for further inspiration. It was like a prayer to find the necessary serenity. She continued, wondering how long it would take.

Five minutes later, she realized she was trying to force it, and it wasn't working at all. Instead, she was starting to get angry. She looked at her work and found it boring and generic. She had gone this way a thousand times already. Frustrated, she tried to force it in some other direction, and then, it looked stupid. Forced. Pointless.

She closed her eyes, dropped the pencil and rubbed her temples. Why. Why? Why couldn't she get that stupid Marcy out of her head? Why did that girl that had always been just a friend have to turn herself into such a hot little ... well, not so little sex-bomb? Okay, that was a bit much, but ... Fuuuuck ...

Ophelia breathed out sharply. She tore off the page from the pad, crumpled it, cursed at it, crumpled it some more, really squeezed it with all her might, and then, ended up thinking of Marcy's muscles.

"Bah!"

She tossed the ball of paper into the trash and shook her head to clear it. Then she started over. This couldn't be like that. She had to be able to clear her head somehow.

She started doodling again. This time, things started out nicely. Some paisley shapes, always a good idea. Some circles shaded into spheres, even better. Some parallel curves

As she worked, she growled to herself:

"Stupid Marcy. Stupid Marcy with her stupid face. With her deep cute eyes ... so ... fucking ... stupid ... Always the puppy dog eyes ... So cute. And those stupid lips ... How did she manage to get them so full and soft?"

She started shading random shapes and found herself rage-doodling.

"Stupid Marcy and her cute soft lips ... I wonder what she'd look like if she would let me do her makeup ... I guess she would be irresistible ... I wonder what it would feel like to kiss her? I wish I could kiss her ... I ... Fuck!"

She stared at the paper.

"Seriously, subconscious? What the fucking fuck are you doing?"

Somehow, she had managed to assemble all those random shapes into an impressive and stylish portrait of Marcy, looking all cute and innocent and yet, sexy. And having her face being composed of all those shapes and lines didn't help either. It was actually pretty good.

She hesitated. Fuck. She couldn't have that thing lying around, right? Should she deface it? Draw a moustache on it? Should she crumple it and just throw it away? It was a bit too good ... No. She would keep it for ... reasons. Yes.

She carefully slipped the drawing into a sleeve and let it disappear in the drawer labelled "taxes" where she kept her "spicier" drawings. Then she got up and looked at the mirror.

The Ophelia in the looking glass seemed angry and frustrated, but also horny.

With a sigh, she said:

"You really gotta do something about this. You can't go on like that."

She would have to figure this out. Deal with the whole Marcy situation. Somehow.

For the next weeks, Ophelia did everything to avoid Marcy. It was just a stream of "Ooh, sorry, something has come up ...", "Hey, I'm really sorry, but I have an appointment with a client ..." and "Yeah, I know I should be

there, but ... you know how it is ... I kinda have to take care of this thing ...”.

The longer the whole thing went, the lamer her excuses got. In the end, she was starting to feel stupid even saying those to her phone. It was just this stupid.

The problem was, every time she couldn't come up with an excuse, things got super-awkward. The only way she could stand being around Marcy was when she was at least slightly drunk, and this usually turned out to have been a disastrous idea the next day.

Things came to a head one Friday evening in late September. They were supposed to meet at the Lestat and watch Innsmouth Amphibion, but Marcy didn't show up. The concert was about to start and Ophelia was gravitating around the entrance, looking very, very worried. Her self-doubts were hitting her hard. Did she finally manage to be such a shitty friend that she had successfully driven Marcy away? Did something happen to her? Did she have an accident? Was her best friend lying in a ditch somewhere, run over by a truck, assaulted by gangsters, attacked by stray wolves, caught in an international web of spies ... Ophelia shook her head. Her mind was clearly going off the rails here, just piling on ever more insane and ridiculous worries on top of each other.

It had to be her own idiotic behavior. Marcy wasn't coming because Ophelia had been a stupid, frustrating asshole. Marcy would have needed her support in her quest for justice, and Ophelia just hadn't been able to control herself and ruined everything. Everything!

She thought about sending Marcy a message, but she didn't want to fuel the whole disaster even more. If she just sat this one out, maybe things would just end and she would be free. Maybe this was the proverbial band-aid that had to be ripped off?

In the background, the concert started. Ophelia couldn't bear to worry about it. The music drifted over to the entrance, and it only made her more nervous and angry. The bouncer looked at her and asked:

“Do you need help?”

“Uh ... I think I fucked up.”

“Wanna talk about it?”

“Not sure. You see, there's this girl ... I adore her. And I don't want to ...”

“Tell her about your feelings?”

“Yeah.”

“It's a tough thing. Does she like you too?”

Ophelia stood and stared. Did she? What did Marcy think of her?

“I ... Maybe?”

She thought about her moments with Marcy in these months and all the years before, and she had to admit that ... Marcy definitely liked her. Maybe it was all ... okay? But why wasn't she here now? Panic started building up within her. What if she had fucked everything up now? What if everything had been okay, and her decision to put up some distance had only caused things to get worse? What if Marcy had decided that Ophelia hated her?

The bouncer looked at her with a friendly smile. Suddenly, Ophelia received a text. She pulled out her phone with lightning speed, almost managed to drop it, did an awkward dance as she tried to hold it and then unlocked it.

“Hey, sorry for not showing up. My mom freaked out when she saw me and got me to the hospital and had me do like a hundred tests, and I couldn't get any reception there. I wanted to write, but ... Sorry!”

Suddenly, Ophelia was overwhelmed with relief. The bouncer raised an eyebrow and returned to his door. Apparently, things were resolving themselves.

Another message came in:

"I really didn't want to spoil the show and I hope you are watching it anyway! You gotta tell me how it was!"

Ophelia stared at the screen and her heart was bouncing all around her chest with relief, excitement, and, well, horniness.

"Are you okay? I was worried."

"I am! Also, sorry for getting you worried. The tests are over, and they said that I am healthy as a horse, way more than ever before. They are wondering what is going on, but they have taken a bunch of samples and they'll figure it out. Or not."

"But you are healthy? And okay?"

"Totally. I'm just, you know, big?"

"That's true. I'm just, you know, relieved? So relieved."

"Me too! I thought you would be angry at me for not showing up?"

"Me, angry? Never! Not at you. No. Nope. Nopeity-nope."

"Nopeity-nope? Ophelia, are you okay?"

"Uh. Yeah. Now I am. I ... I gotta see you."

"Maybe not right now? We're still driving. My mom got me to those specialists, and they're ... I actually don't know where we are. But how about tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow. Tomorrow for sure."

"Yes! Thank you, Ophelia."

"See you after workout!"

"Couldn't you just come? I miss you."

Ophelia felt herself almost black out. She missed her. Okay. Fuck it.

"I'm coming. Gotta keep you focused and stop you from cheating on your movements, right?"

"Right! I can't wait."

"Me neither. Good night!" Ophelia started typing L-O-V-E Y- and just managed to catch herself. She deleted this and send the rest.

"Good night!"

Innsmouth Amphibion had to manage on their own.

One week later, the two of them were back together at Wei's home gym. Actually, it had slowly, but steadily morphed into Marcy's gym. She had covered the walls that weren't mirrored with posters of anime muscle girls she had either bought or designed herself, had added a new sound system, and quite a few machines and weights she needed now. Her progress had been absolutely relentless and now, most of the basic devices Wei had purchased back then were ... not as challenging as they once had been. Instead, she had acquired several custom machines, usually made to order by rather surprised technicians in far-away, specialized companies. The funniest part came during the delivery, when the burly dudes struggled with the different parts and boxes and Marcy would walk out and grab them and move them rather effortlessly.

Watching Marcy outlift those dudes did a thing on Ophelia. She hadn't thought that this bit would turn her on, but the bigger and stronger Marcy became, the more she found it impossible to ignore. Also, the whole Marcy physique situation was so out of control now that it was getting a bit too much for her. Seriously.

Marcy had somehow grown to six feet of height and 250 pounds of nicely built muscle. She was heavy, but she wasn't fat in any way. Instead, she looked more or less like a demigoddess or a superheroine.

Right now, Marcy had just finished a set of dumbbell curls with absurd weights, and an encouraging Ophelia handed her a towel to wipe the sweat from her brow. Marcy was wearing a rather eighties-styled outfit which Ophelia had brought her, something that fit the whole anime aesthetic by taking her back to the classics. Marcy was wearing the synchronization training set from Neon Genesis Evangelion, and she had teased Ophelia for not wearing the other set.

Then, with a chuckle, she had put on the Asuka version to her friend's Shinji. She even joined her on some exercises, but of course, at a much lower intensity.

Still, Marcy patted off the sweat from her ample bust. If Ophelia stood too close, it actually became a bit difficult to look over the massive breasts and the equally enormous pecs. Ophelia's eyes clung to her friend's outrageous upper body and did her best to stay cool. Then again, the other girl was making things even more difficult for her.

The thing was, right under those massive tits and pecs, there lurked what had recently become an eight-pack of ultra-hard abs, and the sweat kept pooling down there, running along her navel and down to Marcy's ... sex.

In a panic, Ophelia tried to look away, and since Marcy had this way of filling up her entire field of vision, she was forced to stare at the ceiling.

Marcy watched her with a certain confusion, then looked up herself. When she saw just the lamp, she had to ask:

"What's up there?"

"Er ... what?"

Marcy bent forward, her heavy breasts moving forward towards Ophelia. Although the outfit offered no cleavage, it still gave Ophelia a good look of the dark pleasures that awaited under that well-filled shirt. The musclegirl pointed upwards.

"What's up there? On the ceiling?"

"Uh ... nothing?"

"Oh. Okay. So ... What are you doing? Is that some kind of cool pose? Looking so far down on the normies that you have to look up again?"

"What?"

Ophelia was confused. What was Marcy talking about? Then she recovered.

"Yeah, totally. Queen of the damned. That's me." She looked to the left, then to the right. "So ... what do you think? Is my left or my right side better?"

Ophelia just hoped Marcy would change the subject quickly on that question. However, Marcy looked at her intently and scratched her chin.

"I ... It's hard, you know? You ... you kinda look amazing from all sides. I guess I am not cool enough to figure this out. You, on the other hand, are the cool expert ..."

The goth girl would have blushed if her makeup would physically let her, and replied:

"Hey, you're the science nerd around her. If there's someone in this room who could prove the existence of coolness, it would be you, right?"

Marcy snorted and grinned. Then she realized she had produced a tiny blob of snot on her nose and quickly and clumsily tried to wipe it off. Next came an even more awkward attempt at getting rid of the wiping towel, then some running around, and finally a deep breath from her.

"Er ... Uh ... Oof. Hey, please, please, never tell anyone what just happened, okay?"

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Hell, why did you have to tempt her so hard?

Marcy returned to her and sighed:

"You see my problem? There isn't a cool bone in my body."

Ophelia smiled sheepishly. This big clumsy girl was so cute in her stumbling loveliness.

"You're doing fine, mostly, Marcy."

"You're only saying this to make me feel better, but I like it."

Suddenly, Ophelia found herself hugged by the giantess in front of her. Marcy's mighty arms closed around her trim shape and she panicked at first, but then, as she realized she wasn't going to get squished, she tried to keep her distance without pushing her away at the same time. It was so strange. Marcy seemed to understand what was going on and relaxed, but still kept her close, her hands somehow hovering around Ophelia's back while also having her tits up at her friend's chest.

The big woman whispered:

"I'm just so happy you are here ... I didn't think I could have continued without thinking of you! My family was freaking out all over, and my dad was going crazy when he saw me like that! If I hadn't thought of you, I would have given up. But I decided to not care. I'm doing this, I want to win this, and ... I want to make you proud!"

Ophelia shivered and somehow extricated herself from Marcy's hug. The big girl instantly recoiled, taking away her arms and looking all crestfallen. Meanwhile, Ophelia's inner voice screamed at her for being so incredibly stupid. If she stayed here, everything would go to shit. If she left ... It wouldn't work either ... She didn't want to ruin all of this, and she was so close to bringing her friendship with Marcy crashing down ...

She had to get away. Now.

She fought the mounting panic and retreated slowly, gently, whispering to Marcy that it was fine but that she had to take care of ... something, then she fled.

Marcy stood there in the gym, completely lost for words, her reflections staring at her in complete confusion. What just happened?

Hundreds of thoughts were racing through her mind. She was a freak. She was a monster. She was disfigured. She was disgusting. She was unlovable. She didn't deserve friends, respect, love ...

It was for the best if despicable creatures like her, whose mere existence made people sick stayed alone. Hidden. Away from everybody.

The best thing would be if she just disappeared. If no one even remembered that she existed.

There was nothing she could do to fix this.

When she had still been fat, everybody hated her because she was so disgusting. Now that she was fit, all the world couldn't help but stare at her in horror, like some kind of freak or mad science experiment!

She left everything the way it was and stormed to her room, slamming the door behind her. The blow was so strong that the panel almost flew off the hinges, and she heard wood splinter. She threw herself on the bed, pulled the blanket over her head and started howling in pain, biting into her pillow to muffle it.

It took forever for her to calm down, and then, out of despair and hope that at least the old things would still help, she ordered a large pizza for herself. When it came, she devoured it hungrily. It was the first time in months she had eaten something like that, and only now did she realize just how disgusting it was. She cried on the pizza, which made things even worse.

She wanted to throw it away, but she couldn't even bring herself to do this. She didn't deserve not to finish it, even if it tasted like cardboard and rubber. She ate it, glaring at her greasy fingers and feeling sick.

As she went to sleep, she started sobbing again. This was rock-bottom.

Marcy awoke at nine o'clock and stared at the ceiling. Now that had been one stupid night. She was sure she had just dreamed the worst things, but thankfully, she was already forgetting all that again. It hadn't been good, if the shape of her sheets was any indicator. She must have rolled around like crazy. Her large, heavy body was completely entangled and she really had to extricate herself carefully from the mess without damaging the blanket. At last, she was free and she was lying on the mattress, spread-eagled, and completely exhausted.

She glanced at her phone. By now, she should have already been to the gym and finished her morning run. She should have eaten and she should have been working on her coding project already.

Well, she didn't do anything of that. Instead, she felt like shit, but now, she was stuck. She couldn't go back to her flabby, tired, unfocused self. Nope. But at the same time, she couldn't move forward either. Without Ophelia, things were stupid. She had grown so close to her friend, and the idea that the wonderful goth girl had fled from her like she was some kind of monster made her feel sick.

Why did she ruin things?

Why was she always able to fuck up her life when the opportunity presented itself?

Couldn't she just be happy?

She decided to take this debate to the shower. Maybe just standing there and letting the warm water flow all over her would help. Of course, this was a stupid thing to do in a place like that, what with water

shortages and everything, but ... she needed that. She wasn't going to go into a state of perma-mope. Just a little micro-mope to feel better!

The "micro-mope" made her grin. Okay, maybe all was not lost?

She got out of the bed and took a shower, and indeed, she enjoyed washing the motes of nightmares and the frustration off her body. Then she got out, looked at her muscular body and started crying again. This was all so connected to Ophelia that just looking at herself like that made her miss her.

How could she live if just looking at her reflection made her think of her lost friend?

She got out of the bathroom, wrapped in an extra-big towel.

"Bah. What do I do now?"

For a moment, she thought about checking whether there was still a box of those sugar-bomb cereal in the kitchen. She contemplated the idea of ruin her figure again to forget about Ophelia, but then decided against it.

That was completely idiotic.

No. She would have to fix this. She was an adult, and she had to make her own life work!

Just then, she noticed that she had received a message on the phone while in the bath. She picked it up quickly and looked at it. Her heart swelled with joy. Ophelia!

"Hey, Marcy, sorry for being so weird yesterday. I need to work out some stuff, and it was all strange and complicated all of a sudden. I like you. Like, a lot."

Then, there came another message. Apparently, Ophelia had sent these in the middle of the night and the provider hadn't delivered them until now. Great. Another problem she'd have to deal with ... She shook her head to focus on the message.

"Anyway, there's a costume contest for Halloween and I'd be really happy if you were to join me. It's a couples' thing, and we could do matching outfits!"

It felt as if a massive weight had been taken off Marcy's shoulders. And that weight had to be positively enormous, what with the size of those super-rounded, hard and buff shoulders.

She instantly wrote back, thanking the auto-correct feature for fixing her garbled, super-intense typing.

"Totally! I can't wait! We gotta do this! I love it already! Whooooo!"

Then she realized how much a proper goth lady like Ophelia might not like this boundless enthusiasm and added:

"Your offer is acceptable. I would gladly participate."

The reply came moments later.

"Dork. Love you."

Suddenly energized, Marcy pulled on her workout gear, grabbed an apple and was already running out. Maybe this was going to be a good day after all ...

"All I'm saying is we should play on our strengths, right?"

Ophelia listened to Marcy explain how She-Hulk and Hellcat was the winning combination. Ophelia struggled hard. Of course, Marcy was right. Having her dress up as She-Hulk, all painted green and wearing a swimsuit was going to be an instant winner, and making a Hellcat costume for herself wasn't too complicated either.

Sure.

There was just one gigantic problem that had to be addressed. The idea of her carefully covering her friend's enormous muscles in green makeup, shading and highlighting them, and spending probably an hour or two just touching her ... Just thinking about this made her horny as fuck.

She was very much certain that this was a very, very bad idea.

There was another thing about it ...

If she could pick the outfit that her friend was going to wear, and she could have something matching, there was another thing she preferred.

"Uh ... how about She-Ra and Catra?"

There was a pause. Marcy looked at her in a bit of confusion, then asked:

"You mean the new show, right?"

"Sure. I didn't even know you knew the old one."

"Isn't that kinda common knowledge?"

"Good point."

"Anyway, suit-Catra or uniform-Catra?"

Ophelia retreated:

"It was a stupid idea."

"No, no, I'm all for it!"

"You are?"

"Uh-huh. How about ... I do dress-She-Ra, and you do suit-Catra ..."

"Oooh ... nice ..."

"Yeah. We do both. We win the competition as She-Hulk and Hellcat, and then we do the dance as She-Ra and Catra!"

Ophelia swallowed nervously.

"The dance?"

"There will be a dance, right?"

"Yeah, of course ... I just ... you would ... dance with me?"

Marcy smiled at her from above:

"Obviously? I mean, you're my partner and my best friend? It would be wrong not to dance with you!"

"But ... you ... you could find some dude ..."

"And then what? What do I do with a dude? He'd just be all: 'This is now a date and we are now a couple and also sex!'"

Ophelia blushed stupidly, looking away from the gorgeous amazon in front of her.

"Yeah ... That would be terrible. The couple thing. And the sex ..."

"Right!"

Marcy folded her arms over her giant bust, found that this didn't work, then folded them under it, pushing her enormous chest up to her chin. Then she went "Gah!" and uncrossed her arms again.

"Bah! You can't believe how difficult everything is getting! I mean, I'm not going to be unhappy about having this figure now, but ... I keep bumping into things and knocking things over!"

Ophelia nodded slowly, watching the klutzy sex-goddess in front of her.

"Terrible. Yes ... absolutely terrible."

She shook her head to clear it:

"Anyway. The plan is the plan, right?"

"It is! Hulk first, Ra later!"

Ophelia put out her tongue and rolled her eyes in despair at this.

"Okay, this was a stupid idea. I ... I don't wanna go on stage half-naked!"

"Bah, you brought this upon yourself! Stop squirming!"

They were backstage now, and Marcy was getting painted by Ophelia. The tall musclegirl was already in her swimsuit-like outfit, whose edges were protected by paper tissues Ophelia had pushed under the fabric. She had also gotten herself a stepladder to reach up far enough to paint her everywhere. The six feet two-amazon girl which packed some 280 pounds of hard, ripped muscle was trying to blush under the green face-paint.

"Couldn't you just ask Maya? Or Arioeh?"

Ophelia sighed:

"Seriously? Can you imagine either of them as She-Hulk?"

"Maybe ... ironically?"

"Hey, I'm all for irony and challenging expectations, but ... not like that. Not without a plan. You're gonna be She-Hulk with me, we're going out there, and we're going to be amazing and we're going to win that. And I'm going to get this amazing guitar!"

"Oh ... yeah. The guitar. Listen, I could just buy it for you? My coding projects are really paying off now ..."

Ophelia got on top of the stepladder, stood on the tips of her toes and smiled at her big, dorky friend. She grabbed the girl's cheeks and said:

"No. This isn't about the guitar ..."

"... it's about sending a message?"

"That's right. And the message is: You are awesome and you look great, and we are nerds and we are in L..."

Ophelia managed to catch her just in time.

"In L?"

"Oh look at the time! I really got to finish this ..."

Marcy frowned at Ophelia.

"What?"

"Nothing. I missed a spot!"

She took the sponge again. Just touching those muscles ... Fuck ...

Marcy flexed her other arm, making her giant muscles swell up and cause a massive vein to appear on top of her enormous biceps.

"Yeah, I just hope those muscles are going to be enough ..."

Behind her back, Ophelia said:

"Seriously, girl, with your muscles and my moxie, we've got this in the bag!"

The goth girl shivered. The whole situation was getting out of hand, and she knew it. With a deep breath, she finished applying the body-paint and said:

"Alright. Now let's finish this ..."

She plucked the paper tissues from under the suit and made sure it covered what it was supposed to. The thing was tight, creaking ever so slightly under the strain. Just being so close to Marcy's gigantic tits which were getting closer and closer in size to her own head made her horny. To finish things off, she floofed Marcy's hair with the hair dryer. They had

died it a slight shade of green a few days ago, which had also been a bit of a troublesome situation with Ophelia. They had been in Marcy's big bathroom, and the large woman had taken off her top off so as not to get any blotches of green on her outfit. Then Ophelia had carefully brushed her friend's long, luscious hair and cut off the ends to even it all out. Just doing this had been tough on her. But then, she had to put the dye in, and as she massaged the color into the enormous mane of hair, Ophelia's thoughts had gone to ... places. At last, everything was ready and packed up and she took off her rubber gloves, which were now very green.

Marcy had smiled at her and said:

"Thank you. That was a big help and also ... really nice."

That look! Ophelia had bitten on her lips hard.

"Yeah, no problem."

Then Marcy had added:

"I really couldn't have done any of this without you. Sure, maybe I somehow started to transform into a big musclewoman, but it was your guidance who really made it work. I'm so going to crush Wei ..."

"Uh-huh. You totally are. Mhm."

Was there a glint of nervousness in Marcy's eyes? Ophelia probably deceived herself. She tried to awkwardly change the subject before things got even worse.

With hindsight, maybe she should have taken her time to come up with something intelligent to say, even if that meant producing an awkward silence. As they say, hindsight is 20/20.

As a result, her reptile brain just kicked in and produced this pearl of wisdom:

"It's so unfair you got to be all buff and still keep those big breasts of yours."

The pause that followed was ultra-embarrassing for everyone. Ophelia blushed under her makeup, Marcy blushed down to her chest, and her nipples decided that this was the perfect moment to perk up. It probably was the draft of cool air. Yeah. For Marcy, Ophelia's comment was really hard to parse. What did she want to say by that?

Was she jealous of Marcy's transformation?

Was she trying to make a joke?

Did she ... find her attractive?

Panicking, Marcy went with option number two and produced a forced laugh.

"Ha! Haha! Haha. Yeah. Yeah. That's just it. Life's unfair, right? Ha."

Ophelia was just happy that the moment had passed with her saying that she had to check something on her phone. Yes. The phone.

Of course, this wonderful moment in their friendship came back to haunt her and she wanted to sink into the ground and disappear.

Marcy, who probably didn't think of that right now, asked:

"Will you need any help putting on your costume?"

"No, I will manage. I'll just do it ... over there, okay?"

"Sure. No problem."

"Yeah."

"Okay everybody, time for our contestants to show us just how awesome they are! Put your hands together for the couples' cosplay

contest!"

The audience clapped and whooped. The other members of the Weeping Angels stayed in the back, snapping their fingers in admiration. Then the first couple got on stage. Superman and Lois Lane. The young, buff dude came in in his Clark Kent-suit and switched behind his reporter friend, quickly tore off the suit and revealed his Superman outfit, whipping away his glasses and loosening his hair. Lois fell in his arms, and he carried her off the stage.

The spectators liked what they saw. A lot. Next to Ophelia, Marcy was getting super-nervous from that super-entrance. If the first contestants were already this impressive, how could they even hope to win?

A Sherlock Holmes patted Ophelia on the back as he pulled his Watson after him.

"Good luck, you two. You're amazing. Love the muscle suit!"

Ophelia grinned stupidly at Marcy. Marcy was getting even more nervous. What were they going to do? She had tried to practice a few poses, but so far, she didn't feel like she really managed any kind of "pop".

At the same time, Ophelia was getting more excited. She loved being on stage, and she wasn't known to get nervous before that. When she did get the jitters, it was usually a bad sign. This time, she didn't feel threatened at all. Instead, she thought about the dance afterwards, about how she would be with Marcy, and how she would finally reveal her thoughts to her friend, that is, once she managed to reach a certain level of drunken deniability.

Okay, now she was getting nervous ... Why was she so stupid?

She urged herself to focus.

"And contestants number five: She-Hulk and Patsy Walker, AKA Hellcat!"

"It's showtime!" Ophelia gave her reflection one final checkup. Her slim, fit body was poured into the yellow catsuit, she had the boots, the gloves, the mask, the red wig, everything was perfect!

She looked up at Marcy with a confident smile and out they went.

The stage lights were surprisingly bright, which made the audience mostly invisible. They strutted to the center together and did the routine as planned. First, Ophelia walked to the front all model-like, then she turned around, and Marcy squatted down, putting her hands together. Her friend stepped on them and Marcy easily lifted her up, while Ophelia balanced on them.

The audience was quite impressed. Up there, Ophelia stood on one leg and posed, then she jumped down with a somersault, landing elegantly in a superhero pose.

The spectators cheered, and Marcy started to relax. This was going fine. Ophelia was now moving around her, snapping cool poses and being all sexy and fascinating. At last, the big girl managed to snap out of her paralysis and struck a pose too.

When she flexed her biceps, it caused people to gasp. Now it was clear that this was not a suit.

Both Ophelia and her started to get in the tune and posed together now, with Ophelia echoing Marcy's bodybuilder moves. It only made it clear just how massive her friend was.

Then, at the height of it all, Marcy went for the most muscular pose. She didn't hold back. This would be the *pièce de résistance*. Her muscles swelled against the suit, she smiled happily and enthusiastically at everybody and then, the suit broke. The snap as the shoulder straps gave way was audible all across the room. The suit's contents spilled out

like an avalanche of massive, wonderful tit-flesh, supported by a cascade of pec.

Ophelia saw what was happening and did what she could. She jumped at Marcy, hanging herself around the girl's neck and covering her up with her body. She felt her friend's soft, heavy breasts against her own slim body and was both panicked and aroused. Scaroused?

She locked her legs around Marcy's waist and covered her up as good as she could.

Marcy was frozen by the shock, while the audience started to recover. Ophelia squealed a panicked "Show's over! Please! Quick!", which managed to wake up her friend enough to move.

The big woman drifted to the backstage area as if in a dream.

Only once the MC said something about a tragic wardrobe malfunction did she wake up from her stupor.

Marcy's brain was completely overwhelmed by the sheer embarrassment. Ophelia had wanted this guitar so much, and she wanted to win the competition, and once again, Marcy had screwed this up. Why couldn't she do things the right way? Why couldn't she just act like a normal person? Like a good friend? Why did she have to be a big, clumsy, walking disaster?

She started to cry.

Ophelia was still clinging to her, her mind stuck in a loop of panic and the desire to protect her friend. Slowly, her consciousness returned and she realized she was caught in a very intimate position. It was ... nice? But also deeply embarrassing. She tried to figure out what to say or do to extricate herself out of this whole situation, but her thoughts were cut short by the sensation of dampness on her scalp. Marcy was crying, no, she was bawling her heart out.

"Marcy? Marcy ... Please ... Stop crying. I'm sorry. I didn't want to ... Marcy ..."

"Ophi, I'm so sorry! I didn't want to ruin this! I wanted you to have the guitar!"

"The guitar? I don't care about the guitar! Are you okay?"

"I'm just ..."

There came another flood of gasps and snorts. Ophelia felt terrible. Then, suddenly, she decided to just jump into the cold water and get it over with. She couldn't bear this infinite, terrible sadness anymore.

Slowly, carefully, she climbed up, working herself past Marcy's giant soft tits and then, pushing herself off the musclemom's strong, large hips, looked her straight in the eyes.

Marcy was still looking like an allegory of despair.

Ophelia looked at her, took one deep breath and plunged.

She kissed her softly, then went in deep, her tongue parting Marcy's lips. The girl's eyes opened wide, but it was clear she enjoyed this. Okay, at first, she was shocked, but the softness and intensity won her over. It was a long, passionate, complicated kiss. Marcy was struggling to figure out what to do, while Ophelia tried to decide just how much was too much.

At last, they separated, a sensation of deep longing filling the space between them. Ophelia looked at her friend with a strange kind of shyness and then managed to whisper:

"Oh Mar-Mar, you big dork." She touched her forehead against Marcy's. "If someone has to be sorry, it's me. I never shouldn't have been this weird to you. You deserved to know my feelings."

"Your feelings?" Marcy's eyes were glistening. She seemed sad and hopeful at the same time. "You mean ... you're not angry?"

"Angry? Never. Not with you. No. I ... I just ... I didn't want to admit it, but ... I kinda ... you know ... uh ..."

herself. Hadn't she already said it? Wasn't it clear? Did she really have to say it out loud? Wasn't she too cool for this? What would her friends think? What would Marcy think? What if Marcy didn't reciprocate it? What if she just ruined their friendship? What if ... "I love you."

Marcy's jaw dropped. Somehow, the tension seemed to disappear from her strong body for a moment. Her muscles felt as if they were turning as heavy as they actually were. How could the world actually support her? As her mind slowly jumpstarted itself back into action, her heart beat in big mighty blows, and she felt light as a feather. Giddy. She barely could stop herself from giggling, then she laughed. Loud and deep. Intensely.

Ophelia's face was a mask of confusion and panic. Was her friend laughing at her? Had this all been a terrible mistake? Did she just ruin everything?

"I love you too!"

The tension in Ophelia's little black heart left and she kissed her again, relieved. She felt amazing. It was as if the weight of the world had been taken from her shoulders. As if a sudden spring gale had blown away all the grey clouds.

She hugged the huge woman, covered her in kisses, rubbed herself against Marcy's muscles, adoring her, worshipping her.

The green stage make-up was everywhere, ruining her costume, but she didn't care. Not in the least. She was just so happy, she couldn't believe her luck.

They stayed like this, laughing at their clumsiness and awkwardness.

A good while later, they were relaxing with the rest of the band. Sasha was happily plinking along on his new guitar, which seemed to annoy Maya, who shot him frustrated glances. The guy didn't much care,

completely engrossed in his new toy. Arioch was just smiling at her friends, though. Marcy and Ophelia had changed their outfits to the She-Ra-Catra combination, and they were feeling very, very good now. Getting the green body paint off themselves had been a pain, but finding out that they had apparently won the contest somehow had been a happy surprise.

They had danced a bit, taking the edge off and now, they were just feeling good. Sitting next to each other, with Marcy cuddling against Ophelia despite her completely outsizing her goth friend, the young women were watching the rest of the costume party with amusement. Most of the guests had made some effort, and there was a bit to see.

Eventually, though Ophelia couldn't ignore Arioch's looks anymore. She turned to her friend and asked:

"What is going on? Why the smile?"

"Can't a person just smile?"

"A person can, but you usually don't. So tell me: What's up?"

"Oh ... Uh."

"Uh?"

"Uh. Yeah. So ... uh. Marcy and I just might be an item now?"

Arioch grinned at Maya:

"Pay up."

"Bah! This is seriously the worst day ever!"

She slapped a tenner into Arioch's hand.

"Choke on it!"

"You wish!"

Ophelia stared at them:

"What's going on? Did you seriously bet on Mar-Mar and me being together?"

Arioch grinned cheekily:

"No offense, Lia, but to me ...", she made a mocking gesture towards Maya, "... this has been very obvious for a time now, and my dearest Maya couldn't believe it. So I bet her, and here we are!"

She showed the note around poking her tongue at Maya, who rolled her eyes.

"It was that obvious?"

"Sooo much! I mean, basically Marcy has been pining for you since high school, so ... it was really just a matter of time, especially with you two hanging out with each other all the time. Plus, we all know your type!"

"My type?" Ophelia was a bit taken aback by the suggestion.

Maya and Arioch grinned at each other.

"What's my type? What are you talking about?"

"La-dee-dah, we're going to fetch some drinks with my well-earned spoils!"

Maya got up, took Arioch's hand, and they walked away, grinning at the young couple.

In the very early morning hours, Marcy and Ophelia wandered home, stumbling through the greyish black night. Cars were creeping by, the moon was going down, and the air was surprisingly chilly. Marcy had loaded all their stuff on her mighty back and was walking along, doing her best not to stumble and fall. She hadn't drunk all that much, actually, she probably was still mostly sober, but since she had almost no experience with alcohol, she still struggled.

Ophelia wasn't doing all that fine either, swinging happily along the way, her head swimming with excitement, confusion and tiredness. The duo occasionally stopped either to kiss or to gag, which was a bit weird.

Eventually, they reached the Marcy's family's mansion and stopped.

Marcy leaned against the gate and said:

"You still coming in? It's dark and the night is full of shufflers."

"Shufflers?"

"Shufflers."

"Yeah. I don't know. I ... I probably should go home."

"It's here."

"No, it isn't."

"It's A home."

"Yeah, yours."

"Mhm." Marcy giggled: "So, wanna come in? Get some toffee?"

"Toffee?"

"Toffee. Fuck, I am so drunk!"

"Marcy, you had maybe two glasses of beer? On your body mass, this can't really make you drunk."

"Are you calling me fat?"

"I am calling you gorgeous."

"Me too. You're gorgeous too, Ophi."

"Mar-Mar."

"Ophi."

"Mar-Mar."

"You really shouldn't be going home like that. It's dangerous to go alone. Take this."

Marcy handed her a can of an energy drink they got as a free promotion at one point during the evening.

"What am I supposed to do with that?"

"Drink it? When you're in danger?"

"I don't think drinking a ginger-passion fruit-sour milk energy drink is going to help me."

"Yuck. That sounds really disgusting."

"Yeah."

"Yeah."

"So, how about you come on in and we sleep together ... in my bed?"

"I already told you, I should go home."

"Yeah. And I asked if you wanted to ... Oh fuck."

Marcy opened the can and took a sip.

"Gross. Wanna try?"

"Nah. The smell is so gross ..."

"The taste is even worse."

"No wonder it was free."

"They should have paid us to take it."

"Yeah. As gross as this is, I would be rich by now."

Marcy set the can down on the ground. Then she smiled at Ophelia.

"I know my mouth tastes like ginger-passion fruit-sour milk now, but would you still kiss me?"

"Totally."

"Then we should totally kiss now."

"Yeah."

"Yeah."

"Fuck, Mar-Mar, I love you!"

They kissed.

"I love you too."

"Yeah."

They kissed again, longer this time. Ophelia gasped for air.

"How can it be so nice if it tastes like ginger-passion fruit-sour milk?"

"Maybe it's me?"

"Maybe it's you."

They kissed, and now, they really took their time. Ophelia gently worked her hand under Marcy's dress, and the girl sighed.

"Wow ... Either you leave now, or you're coming with me."

"I ... Fuck."

"I fuck you too."

"That's not what I ..."

They kissed a fourth time, moaning happily.

Then, at last, they separated. Their hearts beat strong. Then Marcy felt a bitter taste in her mouth.

"I shouldn't have drunk this."

"No, it's gross."

"I'll ... I'll see you tomorrow. I think it's for ..."

She ran away, trying to hide what was going to happen. Ophelia stood there, both sick and happy at the same time, butterflies rampaging in her stomach.

This was incredible.

It was the night before Thanksgiving, and Ophelia was tracing the bold "C" on Marcy's shoulder blade. The tattoo was still a little prominent, but this was just a matter of days now.

"I still think you should let me finish. I mean, at least the 'o' ..."

Marcy shook her head, her giant body covering most of the mattress. She had somehow grown to seven feet tall and weighed a bit over three hundred pounds, which was absolutely shocking. At first, she had been terribly inconvenienced by this absurd size, which also meant that she had to get her clothes tailored, but at the same time, being this big was amazing!

Sure, people stared, but she also enjoyed the look of panic and respect they gave her. Also, her growth had somehow maintained her proportions, so she didn't look like a weird muscular beanpole. Instead, Marcy was an enormous Valkyrie, with broad shoulders, strong arms and powerful legs. Also, her chest had kept its volume, and they were both quite sure that her breasts had only gotten bigger and perkier over time.

"No. Sorry. That was too ... I ... I'm really sorry, Ophi, but apparently, I get squeamish around needles!"

Two weeks ago, Marcy had somehow decided that she wanted Ophelia's name tattooed on her shoulder, and her friend had even come up with a really nice design that would have matched her style. Marcy had been all excited. Then the big day came, Marcy got on the tattooist's chair, which had groaned under her bulk, Ophelia had started the needle, and it had turned out to be too much for her love.

Marcy had really tried to go through with it, but she had started squirming, and Ophelia had to stop. The situation had gotten quite tense and at one point, she even had grown really annoyed:

"Will you hold still, for fuck's sake?"

The big girl had stared at her, shocked by the outburst. Then she had told her that she absolutely couldn't and that she was really sorry. Marcy had apologized a hundred times, and it had taken Ophelia a moment to get out of the loop of being furious about someone not wanting something that she had no say in.

Eventually, she had accepted that the session was over before it had really started, and Marcy was stuck with that "C".

Marcy twitched her massive shoulder muscles and Ophelia chuckled:

"So what do we do now?"

"I don't know. Maybe you should change your name to 'Cophelia'?"

The goth lady stuck her tongue out.

"You wish!"

"You know what, I'm going to call you Cophelia from now on!"

"Don't you dare!"

She sank her fingers into Marcy's sides and started tickling her. The big woman let out a thunderous squeal and started laughing in panic. She tried to get Ophelia to stop, but the massive size of her muscles made

that a bit difficult. She bucked under her lover, and Ophelia rode her, clinging on to her dear life.

At last, she managed to throw her forward, caught her and trapped her under her mighty chest.

"Ha!"

Ophelia grinned cheekily.

"Ha indeed."

"I feel like returning the favor."

"Don't you dare ..."

"You're ticklish?"

Stony-faced, Ophelia replied:

"Absolutely not."

"For real?" Marcy cocked an eyebrow.

"Exactly. Not a ticklish cell in my boooooo ..."

She burst into explosive laughter as Marcy ran her finger down her side.

They continued fooling around for a bit, but their movements became more tender, and they started caressing each other. Slowly, without either of them noticing, they turned intimate, and their lips met. They kissed.

They kissed again, deeper.

Gently, Marcy freed Ophelia of her clothes. Then Ophelia obliged her friend, and soon, they were both naked and very horny. They touched each other some more, exploring each other, and then, as they started

to sigh and to sweat, figuring out just what they could do more with one another.

As Marcy felt Ophelia's tongue on her clitoris, she groaned. This was amazing ... She had explored herself as her body changed, but her friend and lover seemed to know her even better. The other woman's touch was so gentle, and yet firm, she couldn't help but twitching lustfully as her fingers dug into the bedsheets. She had to control herself not to wrap her mighty legs around her tiny, slim lover. Between gasps, she managed a "Oh ... Ophi ...", which was promptly answered by a muffled, yet happy "Mar-Mar ...".

The goth girl kept kissing and licking her, her tongue dancing around Marcy's clitoris, sinking into her folds, rubbing against her insides. This was incredible. Marcy had played around with herself, of course. She had explored the secrets of her anatomy as good as she could, but this was something else. Clearly, Ophelia knew what she was doing, and Marcy had to admit that this was intensely pleasurable. She gasped, her insides twitching and contracting in lust.

"Oooh ..."

Ophelia seemed to perfectly understand her lover's rhythm, and matched it accordingly. In no time, Marcy was ecstatic, overwhelmed by sensations she hadn't experienced before. She moaned happily as her lover went on, guiding her further and further upwards. Her whole body was tingling and she felt the sweet freedom as the tension built up in herself.

Her lover kept going on, her touch slower but more intense now. Ophelia sensed that it was just a matter of moments now, but she decided against playing around with Marcy. Instead, she brought her upwards, without any hesitation.

Marcy started trashing on the bed, the mattress booming and banging from her stomps and punches. Her mighty body was feeling amazing and she was so close ...

She came.

Ophelia pulled away quickly as the thighs closed. She trusted Marcy to stop herself from crushing her, but it was best to be careful.

The musclegirl sighed happily as the orgasm washed over her, her mind feeling empty and glad at the same time.

As Marcy's orgasm subsided slowly, she pulled Ophelia to her and kissed her. Her face was glowing and she felt incredibly at ease, the goth lady's slim body resting on her massive chest. They kissed again, longer now. It felt so good.

At last, she whispered:

"That was incredible, Ophi. I ... wow. Please teach me, you deserve this too ..."

Ophelia grinned cheekily, kissed her back and replied:

"Oh, I will. I sure hope your tongue is as strong as the rest of your body ..."

Thanksgiving was there and Wei and his gang were all ready to watch his sister getting humiliated. They had all assembled at the park where a public weightlifting area had been set up a while ago. Phones were ready to record the show and stream it all over the world. It was a bit of a weird idea, and most of the other people found it a bit strange that such a big, brawny dude as Wei felt the need to show up his little sister, but in the end, all that mattered was the entertainment value.

However, things were not going as planned, since Marcy hadn't shown up yet. Wei was all grins and looked at his very expensive wristwatch.

"I don't think she's coming anymore. Talk about a chicken-out, huh?"

His hangers-on laughed and slapped his muscular back.

Then a car stopped and a tall figure in a tracksuit extricated herself from it, followed by a slim young woman in a black reversed pentagram top and some matching black yoga pants with spiderweb patterns on the side.

The audience stared at this. Wei had heard that his sister had grown taller, but he hadn't expected this! Also, the way she was dressed, she mostly looked bulky, even fat. He wondered what had happened, but he still felt pretty confident.

"Hey, sister, glad you could make it!"

Marcy came up to greet him and hugged him, giving him a bit of a taste of just how strong she actually was, while still keeping the real power hidden.

"The car was unhappy with my weight. Sorry."

"Oof ... Then maybe you should try a diet?" He added a nervous chuckle and his supporters joined in, unclear of what it meant.

"Yeah, maybe later. So, how about we do this?"

"Sure, sure. I'm ready when you are."

"Cool. I am. How about we do the running first, then the weightlifting, and then the arm-wrestling?"

Wei still imagined this to be simple, so he nodded:

"Yeah, sure, if you think you can manage?"

"I'll do my best."

With these words, they got in position. Wei quickly outlined the race. It was basically just once around the park, since he had focused a lot on strength lately, and little on cardio. He didn't want to end up all sad and wheezy halfway in.

Marcy shrugged:

"Alright. Then let's do this. Ophi, would you do the countdown?"

"Of course, Mar-Mar."

Wei was a bit confused by the familiarity, but got in position.

"Get ready ... set ... go!"

They started, the spectators running up the little knoll to watch the race. They all expected this to be over in a moment with Marcy collapsing in a heap.

Instead, however, they saw her gain a big head-start, her long legs carrying her quickly around the park. Wei suddenly found himself struggling to keep up, forcing his strong, yet heavy body to run faster. After a few yards, though, he started to fall behind, and soon, he was flapping around uselessly as Marcy raced ahead, her steps spread to mighty leaps.

She waited for him at the finish line, as a rather red-faced and tired Wei stumbled along the path and had to lie down.

Ophelia looked at the audience:

"I think we can agree that Marcy just won that race!"

There came some reluctant cheers in answer to that announcement.

Once Wei had recovered, he sat back up and said:

"Yeah, that's nothing. I admit I trained for strength, and you were just running around, right?"

"Whatever."

"Anyway, weightlifting, okay?"

"Sure, if you don't feel too exhausted."

"I'm fine."

"So, what exercise did you have in mind?"

"Hm. Squats?"

"No problem. Let's go for most repetitions?"

Wei was a bit nonplussed by Marcy handling the technical terms easily, but nodded.

"Alright. What weight should we use?"

"Five-hundred pounds?"

"What? Are you ..."

"Is that okay for you? Is it too little?"

Her brother was a bit shocked. What was she talking about? Sure, he could do that, but once, maybe a few times ... Not for reps! Still, he couldn't lose his face now.

"Okay. Whatever ..."

Marcy nodded and unzipped her top, pulling it off carefully. She revealed an enormous crop top that did absolutely nothing to hide her huge breasts, her broad chest and her ripped abs. Ophelia cheered at her while Wei's friends just stared at her. Her brother's jaw hit the floor and he breathed out sharply.

"What the fuck?"

She shrugged her enormous shoulders.

"What do you mean?"

"What happened to you?"

"Well, I trained. Is there something wrong? Did I drip on my top again?"

Ophelia laughed:

"No, I think he didn't expect that."

"You didn't?"

"I didn't."

"But I told you."

"I didn't believe you."

"Well, next time, you better."

Wei was getting very, very nervous now. Still, he tried his best. He got under the squat rack and pushed hard to lift the massively loaded bar. He managed to get it out and went down, forcing himself to push the weight back up. He struggled. In no time, his face was very, very sweaty and a deep crimson.

Marcy watched admiringly as he managed to pump out four clean and one rather fumbly fifth rep. Then she helped him rack the weight again.

Wei fell off the moment the weight was safe and rolled on the floor, spreading his arms and legs. He wheezed:

"That was sooo ... heavy ... Let's see you beat that ..."

His sister nodded cheerily.

"I'll do my best!"

She got in position and without much strain, she cranked out ten reps. She didn't even seem to struggle much. Then, as she saw Wei turn pale, she said:

"Hey, Ophi, wanna get on top? I could use a little extra!"

The goth girl obliged and climbed on her back, then sat on the bar and Marcy's shoulders. Just to hammer in the nail to Wei's coffin, she pumped out ten more reps, which Ophelia commented with a "Yee-hah!"

She racked the bar again and held it from the side while Ophelia did a quick little gymnastics move and launched herself in a summersault,

landing next to Marcy.

"Ta-daaa!"

Marcy asked:

"Do you still want to do the arm-wrestling?"

"Uh ..." He looked over at his entourage, which was looking a bit disappointed by his performance. "Maybe ..."

"I wouldn't hold it against you if you said you were tired ..."

"No, no, I'll manage."

He got back on his feet and walked over to the table. Seriously, Marcy couldn't help thinking that he was just seriously demoralized.

She sat down opposite to him and held out her arm. He tried to take it, but then, they had to adjust the angle, simply because her forearm was a few inches longer than his. Then she asked:

"You ready?"

"I am ..."

The bang that followed immediately after decided the match. Wei stared at his hand pinned under Marcy's. His sister seemed a bit embarrassed by this and asked:

"Was I too quick? Do you want a re-do?"

"No. No. No, please, no. I'm fine. You win. Seriously, you win."

"I do? Hey, Ophi, I won!"

Ophelia rolled her eyes, but in a friendly fashion and gave her a thumbs-up.

The sun was shining and the sea breeze was quite refreshing. It was January, and the whole family had gone to Cancun for their vacation. After initial skepticism, Marcy's parents had accepted that Ophelia would come along. The fact that she was a successful small business owner and an accomplished athlete and musician did finally convince them that this would be okay. Of course, they would have preferred a doctor or a lawyer for their daughter, but since Marcy had spent the last few months developing her software services into a full-grown business, they were somewhat fine with it. The idea that the two women would get married made them queasy, especially since Ophelia's pronunciation was atrocious. There was a lot of sighing involved, but for now, they were willing to go along with it.

Ophelia and Marcy were lying by the sea, with Ophelia wearing an enormous straw hat with a black ribbon and a matching cute one-piece swimsuit with skulls and spiders. She kept under the umbrella to protect her pale skin from the sun, as did Marcy. She had opted for a sporty bikini in navy and gold that showcased her awesome body. She had built her muscles even more and was now looking seriously unreal. She didn't mind, though.

With a wave, she called Wei to them and asked him politely for some more cocktails. He disappeared, going on the lookout for some virgin coladas.

Ophelia smiled at her, her black lipstick contrasting with her pearly-white teeth.

"This is weird, but I like it."

"You are weird, but I like you."

"Okay, so do I, but I meant ... If none of you want to be in the sun, why do you go to the beach?"

Indeed, her mother was even wearing one of those protective masks to prevent herself from ruining her pale skin.

"Uh ... I don't know. I guess it's one of those keeping up with the Joneses things."

Ophelia chuckled:

"Wow. Anyway, thanks for having me."

"Hey, I love you."

"I love you too!"

They kissed. Then they embraced. Then they kissed again, longer and more intensely. A certain amount of fooling around was to happen any moment now, when they heard Wei groan:

"Get a room, you two!"

Marcy kissed her lover again and turned to her brother:

"If you don't like it, don't look."

"Bah."

He handed them the drinks. They thanked him and he stomped off.

Ophelia blew her straw over to Marcy and her lover took it, pushing hers over in return. Marcy chuckled:

"Wow, this is so romantic ..."

"Mhm. I'm good at that. Goth, remember?"

"Yeah. Hard to miss."

They took another sip and kissed again. It was going to be great ...

###

Roy Ellison writes weirdo erotic fiction. Despite evidence to the contrary, he insists it is about the characters and the plot.

He thanks you deeply for your trust and support.

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