

Point Of No Return 2



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“Shut up and put this collar on.”

Melissa wiped the sweat from her forehead and slithered back from the windowpane to admire her handiwork. It shimmered in the orange light of dusk, barely visible. She hung the wet, lemon-scented cloth on her belt and, taking a deep breath, looked around.

Her last few hours of work had paid off. There wasn't a speck of dust, a hint of a stale smell, a piece of paper out of place in her home. Pride swelled in her gut, and when she noticed her dopey smile on her reflection, her cheeks began to tickle. She checked the watch—Amina would be home in twenty. Food in the oven, a whole turkey, the kind Amina liked to pick at and then goad Melissa into swallowing whole while she watched with that look of awe and lust in her eyes. She wiped her hands on her apron and tossed the cloth into the bin. Table set—the nice plates, the shiny cutlery, the crystal glasses.

She looked at herself in the window's reflection and, for the first time in a while, saw something good. She saw someone who was supportive, someone who could be depended on, someone who filled



her days with leisure and reflection, always eager to hug her partner when she came home.

Yes, this would be a great way to apologize for when she accidentally used one of Amina's dresses to dab her latest painting.

Outside, a van drove by and stopped on the other side of the road. A wolf-woman walked down the street, huddled up in her heavy jacket. Melissa's brow knitted. It was the middle of summer.

She shrugged.

There was always more to clean, more to take care of. More furniture to shuffle about imperceptibly until it all aligned and tied up together in her mind. Still, she found it difficult to focus. An unexpected worry bit at her heart. There were predators on the prowl; something was amiss. The idea of Amina sharing the street with those people worried her; who knew what they could do to her if they cornered her in a dark alley.

When the door behind her burst off its hinges, and something rolled onto the floor and bumped on the side of her tail, her training kicked in, but it was too late. A flash blinded her. A loud shrill deafened her. The bodies started piling up on her, and as she snapped at the nearest one with an open maw and swallowed, she felt an off taste. A chemical.

Within moments, she was out.

* * *

Light came in slivers. Melissa tried to move, but her own body refused to heed her. Her eyes wouldn't open, and through her closed lids she experienced a bright reddish light. The air was cold, stale; it bounced off her scales, but left her top half in gooseflesh. She was prone, as far as she could tell—her chest flat against a rough concrete floor which scratched at her soft-scaled underbelly as she breathed, her face smushed and sore, her neck aching.

Footfalls all around. Singsong humming. She wasn't alone. She startled, but her body once again refused her. No movement, it told her through its stubborn stillness, no movement but the racing of the heart and the wheezing of the lungs, and the stiff curling of the tail in its state of rest.

"I think she's waking up."

"We have time, don't worry. Pass me the sponge."

Cold water slapped her skin. She winced in surprise; suds trickled down her body. The rough sponge ran across her back, drawing circles—the soap smelled cheap, and itched slightly. Her head throbbed; it made it difficult to think, to feel.

"Start from the top, I'll do the bottom."

"Should I do the hair?"

"Yeah, give it a go. Just enough that it doesn't look dirty on camera."

A solid brick of soap dragged across Melissa's scalp, soaking her hair, and a gloved hand ran across it, flattening it, kneading it like dough, rhythmic, clumsy. Against her tail, a second sponge pressed.

"Is she conscious?"

She could now tell the difference between the voices; one raspy, the other younger. One full of questions; the other without the patience to give answers, and both carrying a thick and slurred accent that she could not quite place.

“She won’t be able to move for a while. Ready?”

“One sec.”

Hands rested on her right side; two on her chest, two on the base of her tail.

“On three. One, two...”

She rolled easily into a more comfortable position; her center of gravity aided their efforts.

“Her eyes are open.”

“She’s got more drugs than blood in her veins right now; it’ll be a while until she so much as blinks. I don’t think she can even see anything. Lights are on, but nobody’s home.”

The dim ceiling light shone right into Melissa’s corneas, blinding her. At the edges of her vision danced two figures, dipping in and out of view. One came into view—tall, lanky, with thick glasses over his eyes.

“Poor thing.”

The other, shorter, wider, more deliberate in its motions, joined in.

“Eyes on the job, new guy.”

From the top of her head to the tip of her tail, they washed her, cleaned her, dried her; when they were done they poured warm oil over her and let it seep into her skin, leaving it soft and glossy, camera-friendly.

“What’s taking so long?” a voice asked from afar.

“Poor thing.”



The tallest figure looked up, wiped the sweat from his brow; the shorter one spoke.

“She’s bigger than the last one you brought in. It’ll take longer to prepare.” He cleared his sinuses.

“Yeah, quite big,” the other said.

A door closed, and the two men went back to work. A thick floral scent filled the air as oil pooled around Melissa. Thick with pheromones, it fired up parts of her brain she had hoped to suppress at times like these. Her insides roiled. Pangs of lust and hunger pulled at her focus. It felt shameful, and she couldn’t even cover herself from the cold yet prying eyes of her two attendants.

"She's really quite big," said the tall one. "Do you think Merethis will be able to deal with her?"

Merethis? The name rang familiar, though Melissa could not place it just yet.

The short one snorted. "Oh, don't worry. That woman could scarf down a truck if it came at her from the right angle."

"You reckon?"

"Alright, we're done here, I think," the short one said, ignoring his coworker's question. "Tell the director she's all prepped up and ready to go. I'm going to wash my hands and find a good seat. Like hell I'm going to miss this."

Minutes dragged on, a motionless Melissa alone in a dark room, struggling to move her paralyzed limbs; she could little more than nudge herself a few inches across the slippery floor. Still, she thought, that was a start.

She'd need much more than that to survive what was going on.

* * *

The news ticker rolled the same message over and over; Traitor and Deserter faces Execution. A flat blue screen faded out into a more interesting picture: a massive lamia splayed on a chaise lounge, staring at the camera with a corner of her mouth curled up, effortlessly seductive. Her hair, a pale shade of green, was braided and adorned with precious stones; her tail, thick and covered in golden scales, stretched over the cushions and coiled up on the floor. The camera dollied,

showing the length of her body, but it wasn't until her attendants entered the minimalist set that her true size became apparent.

She dwarfed them all.

New shots revealed new facets — a closer look at her glossy lips, at her golden eyes, then dragging across her body, all softness and danger and allure, from her opulent breasts which heaved as she breathed, to the valley between them, then down to focus on the plumpness of her stomach, where it lingered.

This was no sleek soldier caste, the camerawork stated. This was a queen, well-fed and pampered, used to a life of luxury.

A subtitle pops up and gives her a name: *Merethis, executioner*. She yawns; it goes wide. The light only reaches so far in.

Special camera test.

Mouth. A thick tongue rested below; the uvula swayed above. Embedded deep into the back of the throat, the shot stared outwards, catching glimpses of the camera crew whenever Merethis opened her mouth.

H. Stomach. An upwards shot of an illuminated stomach wall, bobbing as if afloat. A wide, rounded cavity, with pulsing glistening walls and a view of the esophageal sphincter above.

S. Stomach. A look down a long, fleshy hallway, widening and narrowing gently with each breath she took. A lone droplet dripped from the ceiling; the ripples it sent disrupted the stillness of the steaming pool below.

Small Intestine 1, 2, 3, 4. Several cameras glanced at the not-

so-winding recesses of a serpentine lower gut; a surprisingly narrow and pale tube, its surface soft and velvety. A sea of villi swayed back and forth as far as the lights could reach.

Back at the set, the lights dimmed. A set of double doors opened, and a group of predators carried in an oversized stretcher, upon which Melissa's limp body rested. Her eyes were wide; it was clear to see she comprehended what was going on, yet what should have been the fury of a predator's desperation was nothing more than a series of nudges and shudders.

Merethis's eyes rested on the feast being carried her way. Zoom into her eye; the pupil dilated. Zoom out; her whole body shifted eagerly. The camera at the back of her throat captured strings of saliva dripping down from her teeth and the roof of her mouth, and a quick cut to the camera in her snake stomach showed its cavernous lengths widening in anticipation.

Her attendants set the stretcher before her. She opened her mouth, and it opened wide; up to the limit and then it kept going, her lips and cheeks stretching seamlessly. Her tongue slid out, hanging free, with a stream of saliva flowing all across it and dripping onto her chest. Her pearly-white teeth glimmered under the studio lights, her carefully arranged hair swayed back as her lips parted further and further, her whole body flowed in a practiced way, like she'd done it a thousand times, like the cameras trained on her were her friends and admirers and she owed them the show of a lifetime. Merethis was all grace and smoothness of motion, not just in her gestures, but the workings of her innards too, and the cameras captured that, they captured the subtle stirring of her two

stomachs, the rippling of her throat, the to-and-fro tide of her intestines. Only the camera in her mouth showed something different, as when her mouth opened and the stretcher was brought closer, a head came into view, and a mane of silver hair, and eyes full of shock. Melissa's head pushed past her lips—her tongue stole a few licks at her salty cheeks—and dragged itself towards the back of the throat. The attendants tipped the stretcher forward, and oily skin and scale slid easily across fabric and fresh.

At the same time, Melissa winced. This wasn't her first time; through years of training, she had learned how to resist a swallowing. Even now, thoughts of how to escape darted through her mind. *Make yourself wide. Do not struggle. If swallowed tail-first, use your upper body weight, let yourself sag, and go for the throat. If head-first, wait until the neck is past the teeth, then widen your shoulders, grab their throat between your coils, and cut off circulation to the brain. In either case, allow the assailant to go still before attempting escape.*

But she couldn't move. Drugs coursed through her veins, weakening her body but allowing her to remain conscious and fully aware. She couldn't resist. Flashes of panic and guilt permeated her thoughts; *do this to escape, why aren't you escaping, soon it'll be too late.* And when her head brushed past the hanging uvula and the tightness of the gullet compressed her puffy hair to her skull, it was indeed too late.

The transmission focused on her; three times it replayed the blink-and-you-miss it moment where her worried, but flushed face passed the throat camera. Each time, it played it slower, and in fine detail: the single strand of saliva connecting

the tip of her nose to her chin, the reflection of the microcamera in the whites of her eyes, the way her teeth grit as she braced for the inevitable swallow.

Cut back to outside. Merethis's neck bulged with the familiar shape of a head. Her lips pursed around the shoulders. Her tongue dragged between the breasts, between Melissa and the stretcher, and helped guide her limp body forward, downward, into the abyss.

Merethis had yet to swallow, and already Melissa knew she was done for.

Her lips closed, her tongue lifted, and Melissa slid. The esophagus welcomed her in its warm and slimy embrace. It widened before her and contracted behind, and as more of her body delivered itself to this televised fate, the more uncomfortable, yet warmer she felt. Her bust squeezed against the palate, then compressed in to fit into the gullet; her breasts flattened against the caress of a moist wall of flesh, with enough give to bulge out through Merethis's neck, but not enough to stop Melissa from feeling squeezed, crushed, compacted.

Oil flowed down her body, mixing with saliva and slime, seeping into her hair and skin and dripping from the tip of her nose in a small river, disappearing into the small orifice in the contracted esophagus before her, which slowly widened as she dragged down, one inch at a time. The throat both resisted her and dragged her in. It locked and unlocked in a cycle of peristalsis that trapped Melissa.

The first stomach camera caught the moment where the sphincter above gaped. From the fleshy hole, a soaked mane of air pushed out, then a head, gasping for air then wincing at the

bitter smell of acid. Outside, the camera angles shifted again; one zoomed in on Merethis's expanding gut, another on the thick tail that emerged from her golden lips, growing smaller and smaller as it approached the tip. Merethis's mouth returned to its original shape, lips pursed around the soft scales; she slurped the last of Melissa's tail, and —

The phone buzzed.

Amina wiped the tears from her eyes, switched the transmission off, and scrambled to answer the call.

"Please," she said.

"Your ride should be at your door in fifteen minutes," a male voice said. "They'll drop you off. Are you sure about this?"

Amina didn't answer.

"Good luck," the voice said. "And never call me again."

She sat alone in her trashed living room, on her shattered couch, next to the bouquet of flowers she'd bought for Melissa. She had been late home because of it. Maybe if she had just come home...

She shook her head.

A car horn sounded outside. Barely feeling her body, she dragged herself out of the house.

* * *

Amina's whole body was sore as she stepped out of the car. It drove off as soon as she closed the door; she looked around. Night had set, but some places never slept.

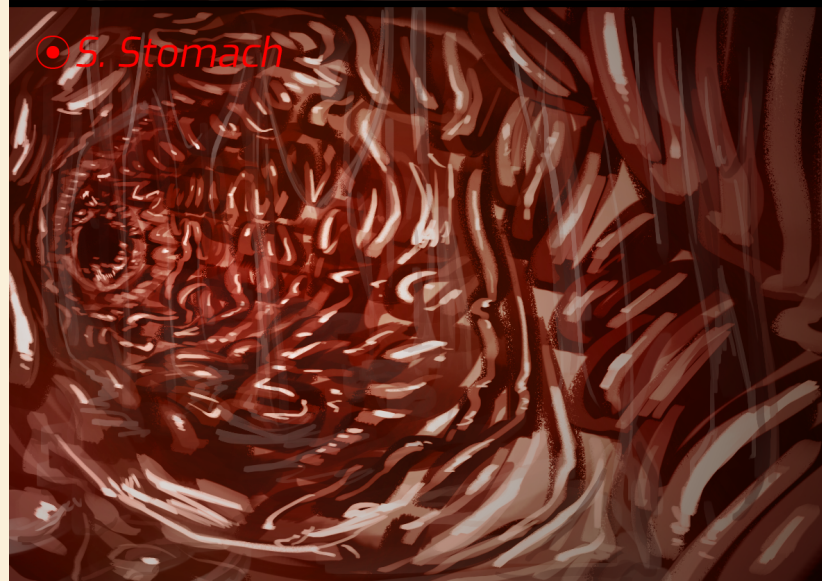
● Mouth



● H. Stomach



● S. Stomach



● Intestine 1



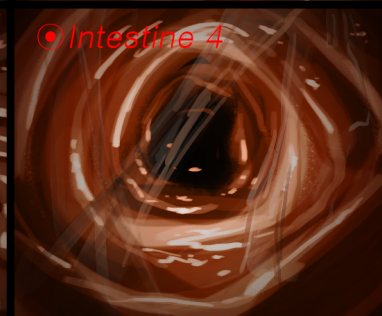
● Intestine 2



● Intestine 3



● Intestine 4



● Mouth 2



Satan

And when her head
brushed past
the hanging uvula,

and the tightness of the gullet
compressed her puffy hair to her skull,
it was indeed too late.

She slurped the last
of Melissa's tail, and--

She expected
to feel pain

But Merethis's gastric juices were stale, warm but gentle

Here the houses were dilapidated, the roads potholed, and the buildings too close to each other. Music blasted out of a house nearby, resonating through every foundation, making it feel like the entire neighborhood would crumble into dust.

She checked her directions. Just down the street, the economy housing. Fifth floor, H. On the way there she passed a club; another source of cacophonous hell and flashing lights; she immediately knew this place wasn't for her. The doorways were too tall; a wary glance around was met by several pairs of staring eyes, all of them looking down, some of them from nearby windows. At the door stood a bouncer, a massive centaur in a black shirt, with legs as thick as tree trunks and a burn scar across his flank.

So this was it. This was the kind of neighborhood predators ended up in when the army was done with them.

She had to hurry.

As she passed the club, she heard the music swell behind her, then fade; a door had opened and then closed, and now another set of footfalls joined her. Heavy and drunkenly uneven. She hastened her step, trying to not look back.

"Hey," a female voice slurred, deep and thick, like a low purr, "you there, wait up."

Amina walked faster, but the uneven steps moved closer, now, and each stride they took was worth three of hers.

"I said wait up, morsel."

A heavy hand landed on her shoulders; claws dug into her skin. Amina tried to run, but the fingers hooked into the fabric of her shirt and she found herself twirling in place, until her

back slammed against a cold wall.

Amina found herself face to face with a bare midriff.

"My face... is up here."

Her breath stunk of alcohol.

"Please," Amina said, "I have somewhere I must be."

"Yeah you do, morsel."

The body moved closer to hers. That flat stomach nearly brushed her nose. As she shrunk away from it, it growled.

"I said," the voice said, "my face is up here."

Trembling, Amina looked up. Past a hefty pair of breasts, a woman looked down at her, a single fang among her teeth, two furry feline ears emerging from her hair. Her slit pupils struggled to focus on her.

"That's... better," the catlike woman said. Each word came out as a struggle. Amina could see she was trying to be seductive, but the alcohol that coursed through her veins left her nothing but dangerous, unpredictable. "Now, morsel, what's your name?"

"I really must —"

"Your name," the catlike woman growled.

"Mary," Amina said.

"Well, morsel, I've got a conundrum and I need your help with it. I'm a veteran, see? Fought in the frontlines. Ate enemy combatants like no-one's business." She giggled. "Civilians too, sometimes. Even digested them when I could get away with it. But now I'm back in civilian life, y'see? I have shit pay and live in a shit house. I see a nice morsel like you walkin' by, you know? Makes me remember the old times..."

She smiled. Amina could now see all her teeth were sharp, not just the one – and that she was drooling.

“So how about I take you over to my place, morsel, make a nice pussy toy out of you. You’re a dainty one; I bet you feel real good wiggling around in my womb.”

“I’m...”

“Or.”

She grabbed Amina’s head, pressed her ear to her stomach, just in time for it to let out a roaring gurgle.

“I could be tempted to relive my service days.”

Hard hooves tapped against concrete. A dull, raspy voice followed them.

“Miri.”

The catlike woman looked to her left. The centaur bouncer stared her down, his tattooed arms crossed.

She sneered. “Not now, Clive. I’m busy.”

“Get the fuck out of here,” he said. “Now.”

Miri laughed at first, but the centaur didn’t seem to find it funny, so she turned to him, sizing him out. Amina again tried to escape, but her foot caught on a missing cobblestone, and it sent her stumbling onto the sidewalk.

The two predators stared each other down. Eventually, Miri huffed. “Fuck it,” she said. “Didn’t want to eat the ugly bitch anyway.”

With those words, she stumbled away. Once she was gone, Amina realized she was still being stared at.

“You need to go,” he said.

She grabbed Amina's head,
pressed her ear to her stomach,

"I could be tempted
to relive my service days."



"Wait. I need to find someone, can you help me? I'm looking for..."

"You need to go," he repeated, "now. This isn't a place for the likes of you."

He didn't need to tell her twice. She got up, turned, and ran, only stopping once she reached the address she was looking for. The name on the buzzer was scratched off; she rang it anyway. Once, twice. No answer.

The third time, a warbled voice interrupted her.

"Wrong button."

"It's Amina. We need to talk."

There was silence. Then the door unlocked.

Amina took the stairs. The elevator was out of order, and from how faded the sign looked, it had been for a good few years. Meanwhile, the steps were clearly designed for a different kind of person; the kind that usually has to squeeze past doorways. Each step provided a challenge, but she braved on. Five floors still to go – but Melissa needed her.

She took a moment to rest when she reached the fifth floor. As she sat on the stairs, the door behind her opened, and a familiar voice sounded.

"You have a lot of nerve showing up here."

Amina sighed.

"Hello, Natani."

* * *

"You have a lot of
nerve showing up here."



Melissa curled in Merethis's stomach; from head to tip of tail, the fleshy antechamber contained her, the soft acids rose up to her neck. Her body coiled upon itself, tight, motionless. She expected to feel pain, to feel the itching on her skin that signaled the beginning of the end, but Merethis's gastric juices were stale; warm but gentle, unable or unwilling to finish the job.

A camera floated by her face. She thought it was a piece of debris at first, but then, she understood.

They were making a show out of her. A statement. Merethis was a born and bred predator, not the warlike kind, which captures and retains, or even the speed-digesters that Melissa had fought alongside here and there—no, this creature of opulence, this Serpent Queen in branding and demeanor. She was a torture machine. Her job was to wear out her victims, to digest them slowly, to send them on a mostly-conscious tour of her insides, from gut to tail and winding all the way down, all while millions watched, from the comfort of their homes, what happened to deserters.

“Urgh...”

She tried to punch at the wall. To her surprise, her muscles responded. Her fist collided with the thick barrier of flesh, which bounced with the impact; a low chuckle resonated around her.

“This one has spirit,” a rich voice hissed, far away yet all around her. Merethis's voice. “I like meals with spirit. They give me something to do.”

Rehearsed lines. Of course.

Melissa coiled her tail, leveraged every inch of strength in her fearsome body against the cage that contained her. The walls resisted. Their squishiness absorbed the brunt of the force and reciprocated by closing in *hard*, with crushing intent; but she felt it, the temporary loss of balance, the lamia's massive body slouching forward for but a moment; her distraction had worked. She reached for the sphincter above, shoved a fist through it, then two, then forced it open, springing herself upward with her tail. The esophagus locked in around her, but she was stronger, and pushed through it. She fought for every inch as outside, the cameras focused on Merethis's shocked expression as a bulge pushed up her neck and, with a satisfying gasp, revealed a slime-covered head.

Merethis glanced sideways at the nearest camera, and raised an eyebrow. Once drama had built up enough, she placed a finger on Melissa's forehead and nudged it.

The floor collapsed under Melissa's tail. The liquid around her drained; the valve at the bottom gaped, and the sudden lack of purchase sent her sliding further into Merethis's innards. She tried to reach out, to get a limb out of that accursed maw, but it was too late—the weight of her sinking tail soon pulled the rest of her back into the depths.

Merethis smiled; with a gesture, she summoned one of her attendants, who wiped the very tip of her finger with a gold-lined handkerchief. Her tail flattened, her belly shrunk. With a massive gurgle, several tons of flesh shifted inside her body as her prey settled into its new home.

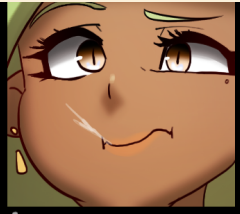
Trapped between two crushingly heavy blankets of flesh, fat, and scale, a prone Melissa surrendered to the vagaries of

Melissa coiled her tail, leveraged every inch of strength in her fearsome body against the cage that contained her.

Thirst

SHLURP

MLAH HHH



Once drama had built up enough, she placed a finger on Melissa's forehead and nudged it.

Nom

GRRR

BBRRR

The floor collapsed under Melissa's tail.

Schlurp

GURGLE

Her tail flattened, her belly shrunk

Sub

Several tons of flesh shifted inside her body
as her prey settled into its new home.

Trapped between two crushingly heavy blankets of flesh,

Fat, and scale,

a prone Melissa surrendered
to the vagaries of Merethis's inner workings.

Grrr...
Rumble
Glop
Blop
S
osh

Eden

Merethis's inner workings.

* * *

"I should devour you where you stand."

"Keep your eyes on the road, please," Amina said from the back seat.

Natani groaned. Since Amina had last seen her, something about her had changed, and not for the better. She looked older. Scruffier. She had tired-looking eyes that still somehow looked wild, almost feral. Her voice, though low and measured, sounded like it was about to break at any given time.

Amina recognized the look. Melissa had the same eyes, when her condition got worse, when the combat drug's permanent effects reared their ugly head. Having a healthy outlet had helped the lamia, but somehow, Amina doubted Natani had as healthy a sex life, or a sex life at all for that matter, hence the crazy eyes. Was it even safe to let her once-adversary drive in such a state? Not that it mattered. The minivan was designed with predators in mind; Amina wouldn't be able to even reach the pedals.

"For your own good, you'll keep your word."

"I've already spoken with Father," Amina said. "You'll be well taken care of. 'A quiet place to retire to' isn't exactly the hardest wish to grant, you know."

"I do know," Natani said, teeth gritted. "That's why it hurts so much to not be able to get even that."

"How long do we think we have?"

Natani paused, drumming her fingers against the steering wheel. Her eyes darted through the traffic.

"We'll be at my friend's in about three hours," she said. "Four, if the traffic gets worse."

"I meant for Melissa. How long do you think that lamia...?"

"Merethis?" Natani perked up. "About a week, maybe."

Amina raised an eyebrow. "You're familiar with her?"

"Fan, really. Mostly jealous of. Her technique is phenomenal. She has full control of her insides from tip to tail; I've seen her digest a centaur in three and a half minutes, and I've seen her retain people for weeks on end. I guess what I'm trying to say is, I've seen a lot of her."

"You're all red, Natani."

"I'll turn right back —"

Amina laughed. "I'm just kidding! It's not like I can't relate. Lamias are fascinating creatures."

"Lamia. The plural of lamia is lamia."

"Lamiae."

Natani sighed. "Nevermind. Anyway, as I was saying, these executions usually take about four days, but Melissa's big, and she's strong — she'll last a week at least." She glanced at the rear view mirror. "You don't look relieved."

"Will it be enough?"

"I don't know. But the studio is only a few hours away from our first stop, so if we time it right, we should be fine." She paused. "Take a nap, kid. You look like you haven't slept in ages."

“Look who’s talking,” Amina said.
Natani shrugged. “Suit yourself.”

* * *

The bright sunlight woke Amina up. She straightened up; her neck ached.

She was alone in the minivan.

She shielded her eyes from the sun and looked out the window; she didn’t recognize the area. The minivan was parked on a mostly empty lot, and when she searched for Natani, she didn’t find her.

Had she been abandoned? Turned in, perhaps? Had Natani just up and fled?

Though a city stretched out beyond the residential walls, only the building the lot belonged to drew her attention. It was a large concrete tower, a brutalist monolith that may have, at some point, have looked unique or awe-inspiring, but in its advanced age it just looked dirty. Three letters decorated its facade; *APL*.

Amina had no idea what she was looking at.

There was a knock on the glass; instinctively, she threw her blanket over her head—where had the blanket come from, even? She looked like a child hiding under her covers, in the backseat of a car much too large for her, standing very still so as to not give herself away.

Another knock.

“Stop messing around. It’s me.”

Amina peeked out. "Natani?"

The car door unlocked, and the entire thing tilted as Natani took the driver's seat. Something landed on Amina's chest—a small, sealed pill bottle full of white and blue capsules.

"What's this?"

"The only thing this side of divine retribution that can take down someone like Merethis, courtesy of my contacts at the..." She stopped herself; the words refused to leave her lips, so she just gestured towards the building. "Confidential stuff."

Amina sat up.

"I think it's time you tell me what your plan actually is."

"No plan as such, at least nothing I'd describe as one. I just know where the studio is—I've been there, don't ask—and just acquired a way to put a predator to sleep. We infiltrate the place, rescue your friend, and fuck right off."

"Do you think it'll work?"

Natani shrugged. "Probably not."

They drove off.

* * *

I can't believe I'm doing this.

Amina couldn't tell what was going on outside. There were words exchanged, but from her hiding place in the back of the van, she couldn't even imagine the sorts of things Natani was telling the guard at the studio's gate.

For the first time in a long while, she dared to hope. She

closed her eyes and recalled what Natani had told her earlier, while they were in the hotel room, after taking their first shower in days. Natani had rented a suit, but nothing for her.

Be ready to do anything. You won't have a lot of time.

For all she said about not having a plan, Natani's orders sounded exactly like one—and a damn good one, too. Now all she had to do was follow the lead... and trust.

The engine revved up. Whatever Natani did, it must have worked. Before long the rental was parked, and after a long wait, there were three knocks on the trunk, a signal that she was free to come out. She did, filling her lungs with fresh air to purge the new car smell, but before she could even realize her surroundings, she saw a glimpse of Natani, but she wasn't wearing the suit, or even the worn shirt and sweatpants she had on when the whole journey had started. Moreover, her stomach now bulged out, filled to its brim with not one, but two wriggling shapes; one predator-sized, the other not much bigger than Amina. She'd been busy, it looked like. Amina couldn't get a better look at the outfit, but the word skimpy came to mind, before something was shoved into her hands and the trunk slammed shut again.

"Put that on," Natani said. "I'll let you know when you can come out."

In the darkness, Amina tried to make heads and tails of what she had just been handed. It felt like a bunch of strings at first, but as she felt at it with her hands, she realized what she was holding. She felt the little triangles of fabric where the strings met, and gasped. *This* was her disguise?

After several minutes of trying to figure out how to put it



on, and a bump or two of the head as she kicked and struggled about, two knocks let her know the coast was clear. Natani opened the trunk, Amina stepped out—and the cold breeze chilled her to the bone.

Natani snorted. “You look like someone tried to gift-wrap you and forgot the tape.”

Amina looked down at her body. She couldn’t even deny it. Her top was held in place by her hopes and little else; the thong was giving her a wedgie. When she tried to take a step on the dainty slippers she had been provided, she felt every crease on the pavement. She touched her cheek; the wind might have been cold, but her skin was burning red hot.

Then again, Natani wasn’t faring much better. Her outfit was more colorful, but even more gravity-defying than Amina’s, with her massive breasts squeezed into a lacy top a few sizes too small, all barely tied together by little strings. The thong she wore had all but disappeared into her ass, and the little inch-wide ribbon meant to conceal her crotch was not nearly wide enough to even begin to do its job.

“Looking good,” Amina said.

“Shut up and put this collar on.”

The warm leather locked neatly around Amina’s neck. Natani held the other end of the rope.

“What a weird leash,” she said. “Anyway, let me see if you got this right. We wait for the filming to take its hourly break, we talk to Merethis, you tell her...?”

“That one of the cameras stopped working and I need to replace it,” Amina said. “Then, once I’m in the first stomach, I

drop the capsules in and go get Melissa.”

Natani nodded. “Excellent. With her on our side, we can just brute force our way out. We get back into the car, drive back to the minivan, hop cars, then lay low.”

“Sounds like a plan to me.”

“For the last time, it’s not. It’s a gamble at best.”

The studio door opened behind them.

“Hey, you two!” a male voice shouted. “What the hell are you doing out there? You don’t get paid to laze about! Get your ass back in the studio, stat!”

Natani smirked, slammed a fist into her stomach, and let out an earth-shaking burp. Before Amina’s eyes, her stomach seemed to tighten just a bit; the figures trapped within quieted themselves.

The studio hand rolled his eyes. “Right, sorry, didn’t realize you were working. Alright, you two, wrap it up and come inside when you’re done with whatever you’re doing.”

“Oh, we’re done,” Natani said. “Aren’t we, Mary?”

Amina nodded. “Sure are, uh, Rebecca.”

“*Mistress* Rebecca.”

“Y-yeah, of course. *Mistress* Rebecca.”

“That’s better,” Natani said, smiling. “Come now, help, you have some spelunking to do.”

Finding the set wasn’t difficult. All they had to do was follow the luxury; the nicer suits, the larger entourages, the one fan with the autograph-ready portrait of Merethis in hand. Eventually they found it, mixed in with the crowd—Natani found it surprisingly easy to do so even with her bouncing gut;

she was far from the only predator on staff to have acted on her urges. Back during service, she was used to being gazed at whenever she walked through the barracks with a captive or three inside her; even people who had seen their share still glanced out of habit. Not so here. Eating meant something different here. It was common; routine. Any gurgling gut was assumed to contain a criminal – and a camera.

Amina saw her walk backstage, and return no more than twenty seconds later, wiping the saliva from her chin. She looked slim again; as if nothing had ever happened.

“What did you...?”

Natani shushed her. “Not now.”

Nobody cared to listen in, however. After all, all eyes were on the main star.

Sitting on her chaise longue, Merethis posed for the camera. An attendant on top of a ladder dropped grapes into her open mouth; they fell in and disappeared, no swallowing, no reaction whatsoever save the occasional licking of her lips. Her massive tail, all curled up, seemed to melt into the floor; Melissa’s figure was but a subtle bulge on her soft underbelly, barely perceptible even when Merethis flaunted it for the camera.

Amina elbowed Natani’s stomach for attention. “Look, there she is.”

But Natani was already looking. Staring, even. There was a spark in her eyes as she saw Merethis; a smile on her face, too.

“Compose yourself, *Mistress*.”

Natani cleared her throat. “Hum. Right. I was just... doing

a strategic survey of the area.”

“Yeah. Sure.”

Minutes passed. Their tension only rose. Amina found herself inching closer and closer to Natani, closer and closer to that once-bulging midsection of hers. It brought back unpleasant memories, and still, in a way, it reassured her.

“Take fifteen, everyone,” a deep voice announced. A few lights went out; attendants flooded the stage.

Natani tugged on the collar, and the two joined the crowd.

Merethis only looked more and more massive as they approached her. A creature that had dwarfed Melissa obviously dwarfed Natani as well, but Amina, who felt small and powerless even in the presence of her newfound ally, might as well be a speck of dust to the lamia. Each of her golden scales was larger than the palm of her hand; would a creature like this even feel her inside?

“Now you’re the one blushing,” Natani whispered.

Amina almost cracked a smile. Almost.

Once the makeup team was done with Merethis, they stepped in. Natani took the lead, and Amina followed—together, they looked like any other predator-prey pairing in the building, if slightly less blase about the goings on than your average attendant. They circumvented the coiled tail, Natani enjoying the view, Amina trying to find where Melissa hid behind that thick layer of fat; once they reached the foot of the chaise, Merethis’s golden eyes languidly turned to face them.

“I’m here to retrieve one of the cameras, ma’am,” Amina said. She tried to maintain eye contact, but before she knew it,

she was staring at her feet, her cheeks on fire.

"I don't recognize you," Merethis said.

Her voice seeped into Amina's ears like thick honey. It lingered even after she stopped speaking.

"I'm, uh, new here."

"I see. And your handler," Merethis said, turning her attention to Natani. "She's new too?"

Natani nodded. She shifted her weight from one leg to another; this queen upon a throne had, with a glance, turned a trained former government agent into a child with a crush.

"You have a good build. Strong middle section—I can see it from here. You digest quickly."

"I'm sorry, ma'am," Amina interrupted. "But we're on a schedule, and..."

Merethis raised an eyebrow, then searched the crowd for the director, then gave a nod. His voice immediately echoed again: "Make that a thirty minute break, actually."

"As I was saying," Merethis continued. "It's not often that I get two new attendants, one so uncomfortable in her uniform, the other a clear predator. A camera replacement, you say? Little one, are you sure you can traverse my innards without being claimed by them? I can only hold back their processes for so long... and they do love the tender ones."

She winked. Natani bit her lip.

Amina nodded. "I'll be fine, I've had training."

"May it serve you well," Merethis said. She beckoned Amina closer, unclasped the leash from her collar, and parted her lips.

With a small boost from Natani, Amina crawled inside.

The noise from outside faded. Only the squelching of the tongue underneath her knees, and the groaning of a distant digestive tract, carried up the throat and released echoing in the cavern of her maw. Her hands sank deep into the pink flesh; the cavern ahead beckoned her, and she heeded its call. She crawled forward.

Merethis's gullet widened before her, inviting, breathing. She reached into the darkness, and saw her hand disappear; she moved closer, and felt the beginning of the slope ahead. The fleshy tube curved downwards, then went on, seemingly forever. Taking a deep breath of the dank, moist air, Amina lowered herself to a crawl and slid over the long, flat tongue, diving headfirst into the pulsing abyss.

The trip down the esophagus was slow, but relaxed – a far cry from Melissa's tight, but giving gullet. She felt like she could freefall her way down, and that the rippling downward motions of the ribbed tunnel all around were but a formality; still, she took it slow. If she stimulated Merethis's digestive tract too much, her stomach could decide to turn its guest into mulch.

She had seen Melissa's stomach get riled up over much less, after all.

By degrees, Amina pushed through the throat, half by her own efforts, half thanks to gravity and her slippery surroundings picking up the slack; within seconds she was deposited in the stomach, an alcove so roomy she could stand up in it without her head scraping the ceiling. A bright light illuminated the area, coming from a small waterproof camera

floating on a piece of cork. To her relief, it didn't seem to be recording.

"Melissa?" she whispered.

No answer.

With a sigh, she tested the ground with her feet until she found the valve leading to the second stomach. When exploring Melissa's innards, she often did it by running her big toe down the stomach's creases until they converged at the bottom; here, though, she needed only take a wrong step for her entire foot to lodge itself in one.

As if to answer her questions, the sphincter opened, draining excess juices from the stomach.

She didn't have much time. Reaching into her thong, she pulled out as many capsules as she'd manage to fit in there – five. They would have to be enough. One by one, she opened them, and emptied their contents into the roiling pool that foamed around her knees; once she was done, she took a deep breath and dove towards the second stomach.

A slurping sound accompanied her slide. The liquid that at first submerged her seeped lengthwise into the long abyss; she found herself crawling through a narrow tube, hundreds of pounds of snake weighing down on her, kept at bay only by the counterpressure of the stomach's moist air. She pushed through, and for once, the flesh resisted; she had to squeeze her near-naked body through the orifice, every breath shallow, every foot gained a victory – and every few steps, she called out Melissa's name.

The world around her seemed to slacken. Muscles

loosened; tendons relaxed. The everpresent sound of Merethis's breathing slowed, as did the echoing heartbeat that carried down her frame. *It's working, Amina thought, it's working.* All she had to do now was brave on...

Then, just as she thought she couldn't go any further, she felt something brushing against her skin.

A hand.

"Melissa!" she shouted under her breath.

Her vigor renewed, she pushed further in, until she saw the arm that followed that hand, and the shoulder, and at last Melissa's face, exhausted and slime-covered, but still breathing, still warm, still alive!

"Melissa! Melissa, wake up!"

She nudged her face. No reaction.

"Melissa, wake up, damn it! It's me, Amina!"

The lamia's eyes twitched at the mention of her name; Amina could tell she was trying to grasp onto her consciousness, but that it wasn't enough.

"Amina...?"

"It's me."

"Where are... we?"

"Inside Merethis. Look, Melissa, we have to get out of here. You need to get up and escape."

Melissa sighed. "I'm... so tired..."

Amina took her head in a forceful grasp, pulled it close, turned it towards her.

"Open your eyes!" she barked, a lightning clap, a slap to

the face, a sharp edge in a sea of softness.

“Y... yes.”

Melissa’s eyes slowly opened. The world around her came slowly into focus, and she saw Amina, lit by the dim glow of a distant camera light, looking at her, tears coursing down her cheeks.

“Which way am I facing?” Melissa asked, her voice strained.

“I just came from the first stomach.”

“Ah. Can you... can you back up?”

Amina tried, but the weight of Merethis’s idle coils pinned her down. The lamia’s digestive tract was one way only, or so it seemed.

She shook her head.

“That’s... okay,” Melissa said. “Lay flat. Close your eyes.”

Amina obeyed, and soon a second warmth washed over her head; a hotter, livelier warmth that buzzed with adrenaline, a narrow throat that handled her with care, lips that caressed her skin as they traveled across her body, the cozy embrace of a stomach her size. *Home*.

She put her trust in her partner. It was all she could do.

* * *

Natani fidgeted. Beads of sweat formed on her forehead, yet her hands were cold. She took another glance at the still-fresh autograph on her right breast; she hoped the sweat wouldn’t wash it away before she was home.

Where the hell were the others? They were supposed to be back by now...

Merethis, before her, slumped on her chair. She looked relaxed, yes, and her movements had slowed, but her eyes were still open, still trained on her.

"They're not coming back," she said. Her words came slowly.

"Excuse me?"

"You're waiting for them to come back up, aren't you? So you three can escape. This is a rescue, is it not?"

Natani bit her lip. This time, she drew blood.

"I don't know what you're talking about, ma'am."

Merethis smiled. "Oh, come on, now. I know the name and face of every person in this studio. Nobody's hired without my knowledge; nobody leaves without my permission. And besides... do you really think I wasn't briefed on my victim's background? And the girl inside me right now, why, she's basically a celebrity if you pay attention to the game of politics. And as for you..."

She nodded towards the autograph.

For the first time, Natani focused on the actual words that the lamia had left on her bare skin.

For Natani, much love. Merethis.

Her blood froze.

She knew.

Had she known from the beginning? What was her game?

Merethis smiled. "She's not coming out. I'm not holding her in; she just cannot withstand me."

"I don't understand," Natani said. "You could digest them both at any time."

"I could. I would. Maybe I should." Merethis's shoulders sagged. "But I'm not here to just digest—I'm here to put on a show, I'm here to drive home what happens when the pawns try to act like kings and queens. And the show must go on. As for you, you're free to go. But you don't look like you will... am I wrong?"

Her finger rested on the corner of her lips, and a pink, slimy tongue came out to meet it.

"We have a deal," Natani said. "They can give me something I need."

"And what could that be?"

Natani's first instinct was to not answer, but she needed to keep Merethis busy, give the tranquilizer time to finish its job.

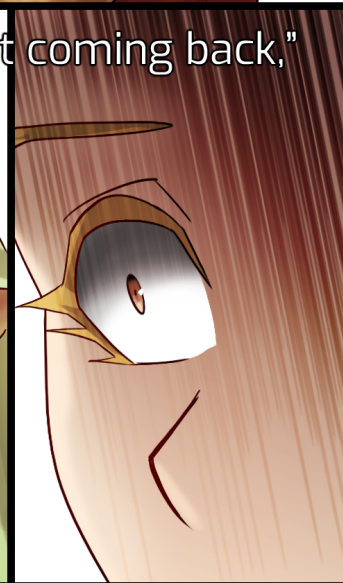
"Peace of mind."

"Can they give you that?"

Natani shrugged. "Probably not. Hell, can anyone? At this point, I'll settle for anything. Being able to just move on would be nice."

She saw Merethis's eyes begin to lose focus, and knew it was her time. She reached for the lamia's head, pulled it close, pried her jaws open, and dove in. The sweet smell of Merethis's innards filled her nostrils, her lungs, her mind—she felt her body react, her own libido rising, but she shut it all off and homed in on the sounds of motion below.

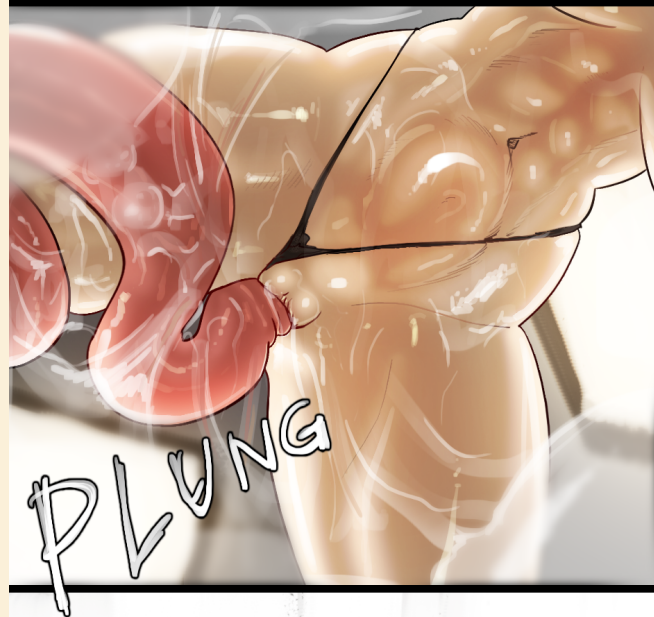
The screams and shouts outside didn't even begin to register.



Two bulges traveled through the idle lamia's body. One, thick and slow-moving, dragging itself up the tail in a slow, grueling march; the other, smaller, sprier, swimming through flesh with ease. The two bulges met at the very beginning of Merethis's tail, and then, as one, pushed up. They forced their way back to the first stomach, stretched it out, and their combined efforts kept the weight of the lamia's fat at bay. The largest of the two slithered on up, pushed through the throat and erupted from the jaws to a cacophony of screams.

With a wet thud, Melissa hit the ground. She took her breath of fresh air in days, and as an ample supply of oxygen made its way back to her brain, she felt her body begin to energize. The chaos that surrounded her—the colors, the shouts, the stampede of a studio in chaos—faded into the background as her focus sharpened to a point. *Escape*. That was the only thing that mattered.

She didn't even look over her shoulder to see Natani emerge from the same gaping maw, or the tongue that tied itself around her ankle and intercepted her fall. Merethis's eyes opened, sharp as ever; she shook off the lethargy from her bones and smirked. Her long tongue crawled up Natani's leg, coiling around it like a snake, slithering, slithering, from calf to knee to thigh, then sliding under the thong and *plunging* deep. Natani gasped, squirming on the floor, her knees locked against her other—the wave of pleasure that washed over her shattered her body, her mind, her very survival instinct. She clawed at the floor, but as the tongue slid back into Merethis's mouth, Natani followed. Golden lips welcomed her in, a throat stretched to accommodate her, an already massive gut bulged



and expanded, then gently, like a lover's caress, settled.

Melissa perceived none of this. She perceived only the exit, and how many people she had to trample on the way.

* * *

The show must go on.

Only the most perceptive amongst the transmission's millions of viewers noticed anything wrong after the technical problems ceased and the show resumed as planned. The style of editing changed, however. Quick cuts and experimental angles kept the attention away from Merethis's victim's face even as she was dragged through the second stomach and pushed into the intestines; darker lighting made it more difficult to perceive where she ended, and the foaming pool of acids began. No shots of her lower half were ever shown.

The show must go on.

Melissa released Amina in the nearest dark alley.

Nobody came to pursue them. Nobody questioned it when Amina borrowed a phone to call for a ride home. As far as they knew, she was just another employee at the studio, or some deviant enjoying a walk in the sun—neither of them was an uncommon sight.

The ride—an all-black step van—came with two changes of clean clothes and the promise of a stop for food at the next gas station.

Amina and Melissa looked out of the back window, watching as the studio building shrunk into nothing. They

couldn't bring themselves to smile.

* * *

"Hey, Melissa, check this out."

Melissa stepped into the mansion's grounds. She had been here once before, but never in formalwear. She looked down at Amina, who, despite her attempts at sounding chipper, kept hiding behind her, as if she wanted to hide herself.

She was holding an envelope.

"What's that?" Melissa asked.

"It was in the mailbox, I guess I meant to read it on the way..."

"...and then you fell asleep."

"You know I always fall asleep on car rides, Melissa."

The lamia smiled, leaning down to place a small kiss on Amina's forehead. "Well," she said, "store it somewhere. This really isn't the time to be reading our mail."

She tried to not make eye contact with the chauffeur, who stood by the car, as if waiting for something.

Amina ignored her girlfriend's pleas. She had never been a patient sort, but ever since their escape from the studio, she had seemed even more devoted to living in the moment.

Hard to believe it had already been two weeks. Two weeks of living in the wreck of a house, eating cold food and waiting for the contractor to come to assess the damages. Two weeks of fearing they'd be attacked again. But no-one came.

It was as if they had ceased to exist.

The sound of tearing paper snapped her out of it. She watched as Amina reached into it and pulled something out.

A photograph of Merethis.

A *signed* photograph of Merethis. In a room larger than their house, on a bed that seemed to go on forever, lounging naked over the fabrics, her arms squeezing her breasts together.

But this wasn't what drew their attention.

Amina gasped. "Look!"

Where Merethis's tail began, the large scales that shielded her labia were parted by her two hands; from between them peeked out Natani's head, her eyes burning with lust, her tongue hanging out of her mouth, her hair tangled into a soaked mess.

"There's something written on the back."

A little something for you two loves to remember me by. I believe you're acquainted with my new human vibrator—she's got so much stamina! Can you believe she lasted the whole week of filming? I knew right then I had to have her. We go everywhere together!

Melissa covered her flushed face. "Oh, gods."

I asked her if she wanted to send you her regards, but she had a tail down her throat as I wrote this, so I didn't understand the answer.

Miss you both inside me. Come back soon.

—M.

"She's very... forward, isn't she?" Melissa asked through her fingers.



“A tail down her throat, she says. Now that’s an idea to keep in mind.”

“Amina!”

The chauffeur stepped forward, interrupting Amina’s laughter. “Please, miss,” he said. “The master of the house...”

“Yes, yes,” Amina said, waving him off. She squeezed Melissa’s hand. “Are you ready, big girl?”

Melissa took a deep breath.

“Amina?”

“Yeah?”

“I’ve been in battlefields. I’ve been hunted, near-dead. I’ve

been trapped, unable to move, waiting for death's inevitable approach."

Amina tilted her head.

"And," Melissa continued, "this is the most scared I've ever been in my life."

"I know." Another squeeze. "Are you ready?"

Melissa looked up at the mansion that towered before them, more awe-inspiring than any predator.

"I am. Time to meet the in-laws."



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Happy reading!

Love,
the Snakethroat Crew

(also, if you'd like to chat with us, we have a [Discord server](#)!)