

... Author's Notes ...

Dear reader,

I go by the pen name j.j. scriptease and I've been writing fan fiction on and off for almost a decade and a half now, predominantly of a lemon/erotica variety. None of the places I've posted my stories on however quite felt like home, whether it be due to the design or structure of the website, the restrictions imposed on saucy content, or anything in between. And thus, I thought it would be neat to have a personalised hub for my fan fiction works.

I teamed up with a developer buddy to create a site called <u>lemonzsauce.com</u> where you can find ALL my literature along with extra goodies – like downloads in PDF format, seeing the artwork that inspired the fics, and subscribing for new story and chapter updates!

The site does cost money to keep up and running. If you enjoy my work and would like to help with maintenance (or would simply like to support me), please feel free to visit <u>lemonzsauce.com/donate</u> to make an offering - no pressure, and it's not necessary at all :) - any amount from a dollar up will be very much appreciated.

Thank you for reading! I hope this piece of writing lives up to your expectations.

- j.j. scriptease

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DISCLAIMER

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WARNING

This work of fiction is Rated MA and only suitable for mature audiences. It may contain explicit and offensive language, adult themes and graphic descriptions of a violent and/or sexual nature.

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Synopsis

When May and her father wind up broke and stranded on foreign territory, an untimely wardrobe malfunction questions the boundaries they're willing to push to get back home.

Ho'ing For Hoenn

A Pokémon fanfic by j.j. scriptease

Chapter 1 – Nip Slip Tip

May should've turned and ran. Disappeared in the thick trees and bushes. This little, four-foot-nothing brat would never catch her. Could he? She gulped. What if he did?

It would only make things so much worse.

May stood there, lost, flatfooted, caught in two minds; her brain had already made a break for it, left her body behind, frozen in guilt and trepidation.

"Well?" The smug brat crossed his arms and tapped his foot, cap tilted to the side, blowing bubbles with his gum. "I ain't got all day, ya know?" His grubby little fingers made 'gimme, gimme, gimme' gestures. "Momma's gonna be really mad if I get home late again. And I really don't feel like gettin' another spanking today! So... hurry up!"

"Oh, um..." May fidgeted with her fingers. "The thing is..." She didn't have two pennies to rub together, let alone the 20 Pokédollars she owed him after losing their pokémon battle. "I'm sorry?"

"Eh?" The boy slanted his head in confusion. "Yeah, I'm sorry ya lost too, but 'sorry' ain't gonna pay my bills." He gnawed at his bubble gum remorselessly. "Cough it up already!"

"That's... I..." She sighed. "I'm saying... I might not have any cash on me right now," she admitted in a feeble whisper.

"You what?" His eyes grew wide, incredulous. "You must have some big cojones on you, lady."

No cojones. Just a desperate longing for home and the grit to do whatever it would take to get back. "I'm sorry," she said again. "I didn't think I'd lose."

"Ha! Well, ya did!" He spat his tongue out at her. "And ya know the rules 'round here. Since you ain't got cash, that's mine now." He lunged for the red and white sphere in her hand.

"No, wait!" May grabbed his fist after he'd already closed it around her Poké Ball. "Skitty's all I've got left!"

"Not. My. Problem." He growled each word between gritted teeth as May yanked on his arm and struggled to pry his fingers open. "Stop! What are ya doing? It's 'posed to be mine now!"

Like hell she'd surrender her Skitty! She didn't give a damn what the laws of this godforsaken region said. Now she really regretted not fleeing the instant he defeated her. How silly to think one person on this stinking island might be humane enough not to kick a stranded girl while she's down. She hated this place and everyone in it!

May fought with tears in her eyes as the heartless boy tried to rip away her only solace of home. She couldn't let him take her Poké Ball, she just couldn't. It didn't matter he'd won it fair and square. Skitty was going nowhere! Their struggle intensified, turned more physical, forceful pulling and shoving, neither willing to give up the Poké Ball. May yanked back hard, so hard she took him down to the ground with her. He remained stubbornly attached to her prized possession. They rolled around in the grass, growling and swearing and yelling at each other, shouts of "fucking let go!" and "you let go, bitch!" When nothing seemed to scare him off her and Skitty, May resorted to sinking her teeth into his closed fist.

He yelped and released her Poké Ball immediately.

May pushed the limp boy off of her then clambered back to her feet. She might've been dirty and roughed up and panting for breath, but her Poké Ball was hers once more, guarded in two tight fists.

The brat stood up, dishevelled and hat-less, cradling the bite mark in his hand. "You stupid bitch!" He spat out his gum. Grass and dirt littered his bushy hair, his face a mixture

of venom and embarrassment, tears welling in his eyes. "That was mean! What the hell is wrong with you? I can't believe you... you..."

Strangely, the rage in his eyes waned as he lambasted her, his yells withering to weak mutters. He fell silent altogether, then just stood there and kind of... stared. May was bewildered, having planted her feet firmly in the ground bracing herself to fend off another lunge for her Poké Ball. He hadn't moved an inch. She could probably snap her fingers in his face and he wouldn't flinch.

Huh, what gives?

Had she suddenly turned into a Sableye or something? Why were his eyes so wide and crazed, and why did his jaw keep drooping lower and lower? She didn't get it. Not until she followed his line of sight to her chest.

May had been so outraged and pumped with adrenaline, she didn't notice her state of disarray following their little tussle. Somehow, amid all the rumble and tumble, the zip sealing her red shirt had been dragged down to her navel, exposing one side of her large, purple bra! And, if that wasn't embarrassing enough, her nipple had slipped out and into the open, jamming the little runt's reptilian brain. She turned beet red.

"Oh my –" May whipped around so fast she nearly dropped the Poké Ball she'd just fought tooth and nail to retain. She readjusted her lopsided bra with panicked haste and zipped her ruffled shirt back up.

"W-wait," whined the young boy, as if his favourite toy had been unduly confiscated.

May huffed at the little pervert. "Shame on you! Haven't you done enough? Now you want to strip me of my dignity, too?"

"No way Jose! S-s-sorry, I mean, it just slipped – uh, I mean, I wasn't trying to be a tit – uh, I mean..." She rolled her eyes listening to his babbling defence. He took a deep breath and finally said, "I didn't do it on purpose." "Yeah right. I should report you to Officer Jenny!" Did this region even have an Officer Jenny? If so, she'd probably be as corrupt as the rest of them. Nonetheless, her threat had the boy squirming.

"No, no, no, no!" He waved his hands frantically. "It was an accident. I swear! You gotta believe me! Hey, I'll even let you keep your pokémon and you don't have to give me anything, how about that?"

Wow, did he really mean it? She'd gone from broken, beaten and blatantly in the wrong to some unexpected power position... all in the space of an ill-timed nip slip. Well, she'd take the fortune from her misfortune, and be grateful no one else had been around to witness it. "Fine," she grumbled, hiding her relief. "Let's pretend that never happened, okay?"

"Okay!" He nodded eagerly.

"Good."

"Great!"

"Fantastic."

"Yeah! Or..." He trailed off, lost in his musings.

May quirked an eyebrow. "Or?"

"Or... I can give you 20 Pokédollars, too."

"Huh?" What sense did that make? "You're going to give me the prize money for our pokémon battle... even though you won?"

"Yup," he said. "But..."

"Oh, here it comes." She should've known. "What's the catch?"

"Um, well, uh, only if you... uh..."

May couldn't believe how quickly he'd gone from snide and sure of himself to bumbling and uneasy. Jeez, what could be that hard to say? "Spit it out already!"

"Onlyifyouletmeseeyourboobagain!" He covered his mouth immediately, apparently shocking himself with his own suggestion.

"Wha...?" His words had flown out at 100km per second; it was miracle she'd heard a single one. And she wished she hadn't.

"Just for a few seconds." He pleaded with his palms together. "Pretty please?"

May blinked, staggered he'd have the audacity to ask a second time. The nerve of this runt! First of all, she had a boyfriend who wouldn't appreciate some little twerp eyeing her goodies, even if he was 1,000 miles away in a different region. Moreover, what made this brat assume for one second she was *that* kind of girl? He'd already seen more than she'd cared for any stranger to see.

Honestly though, the prize money did intrigue her under the circumstances; 20 Pokédollars sounded like 2,000,000 when three weeks had gone by since your last hot meal. May was grateful the rundown, overpopulated Pokémon Centre on the outskirt of town offered strays like her free food, but the cold, brittle mush could get vomit-inducing once you'd shovelled it down day after day, week after week, and month after month for long enough. What she wouldn't have done for a cheeseburger! It would've been nice... more than nice... but her dignity, she decided, was worth a lot more.

"All right, listen here ya little punk." She grabbed the front of his shirt. "I'm not some cheap 'flasher' you can just pay off! You're lucky you got to see the little you did. If you ever even *think* of making a suggestion like that again, I swear I'm gonna –"

"30 Pokédollars!"

Her mouth froze mid-rant. "30... Pokédollars..."

"Yup! All yours, I promise. Just for 5 seconds! It's the easiest money you'll ever make!"

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Suspicion narrowed her eyes. Was he being serious right now? The improved offer could afford her a *few* good meals *and* Pokéblocks for Skitty. Arceus knew her pokémon needed better nourishment, too, probably more than she did. Pokémon battles had become her only hope of income, but her scrawny, depleted Skitty lost five in a row now, and she looked worse for wear after each defeat. Without her, May couldn't even begin to imagine how she'd survive. Skitty needed to get stronger and healthier for them to rediscover their winning form. And besides, May owed her partner a good treat for all the effort she'd put into carrying them this far, and especially after May nearly gambled her away. ₽30 wouldn't be a bad start to setting things right...

Her indignant clutch on the boy's shirt loosened a bit.

Wait... am I actually... considering it?

No way! How could she? No decent human being could justify flashing a little kid for a few bucks. What had gotten into her? She needed to nip it in the bud before her better senses strayed any further.

"Look," May said. "You've got the wrong girl. Now get lost, kid." She let go of his shirt. "Before I change my mind about pounding some respect into you." May had never laid a violent finger on anyone in her life, but she hoped she sounded intimidating enough to paint the ugly picture. "Besides, what are you, like... eight?"

"Eight?!" he screeched in offence. "Not even close, lady!"

Admittedly, May exaggerated; Trainers had to be at least ten to acquire their licenses, even in this godforsaken region she assumed. She rather enjoyed rubbing him the wrong way. "Are you sure about that, short-stuff?"

"Heck yeah I'm sure 'bout it! What's it matter anyway? ₽30 is ₽30."

"And no is no." She shooed him off.

But he ignored her dismissive gesture. "C'mon, just think about what you could do with thirty buckaroos! Get yourself some better shoes or a shirt that actually fits or hey – maybe you can even get yourself a half-useful pokémon on the black market."

"Don't you talk trash about my Skitty!" She waved an angry fist at him.

He threw his hands up and backed off. "Okay, okay, was just a little joke, hehe."

She turned and huffed, unamused. "See ya later, loser." She took three steps away when he piped up again.

"A hundred Pokédollars!"

May's foot froze in the air, mid-step. *Did he just say... 100 Pokédollars?* That was *five* times his original offer, and more than May had ever won in a single pokémon battle. Wow. How desperate could he get? She whipped around and asked, "You're really going to throw all that money at a random stranger?"

"Final offer." He put his cap back on, prepared to leave if she declined it.

That was a lot of money just to glimpse at someone for five seconds. "Seriously? ₽100? Aren't there girls wherever you come from?"

"Of course! But..." He twiddled his foot in the grass awkwardly. "Theirs aren't as... uh... as huge as yours!"

May flushed and raised a coy forearm across her chest. An early bloomer, she'd been subject to leering boys and men practically from the beginning of her travels, some old enough to be her father. Yick! Though she never quite understood why they looked at her that way, she recognised the impurity in their eyes, which often left her uncomfortable in her own skin. Mercifully, most oglers hadn't had the gull to comment on a young girl's budding chest, at least not until she grew into adolescence. May liked to think she'd learnt how to navigate and ignore the sleazeballs – and yet, on the odd occasion, a direct comment targeting the fullness of her breasts had her feeling like that naïve, insecure child again. Perhaps what caught her off-guard this time was how unexpectedly blunt the youngster had been comparing her 'huge' bust to other girls her age. She'd never wanted to stand out for anything other than her Pokémon Coordinating talents. "Uh, right." She made sure her zip was all the way up to her chin.

"So, what do you say? Are you gonna take the money or not?"

"You really don't quit, do you?" How many more hints did she have to give him? Heck, what reason did she have to believe he could even fulfil his side of the bargain? Not that she was considering it at all, but, "How can I even be sure you have –"

He thrusted a messy wad of notes in her face before she could finish the question, silver coins dropping out of his pocket in all his excitement. "You gonna do it now?"

The crumpled knot of 10 Pokédollar bills was difficult to count accurately, but it easily amounted to ₽100, possibly even more. Now that the money was so close to her face she could literally smell it, May wasn't in such a hurry to up and leave. "Er, I was just curious if you actually had it." Maybe she could negotiate or guilt-trip him somehow into handing some over without having to shed her dignity. "On second thought, I don't think 'sorry' is enough to make up for what you did. You know, an honourable person would –"

"Pay the Trainer that just beat them in a pokémon battle!"

"Well... I mean..." Damnit, he had her there, humbly reminding her which direction this transaction *should've* been going.

"Like, come on. Whatchu even worried about, huh? It's only us two here." He spun around with outstretched arms, gesturing to the empty clearings and bushes. "No one is even gonna know. Please?"

May surveyed their surroundings, too. He wasn't wrong.

But, "I don't know..."

"Five seconds for a hundred smackaroos!" He waved the jumbled ball of hard cash in her face, shaking loose several coins. "Ya *really* shouldn't be thinking that hard about it. Where else you gonna get a deal like that for losing?"

Nowhere. Annoying and obnoxious as he was, the little turd did raise one or two valid points. Would she be silly to turn it down? She looked around again. Who would even know? Only five seconds. If he spilt the beans, she'd deny it, pit her word against his. Only five seconds. She bit on her bottom lip. And all he was going to do was *look* – look at something he'd already seen. For only five seconds. Skitty needed to eat. Hell, she needed to eat. She'd already been humiliated by a nip slip, why not make lemonade? Only five seconds...

"Well? I ain't got all day, lady." He tapped at his wristwatch. "My mom's gonna throw a fit if I'm late again. Ten more seconds. And the deal's off, ya hear me?" Oh, she heard him, but the gears in her head hadn't stopped turning. He sighed in frustration. "Ten... nine... eight..."

Would you shut up?! I'm trying to think! Oh God, I can't believe I'm actually considering it. What will Brendan say? I can never tell him. Never. But he'd understand, right? It's not like I'm actually going to let this pipsqueak touch me or anything. Plus, Skitty's getting so frail. She needs it more than I do. Oh, quit lying to yourself, May! You want that cheeseburger soooo bad! What do I do? Brendan isn't going to break up with me over something stupid like this. I mean, he wouldn't... right?

"...two ...one! That's it. Ah well." He stuffed the money back in his pocket

By the time she quit her inner ramblings, her ticket to a hot meal was walking away. May shouted in panic, "Wait!"

He stopped. "What? Ya say somethin'?"

"All right. I'll..." She glanced at the sky and issued a silent prayer for forgiveness. "I'll do it."

He jumped and turned around. "You will?!"

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Was he seriously going to make her repeat it? "Yes," she grumbled out the side of her mouth, "I'll do it."

"Right on!" He leapt and punched the air.

Sheesh, you'd think he just beat the Elite Four. What had she done? "But first," May said, reining in his excitement, "there are going to be some ground rules."

"Ground rules?" He scratched his head.

"Yes. Hand me your phone." She beckoned him to produce it.

"Wha-"

"And your Pokédex, and your PokéNav, and your Xtransceiver, and any other device you might have that can take pictures. Last thing I need is you showing anyone." No one would ever believe him over her if he had no evidence.

"I'd never do that! What d'you take me for?"

"A pervert," May said bluntly. "Now hand them over or the deal's off."

"Tch. Fine. I guess that's fair." He emptied his pockets. Other than the jumbled-up cash, he was carrying his phone, a Pokédex, his Trainer's License, three Poké Balls, half a Potion, an empty Gym Badge case, chocolate bar wrappers and an open packet of gummy sweets. *No Badges?* May thought. How did she lose to this amateur? Just another sad indication of how far she'd fallen. "Well?" he said, eager to conclude their agreement. "Anything else?"

"Rule number two, and it should go without saying," May added, "No. Touching."

"Okay."

"Just looking... from way over there." She gestured for him to move back some five metres.

He did as she instructed. "That good enough for ya?"

"No coming closer. If I see you move so much as a toe then -"

"I won't!"

"And no telling anyone about this!"

"I already said I wouldn't!"

"Not a soul!"

"Yeah, yeah."

"I'm serious."

"I get it, I get it. Sheesh!" He sighed, exasperated. "Are we gonna do this or are you gonna keep stalling with these 'ground rules'?"

May hmphed. Was her stalling that obvious? He couldn't blame her; it was not like she exposed her bare chest to random strangers on the regular. May stalled some more while dictating exactly how everything was going to play out: she'd count down from five, unveil herself, count up to 5, and then cover up again, not one second longer. If he blinked or otherwise missed her exposition, it wasn't her problem. No refunds, no redoes. He blabbed "yeah, yeah, yeah" throughout her terms and conditions. When she had run out of words to delay the transaction any further, a nervy chill crept up her belly.

It was time.

May sucked in a huge dose of air. "Ready?" She wasn't sure which one of them she was asking. He rubbed his hands together and nodded with enthusiasm. "Well, that makes one of us..." she muttered under her breath. "Wait, one more thing – count all the money and hold it up so I can collect it as soon as we're done here."

He grumbled, but once again, his desperation made him compliant. May counted with him as he thumbed through each 10 Pokédollar bill, confirming the amount he held up was exactly what they'd agreed upon.

With nowhere else to go, nothing left to say, the woods fell deathly silent, as if every pokémon rustling within (and the wind itself) had stopped to witness what was about to unfold.

Slowly, May dragged her zip down, and the screech it made was magnified by the hushed air. She paused at her bulging bust, second thoughts muddying her resolve. Looking down from the boy's impatient gaze, she whispered to herself, "You can do this. You can do this. Just think about that cheeseburger." Her stomach grumbled in case she needed further encouragement. With a deep breath, she resumed working her zip.

Her jam-packed shirt split open down the middle as its bulging contents pushed up against their confines. She could've sworn she heard him gulp when her cleavage peeked out of the opening. Her stacked bra burst into view, a mesmerising violet with black trim and floral patterns garnishing her big, round breasts. So big, her cups barely contained the outer halves of her mounds, leaving massive cleavage bulging from the crammed fit. May made a mental note to buy a bigger size after she downed her cheeseburger. It had been months since she'd done any shopping which, for her, was an eternity. Nonetheless, what felt uncomfortable for her, apparently looked appealing to the opposite sex. While the chill of being exposed crawled down her sternum, the heat of being ogled nudged her from across the clearing.

The kid gawked like he'd never seen a half-covered bosom in his life, unblinking in his amazement. He centred his focus where squished flesh met brassiere, where half-crescent shades of areola crept out of their boundaries. May blushed, fighting her instinct to zip her shirt back up. He shook the bundle of cash in the air, as if to hurry her into providing the full show he'd paid for. May groaned. He needed to hold his Rapidash! Did he think this shit came easy to her? How would he like it if she stood there rushing him to drop his trousers? Yeah, probably not very much. Granted, he might've had the right idea; the longer she prolonged this, the more embarrassing it became for her. She really should've just ripped the bandage off. *Ugh, here goes nothing.* "You ready?" She poised her gloved hands over her breasts. "Remember, I'm only giving you five seconds you little troll."

"Yeah, all right, get on with it then!"

May slipped her digits inside her bra and counted down in her head. She turned away from him, unable to bear his leering, then when she got to 'one', she pulled the padded cups down with bitter haste.

Ugh...

Her breasts sprung out with spectacular buoyancy, like big, jiggly prisoners jumping with joy from their release. Evidently, it was colder outside than she'd realised, her nipples flicking upwards in a stiff and vibrant emergence. After the abrupt wobble, her rotund breasts quickly settled into their natural position: high and perky, seemingly defying gravity. Large as they'd become, they kept in proportion with her slim frame, pink nipples standing on the peaks of widespread areolae. She hoped he was happy now.

May shivered with embarrassment. She felt completely naked despite only her top coming undone. Screwing her eyes shut, she didn't even want a glimpse of whatever his face was doing whilst he salivated at her exposed breasts. Only five seconds, she reminded herself, and it was going to be the quickest five seconds she'd ever counted down in her life. At least it would've been, if her one-man audience hadn't reacted instantly.

The boy's nose erupted with a fountain of blood so powerful it jetted him 12 feet into the air!

May stopped counting after one second when she heard a random cry of pain. Her eyes flew open to the sight of him crash-landing on his head. His body stuck out of the ground as if he'd been planted upside-down, crooked legs twitching sporadically in the air.

Talk about an overreaction. A large sweat-drop trailed down May's temple.

Oh well, it served him right. She considered the job done and closed up shop. He groaned a mixture of pain and wondrous stupor in his upturned position. She tiptoed around him and picked up her reward money. In his incapacitated state she could've probably run off with all the extra cash he'd dropped too, but the growing lump on his forehead seemed like punishment enough.

"I would say pleasure doing business with you but, you know, it really wasn't," May quipped, tucking the cash away. All he could do was drone unintelligently. "Anyway, gotta run!"

She fled the scene of corruption before anyone might spot her, guilt and excitement beating in her chest. Who would've thought her most fruitful day to date would be inspired by a wardrobe malfunction?

She laughed and ran faster. Laughed harder. Ran faster. She'd actually done it! 100 Pokédollars was hers! How?! She laughed again in glee and disbelief and relief and elation. May ran and never looked back.



Chapter 2 - From Mush To Lush

May didn't know how far she'd fled before the burst of triumph and adrenaline cooled her bones, but it was far enough that the narrow trees looked completely different to their bushier counterparts where she'd left the boy. She slumped down against a tree, threw her face in her palms and laugh-cried for minutes on end.

It. Freaking. Worked. Wow. "It freaking worked!" she screamed to the heavens. "I can't believe it. I can't..." She laughed some more. "Wow."

How shitty had her recent existence been if today's nip slip turned out to be the best thing that happened to her in the last six months? It felt way longer than six months. It felt like forever since she and her dad boarded that ill-fated plane.

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May had been over the moon when she won an all-expenses-paid trip for two to the Hano Grand Resort on the sunny side of Akala Island. Her unexpected victory came at an unexpected time, and so too did the proposed voyage, scheduled to have the winners attend the Heahea Grand Festival taking place that week. May had never visited Alola and she'd always wanted to be part of the Heahea Grand Festival, if even only as a front-row spectator. The only trouble was none of her friends had been available to join her on such short notice, Max was out hunting Gym Badges and Brendan had travelled all the way to Kalos to enter the Lumiose Conference.

Of all people, she least expected Norman, her workaholic dad, to step up and offer to accompany her. Turned out he was three days into a two-week vacation from Gym duties. With her constant travelling and his constant work, they'd barely spent quality time together in years, practically since she'd set off on her first pokémon adventure at ten. They both felt this opportunity offered a long overdue father-daughter bonding experience and her mother agreed. But none of them could've anticipated what would happen halfway into the flight.

To this day, May didn't know whether the competition she'd won was a setup from the get-go, or if the robbers just happened to pick their plane. Two dodgy men, who easily could've passed for Team Rocket Grunts, marched down the cabin demanding passengers hand over all communication devices and valuables. They'd taken advantage of flight policies confiscating all travellers' Poké Balls until touchdown; it didn't matter if you were a feeble old lady or a commendable Gym Leader like the man sitting next to May, they were equally defenceless against the men who'd somehow smuggled in hidden serrated blades and Houndoom in Beast Balls. Like everyone else, she and Norman surrendered their possessions on command. Her father clasped her trembling hand and urged her to stay calm.

May tried not to think the worst but all that was going through her mind was how she and all the other frightened faces onboard could wind up getting trafficked somewhere their loved ones would never find them. The robbers didn't help by keeping their intentions to themselves. If they'd had any plans of sharing, they never got the chance to before some brave soul pounced from their aisle seat and tackled one of the men with his back turned.

Pandemonium ensued.

More courageous passengers, including her dad, leapt into action, battling to overwhelm the robbers and their tyrannical pokémon. Everyone else was either screaming, weeping, frozen in trauma or cradling their children. May noticed one man punching the locked overhead compartment, seemingly trying to retrieve his belongings. She didn't see the logic behind it though, unless he intended to leap out of an airborne plane. Granted, no one was in their right mind amid the chaos.

Scrapping hand-to-hand with the armed men was one terrifying prospect, but fending off two bloodthirsty Houndoom on top of it was quite another. The untethered pokémon attacked anyone who so much as looked at their masters the wrong way, dragging off their detractors by the ankles, bounding across the cabin to savage resisting passengers. If not for his quick reflexes, Norman might've had his face eaten off, too, raising his forearm seconds before one of the hounds sank their teeth into it.

"Daddy!" May jumped out of her seat, horrified as the beast took her father to the ground. Norman roared in pain. She threw her hands over her mouth. Another passenger whacked the Houndoom on the back of the head with a wooden cane, hard enough to make it spit out Norman's arm. He made the most of the distraction by kicking his legs out and launching the dark hound backwards over his head and through the air.

A family screamed when the large dog unceremoniously crash-landed in their laps. By the time Houndoom recovered its bearings and rolled onto the aisle, Norman was back on his feet with his fists raised in a standoff, ready to go again despite the blood dripping from his ripped sleeve.

May's eyes watered and trembled. She couldn't move. She couldn't bear to watch. She couldn't bear to look away.

The dark-skinned bald man who'd been thrashing at the overhead compartment suddenly raised a Poké Ball he'd fished from his hand luggage. Evidently, the robbers hadn't been the only passengers to smuggle pokémon on board. And everyone was grateful. He cast the ball forth, summoned a Hitmonlee and ordered a Jump Kick attack all in one breath. Norman dived out of the way and back to May's side, moments before the Fighting-type went flying past him. Its hot foot connected with the Houndoom's maw and sent it barrelling several rows towards the back of the plane.

"Nice hit!" Norman applauded.

The heroic Trainer acknowledged him with a nod. But a rumbling growl from behind him cut their would-be celebration short. He whipped around and called back Hitmonlee. His faithful pokémon arrived at his side in a snap. But as soon as it did, another rumbling growl loomed from the other end of the aisle, the first Houndoom having recovered from the surprise attack. "Damnit, you're outnumbered!" Norman gritted his teeth. "Have any more pokémon on you?" It was their only hope.

"Yeah!" the man said as if he'd suddenly remembered. He launched a second Poké Ball. "Go, Skarmory!"

Norman's face drooped from hopeful glee to dreadful woe. "Skarmory? Wait- don't!"

Too late.

The Poké Ball spinning through the air snapped open. A massive, steel bird violated the crammed airspace. Its colossal wingspan knocked two chunks out of the cabin's ceiling and violent winds gushed in over passengers' heads. Panicked screams broke out as emergency masks were deployed all at once, all in vain. The plane's sudden descent rocked everyone to the left, including a rattled Houndoom that reacted in fright, hurling two Shadow Balls in quick succession. Off-balance, its first attack missed Skarmory and blasted a huge chunk out of one side of the plane, though the second projectile caught its target in the wing and spun the bird sideways.

Skarmory squawked and passengers screamed as the giant hole's suction hauled them across the cabin. May, Norman, one of the robbers and the Skarmory's Trainer were amongst the victims thrown through the air. The steel bird slammed its outstretched wings on either side of the hole, its trapped body plugging the makeshift exit, bringing the others to a crunching halt against its armoured mass. They all clung on instinctively, though the Skarmory's Trainer did his best to elbow the robber off his pokémon.

Norman shouted over the rushing air for the robbers to return their rattled Houndoom to their Poké Balls. Who knew what more damage they could cause in their flustered state? His cries fell on deaf ears and the agitated Houndoom fired yet another Shadow Ball. All Norman could do was throw part of his body over May, shielding her from the oncoming blast. Narrowly missing them, the Shadow Ball struck the end of Skarmory's wing so powerfully it blew off the tips of its steely feathers and a massive chunk of plane to boot, thrusting them all out into open air. Clingy passengers slid off Skarmory and plummeted to certain death, their cries swallowed by rushing winds as they shrunk towards the ground. Norman clenched one hand around a giant steel talon, and the other tightly around his dangling daughter's wrist, ensuring the same fate wouldn't befall her. After plummeting several feet, Skarmory recovered into a steady hover, allowing the three people still clinging on to climb onto its back.

The bird's Trainer saddled himself at the base of its reinforced neck while Norman mounted the space behind him, then hoisted May up right between them. Ragged, heaving, but still very much alive, the trio watched with helpless sorrow as the nosediving plane caught fire in its speedy descent. A solemn silence came over them. Nothing needed to be said. They all knew how lucky they were to be alive.

. . .

May stared at the pale-blue sky in mournful memory. She'd lost everything on that plane: her trust, her belongings, her life as she knew it. Well, almost everything.

May fished a Poké Ball out of her utility belt and gently caressed its scratched and damaged surface. How and when had Skitty gotten into her fanny pack? May hadn't had a clue until the wounded Skarmory exhausted the last of its energy to get them to this island. She remembered reading somewhere that some airport scanners allowed certain pokémon of a limited size, type and temperament to be kept along with hand luggage, provided their Trainers ensured their Poké Balls remained lock for the duration of the flight. That would've explained how she'd managed to board without issue, but not how the Poké Ball had snuck into her utility belt in the first place. She would've remembered if she'd done it herself.

Skitty sure had a knack of popping up whenever May least expected it. Funny how a habit that had usually annoyed her to no end became her saving grace. All her other pokémon had perished wherever that plane landed. She didn't have definitive proof but how couldn't they have? Even if everyone's Poké Balls survived the crash by some miracle, it had been some

six months since it happened, most likely six months of no one knowing where to look to find them. They'd either starved to death or drowned at the bottom of some ocean. It hurt to even think about what they could've gone through.

She pinched her eyes shut and pressed her forehead against her surviving Poké Ball in consolation. At least she still had Skitty. And she'd never let her go. She also still had her father.

Her father...

What would he think if he found out what she'd just done to score ₽100?

"Don't worry, honey," she remembered him saying, "we'll be back on our feet and out of here in no time!"

A foolish promise, considering they didn't even know where 'here' was. All the locals called this place 'Dytopiah', a region the castaways had never heard of, a region they quickly discovered was nothing like any region they knew.

The Pokémon League was not an authoritative nor recognised body in Dytopiah. No one believed her dad was who he said he was, and it wouldn't have mattered if they did. Pokémon Centres were old, dilapidated and overcrowded; it was impossible to get any sort of treatment for Skarmory's wounds. Police stations greeted them with suspicion, dismissed them like common scroungers, wouldn't even let them make a phone call home. In fact, no one other than the charlatans in the highest echelons of power were permitted to communicate with anyone outside the region. Border control and oppressive regulations ensured nobody left the island or boarded a plane without governmental approval. Media outlets bombarded the masses with propaganda and prohibited any programming that didn't suit their agenda. After the fifth police station kicked them to the curb, reality sank in for the stranded trio; they'd landed elbows-deep in a pit of shoddy dung, and it was going to be a *lot* harder to clamber their way out than they realised. All they had were each other, the clothes on their backs and the worst hand ever dished out by lady luck.

May climbed back to her feet and dusted off her knees. What a day. She pocketed the Poké Ball and pulled out the bunch of crumpled notes. In the safety of solitude, she took her time to recount her earnings more diligently, then recounted them again three more times as if she still couldn't believe she was holding that much actual money. She raised each note up to the dwindling sun and saw no glaring signs of forgery. What happened... had really happened.

May unzipped her top and tucked the dubious funds fittingly into her bra. Despite it all, she harboured some guilt about actually spending the cash. It still didn't feel like the right thing. No matter, it was an option better to have than not. She zipped up her dirty little secret and headed back to the Pokémon Centre.

Her feet navigated through the thin forest on autopilot. She'd lost count of how many weeks she'd followed the same routine. Get up, force down that disgusting porridge-mush, try to psych up Skitty for battle, wander into Trainer-laden territories and pray she'd come across some woeful amateurs she could beat. The gamble of losing pokémon battles meant she often sulked back with less in her pocket than she'd had in the morning.

In the beginning, her dad would borrow Skitty and try to use his experience to their advantage, but that backfired; Skitty, lacking the conditioning of his aggressively-trained pokémon, failed or outright refused to execute his demanding tactics. Frustrated, Norman handed her back and, without any pokémon of his own, decided it would be best for him to seek other opportunities to raise funds in the city. Every fourth day they'd reunite at a designated location, catch up, trade war stories, strategize and share their combined earnings whenever necessary.

May felt a knot in her stomach already. She didn't know how much she should divulge at their next meetup. Weary with worry, she didn't see the puddle before dunking her shoe in it. "Argh!" She hopped up and down shaking her foot, disgusted as the mucky water soaked through her sock. "Darn it! Why does this stuff always happen to me?"

She sighed then bent to study her downtrodden reflection in the wavy puddle. Her hair, once rich and fervent russet, appeared straggly and greasy and disgusting. Dirt patches sullied her cheeks and her eyes had lost their sapphire lustre. And *this* was the kind of girl who'd impressed someone enough to part them from their money? Granted, it probably said more about his standards than anything else, and besides, it hadn't exactly been her pretty features that impressed him. May facepalmed, ashamed. *I can't believe I actually did that! Never again.* This place was turning her into something she wasn't, something she loathed. She stomped her foot into her murky reflection and marched on.

May frowned when the disgusting porridge-mush splatted on her plate, sending flecks of brown debris splashing across her face. It even *looked* like doodoo.

"Next!" the grumpy kitchen worker barked.

"Wha?! Hold up!" May protested. "That's it? It's our turn to get chicken today. See, look." She nudged the large blue button pinned to her shirt.

The kitchen worker grumbled. "Sorry. Not enough chicken today. Next!"

"Wait just a minute! I can see it right there!" May pointed out dozens of cuts of crispy chicken only two trays down the serving line.

"Bleh. For VIPs only. Next!"

"VIPs?" What Very-Important-Person would be attracted to this disaster of a Pokémon Centre? May smelt a rat. "Since when?! Please. Just one – I'll even take the smallest wing you can find. It's been days since –"

"NEXT!"

"But –"

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The impatient scrounger beside May nudged her arm with his empty tray. "Hey! Quit holdin' up the line, prick!"

"Yeah!" The others behind him shouted in angry unity.

"NEXT!" the bitchy kitchen worker screamed again.

May mustered all her patience not to splat her serving into the closest person's face. "Whatever! I don't need this." She stormed out of the queue, dumped her heaped tray into the first dustbin then marched straight out of the Pokémon Centre, muttering annoyance under her breath.

The cool night air was refreshing to take in, for once. And May wasn't ignorant to the fact it might've had something to do with what was stashed inside her bra. She'd never had the courage to express her grievances in such a brash, emphatic way. It felt... good.

Although, surveying all the bodies bundled up in blankets surrounding the Pokémon Centre dampened her spirits a little. The medical facility had reached its quota for the night, which meant all these unfortunate people would have to shiver in the cold. By storming out, May had made one more spot available, a silver lining, perhaps? Although, it meant she'd have to join the makeshift campers or find somewhere else to rest her head.

She sighed a hopeless sigh.

₽42,000.

That was the magic number. ₽42,000 was the ultimate answer to everything. That was all she needed to make all their troubles go away. ₽42,000 was what the Pokémon Surgeon quoted to have Skarmory's wing stitched up. Skarmory was their only prayer to getting off this godforsaken island. With little more than 100 Pokédollars to her name after six months of struggle, perhaps they'd been a little overoptimistic presuming they could win it all through pokémon battles with only one active pokémon on their roster. She sighed again. Well, standing around here feeling sorry for herself wasn't going to make the other ₽41,900 magically appear in her pocket, nor would it grant her a safe place to stay the night. May remembered the Kallaghar Inn she'd walked past every day and night, to and from the Pokémon Centre. It was only three blocks away. When you could turn your pockets inside-out and only pebbles fell to the ground, the inn was nothing but a decorative building with big neon lights you could admire whilst passing by. Tonight was different.

May walked briskly through the dark dingy streets, rubbing her hands together and blowing hot breaths to warm them. This whole town gave her the creeps, though this part in particular had garnered a ghastly reputation, especially under such a soulless, starless sky. She thought a shadow crept past the corner of her eye and doubled her walking speed to turn the nearest corner. Someone coughed. May jumped and shrieked. It was only a vagrant sleeping on the sidewalk. She walked faster still. Her brain convinced her there were footsteps rushing at her heels. She practically held her breath until she bustled into the lobby of the Kallaghar Inn.

After one big exhale and one moment to gather her wits, May approached the receptionist's desk. She was surprised to learn she could book a room at only ₽60 per night. For some reason, she'd always imagined even their cheapest suites would be much higher. May didn't think twice before reaching into her bra.

The Kallaghar Inn wasn't exactly five-star, but even at two, it beat the heck out of that grungy Pokémon Centre deserving of a negative rating. There was barely enough space to fit more than a single bed and a TV stand in her room, the faded wallpaper was peeling in several places and a slightly stale odour hung in the air. And the place was worth every last penny she'd paid for it!

May splashed onto the bed like an overjoyed child and spread her limbs out like a Staryu, staring fondly at the bland ceiling. Gosh, she'd forgotten what it felt like to lie on a mattress; it had been *that* long. For the first night in forever, she wouldn't have to sleep with one eye open in case some sneaky bugger in the crowded room tried to raid her possessions, nor would the symphony of a dozen different snores keep her up half the time. And – *oh my God, do they have a shower?*

May jumped up and raced to the bathroom. They did! Her clothes flew off her body. She spent hours under the hot, steaming water, lathering every last curve, nook and cranny that hadn't seen soap suds in days, shampooing and conditioning her neglected hair. Even after she'd felt squeaky clean, May enjoyed the hot water pelting her skin for what it was, a desperate reprieve from reality.

The other good thing about the Kallaghar Inn – they had room service! Half an hour later, she was wrapped in a white towel stretching her legs across the bed, Skitty nestled by her side, both scoffing down cheeseburgers and fries, laughing her lungs out at an old sitcom that wasn't remotely funny. The patties might've tasted like cardboard and they would've never known. She couldn't tell if it was because they were exhausted, or because they ate way too much too quickly, but the bloated guests passed out halfway into the third episode.

May woke up with the sun in her face, smiled, turned and slept another two hours.

A full English breakfast was brought to their room. They ate a little bit slower this time. May picked up and sniffed the filthy clothes she'd discarded on arrival. *Yuck!* Putting them back on would feel like she was undoing all the good of last night's shower. But she couldn't exactly depart the inn draped in a guest towel either. May counted how much money she had left and decided just *one* fresh set of clothes wouldn't kill her pockets.

She and Skitty checked out of the inn, well-fed, well-rested and sprightly as spring Torchic. They flagged down a taxi and headed to the closest mall, not nearly as big and lavish as Rustboro Square, but hey, she was in no position to be picky. Red had always been May's colour since she was a little girl; it made speed-shopping a little bit easier. She selected a vest the same crimson shade as her current shirt (before it got so stained and faded), a white pair of ripped denim shorts and dark spats to replace her worn, holey version. If she'd had a few more Pokédollars, she would've refurbished her footwear, too, but she saved that money for a Pokéblock vending machine on the way out.

When the taxi returned them to the outskirts of Dytopiah, May stepped out of the backseat feeling like a brand-new woman, and her attitude shone through the upgraded

attire. A part of her did worry though; she didn't look like she fit in amongst the riffraff of Trainers running around in the trees anymore. The slightest thing could offend the locals in these parts.

May let Skitty out of her Poké Ball at the entrance to the grassy Trainers route.

"Nya!" the feline chirped with enthusiasm.

May smiled. *Someone* clearly had a good time in the last 12 hours! And it only got better for her when May knelt down and fed her some of her favourite Pokéblocks. "That's it, my love. Eat up. I need you nice and strong for today." May petted her pink, little head while she fed out of her palm. "We really need to get back to winning ways."

Skitty abruptly stopped munching as though she just heard something disconcerting. "Nya...?"

May sighed. "I know, I know. Yesterday was fun for me, too. But we don't have enough to do that all the time."

"Nya, nya..."

"Yeah, I don't want to go back to that crummy, old Pokémon Centre either." She shuddered just thinking about it. "Tell you what though, if we win enough battles today and make enough money, there's no reason we can't spend another night at the Kallaghar Inn!"

Skitty ran around in circles, excited.

May laughed. "Okay, slow down there. We actually have to win the battles first, you know! I need you in tiptop shape." Besides serving their taste buds a delicious change of pace, May hoped the dinner and breakfast had sharpened her mind and fuelled Skitty's fighting spirit. "We can do this!"

"Nya!" Skitty gobbled up the rest of her treats then off they went into the woods.

Dytopiah was similar to other regions in one big way; its Trainer routes and forested areas had no shortage of aspiring champions. May found an opponent within five minutes of crossing a patch of overgrown grass and weeds. The lass looked no older than the brat May had struggled with yesterday, and a lot more whimsy and feeble-minded. She appeared to be as good as an opponent for Skitty to get warmed up and rebuild her confidence. Probably not a lot of prize money on offer though. May and the lass agreed on a P4 wager. The battle was on!

Skitty lost in under two minutes.

May nursed the small bump on her head as the lass skipped away with their 4 bucks whistling and humming. "It's okay, Skitty," May reassured her little fighter. "That was just the first one. We're all a little rusty, that's all. Come on. We'll get 'em on the next one!"

They lost the next one. And the next one. And the one after that. A draw. A narrow win. Then they lost two more.

Sheesh, when had she become such a lousy Trainer? Granted, Skitty's lack of sustenance and energy constantly put her at a disadvantage. Dytopiah's Pokémon Battle regulations allowed Trainers to switch pokémon throughout standard battles; so even when May grafted and seized the upper hand, her sly opponents would send out fresh fighters to wipe out her battle-weathered Skitty. It was painfully obvious her small, undernourished companion couldn't do it all on her own, but with Poké Balls going at ₽200 a pop, May couldn't scrounge together enough to build a team. Her strategy almost wholly comprised of Hail Marys and relying on opponents to make naïve mistakes. It didn't get them far.

For all her effort, the dispirited Coordinator had two Pokédollar bills left in hand and some loose change jingling in her waist pack. Skitty's chances of kicking off some miraculous winning streak sunk lower and lower after every battle, every morale-crushing rout, and May couldn't afford to bankroll another defeat.

The state of her bruised and battered pokémon filled her with pity. If she could take some blows herself, she would've. Skitty suffered enough for today. They'd have to lick their

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wounds, eat a hefty heap of humble pie and drag themselves back to that rotten Pokémon Centre.

With her head hung, May raised her Poké Ball. "Skitty, return."

"Hey, you!"

"Huh?" May looked over her shoulder and saw a young boy she didn't recognise in long shorts and a yellow shirt.

"Up for a pokémon battle? What d'ya say?"

"Sorry. We're spent today, even if I wanted to."

"Actually, you looked me in the eye, so you *have* to battle me now! Every Pokémon Trainer worth their salt knows that."

"Wha...?" May didn't even have the energy for an outburst. "That silly law was outdated aeon's ago, genius."

"Pfft." He crossed his arms. "Not in Dytopiah it ain't."

Of course. She forgot she'd travelled back a millennium. "Look, kid, I only have one pokémon on me and –"

"Then it's going to be a one-on-one pokémon battle!"

She ground her teeth. What's with all these overzealous little boys? If they're not obsessed with pokémon battles, they're obsessed with... May couldn't believe her mind had gone there again. But... would he? Could she? Should she? I mean, I've got nothing to lose at this point by just throwing the idea out there. Lightning couldn't possibly strike twice; it hadn't even been 24 hours since she'd dealt with another little kid that reminded her of him. Hm...

"I mean..." May treaded lightly. "We *could* have a one-on-one pokémon battle or... we could try something else..." The boy scratched his head as if the concept of pokémon battling was the only thing rattling inside there. "Er, something else like what?"

"Well..." May leaned forward, lowering her bust in his impressionable face while innocently tapping her chin. "Oh, I dunno, guess it depends how much money you got on you right now?"

His eyes fell right into her trap, glued the protruding mounds staring him back. He droned unintelligently. "How... much... do... I... what?"

Just... one last time, May thought. Only five seconds.



Chapter 3 - The Day March Came After April

May grasped the bottom of her massive bra, shut her eyes, took a deep breath, then hauled it all the way up, all the way till her heavy, mountainous breasts flopped out. This boy might've lasted a split-second longer than the first before a powerful nosebleed sent him hurtling backwards. She scooped up her 100 Pokédollars and hurried away from the scene while he remained incapacitated.

The thrill of getting away with it, again, rushed through her veins and danced in her heart. How was she doing this? Pristine banknotes glittered in her eyes. They smelt like freedom, like another night away from that toxic Pokémon Centre. May hugged and kissed the cash before tucking it away. Life could be so amazing in the simplest of ways.

She hadn't walked 30 yards before another boy pointed a challenging finger at her from across the wooded clearing. The thought crossed her mind. No way. It couldn't possibly work *again*... could it?

One little chat and one little wink later, May's perky chest was fully out in the open, and her would-be challenger landed firmly on his head. Another hundred raised her balance to over ₽200, more money than she'd ever had on her since arriving at Dytopiah. And it all happened in the space of two flashes.

When May lay in bed with a full stomach that night (an actual bed once more), she stared at the ceiling interrogating what had afforded her the luxury. Was she really wrong for taking those kids' money? She'd always laid down the rules meticulously, never forced anyone to do anything and always delivered her end of the bargain. They were willing and able to pay for something she could offer. That was just how the free market worked, right?

She turned on her side and stared blankly at the curtain. Then why did she still have misgivings about the whole thing?

As a child, her parents had drilled into her that if she ever considered doing something she wouldn't openly tell them, then she probably shouldn't have been doing that something. This recent development definitely fit those criteria. She wasn't proud of baring her chest to complete strangers and she promised herself she'd stop, preferably before either her mom or dad found out.

May rolled onto her other side and stared at the wall. Then again, it wasn't exactly like she was hurting anybody? Besides the boys suffering lumps on their heads perhaps, but that was neither here nor there and not her direct doing. They knew what they were paying for and they were at that age where they probably spent half their time ogling boobs in dirty magazines anyway. If Dytopiah unrestricted internet access to its people, May had no doubt these little scoundrels would be scouring the web for all sorts of sordid content. As it were, their lack of available said content was probably what bolstered the appeal of her assets; that, and the fact they got to see them in real time, in real life. Sooner or later, most of these boys would have girlfriends and be interacting with boobs all the time. What was the harm in her giving a little five second, hands-off preview?

She rolled onto her back and stared through the darkness. It was a win-win. May *needed* the money. Over and above survival, the whole point of pokémon battling had been to raise funds so they could afford Skarmory's medical treatment and soar back home. In two days, May had progressed further towards that goal than she had in six months. If she kept things simple, diligent and surreptitious, there was no telling how much more she could raise in a few weeks. By her estimation, she could acquire her half of their goal within the next month and a half!

Hoenn was calling her to do just that. Home was calling her. Her mom. Her brother. Her boyfriend. She missed everything about home.

This... this could be their golden ticket back.

May counted Pokédollar signs instead of Mareep that night, though it did the opposite of soothing her into slumber.

Her venture into Route 304 the next morning had nothing to do with pokémon battles. May had a gameplan, a mental list of indicators to identify potential targets. They had to be male, obviously. Not too tall, or strong-looking; she wouldn't risk anyone overpowering her whilst she stood there topless and vulnerable. Not too old, because... ew. Also, she assumed the more experienced the male, the less they'd be impressed seeing a pair of breasts and not getting to do more. May didn't want to spend half her time bickering with creepy adults on why they couldn't have 'just one quick squeeze'. Her ideal candidate would be a teenage male, preferably a couple of years younger than her, fairly inexperienced with women and easily excitable.

Kind of like the boy she just spotted having his Pansage pluck Occa Berries from a tall tree.

May readjusted her hair and attire as she scouted her target from afar. First impressions could make all the difference and, for the first time in her life, she aimed to draw attention to her larger-than-average bosom. Her tight-fitting, scarlet vest emphasised the roundness of her fully-developed chest, pushing her puffed-out mounds together whilst practically presenting her entire cleavage. May had bought a bigger-more-comfortable bra but strategically left it in her rented room; anyone who so much as glanced in her direction could not miss the big nipple imprints calling their attention. Besides the beguiling aesthetic, it would be easier to expose herself with one less article in the way. She stood up straight with her shoulders back and her chest pushed out (not that it needed any more pushing out), then set upon her first target for the day.

She knew she won him over the instant his eyes drifted to her snug top and the Occa Berries in his palm spilt onto the ground. Dressing up for the part hadn't prevented selfconsciousness from creeping up whenever someone ogled her so blatantly. The sooner she concluded the transaction, the better. And no sooner than a minute later, her bare breasts spilt out of her raised vest. The boy was left groaning in a pile of Occa Berries and a pocket short of 100 Pokédollars.

Wow, that was easy!
May flashed her next two targets in similar fashion. Ka-ching, ka-ching. Why hadn't she thought of this from the start? She could've spared her overworked Skitty so much punishment and earned more profit than if she'd actually won those battles. Oh well, better late than never.

The next boy was desperate to peek at her womanly wonders but he'd only had ₽65 on him. She told him no. He dropped to his knees and begged with tears in his eyes, whining about how he'd been on a demoralising losing streak all day. She couldn't imagine how the sight of her breasts would turn his luck around in any way, but hey, some people found inspiration in the strangest of places. ₽65 was still a good amount for less than five seconds' worth of work. The young boy lost his mind when her huge breasts dropped out to say hello. He should've lost all his money, too, but May pitied him enough to leave behind ₽15.

"Whoa... are those real?" said a stupefied boy wearing a bright orange graphic tee. He hadn't blinked once at the protruding chest pushed in his face.

"Uh, yup." May rubbed the back of her head sheepishly. Why did people always ask her that? "As real as the hair on your head!"

"Whoa... really?" Somehow, he managed to stare even harder, drooling from one side of his mouth. "Can you, like, jiggle them a little? Just so I can see? Pretty please?"

"Jiggle them a little?" May raised her brow. Now she had to prove the authenticity of her bosom? He was asking for more than she'd offered so it was only fair, "You'll have to pay a little extra."

His hand shot up immediately clutching 250 Pokédollars over his head.

"Whoa!" May said, taken aback. "Okay then..."

Although she apparently had all the 'right attributes' (according to her biased boyfriend), May never once felt she knew how to be sexy. She'd struggle to pull off a half decent two-step, let alone move her body with any sort of seductive grace. He put up the money though. There was no backing out now.

May sort of shuffled her shoulders, moving one forward and the other back, then vice versa, alternating in an awkward, rhythmless cadence. "Um... like this?" She felt sillier and sillier the longer it went on.

Surprisingly, her clumsy attempt appeared to have satisfied her customer; so engrossed, all he could do was nod his head and grunt encouragement. May carried on despite her uneasiness. Her breasts were so big and bouncy, even the slightest shoulder movement had them wobbling left and right, dragging the snug vest with them, his beady eyes chasing after her swaying nipple imprints. Somehow it was working; her rhythmless chest had him mesmerised. When May decided he'd had his money's worth, she lifted her stuffed top and an instant nosebleed propelled him into round bushes.

By mid-afternoon, she'd gratified eight suckers – er, eight customers – and made upwards of ₽750! She was so thrilled she could scream. And she did in the shower that evening, much to the bemusement of Skitty lounging on the inn's bed.

It was torturous holding in her exhilaration throughout lunch with her father. She dressed down and acted normal, doing her best not to invite questions about her recent activities. He looked worse for wear sat across the table, his hair an overgrown mess, stress heavy under his eyes and the same tracksuit top she'd seen him in four days ago, with a new rip under the right armpit. She felt guilty for the clothes she'd bought.

Norman may not have been a highly-regarded Gym Leader in Dytopiah, but the region hadn't stripped him of the grit and determination that earned him the title. He recounted how he'd sold loose cigarettes on the streets to scrape together a little over ₽320 in the last few days. Getting to their goal would be a slow, painstaking process, he reminded her, but they'd get to it. He alluded to having something big planned down the pipeline, something that could change their fortunes considerably, but wouldn't elaborate on the details until he pulled it off, lest he jinxed everything. Even in his beaten-up, rundown state, he'd constantly reach across the table and clasp her hand, imploring her to stay strong.

When he asked how things had gone since they last met, she trotted out her usual complaints about the Pokémon Centre and its horrid food, expressed her dying desires for a fresh pair of trainers and exaggerated the number of pokémon battles she'd won. "Ah!" He sounded very impressed. She kept her eyes down on her plate while he complimented her improving battle skills.

At the end of lunch, May offered to pay the entire bill. Not detailing the source of her income didn't mean she couldn't share some of her good fortune. He shot her a strange look. They usually split the bill. "Are you sure?" May nodded and was grateful he didn't ask any further questions, probably assumed pokémon battles had awarded her a little extra. They hugged and he complimented the fresh scent of her shampoo. "Is that new?" A simple "yeah" satisfied his curiosities. They went their separate ways and she couldn't be more relieved to exhale all the guilt she'd been holding in.

May had grown to appreciate her time bustling in the woods. She didn't get a moment to criticise her life choices. It was all 'go, go, go!', titty drop after titty drop, nosebleed after nosebleed. She became disgustingly good at identifying targets and thirst trapping them till they handed over money.

On day 7, she turned up in a brand new, orange tunic, tighter than ever as it stretched across her prominent chest, and tiny, little bike shorts gripping her thighs. The boys loved it. Within her first hour traversing the woods, her zip came undone half a dozen times, her fat knockers knocking down little perverts like dominos. Although she told all the boys to keep their dealings to themselves, May figured some of them might've been gossiping when an overweight hiker skulked up behind her.

"Psst, psst!"

May jumped and took a step back, startled at how close he'd gotten without her realising. "Er, hello? Can I help you?"

"Yeah, yeah, I think so," he spoke very quickly and quietly as though he was nervous someone might catch him being somewhere he wasn't supposed to be. "You're her, right?"

May stuttered. "Wh-what?"

"Her? You know, the one putting on 'fun shows' in this neck of the woods?"

Crap! Building up a reputation was inevitable given her consistent rise in customers but she hadn't anticipated attracting a full-grown, full-bearded man out of nowhere. "Uh, I don't know what you're talking about," she lied. He was the complete opposite of her target market.

"Yeah, you do," he insisted. "The bike shorts, the blue eyes, the big old titties... you gotta be her!"

May crossed an arm over said 'big, old titties', hiding her nipple imprints from his stares. "N-nope. You got the wrong girl, sir."

"I doubt it..." He took his time drinking in the sight of her from head to toe, then from toe to head and back down again, admiring every curve of her tight, young body with a sleazy grin. "You're a gorgeous little thing, aren't you? A sexy, little firecracker. And just look at the size of those bazookas! Mmm..."

Okay, she was officially creeped out. "Um, I think I'm gonna go now." May pointed in a random direction. "Hope you find whoever you're looking for."

"What? No!" He panicked and sped through his words again. "Is it because of the money? Hey, hey, look, look – I got plenty of it! See! Look!" He brandished an incredibly thick wad of fresh notes bound together with a rubber band. "5,000 Pokédollars for you right here, sweetie."

₽5,000?! And something told May that was only his opening offer. The crazy figure stunned her silent.

"Here, take it, take it." He kept thrusting it towards her hands.

She didn't budge. He was just way too desperate, way too old and offered waaaay too much money. Who knew what kind of things he'd expect of her for that amount? "That's... generous of you, sir, but I'm really not whoever you think I am."

"Don't give me that. You can trust me, you know? I have a daughter, probably round the same age as you. Look, look!" He flashed her the photo of his supposed teenage daughter tucked into his wallet. "See! She'd love to meet you. I know you two would get along great! Why don't you come home with me for some ice cream and apple pie? And – oh, oh, oh – if the money isn't enough, I got plenty more of that, too."

What...? Was this creep being serious? How was any of that meant to put her at ease? It only weirded her out more! May had no intention of stepping within a 100-metre radius of his home, no matter how much he threw her way. And quite frankly, he was beginning to frighten her. "Uh, no. My boyfriend wouldn't like that at all."

"Oh... you have a boyfriend?"

"Yes."

He fell silent for a minute. She hoped that put him off once and for all. But, "Okay, how about we make it 10,000 Pokédollars?"

"Sir, bye!"

She spun on her heels and left, ignoring his begging and pleading and hiking up the cash offer. No amount was worth what he'd likely do once he got her into a room alone. Her skin crawled. The second the trees obscured her from his vision, she broke into a sprint.

May exited the woods and took a two-hour breather following the eerie encounter. It was a humbling reminder how dicey things could get. She couldn't let one bad incident dismantle her entire gameplan however. For the next two days, she avoided the east side of Route 304 in case the creep was still lurking around the vicinity. After a string of successful encounters scoring off her usual clientele, May regained her confidence and had all but forgotten the disturbing hiker. She strutted through the woods in a variety of daring outfits; one day: a tight little dress that barely required her to pull down the bodice before her breasts popped out, the next: a Team Rocket bodysuit she found in a cosplay store. It hugged her hourglass frame nice and snugly, long, grey boots climbing halfway up her thighs. In an act as salacious as it was a big F-U to the organisation potentially responsible for her time in Dytopiah, May ripped open the spandex clinging to her bosom, and the young nose across the field erupted in a fountain of red.

It had been a waste of money buying an outfit only fitting for one reveal, but such was May's winning streak she could afford to squander a little. She and Skitty moved up to the top floor of the Kallaghar Inn, booking their most expensive suite with a large jacuzzi and lavish balcony overlooking the rundown city. Skitty's pink fur regained its rich colour and texture. Her little fighter hadn't had a pokémon battle in so long the overabundance of Pokéblocks started showing in her underbelly. May moved up from shopping at thrift stores and bought enough clothes to fill the suite's wardrobe. She never had to eat the same meal twice in a row again.

Of course, her father knew none of this. They continued to meet in dingy fast-food chains or coffee stores. May never wore any of her fancy outfits. One of these days, she'd break the news to him, announce how much she'd amassed and how much closer they were to returning home than he realised. One of these days she'd have to tell him everything. With every rendezvous they had though, she'd kick that can further down road, and would probably continue to do so for as long as she possibly could.

Out in the field, May picked up more coin than ever before, raising her standard fee to ₽200. At her old price, she'd only let the boys see her breasts with heart shaped stickers censoring her nipples. Nearly everyone was happy to throw on the extra ₽100 to have her rip off the nipple covers.

Although she hadn't crossed paths with anyone as scary as the hiker since, the lasting effect of that encounter hardened her to some degree. She shooed away anyone even one

Pokédollar short of her asking price and, if they dropped more cash than agreed upon, May would pick up the extra, too, while they lay there unresponsive. Considering the potential dangers she was exposing herself to for their ogling pleasure, she figured they could do her this one little favour.

May turned her operation into a well-oiled machine. There was never any shortage of impressionable Trainers to prey upon, and the vast acres of tall grass and woodlands meant she'd yet to bump into the same face twice. Whichever way she went, her weapons of mass concussion left behind a long trial of upside-down, incapacitated youths.

She grew comfortable enough not to force herself to look away the moment she deployed her bouncy money-makers. Although, that also meant she ended up seeing things she wasn't ready for. Like all the crude lumps in the young boys' shorts and trousers, some unexpectedly larger than others. The innocent part of her brain wanted to believe they'd simply tucked Poké Balls deep inside their pockets, but she knew better. All that blood rushed to more places than just their nostrils.

Awkward as it could get, seeing the effect her body had on their anatomy bolstered her self-confidence. So maybe she could be a *little bit* sexy if she tried. At the very least, her mini strip shows allowed her to practice for when she eventually got back to Brendan. It became fun trying out different seductive poses on her clientele: pushing her breasts together whilst pouting her lush lips, or running both hands through her hair whilst flexing her abs in a snug crop top, or casting a sultry gaze whilst slowly peeling each bra strap down her shoulders. Some didn't even last long enough to see her uncover her breasts.

The same couldn't be said for her latest patron though, a horndog of a teenager with a long jaw and strong, muscular arms three times thicker than hers. She could practically feel the testosterone oozing out of his pores. He looked older and taller than the boys she was comfortable with, but May was so high on confidence she took the risk. She unzipped her orange tunic down the front and thrusted her big, naked breasts out into the open. His eyes grew large, impressed, but not enough to tip him onto his head in dramatic fashion like the others.

"Now I want you to shake those beautiful puppies," he said.

"That'll be an extra ₽200."

He pulled Pokédollars out of his wallet and counted them in front of her. "Done."

May's shimmy game had improved by leaps and bounds, quite literally, her breasts bouncing high with vigour and character. The word 'wow' hung fixed on his lips. Her enormous mounds clapped together in circular rhythm, so full of perky youth and vibrant jiggle. He itched the growing bulge in his sweatpants. May usually shooed her audience back when they began to approach but she was too invested to break her rhythm, and trusted he'd be mature enough not to violate her 'no touching' rule.

Watching her boobs go, May impressed herself, couldn't blame him for wanting a closer look. She'd never know what it was like to be a guy, but the fact her rhythmic jiggling stirred something in his pants kind of stirred something in hers, too. Excited nipples stood on their ends and swayed in the wind as her plump breasts wobbled left to right. He showed his appreciation flicking banknotes through the air. Pokédollars rained on her performative tits, celebrating the brazen stripper she'd become, and May wasn't mad at it.

His cheers and oohs and wolf whistles encouraged her naughtiness. She bobbed on her heels as briskly as she could without leaving the ground. The momentum propelled her breasts wildly into the air and jingled her loose zip. Her frenzied tits swatted falling banknotes aside, though one or two stuck her sweatiness. This was the most energy she'd exerted in a transaction by far. A small trickle of blood leaked out of his right nostril and was swiftly wiped away. Her toughest customer yet. She ran out of breath round about the time he ran out of banknotes to shower upon her.

May thought it was over, dropping her hands to her knees and panting. He surprised her when he produced a fresh batch of Pokédollars and said, "I want to see it."

"What?" She looked up, confused, heaving. "I've already..." she said between ragged breaths, "...shown you... everything." And even threw on a special dance to boot.

"Not *everything*," he said, matter-of-factly. His lewd sights descended upon the hem of her short tunic. "Lift it up." He waved the stack of money at her crotch. "350 Pokédollars right here. Right now."

Of course he'd want to see *that*. He wasn't the first to ask. Her response was normally an instant 'hell no'. Some things had to be kept sacred. That part of her was for Brendan's eyes and Brendan's eyes only.

But...

It wouldn't count if her bike shorts stayed on, would it? All he'd asked was for her to raise the tunic. A quick and easy ₽350 awaited her on the end of that bargain. Although, if May was being honest, the money wasn't nearly as persuasive as her risqué mood. Riding high off her impromptu titty dance, she'd developed this yearning to flaunt her newfound sex appeal, to see how mad with desire she could drive the randy boy.

May clasped the bottom of her orange tunic and lifted it above her waist and out of the way. The tightness of her bike shorts squeezed her upper thighs to mouth-watering effect. But the extent of their snug grip didn't end there; black spandex clung to her entire pelvic region, drawing out the shape of her rounded nether lips, and the deep crevice separating them down the middle. Her pussy was phat and it showed through the massive imprint in her shorts. He'd survived the show of her beautiful, bountiful, bouncing breasts but May discovered his weakness was... major cameltoe. Twin gushes exploded from his nostrils like rocket fire and blasted him into orbit with a booming wail.

May scratched the back of her head sheepishly as her tunic floated down to veil her puffy mound. *I swear, boys are* sooo *dumb*... She looked up at the sky with a hand over her forehead while Pokédollars showered the earth like confetti.

The whole episode taught May she had more to offer than she'd realised. She drew up a full pricelist starting from 175 Pokédollars to see her taped nipples and ending at 2,000 Pokédollars to see her lift up her skirt (only if she was wearing bike shorts on the day). All the options in between involved May striking some suggestive pose or performing some topless

dance. She turned her nose up at overzealous patrons begging her to add options allowing them *some* physical contact. That was a line she'd never cross.

The Coordinator-turned-semi-stripper upheld her self-imposed limits and her respect for her boyfriend. May hadn't set out to please these creeps, but to get back home to all the people she truly cared about. It became her sole purpose. By hook or by crook or by letting people look. When she approached susceptible Trainers on Route 304, she dropped the pretence of challenging them to battle; right after saying hello, she'd whip out her pricelist. Even after she had earned enough to purchase half a dozen Poké Balls, baring her bra-less 'bazookas' proved more lucrative and less labour intensive than building a team of strong reliable pokémon from the low-level riffraff skulking around in these woods. And even if she did put together a formidable line-up and invested weeks training up the pokémon, there was no guarantee she'd win all her battles, and even if she did win all her battles, she wouldn't make nearly as much as she would from merely flashing her assets. May decided she could live with some small compromises to her morals.

She continued on her mission, flashing boys left, right and centre, only after ensuring she'd confiscated all their recording devices. If any pictures or videos of her activities ever surfaced, she'd just die.

On one sizzling afternoon, May caught the tail end of a horribly one-sided pokémon battle. A youngster rocking a short-sleeved, turquoise hoodie and long, brown shorts obliterated his opponent's Plusle with a devastating Force Palm. The lass didn't have a shot in hell up against his overpowered Hariyama. She cradled her knocked-out pokémon with rivers gushing down her cheeks then ran up the footpath leading to the Route's nearest exit. The remorseless youngster yelled, "use stronger pokémon next time!"

Bit of a douche, May thought. She harboured a strong desire to put him in his place, but her out-of-shape Skitty wouldn't fair any better than that little girl's Plusle. Good thing she'd developed other means of dropping losers hard on their heads. She puffed out her chest and approached the rat-faced boy with a sly smirk. "Huh? And who are you supposed to be, toots?" He kept his hands in his hoodie's pockets when he addressed her. His face was long and hard, his brow fixed in a tough-guy frown. He so badly tried to appear more advanced in his years than he was, and bore a condescending tone that did just the opposite. "Nice jugs by the way."

May kept her hands behind her back where they couldn't accidentally slap his slappable face. *Patience, May, you'll get him.* She forced a smile. "I know. Wanna see 'em?"

His eyebrows shot up into his messy fringe. "Fuck yeah. You being serious right now?"

"Yeah, kid."

"Kid?" He scoffed. "It's Bruce. Only the greatest Trainer to hail from Slumport Town!" He sounded offended she didn't know it.

"Yeah okay, *Bruce*." She fought the urge to roll her eyes. "Take a couple steps back and show me how much you got."

He held up his two hundred, though May might've done this one on the house just to see him hit his overgrown head. She breezed through the rules then grinned whilst lifting up her top, fully anticipating his humiliating downfall.

But Bruce just gaped, his jaw nearly hitting the ground. "Holy cow! Look at those huge udders! Can I come over there and milk them?!" He made disgusting groping and licking motions in the air.

What the... how can this little turd still be standing? She groaned through one side of her mouth then looked down at her tits thinking, why aren't you working? May jiggled them side to side and up and down but the boy showed a level of stubbornness beyond his agemates before him. She shimmied till she couldn't shimmy anymore.

"That. Was. Amazingggg!" He gave her a huge thumbs-up.

May huffed. "Hand over my money already."

"Sure thing." He strolled across the clearing then reached out with the cash. As soon as she snatched it, his other hand swung out of nowhere, striking the side of her breast with an open palm.

The hard slap echoed through the trees.

May stood frozen, dumbfounded. He'd broken her reality. *Did he just...?* Her boob stung, so he must've. She couldn't believe she'd let her guard down. Perhaps it had been naïve of her but she'd trusted in all her gentlemen's agreements, never anticipated this idiot would be the first to break her 'no touch' rule. The possibility hadn't crossed her mind in so long she didn't have a protocol for how to deal with it. She just sort of... stood there.

"Haha, you slut! Totally worth the ₽200! Later, sucker!"

May pulled her hand back to throw a slap. He reacted quickly, stepping back and making a ducking motion. Too quickly; he tripped his own feet in his haste and landed face first in the dirt. Karma had swooped to May's aide and she pounced on the ingrate's back before he could worm away.

"Hey!" His scrawny frame wriggled beneath her straddling weight. "Argh, what are you doing? Hey! Get off me, slut!"

"Shut up!"

"I just did what any real man would do. Treat you like the slut you are!"

"I said shut up!" Please – her a slut? The little turd didn't know a damn thing about her! She clenched both his bony wrists in one hand over his lower back. "You broke the rules," she decreed, not unlike Officer Jenny apprehending a culprit.

"Screw your rules!" He spat the sand covering the lower half of his face. "You show off your tits to strangers! What did ya think would happen, slut?"

"I'm not a slut!"

"*SLUUUUT*? Get off me!" He groaned and wriggled but, for all his tough talk, he wasn't strong enough to break out of her clench. So he tried mocking her instead. "What are you even doing, huh? Trying to ride my cock, slut? How much you want to suck it, huh? 69 Pokédollars? Go ahead – you can find that in my pocket."

"Very original," May droned, unamused. "As if you even have a cock!" She didn't know where that came from but she hoped it hurt.

"Ha. Let me roll over and you can feel it for yourself, toots."

"Ugh." She felt disgusted enough straddling him as it were. Truthfully, she'd acted out of pure instinct, and now that she had him under her control, she hadn't the faintest clue what she actually wanted to do with him. She remembered his demeaning words and thought it would be apropos to take them at face value. May raided his hoodie's pockets and fished out a whole lot more than 69 Pokédollars. "Don't mind if I do!" she chimed.

He squirmed in protest but her thick thighs held him firmly in place. "H-hey, no, you can't do that! Th-that's stealing! I earned it all fair and square!"

"Quiet! You keep making me lose count." May flicked through the notes from the beginning once again. She got up to ₽535 Pokédollars when he interrupted her.

"Seriously though, you can't take all my money. I'm sorry, okay? I already gave you 200 Pokédollars and I'll let you take another ₽200, all right? But please..." He stopped struggling and adopted a gentler tone. "I need the rest. Or it's going to be really hard to get home."

"You should've thought about that before you decided to break my rules." She stood up off of him and stuffed every last penny from his pockets into hers.

"C'mon, please." Bruce begged on his knees, eyes watering. "I said I was sorry for breaking your stupid rules!"

May gave a humourless laugh. "And you still have all that attitude? I don't think you've quite learned your lesson just yet. You need to sit right there, young man, and think about what you've done. Sexual assault is no light matter."

"Please!"

"Later, sucker!" She stuck her tongue out bidding him farewell with a mockful face. Turnabout was fair play and it was satisfying to deliver Bruce his comeuppance. May left the abusive runt kneeling in the dirt with his head hung in shame.

Back at the inn, she dumped all his money onto her queen size bed, along with all the other money she'd amassed over four weeks. It took half an hour to count and rubber band all the notes into neat 100-Pokédollar bundles. A grand total of ₽28,200! She'd surpassed her own estimation. Give or take another week and she could have enough to get them out of this cursed region for good! So close...

"Mom, Brendan..." She looked out from her window, far beyond the cluster of derelict buildings, beyond the industrial fumes blackening the skies, beyond the mountains, beyond the horizon, beyond Dytopiah. She looked out to Hoenn and, although she couldn't see it, she could feel it. "We're coming home!"

May stuffed all the money into her trusty fanny pack. The yellow waist bag housed more compartments than met the eye. Although her stay at the Kallaghar Inn's most pricey suite had been safe and comfortable, she had her reservations about leaving hard cash unattended in the room, especially after ₽1,000 had gone missing from the bedside table the day before. All the cleaning staff and management denied responsibility, suggesting instead she'd merely misplaced a whole grand, or that her Skitty ate it. Right... Nonetheless, May accepted their explanation for the sake of peace and decided she'd never go anywhere without her fanny pack tightly secured around her waist. She didn't trust bankers in this town as far as she could throw them; not that she had the right documentation to open an account anyway. Her fanny pack was her best bet. May hoped the next time she met her father it would be with the fantastic news they were home free. But for that to happen, she had a little more hustling to do.

May experienced her strangest encounter yet when she bumped into a teenager on Route 304. He sat on a large rock with his arms crossed and a pensive stare fixated on something distant. So distant May couldn't see it; when she followed his line of sight, she met an unspectacular wall of trees; trees that looked no different than the hundreds surrounding them. Still as a statue, he stared, and stared so intently he didn't react to her movement in his peripheral vision, or the crunch of sticks and twigs underfoot as she ambled towards him.

He looked nothing like her ideal target; bland, apathetic and not altogether interesting, not altogether there. Yet, something drew her towards him. She thought it was his hat. His grey, oversized beanie looked so much like the ones Brendan loved to wear. Nothing else about his lack of fashion sense was reminiscent though; long, dark sleeves covered his lanky arms and his sweatpants appeared two sizes too big.

May stood right next to him and waved at his profile. His focus remained fixed on whatever he was staring at. She tried again. "Um, hello?" She snapped her fingers in his ears three times before his face slowly rotated in her direction.

"S'up." He looked completely unaffected by her appearance, his eyes half-lidded as though he could fall asleep any minute.

"Uh, hi. Are you a Trainer?"

"Nah."

"Oh." That was unexpected, but did it matter? "You got any money on you?"

"Yeh."

"Great!" May rolled out her pricelist in his face.

He scanned everything she had on offer without a tinge of emotion stirring his bored expression. "Sweet." He turned back to the distance as if he expected her to disappear.

What's up with this dude? May thought he gave her a huge clue when he raised the spliff between his fingers to his lips. He took a good puff. That smell... it wasn't nicotine. She knew through second-hand experience hanging out with some of her more exploratory friends back home. If he hadn't secluded himself this deep into the forest to catch some hidden grass pokémon, it would appear he'd done it to keep this particular habit to himself.

Suddenly, May wasn't so offended he'd snubbed her list. She couldn't be sure he even knew what he'd just read. Quite the change of pace from what her interactions usually devolved into. He put on his thousand-yard stare, ignoring the massive thirst traps in her form-fitting attire. She couldn't resist asking, "What are you looking at?"

He stayed silent so long she couldn't tell if he'd heard her. But then he said, "Myself."

"You're looking at... yourself?" May scratched her head, baffled. Was there a mirror hiding in the leaves? "Uh, where? All I see are trees."

He took another puff of his spliff. "I am the trees. And so are you. Don't let your eyes blind you from yourself."

"Uh... right..." What on Earth? "That must be some, er, really powerful stuff you've got there."

He turned the lit joint between his fingers and studied it from different angles as if he expected 'really powerful stuff' to be written on it somewhere. Her comment had flown way over his dopey head. When he couldn't pinpoint what she'd meant, he figured she must've been hinting at wanting a puff and offered up his spliff. She shook her hand with a nervous chuckle, no thank you. He gave a lazy shrug, then took another puff for himself, staring at the trees once again.

May began to step away from the awkward conversation when he said, "Not from around here are you." It was not a question, but an observation.

"It's that obvious, huh?"

"Yeh. Your shoes are too clean." She looked down at said trainers; they were white as snow and fresh out the box. But when had he noticed? Despite watching him closely, May couldn't recall him glancing down once. He added, "You smell too nice."

"Oh... thank you?" Though the words were complimentary, his delivery remained deadpan, devoid of any inflection or enthusiasm. It was near impossible to read his true thoughts based on anything coming out of his mouth. However, May *had* bought an expensive bottle of Aria's *Dreaming Delight* fragrance just yesterday. He became the first person in this uncultured city to comment on her scent. That bought him at least two more minutes of her time.

"Where you from?" he asked, looking out into the woods.

"Hoenn."

"Hoenn..." He paused holding up the spliff. "You're from a different world."

A tad dramatic but, "Yeah."

"What's your name?"

"What's my... name?" She couldn't remember the last time anyone in this region asked her that. What's your kink?' Yeah, occasionally. What's your bra size?' Oh yeah, way too occasionally. 'What's your price for (insert graphic sexual act here)?' Unfortunately, more than she cared to remember. 'What's your name?' Nope, not once. "Um... my name is April."

"April?" He mused. "That's funny."

"It is?" Funny as in he could tell she was lying?

"Yeh. My name is March."

"Ah..." Wait, was it really? Or was he poking fun at her for saying April? Well, since he didn't outright accuse her, May figured she'd be polite enough to keep her suspicions to herself, too. "That *is* funny."

He shifted his bum to one side of the rock, presenting just enough room for one more to join him. The rough surface couldn't be more inviting after spending all morning on her feet trekking through the Route. His clothes smelt like what he was smoking, like the fumes had been infused into his fabrics for several days. She pretended not to notice.

"So, April." He blew a casual ring of smoke into the air. "How did you wind up so far away from home?"

May dropped her shoulders and sighed. "It's a long story. You don't want me to bore you with the details."

"You don't bore me."

She honestly couldn't tell. His voice was so monotone he sounded like he bored himself. "You really want to know? You're not just being polite?"

"Yeh. I want to know why you're a stripper, too," he said matter-of-factly.

May was shook. He *had* paid attention to her pricelist after all. "I'm not really," she said timidly.

"You don't take off any of your clothes for strangers?"

"I... well... I mean... I do, but..." She laughed at the situation, at how much she'd changed over the past month alone. "Are you always this blunt?"

He looked to the sky and said, "It's a gift."

"Some gift..."

"So why do you do it?"

She shrugged. "Because I need the money?"

"There are other ways to make money."

"Like what? Pokémon battles?" She laughed.

He froze and actually thought about it. After what felt like hours of deliberation, his insightful solution was, "Like selling Girl Scout Cookies."

"Girl Scout Cookies??" Now that had to be a joke. "You're a hoot."

March sucked on his spliff and blew out with nonchalance. "You haven't mentioned how you wound up here."

It was the second time he inquired so May figured he must've been interested on some genuine level. She thought it would be a drag to recount the whole heart-wrenching ordeal but once the words started trickling out of her mouth they quickly grew into an unstoppable downpour of evocation. Detailing her experience highlighted just how lonely and isolated she'd been these past several months. He said next to nothing throughout, showed no compassion in the way of emotion or facial expressions; she might as well have been talking to a cardboard cut-out with a moveable arm dragging a joint to-and-fro his lips. When he heard about how she'd watched the plane burst into flame and plummet to certain doom, he offered her another puff of his joint. The answer was still no. What little reactions he did provide were unusual and unhelpful. And yet, May found herself feeling lighter using him like a dumpsite to unload past traumas.

March not saying much allowed her to hear her own voice, a voice she'd neglected in the hustle and bustle of raising funds, allowed her to unpack insecurities and recognise how strong of a person she'd become in spite of them. Not everyone would understand or accept the decisions she'd made but she could live with that, she hoped. For what it was worth, March passed no judgement on anything she'd done, merely sat there, listened and smoked. She was immensely grateful. He had no idea how much she'd needed to get off her chest. Or did he? "Hn. That's unfortunate," he said, as he came to the end of his spliff. "You're not doing it for the money though." He flicked away the burnt joint. "Not really. You like being seen. Like being watched."

She laughed humourlessly. "You have the wrong idea."

"You're doing all this because you want to get fucked."

May recoiled so abruptly she nearly slid off the rock. "What?" That was all he took from her longwinded account? She laughed at his ridiculous accusation. Where did he come up with this stuff? "I have a boyfriend in Hoenn, you know."

He yawned and scratched the side of his ribs. "And?"

"I wouldn't be out here looking to get..." She couldn't even bring herself to repeat his words. "I respect my boyfriend too much to let anything go that far."

"He may be your boyfriend, but what makes you think you're his girlfriend?"

She shook her head in confusion. "That doesn't make any sense."

"It's been seven months you said. No communication. No idea where you are. No sign you're alive anymore. How long before he moves on with his life you think?"

"He... wouldn't..." The possibility hadn't so much as grazed her mind. Just because her life had grinded to a standstill after she got on that plane, it didn't mean everyone else's did, too. But Brendan wouldn't. They promised, they pinkie promised it would be for life.

"Anyway." March reached into his sweatpants and brought out a neatly bound stack of Pokédollars. "I was going to use this for another batch. But you've intrigued me, April."

An absentminded May caught the money in the corner of her eyes. "How much is it?"

"₽500. You can count it if you'd like."

"No," she said vaguely. "I trust you." Oddly, she did, for reasons she couldn't fully explain. Maybe it was the hat. March came across as many things: cryptic, aloof, blunt to the point of careless offense, but one thing she didn't peg him for was an out-and-out liar. He had the money and she'd appease him like any other paying customer. Besides, May needed to do something to get her mind off of what he'd just put in there. "What would you like from the list?"

"Nothing."

"Huh?"

"I have my own ideas."

Not another one of those guys... "I won't do anything that involves -"

"Touching. I know."

"Good. It didn't end well for the last person who broke my rules," May said. March seemed unfazed by her veiled threat. She became even more curious what his 'own ideas' could be.

It started off standard enough, both parties positioned on opposite ends of a small, secluded clearing. May realised he *wasn't* like any other paying customer when her hand trembled as she grasped her shirt's zip. *Why am I so nervous?* It took her back to the first time she anticipated flashing a stranger. That was the thing though – he *wasn't* a stranger. She'd opened up to March and, apart from the moniker she'd invented to protect her identity, told him everything about her leading up to this point. May had built up this expectation to impress. With baited breath, she unzipped her red top and displayed her big, jiggling goodies.

March's half-lidded eyes remained half-lidded, his lanky arms hanging lazily at his sides. "Hn." Was that a good 'hn' or a bad 'hn'? His expressionless gaze studied her naked breasts with a reserved, almost-scientific interest, far from the lewd, gluttonous stares that had become customary. She didn't know how to feel about his non-reaction.

Awkward...

A tumbleweed could've blown past them in the nervy silence.

"Stay right there," he said.

"Uh, okay?" She wasn't planning to run away topless through the woods.

March dragged a half-covered log out of the bushes and towards the centre of the clearing. *That's a new one.* She assumed he'd sit on it but instead he stepped over the log like it was some sort of marker. May was distracted trying to work out what this configuration was about when his sweatpants suddenly dropped to his ankles.

She gasped, threw both hands over her mouth and shut her eyes immediately; albeit, not quickly enough to avoid noting he wasn't wearing any underwear. "H-heyyy!" she called out blindly. "What do you think y-you're doing?!"

His voice stayed as calm and unemotive as ever. "Getting comfortable. I don't remember anything against it in your rules."

He wasn't wrong. May hadn't anticipated any of the strangers she flashed would want to flash her back in return. Nonetheless, it shouldn't have been a problem, provided he maintained a respectful distance. "Just... keep your hands to yourself, okay?"

"Yeh. That was always the plan."

"Always the plan?" What kind of freak...

"April. Open your eyes."

"Wh-what? Why?"

"That's the only way this will work."

May didn't even know what 'this' was. She wasn't sure she'd be comfortable seeing another guy's junk. *It's not like I have to touch it*, she tried to psyche herself up. *He's got the money and it's not cheating if we don't actually touch, right?*

"April. Look at me."

Her right eye twitched and peeled open in tiny increments. From the centre of his blurred pelvis, a long, semi-hard penis dangled freely between his legs. It looked like an extension of his lanky disposition, tall and thin and crowned with a cock-head shaped just like his beanie. She felt guilty for peeking, let alone mentally admitting there was a certain symmetrical beauty about its length and structure.

"April. Both eyes."

She opened them completely, blinking a couple of times as though she were coming to in an upside-down, unrecognisable world, a world where *she* was the one getting flashed by a boy she'd just met. His dangling pipe of flesh looked so smooth it could've been made of silicone. The moment she set both eyes on it, his member jerked upwards on its own accord, titillated at being observed.

"Watch me." March coiled his long fingers around his cock and, in typical lethargic fashion, stroked it all the way to its swollen tip then back to his pelvis again. May swallowed something she didn't realise was stuck in her throat. Why was he making her watch this? She didn't want to. Not because it repulsed her, but because it made her feel... uncomfortable in a multitude of ways, stirring things inside her she didn't want stirred. Every time her eyes wandered off, even for a second, he'd call them back with, "April. Look at me."

"I am," she whined, turning to make eye contact.

"Look at *it*," he specified.

She slouched her shoulders and sighed in a 'do I have to?' kind of way. He nodded as if he could hear her ask herself the question. May lowered her gaze timidly, where his closed grip continued sliding up and down the length of his full erection. His stroking was slow and

deliberate, drawing attention to the span of shaft he had to cover. She didn't want to make any comparisons but March exhibited above-average length, probably why he had no qualms about letting it all hang out.

Yes, it was big. Yes, it was beautiful. But what did he get out of rubbing it in her face?

It seemed as though he was paying more attention to where her eyes were than where her breasts were. He wanted her to see his shlong, to take in its glory, to celebrate the effect her topless state had on him. That was what he'd paid for. At some point, she quit trying to shy away and stared head-on at the exhibitionist before her.

"You and I are so alike," he said vaguely. "It's funny."

"I don't..."

March masturbated in open view of the half-naked brunette, exploiting a shaft-sized loophole in their stringent contract. While he got off watching her watching him getting off, May wondered what was going through his head, whether it would make the strange scenario better or worse if he was thinking about her. This was the closest he'd get to expressing his physical admiration without touching her.

Should she have been slightly flattered or utterly disgusted?

As May stood there with her tits out shuffling her feet uneasily, she rubbed her bare arm up and down, and couldn't help notice how sensitive her skin had become. Heat spread beneath her chest and cheeks. Her featherlight strokes evoked tingles in her arm that rippled throughout her body. She probably should've stopped before –

"Your nipples are stiff as fuck."

They stood pink, large and blaringly erect, a response both she and March understood had nothing to do with the warm weather. She blushed furiously and turned away. Did he have to point it out so bluntly? It was embarrassing enough letting him see her like this.

"April. Look at me."

"No," she said shyly. "I don't want to." Did he think he was cool just because he'd turned her on *slightly* whilst stroking that stupid, long dick of his? Well, he wasn't!

"April."

"What?!"

"Your no touch rule..."

Ah, she saw this one coming. "...what about it?"

"Does it apply... to yourself?"

Okay, so she *didn't* see that one coming. She couldn't even wrap her brain around the thought of banning herself from touching herself. "Of course not."

"Hn. I didn't think so," he said in a languid tone. "You can touch your breasts."

She liked how he said 'can' as if he was giving *her* permission, as if he somehow knew it was something she was dying to do. May's instinct to retort was snuffed by the fact she couldn't think up a retort. Her body was burning and any Tom, Dick and March could see it. She resorted to sarcasm. "Thank you for your permission, oh great one."

"It was only a suggestion."

It sounded sneakier than that. "I'm sure."

He shrugged, then continued jerking his cock like he'd never brought it up.

May let him get on with it and slowly fell back into the habit of stroking her arm. The higher her fingers feathered over her bicep, the nearer her breasts loomed, the stronger the temptation. Yeah, she could touch them; not because he wanted it, but because she did.

Her digits veered off her arm and glided softly over her plump mound. The sensitivity in her breast hastened her breathing. May had been in no mood to touch herself for the last several months but something akin to muscle memory kicked in, drawing large circles around her nipple with the faintest of fingertips. She felt alive again. As much as she'd never admit it aloud, March did give her permission of a sort, permission to feel and revive the sexual being dormant inside her.

Seeing her touch herself excited March into faster strokes. It wasn't long before May full-on groped her breasts, rubbed them round and round with hard nipples poking out between her digits. She wasn't thinking about the boy in front of her but the visual aid of his pumped-up cock went a long way to stroking her fantasies. The heat spread to every extremity on her body. She rubbed two fingers over her nipples in slow, rhythmic patterns and almost lost her footing from surging pleasure.

"April." March stepped back over the log and spaced himself a few feet clear. "Sit."

May gave him a suspicious glance. Just how far had he planned this whole thing out? It didn't matter, she supposed; at this rate, she could plop herself down voluntarily or have her knees buckle from underneath her.

She settled her tush on the log. A pants-less March sat on the grass facing her, then leaned back on his elbows. He spread his raised knees and opened up his crotch to her unobstructed scrutiny. His dick looked even longer, more immense, standing upright on its own hunger and potency. May couldn't not be impressed if she tried.

She returned the favour and spread her own legs whilst sat on the log. Under the shade of her skirt, skin-tight spandex shorts contoured her plump vulva. Her nether lips were so full and inundated with lust, her mount of a cameltoe practically hung over the log's edge.

March murmured his most enthusiastic "hn…" yet. He coiled both hands around his pipe, stacking one fist atop the other, covering all but the bulbous cock-head crowning his summit. May put a hand on her chest, taken aback by the length of rigid shaft. Her sex enthralled him much the same. Lust clouded his squinted vision as he feasted on the luscious mound punching out her bike shorts. March lost the will to stare off into the distance, her lurid cameltoe proving much too big an obstacle to look around. Whatever thoughts corrupted his mind snaked their way to his coiled digits, twisting and pumping his shaft in both hands. Up and down, her eyes followed his rhythmic knuckles, further fuelling his desire to perform.

Was this really okay? Watching some guy lying back before her feet, masturbating at her thinly-veiled pussy? Probably not. Not for May anyway. May would never do that. April, on the other hand...

April stared shamelessly, from the crest of his double grip right down to where the grass prickled his bum, where his bloated scrotum sort of joggled in tandem with his jerking. She'd never seen a sack so full, so heavy it could barely move, so pregnant it neared tennis ball proportions. Arceus, had he been depriving himself. Seeing him so swollen, so burdened with seed, spoke to the lascivious side of April, urging her to appease him, to be the outlet he so desperately needed, if only just to witness the monumental volumes sure to erupt. She moved her hand over her breasts.

He took his eyes off her muff to watch her fondle her enormous tits. She relished watching him masturbate, watching him jerk that shlong right in front of her, the ultimate expression of carnal adulation. It taught her something about herself. April didn't share May's reservations about her developed body. She loved her fat, juicy tits being out there, being craved and fawned over. The great outdoors only added to the thrill of it, the thought of unsuspecting Trainers stumbling upon them, or creeping in the bushes spying on their eroticism. She gave her nipple a raunchy pinch, and husky whimpers stuttered from her lips.

"Yes. April." March appreciated this development. He leaned back on his right elbow and switched to one hand, jerking his cock in quicker, longer strokes. The same thing that made his languid tone of voice so flat and boring stimulated her in unexpected ways, the deep calmness of his instructions soothing her into action. "Yes. Rub them like that. Yes. April. Touch them like you want to. Like you've wanted to all this time." *What... what am I doing?* May thought, as April heeded his commands and twisted both her nipples. She bit the corner of her bottom lip, struggled to contain her needy moans. "Mmn... ooh..." She'd forgotten how wonderful it felt to be touched, if even by her own hand. May substituted the glazed-over face under his beanie with one more familiar and acceptable; it was Brendan watching her fondle her nipples, Brendan wanking for her viewing pleasure, Brendan imploring her not to stop touching herself.

May's juices were well and truly flowing. She squirmed with excitement, subtly rubbing herself on the rough bark beneath her. Her cheeks flushed scarlet and her shorts darkened from the centre, a telling blotch spreading from her ripe cameltoe. She shut her legs in embarrassment before he calmly ordered her to, "Show yourself."

April took over and her thighs parted ways.

March greeted her lush pussy-print with a slow nod. "Touch it."

Under the spell of his deep, husky voice, April slid her hand down her open shirt, down her exposed navel, lower still beneath her white miniskirt, and perched her palm on her fat pussy mound. It felt hot in her grasp and sodden on her fingertips. She couldn't believe how wet she'd gotten, how desperate she must've looked grinding on an inanimate log. If now he'd suggest she needed a good fuck, May wasn't so sure she'd laugh it off as casually, not while her soaked shorts betrayed everything.

He nodded his approval and she went straight for the crown of her sex, where her heat throbbed at its hottest. Two digits circled the ache hidden between her puffy lips and incited a purr of deep longing. It tickled March's ears. "April... yes... that's... it..." For the first time, she heard cracks in his monotonous tone, unsteady tremors of breath break through his speech.

The strangers-turned-wank-buddies mirrored each other's growing needs. April diddled herself feverishly over her shorts while March jerked himself silly, his passionate strokes tugging his heavy sack up and down. So much semen... a bead of sweat trailed down her brow as she ogled the bobbing scrotum. She pressed and rubbed her aching clit. The wet patch spread further around her crotch and pre-cum leaked out of his bulbous tip.

"Bre... Brendan..." May panted, stimulating her erect nipples with one hand while stirring her swollen clit with the other. She fantasised about home every day on Dytopiah but never found the levity to fantasise about him, not through any sexual lens. March was wrong about him; Brendan would be waiting at the front door when she made her triumphant return. She'd leap into his safe arms and plant a big fat kiss on his mouth. Heck, at this rate, she'd tackle him at the door and ride him ragged on the welcome mat.

April was very nearly ready to settle on the boy right in front of her. She dunked a hand down her shorts and a bulge of knuckles and finger joints stretched the spandex. Her longest digit wedged its head into the cleft between her puffy labia and rushed down and up against her slick folds. Moan after moan cascaded from her lips and mingled with the restrained grunting noises rising from March's throat. Their hunger for one another thickened the air, lust oozing from their pores, heated pheromones cavorting in the space between them. Only their dogged respect for the 'no touch' contract prevented their rampant teenage hormones from closing the distance.

Nothing could tame their wild thoughts however. March thrusted upwards through his coiled hand with all the passion of penetrating a tight vagina. April imagined said vagina being hers, envisioned bounding off the log and landing on his bustling lap, pictured his tower of pistoning meat impaling her up the middle, his overloaded sack slapping the bottom of her ass. It all happened in her head as she shoved fervent digits up her sopping cunt. Loud squelches emanated from the bulge shuffling in her shorts. Her thighs wobbled and crashed together sporadically and, more than once, she had to lurch forward to save herself from tipping backwards off the log. The unrelenting pleasure grew closer and closer to overwhelming them both.

March mumbled, "Fuck." He rose to his feet and approached the seated girl. This was usually the part May stopped everything and berated her patrons to step back. But she didn't have a voice, and any remaining breath petered in laboured pants and erotic moans. March moved into the space between her parted legs. He brought his crotch so close to her visage, his big bouncing ballsack would've brushed the bridge of her nose if he took a step further. An observer from beyond his back might've mistaken their positioning for fellatio, what with her face hidden past his buttocks and her bare tits hanging between his legs. And yet, despite appearances, the no contact rule remained intact.

Barely.

She slowly tilted her head back, ogling in awe as his smooth, lengthy rod extended past her brow, his knuckles swooping within an inch of her eyes when he dragged them to the bottom of his shaft. His thick, masculine musk pervaded her nostrils and stoked the flame raging in her spats. Taking it all in, she found herself alternating between fingering her gash and rubbing her throbbing clit.

A sudden spike in pleasure exploded from her core and, rushed through her body so fiercely, her limbs seized up and her eyes rolled to the back of her skull. May cried in shrill ecstasy and lost the strength to hold herself up. She fell backwards off the log, tits jiggling as she convulsed with one hand trapped in her constricting thighs. The self-inflicted orgasm all but incapacitated her. And while she lay there writhing in long overdue rapture, March planted his feet on either side of her waist, casting a tall shadow over her body.

A low, guttural grunt rumbled overhead, the most raw and animated sound issued from the languid boy. She looked up with bad timing. Hot, steaming goo landed right between her eyes and droplets splashed into her right iris. She recoiled, screwing them shut, but the downpour had only begun.

All she could hear whilst blinded on the ground were unrestrained, drawn-out groans as rope after rope of thick semen rained across her scrunched-up face and exposed tits. She even felt some splash on her cameltoe and seep down its crevice, blending with her own juices staining the spandex. Oh God, she better not get pregnant from this, from a boy who hadn't even touched her before spilling his seed. Nah, impossible; her shorts might've been ultrathin but they weren't permeable. May rested easy as March seemed determined to shake every last drop out of his spent tool. Under normal circumstances, she wouldn't have taken it lying down if a random boy thought it wise to bathe her in his essence. But March earned every drip, drop and splat. Between inspiring her own powerful orgasm and lending both his shoulders to dump her stress on, the least she could do was play the cum dumpster for *him* to unload on. Besides, April kind of liked it.

By the time March flicked the last dribbles of his climax upon her, May felt as though she was drowning in semen, the pungent musk coating half her face, including a cummoustache lining her upper lip. She didn't move, even as he stepped away, worried the fresh seed may slip and slide into places she rather it didn't, like her mouth.

March put his pants back on then stood over her head. "Thank you. April from Hoenn." He dumped the wads of Pokédollars he owed onto her spent, cum-drenched body, then walked away, leaving her lying in the grass like some cheap, used whore.

May must've lazed in the same spot, in the same position, for over ten minutes wondering about Brendan. April whispered a tiny "thank you" to March.



Chapter 4 – The Time That Got Away

Norman knocked a businessman to the ground whilst dashing through the crowded sidewalk.

"Hey! Watch where you're going, prick!"

"Oof, sorry!" Norman turned back to help him up when two burly men in black suits came rushing round the corner. They scanned the vicinity through sinister shades, spotted him and then tapped their earpieces. "Oh, shit!" Norman dropped the man back on his arse before hightailing it. "Sorry again!"

One of the bodyguards pointed in his direction and shouted, "There he is!"

"Somebody, stop that thieving runt!" bellowed the other.

Despite the impassioned order, the common pedestrian continued on their languid way, paying little mind to the foreign men clad in expensive suits. Norman wasn't the first to pickpocket in Toxi City; hell, he wasn't the first to pickpocket in the last ten minutes. Thievery afflicted the streets as surely as the sun rose and, unless it hit their own pockets, jaded locals turned a blind eye.

Norman had learned to be of the people, to move amongst them, to use their indifference to his favour. In his unwashed, oversized hoodie and knee-torn slacks, he turned no more heads than the common vagrant. He weaved in and out of the throngs while the burly men in pursuit slogged behind shoving and barging past sluggish pedestrians.

Norman lost his pursuers in the human maze then snuck into a dingy alley to catch his breath. He leaned on the wall with an outstretched arm, his cut-off glove pressed against soot-stained bricks. Fatigue burned in his chest and poured out in hot breaths. Next to his tattered sneakers gathered a puddle of rainwater, alcohol and God-knew-what-else. The stench of garbage and dried-up piss barely frazzled his desensitised nose. He didn't smell so hot himself after a week without a shower and several more without a shave. But that was the least of his problems.

He poked his head around the corner to check on his pursuers. All the buildings in this part of Toxi City looked the same, a mundane reddish-brown with grime and soot feeding on their old brick. The commotion he'd escaped reached his ears from a distance but no sign of the men in black coming his way. As far as he could tell, no one had seen him sneak into the alley except a scrawny Poochyena drinking out of a dirty puddle.

It was the first time he'd have a chance to look at the watch since nabbing it from its snobbish owner. Well, previous owner. Norman fished the stolen goods from his hoodie's pocket. The timepiece sparkled in his dull eyes like nothing this pitiful city could ever produce, a gold trinket in a mountain of filth and rubble. He almost wanted to keep it for himself.

His steal had to be worth an absolute fortune, especially considering he'd nicked it from an infamous figure. The silver-haired Marc Stone bore a striking resemblance to his better-known brother, Steven, but unlike the latter who'd risen to meteoric heights spearheading the family's business and reigning as Hoenn's Champion for a laudable stint, Marc set out to make his own name in his own way. He hadn't inherited Devon Corporation from his father like Steven had, but built his own lucrative mining and excavation company with shrewd determination, although the sources of his funding remained a major mystery. His fiercest detractors went so far as to say the organisation was only a front for other illicit business endeavours. Albeit, whatever the so-called 'illicit business endeavours' might be, no one could say, nor prove.

Norman didn't know the man, had no interactions beyond relieving him of his luxurious timepiece, but harboured suspicions about his legitimacy, too. In the several months Norman had been stranded on Dytopiah, Marc Stone flew in on his private jet and partook in a sit-down with some of the region's high-ranking bureaucrats at least once every four weeks. What business could a 'humble', Hoenn-based CEO have with the fat cats in this region? Hell, anyone frequenting Dytopiah deliberately was already due close scrutiny as far as Norman was concerned.

Nonetheless, it was through monitoring Stone's movements Norman had hatched the masterful pickpocketing plot. And he'd pulled it off without a hitch.

"Over there!" someone shouted.

Spoke too soon.

Norman jumped, startled by the abrupt alert. The watch fumbled from his hands. He jerked his foot reactively and caught it before it hit the ground. Phew! Damnit though, how had Tweedledum and Tweedledee caught up to him? No time to hang around and ask questions. Norman stashed the gold watch and made a break for it down the alley.

"Oi! Hold it you dirty rat!"

The bodyguards chased after him. "That shit ain't yours!" Tweedledum exclaimed. "Hand it over and we might let you keep your teeth!"

"Yeah," Tweedledee said, "we'll only break half your limbs!"

These guys really need to work on their negotiation skills, Norman thought, running full speed ahead without looking back. From behind him, a loud splash caught his ears and one of the men blurting, "Shit! Not my *Gio-V Force Ones*!" Yeah, stepping in puddles of piss was no fun. Norman chuckled, glad he'd never been wearing expensive attire when it had happened to him.

"Alright, enough of this crap!" Tweedledee groaned. "Houndour, go!"

"You too, Houndoom!"

Norman heard two Poké Balls burst open as crimson flashed in his peripheral vision. *Not good.* He ground his teeth; God, how much he hated the Houndour family. Suddenly, an army of paws joined the footsteps pattering at his heels.

"Get 'im, Houndoom!" Tweedledum roared. "Drag his stupid ass back here!"

The other bodyguard ordered his Houndour to bite Norman's ankles. He really needed to get back to civilisation, where commanding pokémon to attack humans could get you thrown in prison. There'd be no justice for a pickpocket like him around here. He heard a hound's grumbling growl at his heels, practically felt its hot angry breath on his calves before jumping onto a closed dumpster. The Houndour snapped at the back of his pant-leg, tearing off a piece as it skidded to a halt after narrowly missing his flesh.

Heart thrashing, Norman teetered on top of the dumpster as the two hounds snarled and barked at him, venom dripping from their fanged muzzles. When they began to jump and snap at his toes, he very quickly realised his high ground was not nearly as high as it needed to be. Norman swivelled his head, looking for an escape, but there was no way out... except up? Just as Houndoom bounded onto the dumpster, Norman leapt off and grabbed the steel grating of a fire escape like a monkey bar.

He used the momentum to swing his body away and land on a broken thrown-out couch. The flat and worn cushions made for a harsh landing, but still preferable to the snapping jaws of rabid dogs. Norman sprung up off his sore ass and continued sprinting down the alley.

He made it to a wired fence and leapt for it like an Olympian performing a long jump, the longest jump of his life. Norman was pretty sure he would've set a record if any official observers had been present. The bloodthirsty hounds lunged and snapped at his feet while he scrambled to climb the fence. He hoisted one leg over the top rail when Houndour snatched his trailing limb by the pants, dragging him back down a foot.

"That's it, boy! Sic him!" encouraged his scathing master.

Norman groaned and clung to the top for dear life, panic thrashing in his chest as he feared slipping to the ferocious beasts snapping underfoot. As an avid fan of pokémon training, Norman developed a trust and love for the species, a mutual respect that prevented him from inflicting any physical harm on the creatures. But, like many etiquettes eroded by

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the toxicity of this derelict region, his diplomacy took a backseat to instinct. Norman felt himself slipping and kicked out wildly, wriggling his pant-leg free of the hound's maul after delivering a desperate stomp to its muzzle.

Houndoom whined and recoiled. Norman won the time and space he needed to haul himself over the fence.

He landed on the other side and doubled over catching his breath. For all their ferociousness, neither Houndour nor Houndoom had the dexterity to climb the height of the fence.

Tweedledum was not happy about it. "You think you're so slick, huh?" He snarled. "We're not gonna let you get away with this! Houndour, Hyper Beam!"

What?! Norman's eyes grew wide with shock. They wouldn't! But they did.

He turned and ran as the hound began to gather a ball of blistering energy in its maw. A loud clank rang his ears and an explosion of heat threw him to the ground, moments before chunks of wired fence went searing past him. Norman protected the back of his head and kept his face to the ground as shrapnel flew every which way.

He looked back to see the middle of the wire fence had been completely blown off, smoke wisping off the scorched edges. More frightening still, the suits and their rabid canines had nothing in the way of chasing him down. "Fuck," he groaned and struggled to haul his body back to his feet. If this was the end for him, he wouldn't go down cowering to these suited-up thugs.

They set their hounds on him again.

Norman dragged himself forward as fast as he could with a limp. Panting, heaving, hurting, he hobbled into the street carelessly and would've gotten run down by a motorcycle if the rider hadn't screeched to a stop right in front of him. He jumped back, barely avoiding the tires flattening his toes.

The rider lifted the visor on their helmet and he fully expected to be cursed out. He didn't expect to hear, "Hop on!"

"Wha...? Who?" He squinted, struggling to recognise the rider with only her russet eyes and dark fringe visible through the headgear.

"Get on already!" she screamed.

Norman started; between her alarming cry and the growling hounds charging them, he sprung back to his senses and hopped onto the back of the bike. They sped off, leaving nothing but exhaust fumes for Houndoom to choke on. Norman glanced over his shoulder and watched the shrinking men overturn a dustbin and kick a fire hydrant. He grinned through his body aches and waved back a one finger salute.

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A speeding motorcycle weaved in and out of Toxi City traffic. Norman wrapped his arms around the driver's slender waist and rested his cheek on the back of her helmet. The rushing winds blew the hood off his head and fluttered his long, straggly hair. He would've given anything to keep riding to the end of the city. Litter touched every street, poverty camped on every corner, a choir of car horns polluted the air and the wind dragged in industrial fumes from the west sector. No decent human being could find it easy functioning in a morally bankrupt city where the very act of breathing hurt your health. The corruption had already gnawed at his conscious, and Norman feared it would swallow him whole if he didn't escape. As he leaned against his unexpected saviour, he whispered a feeble "keep going" that got carried away by the wind.

In his state of adrenaline-fuelled panic back at the alley, Norman hadn't had the clarity of mind to identify his rescuer. Now, however, he realised it could only be one person. Hugging her back, he took in her natural scent as confirmation. After fleeing kilometres away from the danger, when the traffic dwindled to a handful of cars, she slowed down the bike to a pedestrian pace and his voice carried over the subtle wind.

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"Zinnia," he guessed.

She kept her eyes on the road. "Who else would it be?"

Of course, the only other people he knew in this region were his daughter and Jake, neither of who rode motorcycles. "How did you know where to find me?"

"Wherever trouble goes, Norman follows."

He gave a small laugh. "If I didn't know any better, I'd think you were stalking me."

"I don't need to stalk you. Fate seems to have a way of ensuring we cross paths time and again."

She had a point.

He thought back to when he first met Zinnia at Smuldering Town by complete accident. She had been pickpocketed and unable to catch up to the culprit in the congested market. Everyone ignored her cries to help seize the thief and Norman would've, too; he tended to mind his own business and, while there was no honour amongst thieves, there were unwritten rules that spoke against thwarting another's score. Before he could even comprehend why he did it, Norman stuck out a foot and the pickpocket fell over it. He retrieved two multi-coloured stones with odd markings on them. What they were meant to be, he hadn't the slightest of clues, but Zinnia was overwhelmed with relief to have them back.

Since then, they'd bumped into each other on several coincidental occasions. Or, seemingly coincidental. On one hand, Norman was burdened with guilt for betraying his kinship but, on the other, he'd earned himself an unlikely ally. Granted, Zinnia remained a mystery to him despite their brief and timely encounters. She was on a mission, that much he was certain of, and that was all he was certain of.

"You're right," Norman said, "we do end up running into each other like this quite often, don't we? Why do you think that is?" Zinnia had no answer for him. She revved her bike and swerved into a back alley. After several twists and turns down narrow paths, they wound up at a tall, square building with large windows, half of them cracked, shattered or altogether missing. It appeared to have served as an office once upon a time, but now it was crumbling and deserted and turned into Zinnia's place of operations.

Norman sat on a teetering desk in a dark room with panels missing from the ceiling and cables hanging down, broken swivel chairs and fallen shelves spewed across the floor flooded with loose papers. The air was stale and dusty, the windows boarded up, light seeping in through cracks in the wooden beams. Not the picture-perfect safe haven he'd had in mind but much better than being out there right now, especially whilst clinging to the hot piece of property in his pocket.

Zinnia dabbed an icepack on his exposed back and he shivered. "You big baby."

"You try having a Hyper Beam fired right at you."

"I have. More times than I can count."

Norman clicked his tongue. "Show off." Clearly, she had more practice dodging fiery blasts from pokémon than he did.

"In any case, it looks like you avoided a direct hit. A little bit of bruising and swelling, but no burns. You'll be just fine." She pressed the icepack on his lower back. "What were you doing back there?"

"What we're all doing," Norman said, flinching at the cold. "Surviving."

"Looks like you might've bitten off more than you can chew."

It was definitely his biggest score to date. "Nothing I can't handle."

"If I hadn't come along –"

"Thank Arceus I have a stalker. What were you doing back there?"

She fell silent and calculated her response. "Following up a lead."

"Right. I don't suppose you're going to elaborate on what this lead is all about?"

"When the time is right, the whole world is going to know."

He furrowed his brow, bewildered, but thought better than to waste his time digging. "Well, that doesn't sound ominous at all. You're not part of Team Illuminati or anything are you?"

"I'm part of anything I need to be when I need to be."

"I was only jok- ah, never mind."

"Besides nearly getting yourself blown to smithereens, how have things been going for you?" Zinnia asked. "And your daughter?"

My daughter...

May was the only reason he hadn't cradled himself under a bridge and given up weeks ago. Sweet and innocent in every way, she didn't deserve to have everything stripped from her, to wind up stranded in Dytopiah while her peers explored their youth and chased Contest Ribbons around the globe. He promised her they would be back home soon. That was seven months ago. Every blood-orange sunrise he witnessed in Toxi City was a glaring reminder of his failings as a father. And yet, somehow, she hadn't given up on him.

"She's... doing okay." Norman reflected on their last rendezvous three days ago. In retrospect, she'd appeared to be doing better than okay, certainly better than him. Over the past four weeks, a little more sustenance filled her gaunt cheeks and her skin radiated the kind of healthy glow he hadn't seen since back in Hoenn. The upturn in her appearance coincided with her reported upturn in pokémon battling. Over and above fending for herself, his little girl was out there kicking some major tush! To think, she'd ever doubted herself as a Pokémon Trainer. "She's great, actually. I'm supposed to be meeting her tonight at Skrumpton Steaks. Her treat." Zinnia stopped stirring the icepack as though she had to dedicate all her faculties to process what he'd just said. "*The* Skrumpton Steaks?"

"Yeah. Heard of it?"

"Who hasn't heard of Skrumpton Steaks? Only the second most lavish restaurant in all of Dytopiah. She must be doing exceptionally well to afford that treat."

A proud grin connected his ears. "That's my May! Always been a fighter – just like her old man. Lacked a little confidence starting out but she's definitely come into her own."

"I'd say... Skrumpton Steaks. That's incredible. Nice of her to let you join in on the spoils, too, old man."

"Hey, I'm not that old!"

"A younger man would've gotten away from that Hyper Beam."

Norman chuckled. "You're never going to let me live this down, huh?"

"Where would the fun in that be?" She patted the top of his head playfully. "All jokes aside though, you're a good man, Norman. A great dad."

Good man? Great dad? Heh. He'd beg to differ. And his daughter probably would, too, if she ever discovered her dear old father had reduced himself to grand theft wristwatch.

"You really think so?" Norman said. He hadn't felt like it in months.

"Absolutely. I don't know you all that well but even I can see it. That grit, determination and fighting spirit of hers didn't just fall out of the sky. Anyone who can make it in this morally bankrupt region for as long as you two have earn my respect."

Hm, maybe he didn't consider that perspective often enough. He was great at putting up a façade, especially in front of May, projecting this confidence he didn't really have, this notion he knew what he was doing and everything would work out for the best. Sure, he'd survived Dytopiah thus far, but he felt like a fraud by his own standards. Toxi City nabbed a

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reputable Gym Leader and turned him into a lowly petty thief. May had been doing better for herself in spite of him not because of him. Nonetheless, Zinnia rarely handed out compliments (this was the first he could actually remember), so Norman did his best to accept it gracefully.

"Thank you. I appreciate it."

She smiled kindly. "If you ever need a place to lay low or to hide from the human Muk sullying this city or just need a breather from all the depression out there, you're free to come here whenever you like. Just, make sure nobody sees you. It hasn't been compromised and I'd like to keep it that way."

"Of course."

She frowned at the sea of papers covering the floor and the broken office furniture scattered throughout the room. "Not very much in the way of creature comforts I'm afraid, but there's a gymnasium on the ground floor right across the kitchen, fully equipped with a dumbbell or two and a half-working shower."

"Ooh, a half-working shower. Is that your subtle way of saying I reek like Muk puke?"

Zinnia shrugged. "Take it however you like." She pressed the icepack on a swell lining his collarbone. "Here, hold this."

As soon as he took over, she disappeared from the room. "Where are you going?" She gave him her favourite response: complete silence. "Right. Why do I still bother asking?" he mumbled to himself.

In the silence of his own company, Norman studied his shirtless form, noting how the streets had chiselled any excess fat from around his waist. Slabs of abdominal muscle took shape and his arms appeared leaner, more toned by the day. Save from the fang marks striped across his right forearm, Norman had done well to avoid scars, often running from any potential altercations. Not that he couldn't hold his own; at over 6 feet tall, he cut a lean,

intimidating figure when he sought to, even more so with the Viking beard jutting from his jaw. He only sought to return home in one piece, with all his teeth intact.

After what felt like hours of addressing his own bumps and bruises whilst scanning the carnage surrounding him, Zinnia made her silent return, announced only by her light footsteps treading the papered floor. "Ah, couldn't stay away, could you? That's okay. I've been known to have that sort of effect on wome..." Norman's playful jibe petered into stunned silence when he swivelled his head towards the entrance. "Zinnia... what are you..."

...wearing?

Nothing, he soon discovered, after the cloth wrapping her body hit the floor with a crinkling of paper. Shadows contoured her sinuously slender form, incredibly long legs climbing towards a narrow waist winding into modest humps. A strip of light across her face revealed feline eyes and a wet fringe clinging to her forehead. He gulped down a knot of something. As she sauntered towards him and through narrow beams of light, glimpses of her trim figure filtered in and out of view: small humble breasts... a flat tummy... a triangular patch of jet-black pubes... Norman instantly came alive in the crotch area.

Although devastatingly pleasing on the eye, this uncharacteristic development tethered his excitement a notch. Zinnia, this mysterious Draconid woman who'd shared next to nothing about her life, suddenly appeared before him seemingly prepared to share *everything* about her body. Very curious. She stood between his parted knees, stark naked, dotted in what he presumed was hot shower remnants. Steam radiated from her body and heated his cheeks. He looked down, ashamed to confront her gaze, only to have his eyes drawn to her pierced nipples. Raw excitement pitched a giant tent in his pants, one that wouldn't go unnoticed by the shadowy temptress before him.

She put her warm palms on his naked chest. He flinched, dropping the icepack off his shoulder. Far from lacking experience, Norman couldn't remember the last woman to get him this jittery. Sometime long before he married Caroline. Zinnia's touch felt so foreign, perhaps because intimacy had been as scarce as anything else in Dytopiah. He'd forgotten the caress of a woman, the caress of any woman that wasn't his wife.

But it all started coming back to him.

Her hands roamed down his hard-bodied torso and the urge to reciprocate her touch itched at his fingertips. He could grab her teeny waist and have her wailing up against the wall in a matter of seconds. There was a lot more to the 'good man' she perceived him to be and once that inner beast tore away from its tethers, not even Norman himself could stop it from getting its absolute fill.

She traced the grooves in his washboard abs and came dangerously close to bringing about her own reckoning. Not a soul would ever find out either, not in the darkness of this abandoned office block. Zinnia wasn't the type to blab about her exploits and he sure as hell wouldn't let anyone know he'd been unfaithful – he didn't need his daughter regarding him a loser anymore than she probably did. Although Norman had no doubt he and Zinnia possessed the tact and maturity to relieve each other without giving themselves away, his conscious stopped him when her hands tugged on his waistband.

"I can't." He seized her wrists.

Zinnia didn't resist. An awkward silence gripped the room. Norman kept his head hung while she stepped back, turned on her heels and walked out the door.

He cursed the moment she was out of earshot. Was he an idiot for passing on free, hot tail? Lord knew he needed a big release after the months of hardships he'd suffered through. No one would've found out! He just turned away his first decent opportunity in favour of a musty old blanket, a cold cardboard box and his trusty right hand deep into the night. Hey, at least he could still fantasise about what could've been. *Dummy*! He smacked his forehead.

But then he remembered his vows. The vows he hadn't betrayed nearing twenty years of marriage. This should've been another proud moment. It *was* another proud moment.

Gosh, he was broken in more ways than he realised. Anchoring his thoughts to Caroline helped him reaffirm he'd made the right decision. He'd lost so much to Dytopiah already; he couldn't afford to lose himself, too, or lose everything he'd been fighting so hard to return to in the first place.

Zinnia came back into the room – wearing clothes this time, thankfully. He recognised the black bodysuit and tall shin guards from their first encounter, a sure-fire sign she was in ass-kicking mode. His rejection might've shot him right to the top of her list of targets. Norman very much preferred his ass un-kicked and thought best not to leave any resentment or awkward air hanging between them.

"Look, it's not that you're not a beautiful woman," he said. "You're absolutely stunning. Gorgeous. Probably the most attractive woman I've come across on this whole stinking island. Er, a little rough around the edges, maybe?" She looked up at him with a cold expression while fastening the plaited twine belt looped in her shorts. "Uh, but aren't we all?" Norman quickly added with a nervous laugh. "Anyway, what I'm saying is, if things were different, I would've been all over you like white on rice. But now, I can't because –"

"Your wife," Zinnia said flatly, cutting his rambling short.

"Well... yeah." One of the treasures he'd been fortunate to keep after the plane crash was the golden band on his ring finger.

"I figured as much."

And yet, he detected no annoyance in her voice. She spoke as though the topic was just another casual conversation people had over breakfast. "So, you're not mad? Or offended?"

"Offended?" She stifled a chuckle. "I'm offended you'd think I'd be offended."

Phew! Thank goodness she took rejection like a champ. "I'm glad you understand."

"I suspected you wouldn't let things go too far anyway."

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"Oh? Then why'd you try?" Not that her nakedness had hurt his eyes in any way.

She turned her face to a boarded-up window, speckles of light dotting her visage. "I guess I needed to know if that was the reason fate brought us together."

"You sure talk about fate a lot. Maybe it's simpler than that." He picked up the icepack and placed it back on his shoulder. "Maybe we're meant to help each other escape this hellhole."

"I can't leave. Not until I find the Azure Key Stone. All the signs suggest it's hidden somewhere in this region."

"Key Stone?" Those strange rocks she almost got robbed of? "What do they do anyway?"

As if she'd spoken too much, Zinnia abruptly fell silent again and swung a long, white, jagged cape around her shoulders. "If we weren't destined to become lovers, and you weren't destined to lead me to the Key Stone, then maybe..." She tied the cape in a knot over her breastbone. "Maybe I'm destined to meet your daughter."

"May?" She lost him there. Norman couldn't imagine his daughter getting mixed up with mysterious signs and Key Stones and whatever dangerous business Zinnia got herself roped into. An hour ago, he would've willingly introduced her to May; now he kind of wished they'd never meet. "I don't think she –"

"Don't worry. I'd never do her any harm or allow any harm to come to her."

"Ah, well, that's reassuring to know."

She nodded, then whipped around dramatically, cape swooshing behind her. "So long, Norman of Petalburg."

"Wait, you're leaving?"

"I must."

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"Before you go doing... whatever it is you do, could I ask one last favour?"

The motorcycle stopped halfway across a rundown, rusted old bridge. Norman hopped off the back. Zinnia raised her visor and scanned the desolate streets on either side of the highway bridge. Nothing but broken-down cars littered the winding roads. Moss cracked through sidewalks and devoured dead traffic lights and billboards. There was nothing apparent here but ghosts of days gone past. "You're sure this is the place?"

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Norman wished it wasn't. "I'm sure."

"All right," she said, uncertainly. "Take care. May still needs her father. So keep an eye out for those Hyper Beams – I won't be around to stalk you all the time."

"Ha! So you finally admit it?"

She dropped her visor and kicked her bike into gear. "Bye, Norman."

He waved until her rumbling engine quietened in the distance. Nice girl, if not a little on the melodramatic and femme fatale side. You didn't get to choose the kind of friends you made in a place like this though; you were just happy to have any. Saving him a fortune on taxi fare proved enough to cement her place in his good books.

Norman walked down the slope at one end of the rusted bridge. Cradled between its tall, stained piers, a brown-green tarp covered a bulky egg-shaped mass blocking half the road. The roof of the bridge above and non-existent traffic below made for a secluded and spacious refuge. Norman treaded cautiously around the sharp edges of steel wings sticking out from under the tarp. The mass grew and shrunk in heavy, slumbering breaths, and Norman skulked at his quietest not to rouse it.

"That you, Norman?" Jake called out from behind the snoozing mount.

"Nope. It's the hot date you invited over for dinner."

Jake emerged in a tattered trench coat wearing a huge smile on his face. "You know if I invited a hot date she'd be a lot prettier than your bum ass, right?"

Norman flicked his hair back like a dainty model. "I doubt it."

"You're a damn fool, man."

They laughed and slapped each other's palms in a rough and hearty handshake.

"I'm not looking so hot myself these days." Jake combed his fingers through his curly overgrown beard and sneered at the holes in his filthy shirt. "All this homeless business is really cramping my style."

"Oh, don't be so hard on yourself," Norman said. "Your style was never that great to begin with."

"You know what? I'm gonna let that one go. 'Cause I'm assuming your sarcastic ass didn't come all this way without some sort of good news."

"Hm. Maybe." Norman teased a secretive smile, turned and walked away.

"What the- what is it, man?" Jake followed him, on the edge of his toeless shoes.

Norman deliberately ignored him. "How's Skarmory doing?" He knelt down next to its exposed wing and scrutinised the feathers' state of disrepair. "They actually look a little better than last time I was here."

"Yeah, Skarmory be like that. Their wings usually restore themselves on a yearly basis. But, I dunno, man." He looked down over Norman's shoulder. "Dunno if it's because the damage it suffered was too traumatic or because it hasn't gotten the kind of rich nutrition it needs to heal itself completely. Nothing's really changed. Skarmory won't be up and about in the air till we get it those meds and specialist surgery."

Norman came to the same conclusion and his grim expression said as much. "You might be right for once, unfortunately." He pocketed his hands and rose to his feet with a

sigh. "If only that numbskull hadn't released a giant fucking steel bird in a cramped passenger plane."

"Pfft. Hey man, would you rather be Magikarp food right now?"

Honestly, some days, yes. "Speaking of food, you'll never guess where I'm going to be dining tonight." He paused just in case Jake did want to guess. "Skrumpton Steaks."

"The WHAT?!?!? Quit playing, man."

"I'm serious."

"No shit? Woosh, talk about a hot date."

"Er, not quite. May invited me."

"Word? Damn. Is she turning tricks or something? How can she afford all that?"

"Turning tricks?" Norman scowled. He could take any foul-mouthed jibe thrown in his face, but the slightest remark disparaging his daughter had a way of riling him up to the nth degree. "You know May isn't like that at all." Why would he even *suggest* that?

Jake threw his hands up. "I know. It was only a joke, man." He slapped Norman's shoulder playfully. "Come on, you two are the only family I got out here."

It was a terrible joke but Norman could let it slide. Jake was like a brother to him, too. "You're lucky I'm such a laidback guy." He hadn't always been.

"I heard that," Jake agreed with a nervy chuckle. "Anyway, you came all this way just to rub Skrumpton Steaks in my face?"

"Well, yes. That, and I think I found a way to pay your surgeon buddy's ₽42,000 asking price."

"What, really?" Excitement grew in Jake's eyes. "How?"

Norman brandished the dazzling wristwatch.

"Holy crap! That looks like it could be worth more than my house!"

"Probably twice as much."

"Where'd you get it?"

"Oh, just right off the wrist of a certain Marc Stone."

"Marc... Stone...?" The name instantly drained the excitement from Jake's face. "You legit robbed Marc Stone?"

"Well, I'm not exactly proud of it but... actually, I kind of am."

"Are you nuts, man?! Put that shit away." Jake looked around in paranoia. "One doesn't simply rob Marc Stone and live to tell the tale."

"I'm still breathing, aren't I? The dude's stinking rich. He probably has a dozen more like it in his underwear drawer."

"I dunno, man... and your grand idea is to hand it off to some street kingpin for the forty-two grand?"

Norman shrugged. "Something like that. Could probably get even more."

Jake shook his head, his hopes suddenly a nightmare. "All right, man, look. My advice is you keep that shit to yourself. Don't let anyone know you got it. Sit on it for two or three months – till the heat on it dies down – pawn it for a hefty bag, *then* come back here and we can discuss how best to utilise the profit."

"Two or three months?" Norman was taken aback. "Aren't you sick of this damn region? I don't know if I can survive another month, let alone two or three."

"You're singing to the choir, my dude. But I'd rather get out of here in one piece than in a box, you feel me? Trust me on this," Jake pleaded. "Marc Stone isn't the kind of guy you want to risk jumping into bed with. You hear me, Norman?" "Yeah, yeah." He stashed the stolen watch back in his hoodie's pouch. The revelation hadn't gone at all the way he'd imagined it would. Jake was supposed to be singing and dancing and worshipping him for pulling off the heist of the century, celebrating their soonto-be return to Hoenn. Instead, he laid down a whole lot of street smarts that dampened Norman's spirits.

"Now, don't you go doing anything stupid," he warned.

"I won't."

"Have a lovely evening with your daughter, enjoy the wine and steak then head yourself right to bed, got it? But please, oh *please*, take a shower before you do all that." Norman sniffed his armpit. Did he really smell that bad? "Oh, and don't forget to bring back some of that Skrumpton Steaks for your boy." Jake winked. "Skarmory's definitely gonna appreciate a bite, too."

"You got it, man."

"Remember, nothing stupid."

"Of course."

Sorry, Jake, if this ends up being stupid.

Norman tugged his hood over his eyes and approached the pawn shop with both hands in his pockets. If anyone looked, he was just another bum wandering the streets. He moseyed past pedestrians without notice but caught the eyes of two spotty teenagers smoking cigarettes outside the storefront, cigarettes they probably got from people like him.

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Neither looked older than May, and the taller junkie wore the same league cap Ash had when he first appeared at the Petalburg Gym, only slanted sideways with the League emblem etched out. The other boy bore an ugly scar across the right side of his jawline.

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Norman averted his eyes from it as they regarded him inquisitively, concerned he might be some nosey adult coming to rain on their parade. They reminded him how grateful he was May and Max never had to grow up in a city like this. Norman had more urgent matters to attend to than parenting this region's youth. He gave a slight nod to communicate his nonthreatening presence and they returned the gesture before resting their attention back on their cancer sticks.

Norman approached the clerk in the small, overstocked pawn shop. It hadn't been his intention to visit but the store just so happened to sit on one of the corners leading back to the hostel. Luckily for him, the shop was empty, too, no patrons to overhear his secretive inquiries. What would it hurt to get a rough idea how much he could expect for Marc Stone's snobby watch?

Turned out, it could hurt a lot.

"3,500 Pokédollars?!" he exclaimed, incredulous. "You've got to be kidding me! This is worth at least this entire store. It's an original. Look at it. And you're only offering me 3,500 Pokédollars?"

"Where did you get it?"

"From Marc –" Norman hushed his voice and restarted in a whisper. "From Marc Stone himself."

"From Marc Stone, eh?" The clerk raised a doubtful eyebrow. "Let me see." He brought out some sort of magnifying glass thingamajig from under his desk and scrutinised the gold watch at every perceivable angle. Norman could see the moment he recognised it was authentic when his brow went from creased intrigue to subtle surprise. "Well, I'll be. It *is* an original."

"What'd I tell ya?"

"We'll make it ₽5,000."

Now the man was just trolling him. "You're going to give me ₽5,000 for a luxury watch worth more than ₽50,000?" That offer wouldn't even begin to cover Skarmory's medical expenses.

"Look, if it's really Marc Stone's as you say, I'll be inheriting incredible risk taking it on. For that risk, I have to shave a little off the top."

"You shaved the whole damn top."

He shrugged. "Final offer."

Men like him took advantage of desperate people at their lowest. Norman really must've looked the part because the clerk took him for some junkie willing to accept anything to afford his next hit. "Thanks, but no thanks." He grabbed the watch off the counter and stuffed it back in his pocket.

"₽10,000. If you throw in that ring, too. I cannot do more than that." Norman stifled a laugh. He'd sell his soul before he sold his wedding ring. There was nothing left to negotiate but that didn't stop the man trying to rob him of his treasures. "Don't be so rash," he said. "Do the right thing. You try any pawn shop in Dytopiah and I can guarantee you will not get a better deal. My offer only stands as we are here right now. You come back two days later and I tell you ₽5,000 again," he said, as though he had no more control over the price than he did the weather. "Be a man. Do the right thing."

The 'right thing' being getting swindled by this goof? Right. The only value Norman took away from their exchange was that the watch was certainly the real deal and worth every penny he imagined it was. He walked out of the pawn shop ignoring the owner's desperate pleas, hid his face under his hood, clenched the watch firmly in his pocket and continued on his way to the hostel.

Twilight would soon fall upon Toxi City and Norman needed to prepare himself for dinner with May. Usually, he'd head off to their rendezvous point in whatever happened to be covering his back at the time. Considering the location tonight, and May having already agreed to fit the bill, the least he could do was attempt to look presentable so as not to embarrass her.

Norman splashed water on his face, sponged his underarms, tied his hair in a long ponytail, combed his beard, somewhat, and put on the dress shirt and black slacks he'd walked out of a thrift shop wearing three days ago, after no one picked up he hadn't paid for them. The pants were a little tight and short, showing more of his mismatched socks than he'd cared to reveal, but hopefully he'd hide them under the table before anyone noticed. He took one last look at the stranger in the cracked mirror then forced himself out the door.

Norman kept looking down at his socks and shoes on the way to the bus stop, half his mind prodding him to turn around and reassess his slapdash attire. She'd understand, right? May had always been reasonable. If he had a full wardrobe at his disposal –

"Hey buddy, got the time?"

Norman started at the unexpected voice so unexpectedly close to his ear. His musings had left room for the skinny kid to creep up right alongside him, though how he hadn't smelt him approaching remained a mystery. "Oh, you gave me a fright, son." He laughed sheepishly. "The time? Ah, I'm sorry, I don't think I have it on me." He patted his dress shirt and pants in faux search of a time-telling device. Then he noticed something peculiar about the boy. The ugly scar on his jawline. "Wait a minute, aren't you that kid from –"

A sudden force barged him from behind. Pain exploded in his back and propelled him forward off his feet. He raised his hands just in time to stop his face hurtling into the concrete. But a swift kick caught him in the ribcage, then another floored him. All too suddenly, a hail of angry feet descended upon him from every direction, stomping out any inclination to take on the overwhelming numbers. He curled himself into the foetal position, legs guarding his organs, forearms protecting his face.

Fast and furious feet flew at him all at once, too many to count, though the range in juvenile voices suggested at least three attackers: "Did you get it?", "Stay down, old man!", "You sure it's him?", "Hurry up and get it, bro!" One of the assailants rummaged through his

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pockets while his co-conspirators kept him busy shielding himself from their spate of merciless kicks. "Holy shit, I got it!" the mugger exclaimed as he tore his grubby hand out of Norman's back pocket and left a worrisome gulf in its place. "Come on, let's split!"

The swarm overshadowing him dispersed in a flurry of footsteps. No one but the cold, hard concrete left to hug. Norman raised his head delicately and peered over his forearms. A hurried trail of dirty sneakers scrambled round the corner. The will to give chase burned within him, but a jabbing pain reduced him to his knees the second he got up. He clutched his side and groaned at his failing body.

The scheming bastards probably made off with his bus fare. When Norman patted down all his pockets, however, he quickly realised he'd lost a lot worse than a few Pokédollars. Marc Stone's prized watch, Norman's golden ticket back to civilisation, his deepest hopes and sincerest desires, gone.

All gone.

Norman balled a fist and slammed it into the sidewalk, and the streets drank the blood seeping from his knuckles. "Fuck."



Chapter 5 – Secrets Over Steak

"I'm sorry, sir, I'm going to have to ask you to leave."

"Leave?" The indignation boiling in Norman's veins simmered before the hostess like a volcano on the brink of eruption. "I already told you, *ma'am*," he wrang every last drop of politeness from the word, "I have a reservation. If you just look up –"

"And I already told *you*, sir, there're no reservations this evening under that name." Now she was suggesting he didn't know his own surname? Either that, or his own daughter duped him into making the trip just so he could be embarrassed and bounced at the door. The incorrigible hostess, in her fancy-pants uniform, evaded eye contact as though merely looking at him might get dirt on her spectacles. She showed him no more amiability than a cockroach that had wandered into the wrong part of the kitchen scavenging for food and, if he hadn't stood six feet tall, she would've already flattened and smeared him under her callous heels. "Are you going to find your way out or will we need to get security involved?"

Norman had been beaten and trampled on all day; how much more could a few stern blows from some boneheaded security guards hurt? Hell, a growing part of him had been itching to lash out at something, anything, anyone who'd give him half a reason to. He rolled up his sleeves and declared, "I'm not going anywhere. Except inside this damn restaurant. My daughter's waiting for me and if anyone wants to try to stop me, Arceus help them."

Her scandalised eyebrows nearly touched her hairline. "Okay, that's it." She glanced over her shoulder and shouted, "Securi–"

"Dad?"

The hostess swivelled round as a sophisticated brunette popped up beside her. "You... you know this man?" she asked, her tone a lot more patient and surprise-riddled.

"Yeah," May confirmed. "He's my dad."

The hostess scanned through her guest list frantically. "Table 15. Says here, your reservation for two is under Maple."

"Maple?" Norman repeated, confused.

"That's right." May laughed sheepishly. "Sorry, Dad, forgot to mention that part."

"Right... Well, that's okay." He rolled his sleeves back down, a little relieved, a little disappointed. "Just glad I finally found you."

"Thank you, Miss," May said to the hostess. "I'll take it from here."

The snooty woman relented with a forced smile and stepped out of their way, then aimed a side-glare at Norman, annoyed at losing the chance to abuse her authority. He didn't bother concealing his smirk as he limped past her, disrupting the culture of opulence and suavity with his hand-me-downs and unpolished shoes. The small win injected a little swagger in his step, despite the lasting soreness in his limbs.

May Maple, eh? He supposed that made him Norman Maple? Her reason for inventing names eluded him but it was probably a wise decision. As she walked him to their table, he couldn't help notice how much his little girl had matured, not only in mind, but in fashion, too.

She sashayed across the restaurant in an elegant, taupe dress that hugged her snatched waist as layered brown locks grazed her notable derriere. The last time he'd seen her this dressed up was... well, never. His image of May centred around activewear and outdoorsy fittings suitable for trekking across a wide range of terrains. He'd have sooner mistaken her for a tomboy before a young woman. Sure, she'd dolled herself up for Contests on occasion, but all the dazzling pokémon performances often overshadowed the Coordinators directing traffic from the sidelines.

Well, here, tonight, all the lights appeared to shine on her, and her form-fitting attire, on her womanly curves, on a waist-to-hip ratio dangerously close to Caroline's in her prime.

Watching how the dress crinkled around her globular rear forced Norman to confront the reality his little girl wasn't so little anymore.

He slid his legs under the table cloth to great relief. Although he'd fully anticipated appearing underdressed, he hadn't felt it until he laid eyes on his glamorous daughter. Her eyes sparkled like sapphires across the table, eyeliner and bronzer transforming her visage into a glitzy beauty he wouldn't have recognised in a line up.

Hello, May Maple.

"Uh, Dad... you're staring."

He knew that. And he continued to stare for another seven seconds. "Who are you and what have you done with my teenage daughter?"

She laughed. It helped relieve some tension. "May... Maple?"

"Honey, you're freaking gorgeous."

She smiled. "So you don't think it's too much?"

"Too much? Are you kidding me? It's *way* too much. I mean, look at this place." He gazed all around them in awe at the diamond chandeliers and the shimmery décor and pristine cutlery. Back home, he'd attended many a Pokémon League Conference at places like this, but he never felt the way he did now, like he didn't belong. "Don't get me wrong, I'm ecstatic that you can afford that dress, and whatever we're about to scoff down now, and – wow – even the fact you can bring us out here is amazing enough. But how, May? How are you doing all this?"

Her smile withered at the edges. "Actually, Dad, that's partly the reason I wanted us to meet here tonight. I have something to tell you."

"Oh." Norman's face went blank. "Something like...? Good or bad?"

"Hmmm." She tipped her head left then right. "Bit of both, I guess. It's a 'good news, bad news' situation."

Ah, well, that would be a welcome deviation from the 'bad news, bad news' situation he'd soon be reporting. "Okay. Lay it on me."

May sucked in a huge breath and steadied her nerves, but all she could string together was, "Well, you see..." A server came to her rescue handing them a couple of menus. May was happy to suggest, "Maybe we should eat first?"

Norman's hunger for the 411 was trumped only by his hunger for actual food. "Good idea." He reached for his menu and grimaced as he overextended his arm. His daughter seemed to notice but made no acknowledgement besides an inquisitive micro expression.

"I'll have a Lavaridge Fire Whiskey on the rocks." Norman went straight for the hard stuff. The instant his daughter opened her mouth, he overrode her, "And she'll have an extra virgin Littleroot Cocktail."

She gave him a look of disbelief. "Really, Dad?"

"What? Sounds exactly like the kind of thing you'd love." As fancy-pants as the Skrumpton Steaks dressed itself up to be, it still inhabited Dytopiah, and he wouldn't put it past these fuckers to serve a girl her age alcohol. Granted, she could pass for an adult woman without a second glance in her current get-up.

"I'm surprised you didn't order me a small fruit juice," May said.

"Oh, should we do that instead?"

She gave an ironic smile. "I wasn't going to order wine you know."

"Just making sure." He smiled back.

The server stood by patiently, mild amusement on his face.

May thanked him after he completed taking their orders. She handed him her menu while Norman leaned back and allowed him to collect his off the table. The injured man smiled and nodded gratefully. A precarious silence sat between father and daughter once the distraction of making orders was off the table.

"So," May started, twiddling with her tassel earing, "You don't look so bad yourself tonight, Mr Suave."

"Ha. Ha. Ha, ha! That was a joke, right?"

"I'm serious. I like the whole salt and pepper thing you got going on." She stroked the imaginary beard on her chin. "Makes you look distinguished."

"Distinguished, right." Distinguished criminal maybe. Nah, he hadn't even been able to do that right. "Trust this region to give me my first grey hairs, huh?" At least he still had a full set on his head and sideburns to boot, all rich and raven.

"You should keep it," May said. "Bet you Mom's gonna love it, too."

"This hobo beard?" He pointed at it to ensure they were speaking of the same atrocity.

"A thousand Pokédollars says she'll love it." May dropped an elbow on the table and offered her hand to legitimise the wager.

He scoffed. "You're nuts if you think you know your mom better than I do. I've known her since she was round about your age."

May shrugged one shoulder, undeterred. "Are we on?"

"Oh, we're on." He sealed the handshake. They both beamed, imagining themselves winning the wager. Wow, 1,000 Pokédollars though? She must've been doing more than decent if she could afford to throw around amounts like that in their current climate. "So, I take it the pokémon battles are still going well?"

She retreated into her seat. "Well, they're going."

The server returned with their drinks and May sipped on her colourful cocktail immediately, desperate to acquire some form of liquid courage.

Norman shut his eyes and floated to heaven when the ice-cold whiskey burned the back of his throat. "That's it. Right there." He commended the liquor like it was an exceptional lover caressing him on the insides. "Oh yeah, baby. You always hit the spot."

May trashed his theatrics with a cross between a laugh and a snort. "You're literally so cringe, Dad."

"One day, you'll understand." He gazed deep into the smooth, loving, golden-brown soul inhabiting his whiskey glass. "When you're old enough, of course."

"Of course. I am old enough to enjoy this though." She took another sip of her cocktail but, this time, she mocked his exaggerated reaction with one of her own, moaning deep through her throat and dropping her voice a couple of octaves. "Mmm... yeah... so, so good... right there..."

Norman forgot where he was and who he was talking to. Unintended as it may have been, his daughter just gave him a terrifying glimpse at how seductive she could be, at what some undeserving runt would be privy to in the bedroom. He shifted uncomfortably in his seat and swallowed a harsh swig of liquor. "Okay, you're *never* doing that again."

"Sorry." May scratched the back of her head awkwardly. "Anyway," she quickly moved on, "how have you been? How's Toxi City treating you? Did you finally pull off that 'something big' you had in the pipelines?"

"Heh." If he didn't laugh, he'd cry. "You know what they say about life."

"When it throws you lemons –"

"It can be a bitch." He downed the last of his whiskey then slammed the glass a little harder on the table than he'd intended. "Waiter!" He snapped his fingers in the air, ignoring all the judgemental scowls from 'civilised' diners. "Another, please!" May sighed a desolate sigh. "I can tell you're a little beat up. I'm sorry things have been rough for you."

"Rough? Rough is buffalo wings when you ordered rump steak. This shit..." He shook his head, fed up. "This shit we're in – and have to deal with on a daily basis – is complete and unadulterated torture."

May looked down in her glass and agreed with a subtle, "Yeah..."

The server brought Norman his second glass and he took another swig before it touched the table. "Anyway. We may be down but we're never out. We never give up. That's not the... Maple way." He winked.

She gave a weak, if not hopeful, smile.

The food finally arrived. While May dallied about with a knife and fork, Norman grabbed his massive, gourmet burger in both hands and chomped a Snorlax-sized chunk out the middle, barbeque sauce and pickles drooping onto his beard. "Oh, God, yes!" he growled with a mouthful, eyes glazed over as his taste buds experienced orgasm. May quietly enjoyed her shrimp parmesan while he mowed through his and let the whole restaurant know with loud, obscene grunts and groans of pleasure.

May became so used to his noisy feasting when she hadn't heard a peep from him in over a minute, she needed to check he was still alive. "You done?" she asked, fighting down giggles as he lounged back on his chair like a bloated Munchlax.

"Done?" He belched. "Honey, I'm only getting started. Waiter!" He ordered their famous rump steak and a third whiskey.

"Have as much as you like, Dad." May smiled, happy to see him happy.

With the crippling hunger out of his way, Norman asked himself the same questions he'd asked when they first sat down. "You still haven't told me how you can afford all this."

She paused chewing whatever was in her mouth when the sombreness of his statement hit her. It dawned on May, she couldn't run away from the question forever. She gulped down the ball in her cheek and laid her knife and fork to rest. "Dad, I… I lied to you."

"You what?" He sat up abruptly.

"I haven't been doing great at pokémon battles. Actually, I've kind of sucked at them lately." She couldn't look him in the eye when she admitted it. "It's just not the same in this region. All the Trainers here are ruthless, don't give a crap about your pokémon – they barely give a crap about their own. It's all about getting the 'win, win, win' at any cost, no matter how much damage gets dealt. Skitty is all I have left and..." Pain flashed across her features in remembrance her other pokémon. "It isn't fair for me to put her through all that. It's not her fault we're stuck on this island and she shouldn't have to carry the hopes of our survival square on her little shoulders."

Norman listened patiently as a rabble of questions congregated in his head. "You've always been compassionate, May. I don't think that's a weakness but you're probably underestimating how tough your Skitty can be."

"No, Dad," she cut him off sternly, "You haven't been there. You don't know how hard it's been on her. On both of us."

"Well..." That was true. And hearing the hurt in her passionate retort made him feel guilty about it all over again. In all his fatherly wisdom, he had thought he'd be more useful toiling away in Toxi City, neglecting his little girl when she'd needed him most. And for what? A fraction of the Pokédollars she'd made on her own and a stolen watch he couldn't hang on to? "I'm sorry, honey. I should've been there to –"

"No. It's okay. You can't hold my hand forever. And anyway, your plan to split up to better raise the funds for Skarmory's surgery was a good one. I agreed with it then, and still do now."

"You do?" That made one of them.

"It hasn't been perfect, obviously," May said, "but I've... stumbled upon a method to make the kind of money we'll need to fix up Skarmory and get out of here for good. And I almost have all of it."

Norman couldn't trust his ears, but couldn't deny all the evidence laid bare before his eyes either. "You have all of it? All \$\vert{42,000}?" he whispered.

"Almost." She took a smug sip of her cocktail. "That's the good news."

"And the bad?"

"Well..." Her demeanour shifted from upright and boastful to uncertain and bashful. She traced the rim of her cocktail glass with a finger and spoke softly. "To get the money... I've sort of had to... to..."

God no... "You're not turning tricks, are you?" he blurted.

May recoiled, perplexed. "What?"

"I mean, Jake, he just says the darndest things sometimes." Norman gave an uneasy laugh. "He thinks you might be turning tricks – can you believe that guy?"

May was not amused despite Norman attempting to lighten his accusation. "Does Jake think that?" she asked, point-blank. "Or do you think that, Dad?"

"Me? What?" He hid behind a huge swig of whiskey. "Well... I mean... if we're being honest... I don't know what to think." He shrugged. "You've been coy about where all this money is coming from and –"

"And so you think I'm sleeping around with random strangers for money? You think your own teenage daughter's a whore?"

"Me? Nooo!" he squealed. Another swig. "It's that damn Jake, he -"

"Yeah whatever, Dad. I can't believe you think I'd swoop that low."

He sighed. Of course he didn't really think that. It was this damn whiskey, and yeah, maybe Jake had gotten in his head a little. This was May, the girl he'd reared and raised himself since diapers. Of course she wasn't up to any tomfoolery. "Let's just forget I said that, all right? It was a really bad joke. You know I've only ever thought the world of you, May, since the day you were born."

Her cold and rigid expression repelled his would-be apology, but somewhere deep down beneath the stubbornness, she knew him to be sincere. "Fine."

Norman was thankful for her reply, even if she'd pushed it through gritted teeth. He took the olive branch. His curiosity concerning her recent fundraising activities would have to wait, lest he ruffled her feathers even more. Truth was he wasn't any more eager to divulge all the criminal antics he'd engaged in to make a buck either. She still believed he made most his profit off buying boxes of cigarettes and selling them loose at a premium. But half the stuff he sold he'd stolen from bodegas or pickpocketed off the streets. She didn't need to know that. Not yet.

He lightened the mood by recanting a recent incident in which he'd witnessed a vagrant chasing down a stray Poochyena that had stolen a sub sandwich he'd stolen minutes prior. She conceded a small snicker, not quite the rambunctious laugh signing off on her forgiveness, but a little crack in the way to her good books.

On the topic of amusing stories, he took them back to a time they were both lighter, both happy, both laughing amongst family and friends, like the time Max's hair stood on end for nearly twelve hours after he willingly took a Lighting Bolt attack head-on. Reliving the moment inspired other hallmark memories, like the time Caroline chased Skitty all around the house after discovering she'd been the culprit stealing all her freshly baked muffins, or the time May prematurely blew up a volcano for a science project reconstructing Cinnabar Island, or the time Norman lost a Gym Battle because his Slakoth emerged fast asleep from its Poké Ball and refused to wake up the entire fight. One story spiralled into another till they lost track of time in a whirlwind of mirth and reminiscence. This was what their trip should've been, Norman thought, when they got on that plane. Good old-fashioned father-daughter bonding time. It took them getting blown off course and stranded on a remote region to realise they hadn't needed an extravagant getaway to do all this; just a little time away from their own lives, and a little effort to remember family was everything.

"Why don't we do this anymore?" May stole the words right out of his mouth.

"I don't know," Norman said, regret heavy in his tone of voice. "But once we get back home, Daddy's going to be laying down a whole new set of rules!"

"Calling yourself 'Daddy' when you get all hyped isn't as cool as you think it is, you know?" She stuck her tongue out at him.

"You don't know what you're talking about, young lady. I'm totally hip." He hiccupped.

"And totally tipsy."

"And you'll be totally grounded in a second if you don't stop."

May laughed and threw her hands up. "Okay, okay. Er, you were saying something about new rules?"

"Ah, yes." He raised his whiskey glass as if to thank her for reminding him. "When we get back home, there'll be no more eating dinner in front of those life-sucking gadgets for you and your brother."

"Oh, come on! You know dinner's the one time I get to catch up on -"

"Bleh!" He swept aside her rebuttal with a wave of his hand. "I don't want to hear it. This family –" He hiccupped. "Is going to learn to be a family again."

"Oh, all riiiight..." She pretended to roll her eyes.

"I think that's deserving of a toast." He raised his glass. When May clinked hers against his, neither of them expected to see a third touch theirs both.

"My apologies," said a tall, strapping gentleman clad in a scarf and long coat. It looked like he'd spent hours in the mirror ensuring not a single hair lay out of place. "I'll only be a minute. I don't mean to interrupt your lovely dining experience but I just *had* to come over and say: your daughter is the most beautiful specimen I've ever had the pleasure of laying eyes on – not only tonight, but on every occasion I've frequented this restaurant."

May was taken aback, her face frozen save for her stunned eyes shifting left and right between the two men, awaiting Norman's inevitable explosion.

"If I may," said the handsome stranger, "I'd like to put everything you order tonight on my tab."

"What? No," May said. "You really don't have to -"

"I insist. Consider it a token of my appreciation. My way of saying thanks for sharing your beauty, for lighting up this restaurant tonight."

Norman grunted, unimpressed. "You know she's only a teenager, right?" He looked to be at least in his mid-twenties.

The man did a double-take, as if her age might suddenly appear across her chest if he studied her long enough. Uncertain, he took Norman's assertion at face value. "Even so, my contribution to your dining experience remains inta-"

"Oh, get out of here, ya nonce," Norman chirped out the side of his mouth. "Before I really give you something to lay eyes on." He waved around a clenched fist.

"Daddy!" May hissed. She apologised for Norman's apparent 'rudeness' while he rolled his eyes, then sent the gentleman away with genuine thanks. "Was that really necessary? He was only trying to be nice." "Nice." Norman chuckled and emptied his fourth glass. "No such thing as 'nice' when it comes to men."

"That's just not true. You're so paranoid."

He laughed. "Oh, sweet innocent daughter of mine, you have a lot to learn about our species. Good thing dating isn't on the cards for you for another couple of years."

May cleared her throat and suddenly hid her face behind the dessert menu. "Uh, so how does white chocolate and raspberry pudding sound?"

Norman shrugged. "I still haven't developed a sweet tooth but since that jerkoff is paying for everything, would be a waste not to. Oh, remind me to order something to go for Jake and Skarmory, too."

Norman lost count of how many spoons of pudding he'd had before the world around him slowed down. Chatter and clinking cutlery faded in the distance. A cloud of liquor filled his nostrils and every sudden move of his head smeared bright colours into blurs. He couldn't even taste the pudding anymore, and yet his slothful hand kept scooping up more like a mechanical arm malfunctioning in an infinite loop. His eyes must've been malfunctioning, too, because May transformed right before him, from his pretty teenage daughter to a full-fledged woman bearing luscious lips and large, appetising breasts. Suddenly, in his drunken clarity, he noticed just how low cut her low-cut dress was, squeezing her mounds together and jutting her massive cleavage over the table. His dick must've been malfunctioning, too, because... well, at least no one could see it under the table. He envisioned turning a heaped spoon away from his lips and towards her cleavage... pouring warm pudding down her big, exposed bosom and then –

"Dad?" Her voice snapped him back to reality. "You're getting it all over your shirt."

"I'm wha...?" he said dumbly, before looking down and seeing streaks of dessert muddying his formal shirt. "Ugh, shit!" He grabbed a bunch of napkins and patted the mess drunkenly. "Okay, I think you've officially had enough." May hopped out of her seat to help.

"I... think you're officially right." Norman laughed absent-mindedly. Had he really just been fantasising about...? As May wiped the pudding off his shirt, his drunken eyes leered down his daughter's dress, mesmerised by the big, doughy masses jiggling in their confines. She smelt incredible, too, a sweet exotic fragrance oozing from her neckline. He felt his boozy face leaning towards the scent like a cat lured in by catnip, but abruptly snapped his head back. *What the fuck am I doing?* "Uh, thank you, May." He ripped his gaze from temptation and shooed her away. "I'm all good now."

"You sure?"

"Yeah, yeah, I'm good. Maybe, just order me a glass of water." And something strong enough to erase the last thirty seconds of his memory.

Norman regretted knocking back those whiskeys as quickly as he had. He did start feeling a little more like himself after a few glasses of water and a self-imposed timeout. It only just occurred to him this was the first time he'd consumed alcohol in front of one of his children, and almost certainly the last.

"Feeling better now?" May asked sweetly.

He huffed. "I'm a terrible father, aren't I?"

"Don't say silly stuff like that. It doesn't help anyone."

"That's the thing – I don't feel like I've helped you at all, May. The only reason we're here is all you. I mean, jeez, you've nearly hit our target all on your own." She tried to interject but he bulldozed over her niceties. "I'm serious. I want to do better. I want to start helping, start chipping in more. We tried my way but now I'm leaving it up to you. Whatever I can do to help, you just let me know, and it's done. Whatever it is. I promise I won't let you down. I owe you that much at the very least." She looked as though she wanted to argue, but settled with a gentle sigh. "Okay, Dad. I'll let you know."

"Promise?"

"Promise." She stroked his hand reassuringly over the table. "For now, all you have to do is sit tight, not get into any trouble and let me work my magic. If all goes to plan, we could be out of here in two weeks!"

He nodded earnestly. Although, sitting tight had never been his strong suit. And lately, he wasn't all that great at staying out of trouble either. "I don't suppose you're prepared to tell me what this 'magic' entails?"

May frowned and shook her head. "Sorry. Coming into this, I thought I was. But it'll be less complicated and easier to explain once everything is said and done."

Why couldn't she just tell him? Norman knew what it wasn't, but he really wanted to know what it was. Unfortunately, his stupid mouth had ruined whatever goodwill he might've had in pressing for details. All he could do now was play by her rules.

They shared a warm hug outside the restaurant. He kissed her forehead. "I love you, May."

"Love you, too, Daddy. And hey, I want you to have this." She fished a wad of banknotes from her purse and shoved them at his chest. "I was going to use this to cover dinner tonight but since that wasn't necessary, I want you to have it."

He shook his head, no. "I can't take that. What kind of pathetic father would I be? I should be taking care of *you*. It's bad enough I -"

"Dad, please. Just take it. We've been through this already."

Norman reluctantly pocketed the cash. "Thank you."

"Welcome." She beamed. "Want me to call a cab for you?"

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"Now *that* I can definitely do for myself. I ain't that tipsy, alright?" He ruffled her hair. "Get out of here, kiddo." May ordered a ride and a sleek, midnight-blue sedan soon arrived at the front of the restaurant to pick her up. She hopped into the back and they took off.

Seconds later, Norman waved down a taxi and bustled into the backseat. The driver looked back and asked, "Where to, buddy?"

"See that dark blue car up ahead that just took a right turn?"

"Yeah?"

"Follow it."



Chapter 6 - Bushes And Ambushes

May froze when something prickled the back of her neck, an ethereal sensation rousing the little hairs on her nape. She turned her head and looked over her shoulder from the corner of her eye. Not even May knew what she expected to see, a pair of prowling eyes perhaps, but the woods behind her lay silent and still, save for the shrubbery swaying ever so subtly in the wind. There was not a soul on the dirt path winding back from her feet, human, pokémon or otherwise. Just her and her imagination that may or may not have been inventing sounds. She pressed onwards.

Dinner with her dad last night was a lot more fun than she'd anticipated, though she couldn't be certain whether it was his company or the fact she got to socialise with another human being in a comfortable setting. Last night also gave her the excuse she'd been looking for to bust out her recently acquired taupe dress and tan heels. She'd noticed more than a few eyes stalking her in the restaurant; that guy who came up to their table was the only one brave enough to admit it, in front of her overprotective father no less! If she didn't already have a boyfriend, May might've respected him enough to give him a chance. Nevertheless, his interruption was flattering for what it was, and reminiscing about the good old times with her dad left a huge smile on her face that still hadn't shrunk away.

Sure, she shouldered some guilt for not revealing how she'd raised so much money in the space of two months, but she decided the ends would justify the means, and he'd find it easier to forgive her if she spilt the tea mid-flight on their way back to Hoenn.

Leaves rustled.

She gasped, whipped around. Still nothing there. Probably Nidoran cavorting in the bushes? She smiled at the thought and turned her face forward again, only to get the biggest fright of her life. May screamed and jumped back before she took a second to process it was only a young boy stood in front of her. He screamed at her screaming, her panic contagious.

"I'm sorry," May panted, clutching her heart, feeling rather silly about her reaction. "I didn't mean to... hey, wait, don't I know you?" There was something familiar about his turquoise hoodie.

His eyes lit up with recognition, too. "Oh yeah! You're that girl that –" He stopped, embarrassed to complete the sentence. "It's me, Bruce!"

"Bruce, Bruce..." She tapped her chin trying to find his rat-like face in her memory banks and, when she did, she lost any enthusiasm she'd had of bumping into him again. "Oh yeah, Bruce. You're the little pervert that broke my rules."

He rubbed the back of his head and chuckled awkwardly. "Guilty."

May huffed and brushed past him. "I don't have time for losers like you."

"Wait, I'm sorry, okay? And I mean it this time."

To his credit, he sounded a lot more sincere and a lot less big-headed than the first time they'd met. That encounter ended with May strutting away triumphantly with all his money and Bruce kneeling in the dirt on the brink of tears. Well, wouldn't you know, all the little bully needed was someone to stand up to him and put him in his place. Granted, she hadn't exactly been a beacon of best behaviour during their heated squabble either. "Don't worry about it," May said, not one to hold grudges. "You live and you learn." And she knew for a fact he'd learned his lesson well. "Off you go."

"Are you still... doing that stuff you do?"

That 'stuff she did' being partial stripping for Pokédollars? "Yeah? What about it?"

"Oh, nothing. It's just..." He scraped his shoe in the dirt shyly. "I was kind of hoping you'd let me see them again. For a fee of course!"

"No way." The sound of him slapping her breast while she stood there vulnerable and exposed still haunted her to this day. "You had your chance and you blew it."

"Come on, please?? I know what I did was really, *really* dumb and wrong. I swear it won't happen again. Doesn't everyone deserve a second chance?"

May wasn't so sure about that. "Everyone?"

"I won't do anything bad. Promise!" He dropped to his knees and pleaded with his hands together. "Pretty please? Look, I'll even pay you double whatever you ask." He pulled out messy bundles of cash from both pockets and pushed them towards her like a sacrificial offering. "See, here. And you can have it all upfront this time! Easy money. What've you got to lose?"

May regarded the cash and considered his proposal. Not because she needed *his* money, but because it genuinely seemed like he had changed. What good would continuingly treating him like a prick do? If anything, it would send the message: changing your ways doesn't matter because past mistakes, no matter how small, will follow you for the rest of your life. Bruce was young and dumb but had infinite potential on his side. She had helped him mature once and this could be an extension of that.

"Okay."

"Okay?" he asked, tentatively optimistic.

"Okay," she reaffirmed. "One more chance. And you have to pay upfront. And I'm warning you, any funny business this time and –"

"None!" he pledged with a hand on his heart.

May straightened and counted his Pokédollar notes till she slotted ₽400 into her waist pack. "Great. Now let's find a quiet place off the footpath to –"

"How about over there?" Bruce pointed at a clearing in the direction he'd come from.

May surveyed the area from afar with a hand over her brow. Nothing peculiar about the site raised alarm bells. In fact, it was exactly the kind of closed-off, secluded, off-themain-path locale she would've picked out if he hadn't beaten her to it. "Perfect. Let's go."

•••

The second she began turning her head, Norman snuck his face behind the tree and held his breath. He kept himself upright and rigid, back against the bark, completely and utterly still, down to minimising the rising and falling of his beating chest. No footsteps approaching. She must not have seen him.

Norman had been half-drunk when he stalked his teenage daughter back to her residence after dinner last night. He almost instantly regretted ordering his cab driver to follow May, certain he'd uncover nothing but a mundane routine proving him to be the pathetic and paranoid father he'd become. But when May stepped out of the vehicle and waltzed into the Kallaghar Inn, all the waning suspicions he'd had suddenly jumped and waved red flags in his face.

Just how long had she been staying in a place like that? Granted, if he'd started coining it big, moving on from the grimy and overpopulated hostel would've been his first order of business, too. He didn't blame her for upgrading from the rundown Pokémon Centre he'd left her in, but why had she failed to mention it a single time in all their rendezvous? Norman had changed his mind about having the cab drive him back to Toxi City; instead, he camped outside behind a dumpster on the opposite street.

This morning, he woke up groggy nursing a throbbing hangover but, nonetheless, in time to catch sight of his daughter departing the inn. She wore a familiar red top and provocative bike shorts, looked much more like the May he knew than the May he'd met last night. But why would she put on her training gear if she'd admitted to quitting pokémon battles altogether? Where would she be going this time of day? He muttered to himself under his breath, "Just what are you up to, sweet daughter of mine?" May ventured out of town and into the wilderness of Route 304, none the wiser to her ninja dad tracking her every step of the way.

He might've got caught if that young Trainer's surprise appearance hadn't staved her off his trail. Eavesdropping from round a tree, Norman only caught snippets of their conversation, learning little more than Bruce's name and that he and May crossed paths before today. Had they battled in the past?

Norman peaked an eyeball round the tree. Bruce was on his knees begging for something but May kept her arms crossed, not buying whatever he was selling. Norman ducked behind the tree whenever either of them made a sudden movement. At some point, May must've yielded, because he poked his head out from hiding and the youngsters were walking side by side in the same direction. Norman gave the kids a ten-second head start then crept out of his hiding spot and followed them in a stealthy crouch.

Concerned-father-turned-prowling-ninja, Norman crawled to a nifty spot amidst the tall bushes encircling the spacious clearing. Although he'd suffered the loss of his entire pokémon team, the Trainer inside him recognised an apt battle field when he saw one. The surface was mostly level, spacious enough to contain larger-than-average pokémon, and nestled a good distance away from potentially busy footpaths.

First his forehead, then his prying eyes, gradually emerged over the top of the large bush providing cover. About 15 yards ahead, May and Bruce stood on opposite ends of the clearing, taking up the positions of sparring Trainers, but what happened next was something he'd never seen in over three decades of pokémon battling.

Neither Trainer reached for a Poké Ball. Instead, May asked her would-be opponent a simple question. "Ready?" *Ready for what*? Bruce didn't share in Norman's confusion. He nodded rather enthusiastically and signalled two thumbs-ups at May. Even more perplexed, Norman's eyes darted back to his daughter, who for some reason initiated a countdown from five seconds. Whatever the heck was going on here, Norman had the distinct feeling he'd find out once she got down to zero.

He wasn't wrong.

But oh boy, did he wish he was.

With no rhyme, reason or warning, May lifted her shirt faster than Norman could've shut his eyes even if he'd known what was coming. Apparently, his naturally busty daughter was not a fan of the brassiere. In the non-blink of an eye, Norman was confronted with the lewd sight of his child's big, bare, prodigious tits flopping right out of her teeny top. He gasped and swallowed the sound immediately, remembering he was undercover.

What the fuck?! May! What are you doing???

He and Caroline hadn't raised her to be so... so... ugh! *Just you wait till your mother gets a load of this, young lady!* Could he even say 'lady'? This repugnant display was much more fitting of a tart! The bush concealing Norman trembled with rage. He didn't raise her like this, damnit! *Why, May? Just... why?*

A tear rolled down his cheek. Shocked, he thumbed it away. He'd never felt so powerless. So at a loss. He'd failed her as a father and, by every meaningful metric of fatherhood, failed her in the worst way imaginable. His teenage daughter had to resort to stripping to get by... Fucking hell. Nightmares didn't get any more terrifying than that. Did he even have a right to call himself a father anymore?

All the anger and vitriol boiling in his veins, he realised, was borne of him for him. This image of his little girl standing topless in an open field was merely a reflection of his own failings. Perhaps, deep down, it was the only thing holding him back from springing out of the bushes and giving both kids a good hiding. Like that would fix anything. He and May would very soon be having a serious talk however. Once he figured out what he wanted to say and how he wanted to say it. Maybe he should've stayed put like she'd suggested after all. Some secrets were better off secrets. Now he couldn't unknow what he knew... unsee what he was seeing, his daughter squishing her bare tits together with her forearms. They protruded even further under the compression, and she bounced her chest so her freed nipples flailed on the ends of wobbly breast-meat. Fuck... when had they gotten so enormous?

Stop it. He scolded himself. Stop getting side-tracked.

What did her bra size matter in any of this? She was a growing adolescent girl; of course they'd get bigger. Although, the extent of their growth amazed him all the same. It was the first time he'd seen them sans shirt and bra since she was a young girl. In a weird, unexpected way, seeing her development laid bare reminded him just how much of her life he'd missed, how distant they'd become with age. Last night they'd made a pact of sorts to reconnect, but Norman very much doubted this was what she had in mind.

He shrunk into the bushes a little, deciding he *didn't* want his presence known after all. Finally, she'd uncovered the big secrets he'd been so desperate to uncover. May had vehemently insisted she wasn't sleeping around with boys and, judging by the distance she maintained from her young audience, Norman was inclined to believe her. He'd take any small mercy and silver lining. Wow though, how many boys had she flashed to attain her current lifestyle?

For his own mental health, he was probably better off not knowing the number.

The way she shimmied and jiggled those bountiful beauties side to side would indicate she'd garnered quite a bit of practice. Dare he say, his little girl had kind of... gotten good at it? Good enough to pull him out of his self-loathing and appreciate the front row ticket to her peep show. The best seat in the house, however, went to young Bruce, mere metres away from her eyepopping, mouth-watering, shaking and quaking money-makers. For all the wisdom and maturity that came with age, Norman wore the same gormless expression as the young boy, bore the same weakness for a nice set of perky tits.

And apparently, it mattered naught who they were attached to.

Norman couldn't pull his eyes off his daughter's rack and this time not an ounce of liquor drove his perversion. A damning tightness gripped his underwear. He thought losing that watch yesterday was his lowest moment but this might've trumped that. When May dropped her shirt like a velvet curtain closing the show, a tinge of dismay struck a part of him, his lower half perhaps.

"Wow! Amazing," Bruce applauded her. "Again?"

"Do you have -"

The boy raised a fistful of hard cash to answer her half-completed question.

"All right then." She reached for the bottom of her shirt when he stopped her.

"Wait, can you do it over there this time?" He pointed in the vicinity behind him. "The sun is kind of in my face here," he said, shielding his eyes from the glare. May took no exception to his request. They swapped positions in the clearing, Bruce directing her where to stand with gesticulating arms. "Yeah, right there – oh wait, a little to the left – yeah, right in front of that big ass tree – that's it. Perfect!"

The back of her foot bumped into the bottom of the tree and May took a quick glance behind her to get her bearings right. "Ready?"

Somewhere huddled in leaves and sticks, her father gave an absent-minded nod.

. . .

Here we go again. May exhaled then started the countdown. "Five... four... three..." She clenched her shirt from the bottom. "Two... one..."

Aaaand lift off!

She pulled her top up as high as her shoulders, never anticipating the two arms fly out from either side of the tree behind her. Rough hands snapped around her wrists like vice grips. Panic-stricken, she tried to wriggle loose, looked left and right in deep confusion, then a questioning glance at Bruce in front of her. His mouth hung open, fully agape. He shared in her shock and confusion... for two seconds at most. Then his mouth fell shut and twisted into a conniving grin.

"Gotcha."

Hideous laughter grated her ears as the two boys seizing her wrists crept out of the bushes and flanked her closely. They were tall and bulky and smelt like ham. She wouldn't have been able to fight off one of them, no chance at all against two. A freaking setup. She should've known! Freaking Bruce, the coward brought along his friends from the pigsty to settle his scores for him. She made to lunge at that stupid smirk on his face but his cronies held her back effortlessly.

"You're so dead. You're so fucking dead," she spat.

"Whoa. Language?" he said, standing bravely ten feet away.

"Are you that scared of me, huh? Had to bring your thick-headed goons to fight your battles for you?" May scowled at the bullies restraining her. "And you two, you oughtta be ashamed of yourselves! Ganging up on a girl one-fifth your size." She tried and failed to tug her right arm free. "Real tough guys, you are."

The imbeciles grunted nonsensically.

"On the contrary," said a new voice beyond her scope of vision. "The only person pretending to be tough here, is you." Another boy approached from behind Bruce, wearing a bigger version of his turquoise hoodie. He sauntered over casually with one hand in his pouch and the other flipping a pocketknife, two more boys marching alongside him. Somehow, his long face looked even more Rattata-like than Bruce's, and the ugliness was too coincidental not to be genetic. "We'll see how long you last with that attitude."

"Yeah," said the boy on his right, while the boy on his left laughed.

"So, this is her, huh?" Big Bruce said to Little Bruce, who nodded confirmation. "I expected someone a little more... I dunno, tougher?"

"Watch out, big bro. She's sneakier than she looks."

"Is that right?" Big Bruce scraped the flat of his blade against his jaw while he sized her up head-to-toe. "Well, she's a looker, feisty too – I'll give her that. But you know what I think, lil' bro?"

"What?"

Big Bruce went from calm to sudden rage. "You're a wimp for letting a little Butterfree like this push you around and take all your money!" he spat in the youngster's face.

"But, I –"

"Shut up!" May jumped, even though his fury wasn't directed at her. "You're never gonna man up if you keep crying to me about every little problem!"

Little Bruce looked down to hide his embarrassment. "I... you're right."

"I know I am," Big Bruce said, calm again. "Now sit back and take notes. You might just learn how to tame a fiery little kitty that thinks she's a lioness." He started towards her, casually flipping his pocketknife in and out.

May gulped as the sun hit the blade with a sinister glint. She thought Little Bruce was a menace but, after witnessing how swiftly his big brother humbled him, her apprehension grew threefold. "Hey now, if this is about the money from the other day, you can have it back," she tried through a nervous laugh. "I was only trying to teach him a lesson."

"Ah. A lesson. How very nice of you to let us have *our* money back." He came toe-totoe with her, matching her height to the inch. Fear rendered her motionless. She wouldn't have dreamt of striking him, even if both her hands came free. His dead eyes bore into her soul. "Where is it?" "Uh... where is... is...?" Her voice was shaky. She looked everywhere but his eyes, partly out of fear, partly because he might've taken offence to it. "Where's what?"

"Our money."

"Oh, right! It's in my m-m-my fanny pack. You can go ahead and g-get it." She pushed the pouch forward with her hip.

His hard stare carried a silent threat, a warning that if she lied things could get even worse for her. Big Bruce unzipped the yellow waist pack and retrieved a square piece of paper. This didn't look like his money. Furrowing his brow, he unfolded the paper and read the first line of her itemised list. "Five second boob flash. 200 Pokédollars." He roamed his eyes up and down between her nervous face and the pricelist. "Are you serious? This is daylight robbery."

Well, enough people willingly paid those sums for her services, including his own little brother, but she wasn't keen on standing there arguing the merits of the free market with this psycho. "Wro-wrong zip," she stammered. "Try the other one."

The second he unzipped the compartment, stacks of banded Pokédollars stared up at him. "Hm." He unfastened the fanny pack from her waist and flung it across the clearing with violent disregard. "Check that it's all there." One of his goons ran and picked up her discarded article. While he rummaged through the money, Big Bruce continued sifting through her pricelist. A snide smirk touched his lips when he read the big, bold words she'd scribbled at the bottom and underlined *three* times. "*NO TOUCHING*."

He gave her a questioning look as if he expected her to justify it.

She didn't. It was self-explanatory. No matter what she said, he'd just brush her off anyway. *Please, just take your money and leave me alone...*

"Not cool," Big Bruce said, *not* leaving her alone. "You probably think I'm some evil douchebag." *Correct.* "That I just wake up every morning asking myself, 'hm, whose miserable

life am I going to ruin today?" *Correct again.* "But I'm not the one running around the woods ruining our youth's innocence, am I?"

Well, she hadn't shown anybody anything they hadn't asked to see.

"And if that's not bad enough," he continued, "you outright ransack their pockets, don't you? You prey on the young, on the naïve, on the weak. And if they don't play by your rules –" He shook the paper angrily at her face. "*Your* rules – conveniently designed to exploit the shit out of them – then you shake them down for everything they got, don't you? Don't you?!" he screamed in her ear.

May whimpered as his sudden outburst blew her bangs. She sobbed, too distraught to formulate a coherent response.

"What the fuck?" said the goon going through her fanny pack.

"Is she short?" Big Bruce asked.

"Short?" He laughed. "This bitch is fucking loaded! There's easily forty grand in here, yo. The fuck, did she rob a bank or some shit?"

"Not a bank," said Big Bruce. "Not a bank. Just stupid, little horny kids like my dumbass brother. Well..." He flipped open his pocketknife. "I hope you enjoyed taking their money." Ran the tip gently down her cheek as she shivered. "Oh, this doesn't count as touching, does it? I mean, I'm not using my hands at all." He slid the blade across her jawline. "Such soft, perfect skin..." he said in a creepy whisper. "I can see why all the boys fall for your charm. Mmm, yes." The tip of his knife trailed down her throat as an anxious bulge plunged down her larynx. Petrified, she kept as still as possible, lest any sudden move incited a cut. "And since you love showing these off so much..." He dragged the sharp blade down her top's cleavage. "I don't even know why you bother with shirts."

He sliced the fabric down her chest while the others steadied her wriggling, stuck his fingers through the incision and then tore the shirt wide open. Her magnificent tits burst forth in all their perky splendour, drawing a chorus of gasps and bulging eyeballs. Little Bruce

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poked his head round his brother's waist to have another peek, two more heads peered over Big Bruce's shoulders, and the goons restraining her goggled from above. Six red-blooded males breathing down your bare chest was enough to make any girl shrivel inside.

"Seriously," May said. "Just take the money. P-please. I'll let you have ₽10,000."

Big Bruce scoffed. "I think we're beyond just dollars aren't we, boys?"

"Oh yeah!" they grunted in union. "Way beyond that," another added hungrily.

Big Bruce took his pocketknife and thrusted it towards her face. She screwed her eyes shut and yelped as the blade narrowly swooshed past her cheek and pierced the tree behind her. He grinned sadistically, feeding off her distress. "How about a little kiss?" His lips approached hers and she turned her head to the side, approached again and she turned to the other side. He smirked with amusement. If not her lips then he'd settle for her cold, sullen cheek, scraping his long, slimy tongue up the side of her face. "Delish. How much do I owe you for that one?" he mocked.

The others chortled. "Hey, can we have a taste, too?" one of them begged.

"Now, now. Wait your turn." Big Bruce disgusted her. And yet, his sadistic, unpredictable nature was the only thing keeping his pack of predatory hounds from descending upon her all at once. "I'm not done getting my money's worth from this stripping slut. Now, let's see here. What's on the menu? Hmmm." He pretended to skim through her pricelist again. "Ah, you know what? What I want –" He crushed her list of offerings in a callous fist. "Ain't on the fucking menu."

Big Bruce tossed the crumpled paper aside, making litter out of her 'no touching' policy, then took a swipe at her exposed tits. The defiant *SLAP* echoed in her ears as it struck her left breast and jostled her bosom to the right. It stung, more than physically. The crowd of mouth-breathers oohed as though they couldn't believe he'd actually swung at her. Before her breasts settled from the wobble-inducing slap, their leader struck again, from the right this time, knocking her fat jiggly mounds the other way.

Again. Right. Left. Right. Left.

May winced and yelped with each slap as snickers and chortles poured over her from every direction. Big Bruce had more than made his point again and again, and again. And again. No matter how hard he punished her tits in his sadistic game of ping-pong, May refused to beg him to stop. Didn't want to give them the satisfaction. Outnumbered and outmuscled, there was no way she could fight her way out of this, but that didn't mean she'd have to surrender her pride, too. These insipid, run-of-the-mill bullies would eventually get bored and fuck off once they accepted they couldn't completely break her.

...Right?

It was all she could hope for, holding her head high and clinging to her poker face as the sound of each slap forced her to blink. The defiance etched across her features appeared to offend Big Bruce. His grin faded like an overconfident boxer realising his jabs were getting less and less effective. But Big Bruce wasn't one to throw in the towel. Oh no, he turned up the heat in the next round.

The vicious ringleader squeezed her plump breasts with vigour and vengeance. May conceded a helpless mewl while his cronies salivated, jealousy frothing at their chops. She'd never been groped with such disregard, such disdain, almost as hateful as it was sexual, indignant mitts squishing her soft and pliable tit-meat till it hurt. In his own head, he must've been standing up for his brother, for all the little perverts she'd supposedly exploited; he ensnared the wild cougar in the woods and was going to deliver her just desserts, through conquering the very assets that had conquered her prey.

With a twisted growl in his throat, he mashed her breasts together every which way, pinched them, pulled them, squashed them, clapped them together. His manhandling felt so personal, and May didn't understand why; if someone wronged her little brother in some slight way, she might've been mad, too, but sexual assault? Too far. Her poor tits had been abused and reddened on the sides, didn't deserve the animosity he'd dealt them, and continued to.

She refused to cry. He twisted her nipples hard and all the boys laughed. Little Bruce cheered, "Yeah, get her, bro! Teach that slut who's boss!" They cheered. She winced. They called her names. Bitch. Slut. Skank. They laughed. She refused to cry.

Big Bruce pushed his long ratty face so close to her, his vile breath steamed her profile. "Like the way I use those tits, bitch? Huh, do you?" Her non-response angered him into screaming, "DO YOU?!" May whimpered and even his own goons jumped in alarm. He laughed, then muttered calmly again, "Well, next time you decide to 'show yourself' again in my neighbourhood, this is EXACTLY the kind of treatment you can expect to get, mmm'kay? You understand me, slut? Do you?"

Trapped between the tree and his smouldering face, May gave a feeble nod.

"Good," he chimed happily. "Now, look at me while I suck the absolute shit out of these fat fucking tits of yours. I SAID LOOK AT ME!"

Shuddering, May dropped her gaze as he grabbed her right breast and crammed down as much as could fit in his depraved mouth, which wasn't much at all considering its gargantuan proportions neared the size of his own head. In the end, Big Bruce engulfed little more than her areola and the tender plumpness surrounding it. He wasn't cruel enough to use his teeth, at least not yet, but sucked so loud and viciously you'd think he was trying to vacuum her nipple down his gullet. His hungry eyes stared up into hers as he mopped his slimy tongue all over said nipple, gauging the effect it had by her expression. The muscles in her face quivered with resistance but the sensitivity of her breasts eventually betrayed her, and a reluctant whine tumbled from her lips.

"Ha!" said one of the thick-headed goons. "I think the slut's actually loving this!"

Big Bruce un-mouthed her breast with a gratuitous pop and presented the merits of his tongue-work – her pink, glistening nipple stood on end despite herself, unmistakably kindled and erect. "Heh, of course she loves it. Why else you think she's running around here showing off her slutty tits to any moron that will look?" He slapped her breast again, spittle flying off its spit-lathered peak. "She's been dying for someone to suck these massive puppies to the bone. Well, I'm here now, bitch. And sucking away."

May gasped as he shoved his mouth over her other teat and sucked. This psycho actually believed she wanted this? Wanted his grotesque tongue sullying her nipple, his dirty mitts pawing at her breasts? She would've spat on him if she didn't fear it would only turn him more maniacal. Despite what he and his loser followers might've thought, her involuntary bodily responses could not be taken for enjoyment, or even consent. This was never supposed to happen. No one should've touched her. No one should've... *Brendan... I'm so sorry.*

She refused to ... refused to ...

Her eyes brimmed with tears.

Big Bruce didn't notice and, if he did, he didn't care. He persisted in his love-hate relationship with her breasts, squeezing their suppleness from the bottom so they swelled out pushing her big, jutting nipples a tongue tip away. Side to side, he flicked at her sensitive nubs and she squirmed under her constraints, unable to wriggle her chest out of his grasps. He refused to stop.

She fought hard. But hope finally abandoned her. A tear broke away from her ducts.

"Aww, what's the matter?" Big Bruce feigned concern. "Don't like it when *you're* exploited for all you're worth?"

"Please..." May said feebly. "You've proven your point. I'm sorry. I promise I'll stop. You'll never see me again. Just, please... stop."

"Stop?" He chuckled. And all his goons cackled, too, like braindead parrots. "How can we stop when we haven't even gotten started?" He raised his lips from her nipples, a long string of spit breaking off, then muttered harshly in her ear, "I hope you're good at sucking cock. 'Cause once I'm done sucking and fucking your fat udders raw, I'm gonna shove my cock so deep down your throat, you'll –" He suddenly froze and tilted his head, a look of deep concentration on his face. "Did you guys hear that?"

They all glanced at each other perplexed – well, all except the one goon clinging to her right wrist; so deep in his fixation, he couldn't unglue his eyes from her chest long enough to hear a word Big Bruce had said. May had no idea why he'd stopped mid-threat either, probably another twisted ploy crafted in his head. Everyone shrugged and for a moment it seemed as though Big Bruce was about to resume terrorising her, but then a distant voice grazed all their ears.

"Shit!" one goon said. "Think someone's coming."

"Could be two or more," said another who stood closer to where they'd heard it.

"Probably some idiot Trainers who don't know their way around the woods," Big Bruce guessed, irritated. "Bruce," he called on his little brother. "Go check it out and get rid of them." Little Bruce turned and broke into a sprint so hurriedly he tripped over his own feet before getting up and dashing out of the clearing.

Other Trainers? The realisation just hit May. Crap, I can't let that little bastard scare them off! She opened her mouth to scream for help but Big Bruce saw it coming. He blocked any sound from escaping with the palm of his hand. The look on his face was pure hatred, unabashed loathing that she'd even dare to cut her punishment short. Stifled into silence, May gulped down a terrible fear in her throat.

She didn't even want to imagine what he'd do to her if Little Bruce managed to redirect the wanderers away from the scene of the crime.

. . .

"Five... four... three..."

Norman peered through the leaves, waiting with baited breath as his busty daughter counted down to yet another big reveal. How so shameful of him. Watching his daughter expose herself should've left him feeling sick in the stomach. And yet, here he was, not only *not* sick, but eagerly anticipating her doing it again. The first time went by too quickly. He reminded himself not to blink.

"Two... one..."

May lifted her top as expected – her large, mountainous breasts rolled out – but what wasn't expected were the two boys who'd sprung out of the woods behind her. Huh? Was this a pantomime, some sort of charade? Norman stayed put just in case, but when they grabbed her wrists and she glanced around in panic, he knew something was definitely wrong. Three more boys approached from the other end of the clearing, and one of them was toying around with a pocketknife.

What the fuck?! His fists trembled with rage. Over his dead body would these little ingrates lay a finger on his daughter! He'd knock them out one by one if he had to. Granted, revealing himself would mean he'd have to explain to her how he wound up where he was, and why he'd stayed hidden for as long as he had. But facing that awkwardness paled in comparison to facing himself if he failed to protect his daughter yet again.

Norman crawled backwards out of the bushes.

He stood up tall and shouted, "HEY!"

Or at least he would've, if something cold and blunt hadn't struck him upside the head. He fell unconscious before he hit the ground.

. . .

May's heart was thrashing in her chest. Everyone had stopped in their places and awaited Little Bruce's report. *Please, please, please!* Her toes fidgeted in her shoes. *Please, please, please, please!* If there was ever a time, she needed a hero...

A rush of footsteps approached the clearing.

She held her breath and all the goons braced themselves, ready to make a break for it if anyone else but Little Bruce emerged from beyond the yonder. The whole scene was tense, silent. Faster and louder, the footsteps approached. May would've been biting her nails if her mouth wasn't covered and her hands weren't held up.

A head emerged over the bushes and...

It was Little Bruce. And only Little Bruce. No hero. No hope. No chance.

The brutish gang gave a collective sigh while May shut her eyes, defeated.

"Who was it?" Big Bruce asked.

"Just some dumb hiker showing his daughter around," Little Bruce said indifferently. "I told them to head down the other way 'cause there are vicious Teddiursa in this area."

Big Bruce scoffed. "Dytopiah doesn't even have Teddiursa."

Little Bruce shrugged. "Like I said, dumb hiker."

"Heh. Nicely done." Big Bruce turned back to his captive, more fright in her eyes than ever before. He lowered his hand from her mouth trusting May wouldn't waste her breath screaming into the ether. She didn't. "Now," he said darkly, "where were we?"

May sobbed, the threat of defiling her throat still fresh in her mind. "Please..."

"Please, please, please," he exaggerated her pleas in a high-pitched, whiny voice. Her ripped shirt exposed everything from her neck to her navel, and he drank in every bit of flesh meeting his eye, his sights sinking right down to her white, little miniskirt. The skimpy thing barely covered her crotch area and she felt his leering gaze attempt to sear a giant hole through it. "Please nothing," he said, licking his chops. "You asked for this."

"No!"

He lifted her skirt anyway. May crossed her legs and raised one thigh to hide the front of her bike shorts. He grumbled. "We don't have time for this." He jerked his head gesturing for the other two to come forth. "Spread them," he ordered. They dropped her fanny pack and whatever else they were holding before kneeling either side of her and pulling her legs in opposite directions. Spreadeagled against her will, May lost the struggle to conceal her modesty, the boys unveiling her plump cameltoe to their master's hungry eyes.

She regretted not putting on underwear in the morning. Her plan to seduce and entice backfired in a big way, leaving her sex all but exposed if not for the thinnest of spandex clinging to her crotch. The horndogs didn't have to imagine what her vulva looked like, not with her shorts outlining the size and fullness of her nether lips, right down to the deep crevice splitting her down the middle.

"God..." Big Bruce drooled. "Look at the fucking monkey on this one."

"Damn!" one goon exclaimed, staring up whilst pinning down her wriggling foot. "That thing is hella phat!"

"Told ya," said Little Bruce smugly.

"Hey, I wanna see, too!" said one of the goons restraining her arms.

"Easy, easy!" Big Bruce raised a hand imploring him to hold his position. "I already told you dumbasses, you'll get your turn. You're all gonna lose your virginities today, ha."

May turned redder than red, disgusted and humiliated, forced to listen to these cavemen sharing disgusting commentary on her genitalia, speculating on whether it would "bleed virgin blood", making bets on whether it would be "as tight as it looked... or even tighter", cracking jokes about how the smallest of them should go first so as not to "loosen it up too much" for the others. One of them even swore "that fat juicy cunt" got his dick "so rock hard" he could "plough it right through her shorts" in a heartbeat.

For all their trash talk and one-upmanship, none of the neutered cowards dared make a move before Big Bruce, who thrusted his greedy paw forward in a quick grabbing motion. May flinched, fully expecting to be groped whilst she stood there immobile, but Big Bruce brought his hand to a stop centimetres from her cameltoe. "Oh. I forgot," he said. "No touching, right?"

He raised both hands above his shoulders, as if to say, 'Look! I'm not doing anything, see?' His gesture might've been better received if May didn't feel a suspicious prod below the belt. She hazarded a glance southward and, whilst his hands remained high where she could see them, another part of his anatomy extended against his shorts to unite their crotches. Mischievous glee played on his rat face.

Mr No-Hands made a mockery of her 'no touching' rule as he grinded his hard bulge against her pussy, the friction of their shorts creating a heat May didn't appreciate. "Fuck yeah," he breathed hot air in her ear, "you like that?" She shook her head, snivelling. "Oh yeah, you do." She shook her head more vehemently. "No? How about now?" He pressed his entire body against hers and pinned her to the tree, pancaking her breasts as he rubbed his bulge hard and rough against her cameltoe, feeling her fleshiness through the spandex. "Ohhh yeah." He shovelled disgusting moans into her ear. "Fuck! That pussy wants this dick, doesn't it, slut? I can fucking feel it. You're getting hot."

No, she shook her head. 'That pussy' didn't want any dick that wasn't Brendan's. Her body language was lost on him, or outright ignored. He lowered his centre of gravity so that when he grinded his hips upwards, his tent stimulated the core of her heat, rubbing her where her fleshy lips guarded her entrance.

Fuck! He needs to stop this! He was starting to rouse sensations she'd last felt dryhumping her pillow, only this was rougher, more urgent. She tried to push him off with her chest but her limited mobility gave the appearance of rubbing her tits against him. Sneering, he encouraged her to keep going. *Ugh!* She stopped wriggling immediately.

The two bullies clenching her forearms grew visible tents of their own and started itching them with their free hands. May hoped their divided attention would weaken their grips but they held firm when she tried to yank her arms down. Dry humping her against the tree, Big Bruce left zero room to breathe between them, his crushing weight and body odour overwhelming her as he brushed his sweaty face against hers in pursuit of a kiss once more. And once more, May evaded his lips, only to concede the sensitive flesh where her neck joined her shoulder. He planted a wet kiss there, and the erogenous zone sent tingles down her spine, then he sank his teeth into her.

May moaned, a carnal deep-seated sound coaxed out of her. She regretted the utterance immediately as it only spurred on his unwanted advances. He smeared his tongue over the hickey he'd almost certainly imprinted, then reared his teeth again. May bit her lip this time, forcing down any misleading noises, and jostled his face off of her using her head and shoulder.

Big Bruce stumbled back. He appeared more amused than offended by her rejection. "I don't know why you're still fighting." He stepped within an inch of her again. "When it's plain to see how so very, *very* wet you are." No sooner had the words left his lips than had his palm pressed her pussy mound. Shock exploded in her eyes. "Oh yeah, it's wet," he announced aloud for all his goons to hear. "The bitch's in heat, boys."

They chuckled.

"No... stop..." May begged.

He did the opposite, put more pressure on her cameltoe. She made to knee him in the balls, but her foot only rose two inches off the ground before the hands shackling her ankle yanked it back down. They worked together to keep her legs parted in 'V' formation, allowing Big Bruce all the room he needed to cup her pussy in his vengeful hand, then jerk it upwards aggressively, evoking a gasp.

Apparently, her private parts deserved his harsh judgement as well. He alternated between rubbing his coarse palm against her "naughty cunt" and jerking it so rough and abruptly more of her spandex got wedged up inside her. Defenceless, May could only be grateful her shorts prevented even more from invading her, his longest digit prodding at her entrance with enough barbarity to part her lips through the tights.

When he finally drew his hand back and raised it to her face, May was alarmed to see the tips of his fingers glistening. And, just in case she was in doubt, he wafted his digits in front of her nostrils, ingratiating her with a whiff of her own arousal.

Big Bruce smirked at her bemused face. "Like I said, you really want it, don't you?"

"No!" she retorted with indignation. Absolutely nothing about him or the situation warmed her up to his callous assault. She hated herself, hated the fact her body reacted the way it had, giving these numskulls smidgens to twist around their own perverted connotations. Involuntary as her sexual response might've been, May experienced guilt for it all the same.

And Big Bruce experienced gleeful vindication. He stuck his moist fingers in his mouth and sucked them with a crude smile. "You're ready."

May felt a lump in her throat when he began unbuckling his belt. "Don't do this."

"I have to be honest," he said casually, "I didn't think things would go this far. See, when my little brother told me some stupid whore robbed him of his life savings, I promised him I'd get it back, and if I ever saw this whore, I'd teach her a lesson to boot. You don't mess with fam. But what he never quite conveyed in his words is how..." He drank in the sight of her once more, stripped and wet between the legs. "How absolutely lewd and erotic your body is. Not my fault your pussy looks so fucking juicy and tempting. I'm going to enjoy every second of this... and you will, too, if you allow yourself."

"Never! Don't! G-get away from me!" May fretted, panic straining her voice. She didn't believe him. This didn't feel like a crime of passion; he was in control; this freak had probably done this to other girls and found some warped way to justify it. In a last-ditch, Hail Mary attempt, May bellowed with every ounce of breath left in her lungs, "HELP! HEELP!! HEEELL-mmpnh!"

His hand leapt from his belt buckle to smother her screams. Startled, they all stood in tense silence for a few seconds, only May's muffled efforts squeezing through his palm. As soon as it became apparent no one had been close enough to hear her and come rushing to the rescue, Big Bruce fixed a dangerous glare on his captive, a frenzied look in his eyes that promised 'no more Mr Nice Guy'. He yanked the red and white bandana off her head then gagged her trying mouth.

Now May could scream all she wanted.

She didn't know whether the prospect of some passer-by stumbling upon them suddenly occurred to him, or whether his raging-hot hormones outgrew the fun of methodically terrorising her, but Big Bruce decided he wouldn't waste a second more not breaking through her final, most intimate barrier.

He yanked his belt out the loops of his shorts and tossed it aside angrily. With all her strength, May struggled and sobbed and flailed and squirmed. And when all that failed, rivers burst from her poignant blue eyes. Big Bruce unbuttoned his shorts –

POP!

A burst of crimson light exploded from her forgotten waist-pack. Startled, Big Bruce whipped around to catch a chubby Skitty staring him down through angry slits.

"Nyyyaaaaaa!" Skitty charged his feet.

He hopped away from May to avoid it. "For fuck's sake!" Her little heroine turned on her paws and sped at him again in a Quick Attack. Granted, not as 'quick' as it might've been if she'd maintained tiptop shape. Big Bruce swayed backwards and hopped side to side to evade the pink furball of fury. Fists clenched, May moved and jerked her body along with Skitty, desperate for her heroic pokémon to land a critical hit. Annoyingly, he narrowly escaped each attack like a dodgeball champion. Skitty's stamina wasn't what it once was; she tired from her near misses and attempted to catch him with Hidden Power instead, summoning a random barrage of sharp, spinning leaves. Big Bruce gritted his teeth. There was no way he could dodge all of them. He stood his ground and crossed his forearms to protect his face and chest. A couple of spinning projectiles from the Razor Leaf attack cut his sleeves open and sliced at his flesh, drawing thin, dripping lines of crimson.

"You blasted runt," he growled through his teeth. "You'll be sorry for that. Machamp." He launched a Poké Ball from his hoodie. "Go. Break that damn pest."

His fearsome Machamp towered above everyone by some distance, flexing all four of its thick, rippling arms. A nervous bead of sweat trailed down May's brow. Skitty stood no chance against that monstrosity. Not that her feisty little pokémon cared; high on adrenaline, she sprung into another Quick Attack.

That's a mistake! May shouted, "Wait!" But Skitty heard a muffled, "BWAIFF!"

Her small but round head torpedoed into Machamp's abdomen. Impressively, the force dragged the giant back a foot through the grass, but its powerful heels skidded to a stop.

Big Bruce spotted the perfect counter. "Use Seismic Toss!"

Skitty was still recovering in mid-air after landing her slapdash attack when Machamp snatched her in its massive, bottom-right hand. Her little kitten body was squished like a tennis ball in its mammoth fist, then thrown to the ground with so much force May screwed her eyes shut on impact. She could've sworn she heard a cracking sound, and she definitely heard Skitty's bloodcurdling cry. A fat tear ran down her cheek. *Skitty, you didn't have to...* Slowly, anxiously, her eyes flicked open to the sight of Machamp kicking Skitty's limp body into the bushes like a battered ragdoll.

"No!" May cried against her gag. *Leave Skitty out of it! She didn't do anything to you!* All the pained anger in her soul amounted to a barrage of muffled noises and uncontrollable tears. Snot and sorrow soddened her bandana.

She wasn't even paying attention to what order Big Bruce issued his Machamp next, but the massive Fighting-type responded by removing the only article of clothing on its person – its black wrestling trunks. A thick, inhumanely large penis dropped down past its knees, veins bulging across its bluish-grey shaft.

"Just for that," Big Bruce spat, "Machamp here is gonna have a turn, too." All to eager, Machamp took a giant step forward before its Trainer raised an arm to halt his advance. "Not yet. You'll go last."

"Maa, champ?"

"Heh, I have a feeling that pussy won't be of any use once you get through with it."

May's eyes trembled at the image. Never mind losing her dignity, she'd be lucky not to lose her life if Machamp had his way. His monstrosity of a phallus looked almost as long as her leg! And thick as her thigh.

Big Bruce smirked seeing the dread in her eyes while she struggled to conceive the impossible mechanics. "Yeah, that's right. Machamp's gonna shove it so far up your little cunt, you'll have thick, gooey poké-jizz squirting out your eyes and ears!" He laughed at the imagery and his predictable goons joined in.

May had no tears left as she looked up to the plain sky. She drowned out their heinous cackling, didn't flinch when Big Bruce dislodged his pocketknife in her peripheral vision. Her fists came loose, wilted in surrender. She focused on a foot-shaped cloud as the cold, dull tip trailed down her torso. A slice into fabric. Then a round tear invited cool air to her nether regions. She imagined what it would be like floating on the back of that cloud, free and faraway. Cold fingers groped her bare sex. She winced, got dragged back to hell. No, this wasn't happening. May quickly put herself back on the cloud as something hard and bulbous fumbled around her twitchy entrance. More tears broke free; tears she didn't realise she'd had.

Just keep looking at the clouds. Just keep looking at the clouds.

The stabbing sensation she'd internally braced herself for never came.

Instead, a heavy thud abruptly rocked the earth beneath them; it felt as though a building just collapsed. May broke her skygazing to discover Machamp laid out cold behind its master's feet, spirals in its eyes and a red ugly lump on its cheek.

Big Bruce, and all his boys, jumped and turned their attention to the clearing behind him. Whatever they witnessed spooked him into bawling, "Fuck! Run!" He recalled his fainted pokémon and scurried away whilst awkwardly trying to lift his shorts back on. The bullies restraining May released her limbs all at once. Her weakened form crumpled to her knees. "Hey, dumbass, don't forget the dough!" Big Bruce shouted before one of the goons dashed back and grabbed her fanny pack off the ground. They disappeared in flurries of jostling leaves and bushes.

May had no idea what scared off her attackers. Or who. Still captive in the trauma of her own mind, she hadn't looked up since dropping to her knees. The head of a shadow loomed upon the grass in front of her. She retreated on instinct, scooting back hastily till she hit the tree behind her. May threw the tatters of her shirt over her breasts and hugged her knees tightly, curling herself into a ball of nerves and anxiety.

And still, the shadow approached, eclipsing the sun above her.

Trembling, she tucked her sodden face between her knees and sobbed, and prayed whoever it was would leave her be. And they did.

When May finally hauled her head back up, nobody was there, no shadow, no looming presence towering above her. She was sat all alone in the big clearing. Only after moving her legs to get up, did she notice something at her feet that hadn't been there before. A business card. She could barely read a single word through the blurs of her teary vision. But, considering its proximity, the card must've been deliberately left for her?

But who? Why?

May picked up the card nonchalantly, rushed towards the nearby bushes to retrieve her passed-out Skitty, hurried back on to the main footpath then out of the woods of Route 304. She promised herself and Skitty it would be a cold day in Dytopiah before they ever stepped foot here again.



Chapter 7 - One Bird, Two Stones

A 'Do Not Disturb' sign hung outside May's room for a full 24 hours. Every so often she'd glanced through the peephole when footsteps walked past her door. The shadows she could've sworn followed her back were only housekeepers and room service committed to their routines. After 24 hours of non-incident, she dared to consider Big Bruce and his ilk might've forgotten her existence.

If only she could forget theirs. Yesterday's atrocities plagued her today and her tomorrow, possibly her forever. Half a dozen showers later and his stink still lingered on her. He didn't get to violate her, not the way he truly wanted to, not physically at least. More than anything, he'd ravaged her sense of security, raped her thoughts, turned her into this fearstricken emo moping in circles around her room.

She stopped beside the business card on her dresser. Somewhere someone out there deserved her undying gratitude. May hadn't brought herself to reach out; talking about it meant reliving it, which meant she'd need to build up the courage to. The business card barely garnered more than a passing glance since she'd left it there.

May drew the curtains to a burning sun already halfway across the sky. She shielded her tired eyes from the brightness. The afternoon blaze was a glaring reminder time never stood still, even when it did for you. She walked out onto the spacious balcony, spread her forearms along the balustrade and rested her chin on her hands, her downtrodden features looking out across Dytopiah. A single bird beat its tired wings through the sky, doing all it could not to fall victim to the polluted city. Was there any point?

Two mornings ago, she would've been wearing a completely different expression, an assured smile, eyes bright and shimmering with hope. The nightmare would've almost been behind her. And now... just thinking about it pained her heart. Was there any way out of this hellhole? What if she just... jumped?

Seven storeys down below, the ground seemed to call out to her, to stretch out its long concrete arms and promise her everything would be okay. She'd land just fine. And in a better place. The more she bore into its beguiling grey gaze, the more peace appeared to stare back. Without her realising it, her heels slowly lifted off the ground and her body began leaning over the railing.

"Nya?"

May staggered in surprise and landed flat on her feet. "Skitty, why are you out of bed?" Her furry patient stared at her from the sliding door with a concerned expression. "You should be getting more rest if you want your wounds all healed up." Granted, Skitty already looked ten times better than she had 24 hours ago, thanks to the Hyper Potions May had stocked up during her good run.

Skitty ignored her commands, as usual, and limped towards her at the balustrade. "Ni nnyi nyah?"

"Don't worry about me," May said. "I'm..." Doing awful. The genuine concern in her pokémon's eyes filled her with shame and guilt. She couldn't feed Skitty hollow optimism anymore. "We're going to have to leave this place very soon."

"Niya?"

"Because those mean bullies yesterday took all our money." How many times had she heard 'don't put all your eggs in one basket'? And what did May go and do? She regretted not having the foresight to stash some of her cash in hidden places around the room. All this time she'd been overly concerned about the hotel staff robbing her when she'd been brushing shoulders with real criminals out in the woods. "We can't afford to extend our stay any longer."

"Nyaa ni ni nya?"

"The police?" May gave a dry laugh. "What do you expect them to do?" She'd figured out very early on reporting crimes to the local PD was an exercise of futility. The sheer

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volume of daily offences crippled them into inaction. Unless you were a very important figure, or reporting the murder of a very important figure, chances were your case would be shuffled to the bottom of towering stacks of paper and promptly forgotten. Even if May had the money to bribe them into doing their jobs, what would they care getting off their arses to chase down a gang of rebellious kids? There were probably dozens of those running amok in the woods. Besides, the authorities probably wouldn't take pity on her once discovering how much she'd been robbed of and what she'd done to attain it. "We can't count on them to help us. I don't think this region even has a single Officer Jenny."

Skitty's ears drooped, dejected. "Nya..."

"I know," she said softly, sadness in her eyes. "I don't want to go back to that horrible Pokémon Centre either." Her next rendezvous with her dad was two days away. After selling him hopes and dreams, how was she supposed to explain this soul-crushing development? "I don't know what to do anymore, Skitty. We're back to square one." More like square zero.

Skitty gave a sad purr, then nuzzled up against her leg reassuringly. May smiled for the first time since yesterday and knelt down to pet her behind the ears. They stared out through the balusters, taking in a view they may never see again.

Back inside, May pulled all her clothes out of the wardrobe and tossed them in a messy heap on the bed. Throughout her reckless shopping sprees, she'd only purchased one backpack and it wasn't big enough to carry all her garments and shoes, though she wouldn't have a problem getting rid of half the stuff she'd only bought to tempt male Trainers. Maybe she could sell them and use the profits to book more nights in the cheaper rooms?

She went through all her pockets and, surprisingly, exhumed several loose coins and Pokédollars she'd forgotten about, including the ₽1,000 she'd assumed a housekeeper stole weeks ago. Oops. She pulled all the drawers out the dresser and scavenged for more trinkets of fortuitous savings. Besides a single 10-Pokédollar note unearthed from a pool of bras, her desperate rummaging returned no success. She closed the drawers with a disappointed huff, only for the business card atop the dresser to catch her eye again. May picked it up this time and narrowed her eyes at the familiar-yet-unfamiliar name. Skitty hopped onto the dresser and asked, "Nya?"

"I have no idea." May turned the card over and read the physical address printed on the back. "I don't know where that is." Granted, she didn't really know where any place in Dytopiah was. "Think we should go? Could be a trap."

The confusion on Skitty's face didn't help her make a decision at all.

Honestly, May was just as befuddled. Chances were, she'd meet the person that had rescued her from certain harm if she went to that address. But did she want to meet them? Her trust towards strangers had sunk to an all-time low. Although, if this person really meant her harm, they'd missed a golden opportunity back on Route 304 when she was a hot mess, down on her knees, wrecked, completely defenceless and all alone. The fact that this Good Samaritan didn't touch her and left behind a means to reach out had to count for something, right?

May paced around her room with the card for hours, fell onto her pile of clothes and stared up while holding it towards the ceiling.

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The taxi driver whistled, impressed as he pulled up to the mammoth double gates guarding a huge estate on the hills. "You sure this is the place?"

May double-checked the address on the card. "Yeah. Think so."

"Must be nice having friends in high places."

"Yeah..." May said vaguely, distracted by the enormity of the gates. "Apparently."

She stepped out the back of the car in an ugly, Muk-coloured, oversized tracksuit concealing her figure. A baseball cap shrouded her eyes beneath its visor and her hair hung in a long ponytail anyone who'd seen her in the woods wouldn't recognise.

She pressed the button on the intercom and a posh voice crackled through the speaker. "Good afternoon, how may I be of service?"

"Um, I'm here to see..." May fumbled in her pockets for the business card and read out the name uncertainly. "Mr. Marc Stone?"

"You're here to see Mr. Stone?" Doubt crept into the voice.

"Uh, yes."

"Who shall I say is requesting his audience?"

"Oh, I'm May."

"May. One moment please." Awkward silence ensued. She rubbed her arm up and down and glanced around the litter-free area, so unlike any neighbourhood she'd come across in Dytopiah. The voice returned with an abrupt crackle. "Mr. Stone does not have any appointments scheduled with a 'May' this afternoon."

"Oh, um, he – or someone – left me this card on Route 304 yesterday. So, I just thought maybe I'd... I dunno, I just thought – maybe..." *What the hell are you doing here, May? This is stupid.* "Never mind. Sorry to have bothered you." She dropped the business card and turned back.

No further than five steps away, a loud metallic whirr halted her departure. May looked over her shoulder and the iron gates were pulling open down the middle, welcoming her inside.

"O...kay then."

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The front yard wowed her. Beautifully trimmed shrubbery lined the driveway while tile-paved paths cut through acres of lush green. The front yard alone looked bigger than their entire property back at Hoenn. An assortment of flamboyant flowers added a splash of colour to the landscape and sweet aromas tingling the nose. As May walked uphill towards the creamy-white mansion, she noticed windmills in the near distance, sat amid acres of farmland and a garden of sunflowers. Was she still in Dytopiah? This place shimmered like an oasis in the dystopian reality torturing her.

An exquisitely well-dressed man, who could only be the butler, stood at the door with some form in his hand. It was a Non-Disclosure Agreement and she was required to sign it before gaining access to the premises. May never encountered such a request before but then she'd hardly frequented obscenely rich individuals with secrets to protect either. She couldn't imagine what Marc Stone had to hide in there, nor did she care; she wasn't on some covert mission to expose his dynasty. May signed the papers.

The butler ushered her indoors and led her past extravagant walls flaunting abstract paintings crafted from the hand of an artistic genius, or an unsupervised child – May could never tell the difference. The living room's walls were the colour of the night sky, without the twinkling stars, but mounted pinecone lamps set to provide light once night fell. Mr Marc Stone really liked his Arcanine print, she noticed, evidenced by the Arcanine-print drum tables and multi-coloured Arcanine-print throw pillows. The butler sat her down on one of three purple couches before heading off to summon his master. She glanced around at the eccentric décor, the malformed pokémon statuettes lined up on the mantel – not a single family portrait amongst them, or anywhere in the vicinity.

"Ah, you must be May."

She swivelled her head in the direction of the voice and found a tall, lean figure observing her from the entranceway. His suit was so white it hurt her eyes, so flagrant, so untouched by the filth of the city. An ascot tie garnished his neck and the rich violet coat worn over his suit looked like it might've been skinned from a Liepard. The same hue of violent dyed his curtained hair and tinted the shades shrouding his identity. Yet, he looked so familiar to her.

"I'm Marc Stone." The waft of sweet-scented perfume tickled her nostrils as he sauntered over, pristine brogues clicking on the marble floor. "Pleased to meet your acquaintance."

May stood up, suddenly feeling spectacularly underdressed, and mumbled an awkward, "hello." She still didn't know what she was doing there.

He took her hand and placed a graceful kiss atop of it. Why was he being so nice to her? Definitely couldn't be a native of the region. The crimson rose poking out of his breast pocket reminded her of a certain presumptuous Coordinator she'd gotten to know back in Hoenn, but any conceit Marc Stone might've bore was smoothed under layers of lavish fabric and natural suave. When he pulled down his tinted shades and showed her his steely grey eyes for the first time, May immediately recognised where she'd seen him before.

"Steven?"

He gave a small chuckle. "Oh, dear. Even miles adrift, halfway across the globe, it appears my brother's obstinate and overbearing shadow continues to stalk me."

"Brother? Wait, Steven has a brother?" She gaped, only just drawing the connection with his last name.

"Why, yes. A more handsome and refined brother to be precise."

More handsome? May wasn't sure he could draw comparisons when they looked *exactly* the same, down to the grey eyes and sharp jawline; if Marc lost the violet hair and posh accentuation, no one could've convinced her she wasn't talking to Steven Stone. "How come I never heard of you?"

"Because my father doesn't want you to. Why would he? A powerful man like that wouldn't risk having the reputation of his global enterprise besmirched by acknowledging a deeply disappointing child, now would he? Not great for shareholders' interests, you see."

It was hard to believe Mr. Stone would reject any of his children to the point of nonexistence. May and her travelling companions had had the fortune of bumping into him once in Rustboro City after her klutz of a little brother managed to ruin their only PokèNav. Not only did Mr. Stone see to its repair free of charge, he invited the whole gang to a scrumptious dinner celebration. Sure, he might've been stern and demanding towards his employees on occasion, but he never came across as anything worse than fair – even to strangers like them; how was she meant to believe he wouldn't show the same warmth to his own children? He spoke the world of Steven and nothing of Marc. Something didn't add up.

"Anyway," Marc said with a peachy chime. "I'm quite certain the wind didn't blow you all this way just to hear me pontificate about family matters. Please, have a seat." She sat right back down from where she'd stood. He poured himself something from an expensivelooking bottle off his wine rack. "Don't suppose you're old enough to partake?" He held up the bottle like a generous offer to which she gently shook her head. "Ooh, not one to flirt with the rules even when no one is looking. How very... proper of you. Either you're the purest of us all or you haven't been here long enough. No matter, I'll have Hargreaves serve you some... orange juice?"

May shrugged then gave a nonchalant nod.

"Ah, perfect!" Marc practically snapped his fingers and the butler who'd welcomed her inside came bustling in to take the order.

May couldn't stop staring as Marc cosied himself in the middle of a long, purple couch adjacent to hers. The resemblance was *too* uncanny. A part of her brain tried to convince her he really was Steven cosplaying as some rich bastard. Granted, Steven wasn't the type to flaunt his health with the kind of huge, extravagant rings and sparkly gemstones adorning every single one of Marc's fingers. Steven had retired as Hoenn Champion but, surely, he would've found better use of any freed up-time than gallivanting halfway across the globe pretending to be someone else? May was so very confused by Marc Stone's existence.

One thing was crystal clear however, Marc had an eye for her. Despite her baggy garbs disguising her figure, his gaze would roam her body unabashedly, glinting with the kind of keen interest she'd come to recognise in sleazy men. He hadn't saved her out of the kindness of his heart, had he?

With her legs squeezed shut, May tucked her hands between them and tried to ignore the silver eyes undressing her. "Um, so you're really not Steven, huh?" She started to believe it; Steven had never ogled her this way.

He leaned back against the sofa, crossed one leg over the other and took a light sip from his glass. "As if that cave dweller could ever thread together this level of prestige. Unlike my spoilt and entitled brother, I had to build everything you see around you from the ground up. Father dearest ensured I wouldn't inherit a penny from the family business."

"Why?" Why would Mr. Stone disown any of his children? "What did you do?"

"What did I do? Oh, I had the audacity to be born." Marc gently stirred his glass in the air. "I wasn't part of the plan. His drunken one-night rendezvous with my mother was meant to be just that – one night of forgettable fun. When he discovered she fell pregnant, he fired her from her secretarial position after she refused to get rid of me. He hoped a hefty severance package and several vapid gifts would make us go away." Marc shook his head at the pained thought. "In the end, I suppose we all got what we wanted. I made my fortune without ruining the 'perfect family' image he'd spent decades crafting in the media. Not bad for someone who wasn't supposed to be here. And yet, here I am."

He took a proud sip just as Hargreaves returned with her glass of orange juice.

"And here you are," Marc added, raising his glass. "Here's to fate for turning water into wine, for brewing the likely out of the unlikely." An awkward May played along with the imaginary clink of their glasses. The only thing they had in common was the room they happened to be sharing. She didn't want to say or do anything that might antagonise him however. Uncomfortable leering aside, he'd been a very welcoming and pleasant host. And his orange juice might just have been the best orange juice she'd ever tasted in her life.

"So, while I'm thrilled you decided to take up my invitation," Marc said, "I must ask – why are you here, my dear?"

A question she'd been asking herself since she stepped out of the cab. "Well, I'm not sure," May answered honestly. "I guess I needed to know who was behind the business card."

"And now you do." Marc beamed and spread his arms out boastfully.

"Yeah, you could say that." She laughed uncertainly. "Marc Stone. So weird. I guess I also wanted to say thank you for..." She had to pause and take a huge swig of orange juice to wash down the horrid memories resurfacing. "Thank you for what you did for me back there. If you hadn't come along –"

"Ah, but we *did* come along. That's all. There's nothing to be gained from entertaining what could or couldn't have been. Trust me. I've tried."

She nodded thoughtfully. "I guess you're right."

"And you're welcome. I certainly don't want you to feel as though you owe me anything."

"Really?" A massive weight rolled off her shoulders. Nothing she would've done could pay back the favour.

"Absolutely," Marc said. "Don't spare another thought on it. I don't suppose there's anything else you'd like to ask me?" He held the rim of his glass upon his lips and awaited her response with languid anticipation. "Well..." In the short amount of time she'd gotten to know Marc Stone, May developed a budding trust for the immaculately-dressed mogul. His relation to Steven – someone she'd trust with her life – worked to his benefit, despite his apparent disdain for his half-brother and father. Marc opening up about his painful past garnered some sympathy from her, too, and she could see how it drove him to amass the riches he had today. She didn't want to overstep the kindness and generosity he'd shown her but, if there was any inkling he'd be open to alleviating the suffering she was going through, she owed it to herself to at least ask. "I was wondering if you'd be able to help me out again."

Marc smiled as the wine seeped through his lips. "I knew you'd see it, too," he said happily. "The potential for us to help one another. *That*, May, is the real reason you came."

She could neither confirm nor deny his assumption. After losing all her money in one fell swoop, she'd been racking her brain for a path back to salvation, and Marc Stone certainly appeared to have enough to spare a little of his fortune, if only to keep her in the Kallaghar Inn for another couple of weeks. By then, May hoped she could think up a way to get her and Skitty back on their feet. It was clear to see what Marc could offer to her cause but, "I don't have anything to offer you right now. I promise once we get back to Hoenn though, I'll pay you back threefold of anything you lend me right now. I swear on my life! My dad is actually the Gym Leader of Petalburg City! I can prove it! And if he just had –"

"Now, now." Marc casually waved her off. "None of that will be necessary, my dear. And au contraire, you have a lot more to offer than you realise."

May was almost afraid to ask. "I... do?"

He giggled. "Oh, yes. Come with me."

Marc led May through the vast fields stretching beyond his backyard, acres of corn, wheat, sugarcane and lush greens tended to by robust tractors. It was beautiful out here and

. . .

May did enjoy the air of fresh vegetation but she didn't understand why he was showing her all this now. Farmers and their hard-bodied pokémon stopped toiling to greet Marc Stone when he walked past. But what Marc didn't see was how their gracious smiles faded the instant he showed his back to them. May noted the fatigue in their eyes before they put their heads down and continued ploughing the fields.

Marc explained how the scenery and overwhelming sense of openness was one of two major draws constantly luring him back to this property. Not to mention, these crops alone generated a decent portion of his wealth. The other major draw, Marc revealed without expounding on the single word, was: privacy.

For no other reason than filling the air with conversation, May pointed out how she found all the windmills spread across the fields really pretty, and asked what the purpose was of those big, industrial-looking structures in the near distance.

"Ooh, I'm so glad you asked!" Marc said, tickled by her fascination, as though no one had ever given him an opportunity to flaunt his knowledge on the matter. Bloated sacks sat metres apart along the row of corn they were walking down, and Marc stopped to dip his hand in one of them and pull out a fist of whole grain. "This," he said, as the crushed particles spilled from his heaped palm. "This is what they do. They turn the crops you see around you into fine grain. I'm glad you asked because I'd intended to show you *exactly* how the corn mills function in any case."

"Oh?" May quirked a brow. "Really?"

"Yes, dear. Come." He dumped the rest of the grain back in the sack and dusted off his hands. "Let's go take a closer look, shall we?"

Did she have a choice? May's interest in corn mills was on par with her interest in watching paint dry. Nonetheless, Marc led the way, and soon they were standing in a long, wide room with an equally long, wide glass dividing their half of the interior from the other. What May witnessed on the opposite side disturbed her beyond words. About a dozen men stood in tall, narrow cubicles blocking them from the sight of their neighbours. They'd all been forced to wear what looked like dirty, old prison uniforms and each had a number printed on the back. Two men watching over them sat comfortably reading magazines in cushioned seats while the dozen continuously climbed a stationary wheel of wooden steps, not unlike a pack of caged Morpeko. Supposedly, their hamster-like physical exertion powered the machinery responsible for grinding crops.

It was sickening. May was certain Marc Stone could afford to employ updated technology and equipment. This whole charade – he was doing it on purpose to torture those poor people. She turned to him, aghast, and he showed no emotion, simply tapped on the glass to get the guards' attention and called out number '008'. The man fell to his knees as they dragged him off the torturous wheel. May covered her mouth, horrified at the state of his exhaustion. Remorseless, the guards dragged him towards the glass while his head hung in defeat. And the most horrifying part yet – May recognised the man.

"Dad?!"

The sound of her voice flicked a switch inside him. Suddenly, his head jolted up, his tired eyes sprung wide awake and life returned to his weathered features. "May?! What are you doing here? What are you – did they hurt you?! I swear to God if they hurt you – let me go!" His sudden burst of strength caught the guards flatfooted. Norman pushed them to the ground and rushed the glass. "You bastard!" He pounded on the clear barrier saving Marc Stone from a broken nose and busted face. "She's got nothing to do with this! You leave her out of it, you hear me? If you lay a single finger on her, I swear I'll –"

"Temper, temper," Marc said coolly. Norman's violent outburst appeared to have bored him. With a flippant 'shoo' gesture, he had his men wrestle the enraged father away from the glass, and they needed a third to drag him back kicking and hurling death threats.

May turned to Marc with water in her eyes and croaked, "Why? Why are you doing this?" To think, she'd actually believed he was a decent man.

"You're asking the wrong question, my dear," Marc said. "What you should be asking is, 'what did *he* do?' Now, I won't fault you for having pity for these deplorables – you're rather green behind the ears after all – however, I can assure you, every one of these stains on our society earned their place on that wheel, including your father."

"What? No. No." May shook her head vehemently. That was outrageous! "Whatever you think my dad did... no, you have the wrong person."

"Do I now?" Marc said, amused. "So, you're saying the four highly trained, highly paid and highly effective trackers I had dedicated to scouring the sewers for this rat over the past couple of days brought me back the wrong rotter in the end? Why, it really is hard to get good help these days, isn't it?"

"What are you talking about?" The creases in her brow doubled in anger and bewilderment. "You had my dad followed? Why?"

"Well, remember when I explained to you how my father offered my mother the world on a silver platter to make us go away? My mother said no to it all. No to the fat severance package, no to all the flashy gifts. She took me and we did disappear. Not because he paid us to, but because he didn't deserve us. She wanted him to know that. It was important to her. Important to me."

"I... don't understand," May admitted.

"She thought she'd gotten rid of everything," Marc continued, mowing over her befuddlement. "Until she discovered an original, hand-made Gio-V gold watch tucked in an old coat she thought she'd gotten rid of years ago. Only twenty of them have ever been manufactured, you know? It was an old gift he'd given to 12 of his best employees for hitting record-breaking sales that year. Though Mother was merely a lowly secretary she ended up getting one, too, and undoubtedly appreciated it more than any of the other overachievers. When she accidentally dug up this little trinket however, her only thought was to rush to the nearest garbage disposal. She had no idea little ten-year old me rummaged through the trash moments after she walked away." May couldn't predict where this was all going, but had the distinct impression she wouldn't get any of her answers until he unburdened himself. "Why?" She hoped feigning interest in his story would help him arrive at his point quicker. "I thought you hated your dad. Why did you want anything from him after he rejected you?"

The real answer to that question remained hidden behind a tricky smile. "I have my reasons," was all Marc said. "My own intentions. I have plans for that watch – well, *had* plans. Plans that will never see the light of day because your father, in all his moral grandstanding, found no sin in stealing from thy neighbour."

May laughed in disbelief, convinced more than ever Marc Stone captured the wrong guy. "My dad would never do that." Marc gave her a questioning look, unconvinced. May turned to urge her father through the glass. "Dad, tell him. Tell him he's lying. Tell him you'd never..." Confidence waned in her trailing voice as Norman's non-reaction and the drop in his shoulders all but admitted guilt. *Dad... how could you? When did you become a thief?*

"Believe me now?" Marc smirked. "My men finally spotted him camping outside the Kallaghar Inn yesterday morning. They alerted me and we kept a close eye on him, tracked him through the woods. We didn't see the watch on him so thought best to keep our distance in the hopes he might lead us to where he stashes stolen goods. But no. It became obvious he had more... perverse reasons for wandering into the woods. We took him out and hauled him back here for questioning."

May's head was spinning. How could all this have been happening without her having the slightest of clues? Evidently, her father had been keeping secrets of his own all along.

"I will give him credit though," Marc mentioned. "Your father's not one to go quietly into the night. Even after we'd clobbered him over the head and Butch carried him on his shoulder through the woods, your father kept mumbling in his half-conscious state, 'I'll save you, honey', 'Daddy's coming'. Such heart and determination at a time when he shouldn't have been able to speak. It moved me. We had to go back. And, well, that's when we found you. I think I can safely say both you and I are glad that we did." The old adage 'never meet your heroes' struck May hard. Granted, she hadn't been in any position to choose who rescued her. Marc Stone's duplicity left her appalled and even more confused. "Let me get this straight, you did all that and left me your business card hoping I'd come here so you can force me to watch my dad suffer?"

"Heavens, no!" Marc cried, clutching his pearls in feigned dismay. "As I said, I saw an opportunity for us to help one another."

He was insane. "Me help you?" May retorted, indignation flaring up her tone. "Help the man taking out his severe daddy issues on people over some stupid watch?"

For the first time since she met Marc Stone, he wore an expression that wasn't faux geniality or indifference; his lips thinned as ire simmered through his façade. May found some sadistic pleasure seeing the pain in his face, the only vengeance she could inflict from her powerless position. Marc Stone wasn't accustomed to anyone belittling his troubled past and May stomping all over his 'woe is me' act pushed him to the edge. As he stood there seething in silence, she couldn't tell if he was about to strike her or break down in tears. Either way, May braced herself, stood in his face ready to take whatever punishment her truth bomb earned her.

Marc huffed and puffed and bemoaned, "How could you ever understand?" He stormed out.

May was taken aback, never imagined her words could have that great an effect. Her brief sense of victory ended the instant she turned to regard her father, still outnumbered, still wrestling against the odds, still confined on the other side of the glass. He had no shot fighting his way to freedom. And even if he did miraculously escape, the property was riddled with henchmen at Marc Stone's beck and call. Her dad wasn't going anywhere. And she'd just aggravated the only person who could possibly release him. May couldn't bear witnessing him suffer a second longer and rushed out of the room in pursuit of Marc. She caught up to him in the fields marching back to his mansion. "Wait! Hold on a sec." May rounded him and stopped in his path. "Okay, you're right. I don't get it. I probably never will. But what you're doing to those people... to my father, it isn't right."

"Neither is theft." Marc shrugged with one shoulder. "Perhaps if this region ran just one competent police department, I wouldn't have to clean up the streets for them."

He wasn't completely wrong, though May wholeheartedly disagreed with his particular brand of justice. "Just tell me what I have to do for you to let my dad go." May threw her arms up. "What do you want from me?"

"Ooh, now we're getting somewhere." The smug grin returned to his face. "However, I don't *want* anything from you. I'm not in the business of making demands."

Sure seemed like he'd been gearing up to. "Then what?"

"A proposal. Take it or leave it. Though I must say, should you decide to accept it, I guarantee you'll have everything you haven't been able to attain in this region. Just like *that*," he asserted with a snap of his fingers.

It sounded too good to be true, but May couldn't help be intrigued. "Uh, what kind of proposal?"

. . .

Marc slammed a heavy suitcase on his dining room table, unlocked the combinations and lifted the top open to reveal countless stacks of pristine banknotes piled in neat rows. The Pokédollars smelt so fresh they might've been printed that very morning. May had never seen this much hard cash in her entire life. Marc spared her the trouble of trying to guesstimate.

"100,000 Pokédollars", he declared, matter-of-factly. "More than enough to buy your way back to Hoenn in first class. You did say that's where you're from, right?"

May nodded absent-mindedly.

"Not only that," Marc continued, "but if you take me up on this offer, I'm willing to write off the hefty debt your father owes me. He'll be a free man, free to travel right alongside you. For that matter, you could afford to take as many tagalongs as you can fit in the plane. You could say goodbye to Dytopiah. For good." Marc stirred then sipped from his wine glass as though he'd already secured the deal. How could she say no to that?

May was still stuck on ₽100,000. She wouldn't have believed it if she wasn't staring at it right now. If that really was the amount in the suitcase then everything Marc Stone stated was true – they'd finally have more than enough to patch up Skarmory and head home.

This can't be real... can it?

After all the pain and disappointment and loss she suffered, May was almost too afraid to be hopeful. But not gullible enough to assume there wouldn't be a catch. Actually, she was pretty certain she'd already figured out what it was. It had been obvious since the moment he laid eyes on her. "Let me guess," she said confidently, "you'll only let me have all this money if I sleep with you?"

Marc spat his wine across the table, forcing his butler to leap into action and wipe up the sudden mess. "Heavens, no! I don't think my partner would appreciate that very much. And even if I did swing on that side of the court, you're a little too young for me, honey. Gorgeous, sure; camera ready, most certainly – with a few touch-ups here and there, but you're not quite my bottle of champagne, dear. Sorry to disappoint you."

Disappoint her? May was overwhelmingly relieved! So not *every* man in Dytopiah was a flagrant pervert. But then, "Okay, if you don't want me to sleep with anyone then –"

"Who said I didn't want you to sleep with anyone?"

Crap. She'd spoken too soon. May regretted asking before the words even left her lips. "With who then?"

Marc downed the rest of his wine, settled his glass next to the suitcase, and said in his typical calm and collected manner, "Only your father."

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Chapter 8 – 2 Bone For Stone?

If May had beverage in her mouth, it would've been ejected all over Marc's egocentric expression and fancy suit. "You want me to do what?"

"Sleep with your father." He just said that a second time with a straight face. Her ears hadn't deceived her.

May suddenly felt the need to sit down. Marc Stone was an enigma and the more she found out about him the less she wanted to know. What could he possibly have to gain by making her sleep with her own dad? "You're a certified weirdo. You have some sort of sick incest fetish or something?"

"Weirdo, perhaps," he admitted with a nonchalant shrug. "Aren't we all in some shape or manner? But no, I do not have a particular inclination for watching family members perform the horizontal tango."

"Then why they the heck would you ask me that?"

"Because I have clientele that do."

"Clientele?"

He got up and spoke to her whilst his back was turned pouring himself another glass of wine. "Has no one ever taught you the concept of multiple streams of income? My wealth would barely be a fifth of what it is if I relied solely on moving vegetation. Lucrative as it is, I've hopped on several fruitful bandwagons to get me to where I am today. One such fruitful bandwagon cruising down the highway to prosperity is the adult entertainment industry – you might've heard of it? You know, pornography?"

His cheeky question merited no response, simply a sad shake of her head. Of course he'd be into producing that sort of filth.

And not an ounce of shame in his step as he returned to his seat on the other side of the loaded briefcase. "You may shake your head but it's the oldest profession in the world. Tried, tested and undefeated. I've had the fortune of dabbling in a particularly profitable brand of adult entertainment – custom-made content." He regarded her lost expression and explained further.

"You see, I know people – important people – of high regard. Rich people, powerful people – you'd certainly recognise more than a few names if I was at liberty to rattle them off. And what you learn is it doesn't matter if you're a renowned world leader or a repressed recluse holed up in your mother's basement, we all fall victim to the same human, lecherous, reproduction-seeking impulses. Just so happens my clientele have the means to turn their unique perversions into reality or, at the very least, into top quality productions for their viewing pleasure." He pointed at her across the table. "That's where you come in."

May wore a quizzical expression, speechless.

"For the last two years, one of my high-paying clients has been in search of a particular kink," Marc went on. "A kink involving a real-life father and a real-life daughter doing things to each other real-life fathers and real-life daughters shouldn't be doing to each other. As you might imagine, it's been rather difficult scouting participants willing to set their familial ties aside, and the few that have come forth failed to meet the, shall we say, 'aesthetic' requirements my client insists upon. Not you, however." He took a sip of his glass and a long sip of her appearance once more. "Not even that hideous, oversized tracksuit can bury the large bags of potential you're working with, honey."

The busty teen blushed despite herself.

"And your father, well, a little rough around the edges but fit as a Mudsdale. And oh," he leaned towards her and whispered, "he's hung like one, too. My men and I took a cheeky gander when we disrobed him while he was knocked out before getting him into his new uniform." Marc giggled. "Oh my God!" May covered her ears in a hurry. She did *not* care to hear about how 'hung' her father might've been! "That's... ew." The last thing she needed was Marc Stone graffitiing images in her head she'd never be able to wash off.

"The point is, you two tick every box! With your bountiful breasts and natural beauty, and his chiselled frame and porn-centric phallus, my client will be more than satisfied. You have any idea how much they're willing to pay for this little production?"

"I don't know. And I don't care." May crossed her arms and retreated in her chair. "I'm not doing it. It's sick. Why don't you ask your 'client' to look for that stuff on the internet? I bet there're plenty of videos featuring that theme all over the place."

"Yes, but the vast majority are pure fiction or poorly-performed re-enactments. Knowing the actors are not really related instantly kills the excitement for my client. And don't forget, the whole appeal of *custom-made* content is a certain level of directorial privileges afforded to the consumer. You'll be working off a script that they wro–"

"No, I won't."

Marc chuckled. "Word of advice – hollow pride is not a commendable trait. All it's good for is keeping you down the ditch you dug with your own self-importance. Bigger names than you have contributed to my productions – highly decorated Trainers and League leaders making up the ranks."

"Bullshit," May said.

"Honest to Arceus." He put a hand on his heart.

"You're telling me there are Gym Leaders and members of the Elite Four that filmed dirty porn movies?"

"Yes. Perhaps, even a regional Champion or two."

"Bullshit. How come I never heard of it?"

"These are all professional productions carried out under ironclad non-disclosure agreements. I couldn't give up their names if you held a sickle to my throat. I can guarantee you, however, at least one of the famous 'heroes' you looked up to growing up as a child has done the filthiest, most unsavoury acts you can imagine on camera. And look where it got them today."

On some level, May always understood the Pokémon League and the world of politics was not what they seemed. It wasn't farfetched to believe some Gym Leaders might've 'slept their way' into the Pokémon League. Just as well Marc wasn't at liberty to divulge their identities; she didn't want to know, didn't want to risk ruining images she'd drawn up from childhood. The possible legitimacy of his claims hadn't swayed May from her staunch refusal.

"I'll sweeten the deal." Marc wouldn't give up. "If you agree to my terms, I'll see to it you are flown to Hoenn, or wherever else you'd like to go in the world, on my own private jet. You won't have to spend a penny of this ₽200,000 concerned with travel expenses. What say you?"

May shook her head, thought she'd already made herself clear. "I'm not some... porn star. There'd be no point going home to shame and ridicule. What do you think all our friends and family will say if they ever saw our... sex tape?"

"They never will," Marc insisted confidently. "The only people who'd even know this 'sex tape' exists are sitting in this room right now, my own small, private production crew and the tight-lipped client who's paying for it. Over and above the ironclad NDA, it would be in their best interest not to expose this kind of material – they love their money, their social standing and their political influence *way* too much let something like this slip into public domain. We've produced over 100 private videos and, before today, you hadn't heard a solitary whisper about a single one. I think my track record speaks for itself."

Well, even if all that was true, no assurance could settle the sick feeling in her stomach at the disturbing notion of sleeping with her dad. "I can't do it." She took another glance at the treasure trove displayed before her, at her quickest ticket out of this shithole and back to civilization... *are you really going to walk away from 200,000 Pokédollars, May?* Even under normal circumstances, it would take a lot for the average person to decline that amount of money. Two-hundred thousand Pokédollars. The crisp, green notes shimmered in her desperate eyes. Was it worth... sleeping with her dad? Was it crazy she considered it even for a sliver of a second? *Come on, May, you're better than this!* She ripped her money-hungry stare away from temptation and reaffirmed, "I can't. I can't do it."

"Hm." Marc looked disappointed. "That's unfortunate." He readjusted himself in his seat and in his approach. "Perhaps, you're too preoccupied considering what will happen if you do it. Perhaps, it's in your best interest to consider what will happen if you *don't* do it."

"Heh, as if my life can get any worse than it is now."

"Oh, but it can. Did you not lose all your hard-earned cash shortly after we came to your rescue? Which means, you're not exactly sitting pretty right now and, before long, desperation will lure you back into the woods and have you undertaking the same perilous antics that landed you in this hot mess in the first place," Marc pointed out, painting a grim picture. "Let's face it, honey, if you had better prospects of making the kind of money you require in the time you require, you wouldn't have been doing what we found you doing."

May looked down, hiding the embarrassment on her face. They saw all that?

"Hey, I'm not here to judge." Marc put his hands up. "A Pokédollar is worth a Pokédollar, no matter how it's gained. But consider that those boys, those *monsters*, we'd narrowly prevented from committing grievous bodily harm, are still out there. Probably pissed they didn't get to complete their heinous assault. Probably keen on having another go given half the chance. And look, if it's not them, how many more debauched delinquents do you imagine are running amok in the woods simply waiting for their opportunity? You're nothing to them. They have nothing to lose. You really fancy your odds going back and flashing your goods to potentially dangerous strangers? I don't mean to frighten you but... if it nearly happened once, it certainly could happen again. And next time, you may not be so lucky to have friends close by." If he hadn't meant to frighten her, he'd made a spectacularly horrendous mess of it. May wore a glum expression, gnawed at her nails, tapped her foot restlessly under the table as she envisioned all the horrible things he implied could happen to her.

"And as for your father... he will, of course, remain under indentured servitude to me. Honestly, he could spend two lifetimes back-to-back on the wheel and still not atone for the irrecoverable loss he's caused me."

The finality in his voice convinced her he was petty and deranged enough to make good on that promise.

"Or!" Marc said with a hopeful spike in his tone. "You could free him. You could do the sensible thing and avoid all the madness in the wild, wild woods. Shoot *one* video with someone you actually trust in a completely sterile, completely safe environment. One video that will cost a little more than a few hours of your time. One video no one will ever discover exists. Collect your loaded briefcase, do pass go and before you know it, you're right back where you belong! Really. How hard of a decision is it?"

She saw what he was doing. The contrast between the alternatives couldn't be painted starker, but he underestimated how big a hurdle it would be to get over the fact it was her *father* expected to co-star in her X-rated movie debut. Either that or torture for the both of them. May found herself trapped between a rock and a hard place.

As far as Marc was concerned, her delayed response was progress from the nonnegotiable no's she'd served him up till this point. "I do understand your dilemma. It's a lot to take in. And quite frankly, not a decision you can make on your own. This is what we're going to do." He closed the briefcase then steepled his hands over the table. "I'll release your father today."

Wait, what? May perked up. "You will?"

"Mhm. Just for 24 hours," he clarified, deflating her optimism. "Although, truly, it depends on what you two do with the time. I'll provide you a cosy guest suite where you can lie your heads down and order anything our exquisite cooks are prepared to make for you. Most of all however, I'm gifting you the opportunity to deliberate over the proposal I've laid out on the table." He glanced at his platinum wristwatch. "This time tomorrow, I expect you to deliver your final decision." He stood, picked up his wine glass in one hand and the briefcase in the other. "Good luck. I sincerely pray you make the sensible choice, May. For your sake. Toodle-oo!"

And with those ominous parting words hanging in the air, Marc Stone took his leave and left chaos and dread storming between her ears.

. . .

May was pacing left and right in the guest suite when the sudden creak of the door rooted her to the spot. Hargreaves held it open for a ragged, depleted man she barely recognised as her father. Staggering, Norman got one foot and a half through the door before she threw herself at him. The emphatic bearhug nearly knocked him back off his feet. She wrapped her arms around him without a care he smelt worse than a dumpster. Norman rested his frizzy chin atop her head and minutes passed before the pair relinquished the reinvigorating embrace.

"Are you okay?" May asked, worry crackling in her voice.

"Me? Pfft. Of course! You know your old man," Norman said. "Hard as nails! They're gonna need a whole lot more than some treadmill from hell to break me."

May wanted to believe him but a half-hearted smile was all she could offer. "You don't have to do that, you know."

"What do you mean?"

"Act all tough." She wouldn't think less of him if he admitted to being beaten down, at his wit's end or even afraid. "It's been a rough couple days. What they're doing to you out there is despicable."

"Yeah, well, as long as they keep you out of it, I'll be okay." He walked past her disguising a slight limp and peeked out one corner of the window, hiding his face behind the thick curtain.

"What are you doing?" she wondered.

"Isn't it obvious?" He looked back over his shoulder. "Trying to figure out a way to bust us out of here."

While she admired his diehard attitude, something told May his prison-breaking scheme was bound to end in misery. Marc Stone had dedicated some of his best resources to capture her dad and there was no chance he'd overlook the security in his compound ensuring all his captives remained captive. "I don't think that's going to work," May said honestly. "He's probably got cameras and security guards all over the place – I mean, there are three standing right outside the door. We'd be lucky to sneak out of this room without anyone noticing, let alone the mansion, the compound. And you just know he's probably got everyone on high alert."

"Maybe." Norman continued scanning the area three floors below. "But we have to try, right?"

"We're only going to piss him off more."

"Well, that's a risk we're just going to have to take, aren't we? I mean, what else are we supposed to do? Sit here until they decide to come back and drag us apart?" He shook his head, no way. "No can do. I'm not letting you out of my sight this time. And if they try to take you away, it will be over my dead body." "Try to take me away?" She suspected her dad didn't get the full briefing. "Wait a minute. They didn't tell you why they put us in this room together, did they?" His face went blank. "Marc didn't mention the proposal?"

"Proposal? What are you talking about?"

Oh God, of course that sociopath wants me to tell him! May couldn't look into her dad's eyes and begin to explain Marc Stone's indecent proposal. That glass of wine she turned down sounded good right about now. "Um, I think you're going to want to sit down for this one, Dad." They got comfortable in barrel chairs next to each other before an awkward May tentatively shared the details of her prior conversation.

Her dad reacted exactly how she'd expected him to. "Is that a fucking joke?! If that purple-haired weirdo had any balls he would've asked me to my face! I'll show him exactly what I think of his sick proposal." Norman punched his palm, outraged.

"Do you know where his watch is?" It might've been the only potential bargaining chip they had at their disposal. "If we can somehow get it back to him, he'll have to write off whatever debt he thinks you owe him. He'd have no reason to keep you here against your will. And he's already made it clear I can walk out of here whenever I like."

Norman dropped his face in his palms and cursed. "I slipped up. Like I told those cavemen trying to beat it out of me, I've got no cooking clue where that damn watch is. The punks that jumped me for it could be anywhere in Toxi City by now, probably sold it for pot or something." He sighed, defeated. "I really don't know where it is. I'm sorry, May."

She was afraid he'd say that. Her shoulders dropped and she sank back into her barrel chair deflated. "Still can't believe you took it in the first place," she muttered so low he could barely hear it.

"What'd you say?"

"You really thought it would be a grand idea to steal something valuable from a narcissistic egomaniac like Marc Stone?"

"Oh, come on." Her criticism agitated him. "Like I was supposed to know he'd take it so personally? Look at this place! I figured the scumbag had gazillion more watches where that one came from. He wouldn't even feel it if one went missing."

"Yeah, well, he felt it, Dad."

"Clearly I was wrong."

"And now we're stuck here."

Norman didn't appreciate her accusatory tone. Who was the parent scolding the child here? "And what about you?" he fired back. "When were you planning on telling me you're whoring yourself out to the whole region?"

"Whoring?" May recoiled, appalled. "I didn't 'whore' myself to anyone! See, this is why I didn't want to say anything! I knew you'd blow everything out of proportion and take it the worst way imaginable."

"So, you *weren't* out there showing little boys your tits?"

"I - look," May huffed, exasperated. "I took precautions. None of them touched me."

Norman laughed with disbelief. "That's not what I saw."

"Yesterday was different. Nothing like that ever happened before."

"Point is it happened, May. And it could've been worse! What were you thinking?" he asked her pointedly, disgust on his face. "What do you think your mother's going to say, huh? Think your mother would be proud?" May fell silent but Norman carried on. "We didn't raise you like that and you know it. I'm so disappointed right now. A whole lot of good those 'precautions' did you, ey? Maybe if Stone hadn't seen how ready and willing you are to sell your body, he wouldn't have thought up that disgusting offer in the first place."

May huffed. "So now it's my fault? You think Mom will be thrilled to find out you're a thief now?"

He shrugged. "Better a thief than a slut."

"I'm not a slut!"

"Then why would you –" His rebuttal was cut short by the loud grumble of his tummy. He could've gone on, but Norman decided now was as good a time as any to take a breather. "Just, never mind. I can't look at you right now." He got up and paced about the room for a while before knocking on the door and shouting at the guards on the other side to, "Get us some damn food in here."

May couldn't believe how he'd turned this all around on her. Of course he could never be wrong – he was the parent. How silly of her to presume he'd take some accountability. Granted, until he mentioned it, she hadn't stopped to consider if any of her behaviour had led them to this juncture, too.

When Hargreaves delivered them trays of lasagne and antipasto, they ate their lunch on opposite sides of the room – May seated on the bed facing the window whilst Norman gobbled up his lasagne in a barrel chair behind her. The TV was on but neither of them could stomach mindless entertainment right now. Hell, May barely had the appetite for anything on the platter, dallying with her fork as she reflected on her time in Dytopiah. Seeing her dad take the revelation this poorly, she pictured it would be twice as bad when her mom found out.

If her mom found out. She and Norman still hadn't developed a gameplan that would get them back home. They'd need to be on speaking terms to do that.

It felt as though hours went by without a word spoken in either direction. May jumped when a hand touched the back of her shoulder.

"Hey," Norman said. His voice had come down to a calm tenor. Perhaps he'd been hangry before the food settled in his gut, or perhaps the stretch of quiet reflection allowed him to re-evaluate his hot take; whatever the case, May was pleased he extended an olive branch. "This is stupid. Fighting isn't going to help us get out of here any sooner. Let's just admit we both did things we're not proud of and we wouldn't be here if we hadn't done those things, okay?"

"Okay," she said softly.

"Good." He squeezed her shoulder with reassurance. "Besides, what's most important is not how we got here, but how we're going to get out. We'll deal with everything else later."

Fair enough for her. "Any ideas?"

He combed his overgrown beard thoughtfully. "You said he's given us up till tomorrow to decide?"

"Yup."

"That means they'll be expecting us to spend the night in this room."

It was a safe assumption to make. "Yeah."

"But what if we don't?" That was where he lost her. "What if we wait till all the lights are out, right? I guarantee you half of these two-bit guards are going to be out like Snorlax. And the rest, well, maybe you distract them while I creep up behind them and then –" He jumped so abruptly it startled May, simulating his best impression of a sleeper hold. "Boom! I'll leave them out cold right where they stood. We don't even need to climb over the tall walls or anything like that. All we need to do is get to the fields, pick one direction and keep running. By the time they figure out we're not in our beds tomorrow morning, we'll be long gone. Sounds like it could work, right?"

Wow, he still hadn't given up on flying the coop. She wished she could be as confident in her ability to play an action hero, but May just knew she'd freeze up at the first sight of real danger. Norman himself wasn't at hundred percent; he might've hidden it well enough from others, but May noticed the slight limp in her father's gait, and the fact he favoured his ribs from time to time. Not to mention, his great idea completely ignored the likelihood of security cameras riddled throughout the mansion. "I don't know, dad…" "Come on, don't you trust your old man?"

"It's not that. It's just... too risky."

"Riskier than sitting here and doing nothing?"

"I guess not. But." She sighed. "I don't know."

"Hm." He crossed his arms. "You have any better ideas? I'm all ears." Probably not. Silence ensued, and the longer it persisted the more awkward it became, then Norman slowly tilted his head in suspicion. "May... don't tell me you're seriously considering his proposal...?"

She couldn't look him in the eye when she said, in a feeble voice, "I mean..."

His jaw hit the floor. "May! You know how crazy that sounds?!" He clutched his hair in both hands and turned around, flabbergasted. "You're my *daughter*, May. I'm your dad! Your *dad*," he pointed out, astutely. "We can't just – just – God." He couldn't even say the words. "This is crazy. Crazy I tell you! Batshit."

"I know."

"And you believe this goofy prick? That he'd actually let us run off with all that money?"

May thought about it and, "Yes. Strangely, I do." Marc Stone proved himself to be many undesirable things, but she couldn't pick out a single lie he'd told.

At a loss, Norman paced in front of the window with both hands on his head. "No. Nuh-uh. Absolutely not. We can't, May. I know we've done a lot of stupid shit since we got stranded on this island but we're not going there. There's no way we're doing... *that*."

"You think I want to?" Sleeping with her own dad was just about the grossest thing she could ever imagine. "We're talking about two-hundred thousand Pokédollars, Dad."

"I don't care about the money."

"Neither do I. But how else are we going to get back home? It's been like eight months and we hardly have two pennies to show for it."

"No. There has to be another way," Norman said, obstinately.

"Like what?"

"Like I give that douchebag the finger tomorrow and tell him to go fu-"

"Dad –"

"No, May, it ain't happening. I don't care if they drag me back to that hellhole. They'll let you go. I'll tell you where to find Jake and Skarmory. You guys stick together and eventually when I find a way out, I'll join up with you."

"And what if you don't?"

"I will."

"Even if you did, we're right back where we started, with no way off this region."

"Not forever," Norman said. "Jake mentioned all Skarmory recover and self-heal their wings on a yearly basis. His is taking longer than usual because of the severity of its injuries, but if we wait it out, Skarmory can eventually fly us out of here."

"Eventually?" May asked, doubtful. "In what? Another seven months? A year?"

Norman threw his arms up. "Possibly."

May droned, exhausted. "I'm tired, Dad. I can't make it another seven days out there, let alone seven months. And a year? I'd rather kill myself."

"Hey." Norman knelt down before her and clasped her hands. "You can. You're a fighter. You can. I know it's a little tough out there –"

"A little tough? I almost got raped!" May pulled her hands out of his grasp. "And you weren't there, Dad. I've been all alone, struggling to fend for me and Skitty. You have no idea how tough it's been for us. How could you?" She walked off in a huff.

Norman let her be. What could he possibly say to absolve himself from not being there to protect his daughter? He'd be mad, too, in her shoes. Caroline would be disappointed in him. And as much as he'd questioned May's risqué decisions, it was his lack of presence that left room for those habits to fester. She looked more like an adult every day; it was easy to forget she was still a child in need of her father.

"You're right," he admitted. "I'm not going to be winning any Father of the Year awards anytime soon. But I swear, what almost happened to you out there, is never going to happen to you again. Not on my watch." She didn't respond, hadn't even looked at him when he made the vow. "Well, I'm here. Whenever you're ready to talk again."

He lied down on one of the single beds and watched TV without really watching. One eye and ear drifted between the screen and the other half of the room. There was no movement from where May sat. Just a silent stillness in his peripheral vision. Norman didn't realise how tired he was, how much this past week had taken out of him, not until he opened his eyes to dusk outside the window. On the other side, the vacant bed next to his was vacant no longer.

"Hey there, sleepyhead."

He yawned whilst pulling himself up in a sitting position. "How long was I out for?"

"Two days."

"Two days?!" He jolted upright and glanced around the room in panic before May's smothered giggles gave her away. "Jeez! Don't scare me like that."

"You really think Marc Stone is just going to let you nod off for two whole days?"

"I can dream, can't I?" He yawned again. "Shit. Now I kind of wish I was."

"You and me both," May said. "For weeks, I've had this dream where I open my eyes and I'm in my own bed again." There was hope in her voice but sadness on her face.

Norman was simply glad to hear her speaking again. "Feeling better now?"

"A little. Not really. I've been thinking..."

Norman turned on his side and held his head up on a palm attentively.

"Remember back at the restaurant you said we'd do things my way going forward? And that if I needed you to help me with anything, you would, no questions asked?" He remembered, but it wouldn't have served him to admit it right now. "Well, Dad, this is it. This is me asking for your help."

Saddening. All that time he'd left her to muse during his slumber hadn't changed her tune one bit. If anything, she carried more conviction for filming the indecent video. This wasn't May speaking. It was fear. And fear blinded her from seeing the full repercussions of pursuing the proposed quick fix. Rather than react with righteous vitriol at the prospect of incest, Norman attempted a more measured approach.

"Have you thought about how this could change everything between us?" he asked. "Even if we somehow... pulled it off... do you honestly believe we'll be able to look each other in the face again? At home? Across the dinner table? At family reunions?" He could tell by her downcast expression she hadn't thought that far. "Once we go there, there's no going back. We might be able to hide it from everybody else, for a while, but we'll never be able to hide it from each other. It will eat away at our relationship from the inside out." All the progress they'd made two nights ago would be for nought. "Are you really prepared to lose your father?"

She didn't have to say it. He could see the answer was no. But May was determined to have her cake and eat it, too. "I know things will never be the same. But that doesn't mean we have to lose each other."

"How can we not?"

"Because it's not real," May argued. "It's an act. When those lights and cameras come on, it's not me you're going to be looking at. And you won't be you. We'll be other people for as long as the cameras are rolling, in some made-up world, some made-up scenario that's not real. And when they yell 'cut', we climb back into our skins. If professional actors can do it, so can we."

"Except, we're not professional actors," he reminded her, "and we're definitely not porn stars. We're father and daughter."

"You know what I mean."

"I also know it won't be as easy as you think." He shook his head with an incredulous laugh. "I can't believe we're even having this discussion. Almost 20 years I've been married to your mom, and not once did I stray from our vows. The last person I expected to try and persuade me to is my own teenage daughter. Pretty fucked up."

"I know it is. For me, too. We haven't even done anything and I already feel guilty for betraying my boyfriend."

Norman's face twitched abruptly. "Your... what now?"

May covered her mouth seconds too late.

Norman clenched his jaw. "Who is it?"

She kept silent, afraid to lower her hand.

"Do I know him?" her dad pressed.

"Does it even matter?" she mumbled behind her palm.

"It's that scrawny neighbour kid with the funny hats, isn't it?" Norman narrowed his piercing eyes at her. "I should've known. There was always something that was never quite right about that boy." May dropped her hand from her mouth to defend her secret boyfriend. "Oh, come on, Dad. You always loved Brendan! You told me yourself you could see him challenging the Champion one day."

"That was before I knew he was sneaking around behind my back corrupting my little girl. The kid's got no integrity, no backbone. Why'd he not come up and ask me if he had genuine interest in you?"

"Oh, I dunno, Dad, maybe because you intimidate any person with a penis that walks through our front door? You even give Max's friends the stink eye and they're only like ten! You seriously need to chill out a bit," May suggested. "It's not like Brendan's been seeking my hand in marriage or anything. We're just dating."

"Just dating." He puffed. "You know you're not supposed to be doing that until you -"

"Turn 21," May droned the rest of his predictable sentence. "I know, I know, but like, it's not a big deal."

"Boys his age are only after one thing."

"Oh. Like you were?"

"Me?" Norman stammered at her unexpected rebuttal. "I mean, you're missing the point," he dodged. "This ain't about me."

"Yeah, it is. And about how any boy will never be good enough."

Norman shrugged. "They won't." She rolled her eyes. Then he asked the one question they'd both been dreading since the topic came up. "Have you," he said, lowering his voice and starting over, "have you had sex yet?"

"Oh my goodness." She turned away as her cheeks flared up.

Norman's heart was thrashing in his chest all of a sudden.

The longer she withheld her response, the less he wanted to hear it. He came about two seconds away from telling her to forget he'd asked when she finally mumbled, with her head down, twiddling her fingers, "...maybe once or twice."

The way Norman slowly shut his eyes and dramatically lowered his face into his palms, you'd think she said 200 times. Even once was too much to hear. "Gee, May. First the stripping and now this? I feel like I don't even know you anymore."

She rubbed the back of her head sheepishly. "Don't you think you're being a tad dramatic?"

"No. You've broken so many of our rules, your mom's and mine. Just because we happen to be in the middle of a dire crisis right now, don't think for one second you're going to get away with any of this scot-free," he stated in the threatening tone he usually used before grounding her. Though something told May, her punishment this time would be a lot more severe than temporary confinement. Only Arceus knew what he'd do to Brendan.

A knock came at the door.

She couldn't be more relieved to hop off the bed and escape the tension.

Hargreaves had arrived bearing gifts, a pile of fresh towels and silk pyjamas folded in his arms.

"Ah, great," Norman said. "Just what the doctor ordered." As soon as May set down the delivery, he slung a towel over his shoulder and headed for the suite's bathroom. "Hope you don't mind if I go first."

"Yeah, that's okay," May said. He smelt like he needed it way more than her anyway. She lay on the bed staring at the orange-pink sky out the window as the patter of a hot shower emanated from the bathroom. Hopefully, the water would soothe his displeasure from learning his 'sweet, innocent, little girl' was a virgin no longer. As dusk dwindled into night, Marc's offer weighed heavily on May's head. Disgusting as it was, she'd somehow convinced herself it was their best bet at getting home. Now only if she could convince her father. His concerns had merit and she couldn't predict the long-term effects of an unholy union between them either. All she knew was she didn't want to go back to Route 304 alone again under any circumstances. Astonishingly, sleeping with her dad appeared to be the lesser of two evils.

Thinking she could do it was one thing but, if it came down to it, could she actually do it? May wasn't so sure. When she'd be forced to confront the moment, she might just run out of the room and completely change her mind. She thought about her mom, too. Not only would her dad be cheating on her, technically, he'd be cheating on her with her daughter to boot, an incestual double dose of betrayal. There was no way she could ever find out. Ever.

May had been so lost swimming in her own thoughts and distress, she didn't notice the shower had stopped running, not until a tall, shirtless figure sauntered into the room with a towel draped over his head.

Her dad was ripped. Hot droplets of water trailed down his broad, hairy chest and picturesque, washboard abs. He looked completely different to when she last saw him topless and on the onset of his dad bod years. Dytopiah had hardened him in more ways than one, chiselled away the excess of a comfortable life. He'd earned a scar diagonally across his right pectoral and another diagonally across his left abdomen, giving May a raw glimpse into how hard it must've been for *him* out there. Her eyes fleetingly drifted to the perfect V-shaped contour leading into the towel around his waist and, for the briefest of scatty moments, Marc Stone's voice slithered into her ears, whispering how well-endowed her dad had proven himself to be.

May fought off her curiosity and looked away a split second before he took off the towel drying his hair. For all he knew, she'd been staring out the window the entire time.

"Woo! Haven't had a shower like that in ages!" Norman exclaimed, drying the squeaky-clean insides of his ears with a hand towel. "The water's great, pumpkin. You should jump in."

"Oh, it is?" May pretended she only noticed him standing there. "Guess I should then." She grabbed a towel and hurried to the bathroom, exhaling a stifled breath as she escaped her dad's half-naked presence.

May could've hopped in the shower, too, but she soaked herself in a luxurious bubble bath instead. Who knew when she'd get another opportunity? The way things were going, she'd be out on the streets again soon enough.

When May returned from soothing her sorrows, pruney and warm beneath her towel, Norman was sprawled out on his bed, picking salumi off a charcuterie in his pyjamas whilst smirking at a silly TV show. He'd taken it upon himself to order them dinner and she was pleased to see him kick back from their onerous conundrum. With a light smile, she changed into her PJs and joined in on dinner. For the next little while, they checked out of Dytopiah and all its trappings, savoured the lazy dinner and each other's company for what it was, even managed to laugh out loud once or twice.

The lights went out before May and Norman came to an agreement on Marc Stone's proposal. She lay in bed staring through the darkness clouding the ceiling, and had the distinct impression her father was wrestling the same insomnia a metre away. The room was deathly silent but their thoughts were loud and wide awake.

"May," Norman said, suddenly.

"Hm?"

After a long stretch of silence, he decided, "I can't do it. I'm sorry. I want you to know you can count on me for anything. Just... not that. I'm sorry."

She closed her eyes and exhaled a defeated, drawn-out breath through her nostrils. "It's okay, Dad. I get it."

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"Hey, give me your hand." He extended an arm out of his blankets and May did the same, joining hands in the airspace between their neighbouring beds. "Everything will be okay. Promise." He gave her hand a warm squeeze. "I love you."

May squeezed him back. "I love you, too."

"Good night, pumpkin. Sleep tight."

She tittered. "Good night, Dad."

May and Norman sat side by side with their hands intertwined under the dining room table. Two burly men in black suits (that Norman had become regrettably acquainted with) entered the room and set down the heavy briefcase from the day before. They pulled out a chair on the opposite side of the table and Marc Stone occupied it after making everyone wait ten, long minutes.

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Norman trained an intense glare on the shoddy kingpin and May felt her dad's hatred for the man when he involuntarily squeezed her hand under the table. It took every fibre of his being not to launch himself at the maniac that had falsely imprisoned him and threatened torture till his dying breath. Retaliation might've felt good, for two seconds, but even if he did get one good lick in before the oversized bouncers sprung to Marc's defence, her dad's impulsiveness would only end in tragedy. May stroked her thumb over the top of his hand, silently pleading for him to keep his cool. His clench loosened ever so subtly.

When she'd woken up a couple of hours ago, his bed had already been made and he was standing by the window, staring through the lace curtains. Had he been contemplating a last-ditch escape? She didn't know. Other than murmuring "good morning" in response to hers, her dad hadn't uttered a single word since getting up. Perhaps the reality of returning to the grinder had started to settle in. May didn't say anything because she didn't know what to say; what words could comfort someone on the precipice of gruelling, non-stop, physical
exertion? She allowed him space for his mental preparation all whilst sticking close enough to let him know she was there if he needed her.

Norman brought his boiling intensity and cold demeanour to the table. May noticed his eyes had drawn away from Marc's face and onto his heavily-accessorised hands. Well, if that's what it took to prevent him from bounding across the table in a fit of rage, then May wouldn't begrudge his silent glare.

"So," Marc piped up as though he'd just risen to the sunniest day of the year. He brandished a contract, set it next to the briefcase on the table and plucked a pen out of his breast pocket. "I trust you've had enough time to mull over my generous offer and come to the sensible conclusion." The pen rolled across the contract towards them. "What's it going to be, hm?"

May swivelled her head towards her dad but he hadn't moved a muscle, not even an inch to lift his gaze from Marc's hands. Clearly it was up to her to do the talking. "Um, yes. We discussed your proposal." She took a deep breath then added, "And we've decided it's best if we –"

"We'll do it."

Marc turned to Norman, stunned. And he wasn't the only one. May stared at her dad's profile, speechless and confused.

Marc broke into abrupt laughter, the joy of a man who'd expected proceedings to go a lot rockier. The perplexed goons behind him laughed, too, more out of fear of offending him than finding humour in the sudden turn of events. "Splendid!" Marc cheered. "Well, then –"

"We'll do it," Norman reiterated, "but only under one condition."

"Ooh, a curveball." Marc smirked and nodded as though he respected Norman's attempt to negotiate. And yet, he appeared completely unfazed. Marc leaned back in his chair and folded his arms behind his head. "Name it."



Chapter 9 - Marc's Fun House

May ambled towards the front door for the third time, heart thrashing in her chest. Funny how an act as natural and ubiquitous as walking could become so cumbersome. Her crammed toes wept in pink sneakers one size too small. Long white socks with pink hoops covered her up to the knees. The rest of her shapely legs made for tantalising viewing, creamy thighs pouring from the tiniest of green pleated miniskirts. She fought the constant urge to tug down the back. A white crop top did its best to cover as little flesh as possible, leaving her arms and flat midriff bare, while her bountiful bust wobbled and bobbled with every step, one wrong move away from jigging right out of the teeny cloth. With the threat of a gargantuan wardrobe malfunction looming at the back of her mind, May measured each step consciously and held a box of cookies over her bursting cleavage.

How could anyone not feel self-conscious in this getup? Her brunette locks were pulled into long pigtails, the likes of which she hadn't worn since she was about five. The May she knew disappeared beneath unconventional makeup; contour gave her features a natural, Mediterranean veneer while light-pink blush rosied her cheeks. She wore a green beret and a matching sash with the words 'Cookie Girl' printed in gold diagonally across her torso. Just what had she gotten herself into?

May refrained from cringing as her skirt fluttered when she climbed the steps leading to the neighbour's porch. She stood in front of the friendly woman's house awkwardly for a moment, as if she expected someone to stop her, and when nobody did, she took a deep breath, raised her fist and rapped her knuckles on the door.

Norman woke up with a start. It took him a couple of seconds to recall he'd fallen asleep on the couch. Another abrupt knock swivelled his head to the door. He glanced at the

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time. 10:27. He tried to remember if she'd mentioned anything about visitors swinging by this morning. Nothing came to mind. Ah well, maybe he should ignore it? This wasn't even his house after all. The knock came for a third time.

Intrigued by the persistence, Norman hauled himself off the couch, stuck his feet in mule slippers and closed the flannel robe over his wife beater and boxers. Yawning, he peered through the peephole and discovered what looked like an overgrown Girl Scout standing on the doorstep with her head down reading a box of cookies.

Heh. Cute, he thought, if not a little eccentric. Unfortunately for her, the owner of the house was toiling away at work and he wasn't much in the mood for cookies. He opened the door intending to suggest she try again later, but when she lifted her head and their eyes met, both their faces froze in astonishment.

Norman had never seen his teenage daughter dressed so... so scantily. Clearly, the Girl Scout uniform set out to highlight her youth, perhaps even cut it in half, but she had long lost all the baby fat that once rounded her face, leaving her touched-up visage a juxtaposed blend of fifth grader and budding adult. Her comically undersized attire drew attention to her bulging cleavage. Girl Scouts never showed off jugs like that when he was growing up. He lost the will to form words. Red in the cheeks, the busty Girl Scout hid herself behind her box of cookies.

Awkward...

Both stammered, unsure who should've been speaking. Norman mumbled, "May, I -"

"Cut!" someone shouted from the sidelines. The boom mic was withdrawn from above Norman's head and the chief camera operator lowered his camcorder.

A bald old man in mysterious shades sat behind his monitor reviewing the take, brow furrowed in displeasure. Roshi wasn't at all what Norman expected of a director. The eccentric old fart hadn't taken his sunglasses off since introducing himself a few hours ago, this despite the current portion of the video being filmed indoors. Norman couldn't blame him; if he was a creep hired to direct a deplorable, incestual sex scene, he'd probably want to keep his identity shrouded, too.

Silvery and bushy, Roshi's facial hair buried the bottom half of his visage, a thick walrus moustache and long goatee shaped in a frown. He spoke very little English and relayed instructions in a thick accent and dramatic gestures which his chief camera operator, Todd Snap, a gangly boy with a bob of curly brown hair, translated in layman's terms.

Snap walked up to Norman in his red striped shirt and casually said, "He's asking if you even bothered to read the script."

Script? Norman stifled a laugh. Said 'script' was the epitome of lazy writing, a scene as dumb and improbable as you'd expect from your run-of-the-mill porn flick. A child could've shat on three sheets of paper, stuck them together and it would be better than this 'script'. Really, it was criminal how much Marc Stone was set to make from this unimaginative drivel; considering what he'd offered him and May to feature in his vision, Marc's cut could easily be seven figures. Norman didn't care though, just needed enough to ditch this godforsaken region once and for all. They'd only been given an hour and a half to internalise the script amidst wardrobe changes and swift makeovers – and in Norman's case, a long overdue shave and haircut. But, "Yeah, I read the damn script."

"Okay doke," Snap said. "I believe ya. The ol' man back there though, doesn't seem to think you did. Ah, maybe you could prove him wrong by, like, reciting the lines when it's your cue... or something?"

"Oh, is that what we're doing here?" Norman asked sarcastically. "I wish someone would've told me sooner!"

"Whoa, hey, hey. Chill, bro." He held up his camcorder. "I'm just the camera guy."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah." It was emasculating taking orders from a kid who barely looked older than his daughter. Granted, Snap seemed like a good seed, an aficionado at his own craft that somehow wound up in the wrong place at the wrong time, lending his talents to the likes of Marc Stone. "Okay, Mr Camera Guy. Just don't get too close to my daughter with that thing, you hear me?"

"Okay dok- wait. What thing? You mean my camera or..." His eyes trailed down suggestively.

Norman balled an angry fist. "Why I oughtta -"

"Whoa, whoa, hey, chill dude." He took a casual step back. "Only a little joke. Ha, ha. Actually, I've filmed so many of these things it's about as exciting as watching Slowpoke race. I don't even get boners anymore, dude."

His languid body language and manner of speech convinced Norman he was telling the truth. He might as well have been shooting stock footage. Poor kid, to be so young and desensitised to lovemaking. At least Norman could trust him to maintain a certain level of professionalism.

"Oi!" Roshi shouted from his director's chair. Befuddled, he raised his arms as if to say, 'what gives?'

"Oh, right." Snap remembered they were on set. "He says he's read the script and he'll try harder this time." He assured the cranky director with a thumbs-up then turned back to Norman. "Good luck. Oh and remember, her name's April not May." He winked before backing out of the shot.

Right. April. Norman tried to remember. The producers were kind enough to let them choose their own characters' names. May went with 'April' for reasons she didn't explain, though he assumed it was merely a lazy play on her actual name. Norman was even less imaginative and piggybacked off her moniker.

The director had them reset the scene. May stood outside again and Norman prepared to act shocked.

He hadn't been acting the first time. While the script gave a good indication of what outfit May, or rather April, would be wearing, nothing could've prepared him for seeing it on his daughter in person. The lines he'd memorised evaporated from the tip of his tongue. How was he going to get through the scene when he couldn't even get past the opening dialogue?

Crap, would he even get hard when the time called for it?

He began to think they'd signed on the dotted line a little too prematurely.

May second-guessed herself on the other side of the door. *What am I* doing? *What am I wearing*? Ugh! Maybe her dad was right. This whole thing was a bad idea.

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Being a seasoned Pokémon Coordinator, May had exhibited her talents throughout several Pokémon Contests in front of live audiences and filming crews alike, but the nerves she often fought before taking the stage had nothing on the Butterfree throwing a party in her stomach right now. At least in Contests, the expectations never eluded her. She knew exactly what to do and, when she didn't, she trusted herself to figure it out mid-competition. But this? This was a whole new undignified world. She had never taken a nude in her life and yet, before the sun went down, she'd be stark naked in front of a crowd of strangers filming her and her dad performing shameful acts on one another.

The ick factor crept into her bones and induced a shiver.

It only hit her now, trembling in front of the door, dreading the indecency on the other side. She glanced around, an anxious mess, adjusted her inadequate clothing although no one was around to see her except a creepily silent camera man stationed a short distance behind the porch steps. The skin-itching sensation of being recorded never left her, even between takes, the paranoia of his camera attempting to zoom up her skirt.

It could've been worse, she supposed, if Marc Stone had arranged for them to shoot in an actual neighbourhood, where she'd have zero control over how many passers-by stopped

and ogled her in all her Girl Scout sluttery. Mercifully, the threadbare script required no more than a single locale and any old mundane house would suffice. As it turned out, Marc Stone had such a house loitering in his spacious compound, a house (she'd learned from overhearing the filming crew's idle chitchats) Marc had used over a dozen times to film previous 'productions'. Alice, the boom operator, called it 'Marc's Fun House', and before it had earned that affectionate moniker, Marc had periodically rented it out to wealthy and prolific families in desperate need of a secluded getaway. Evidently, at some point, Marc figured he could up his profit by turning the property into an inconspicuous porn set.

"And... action!"

May jumped out of her musings, cleared her throat and knocked on the door.

As per the script, her dad opened up moments later, his tall lean physique ruling the entrance to Marc's Fun House. His long messy hair had been cut short to the raven bob she was used to and his overgrown caveman-beard reduced to a tame stubble furnishing his chiselled jawline. She tried to ignore how much better he looked than the night before, lest she forgets her lines again.

"D-Dad?" She widened her eyes in exaggerated shock. "What are you doing at Ms Petal's house? Shouldn't you be on a business trip?"

Norman – or Mr August while the cameras were rolling – reciprocated her shocked expression. "What do you mean what am I doing here? What are *you* doing here?! Shouldn't you be at tennis practice?"

May couldn't swing a racket to save her life. April, however, played on her high school team and went to practice every Saturday morning. Well, almost every Saturday morning. She deflected his wariness right back to his side of the court. "Wait a minute, is Ms Petal in there with you?" She tried to peek around his frame in the doorway. "Oh my God, Daddy, are you cheating on Mom?" Mr August nearly jumped out of his mule slippers. "What! No, sweetie! How could you even think that?" He stuck his neck out and scanned left to right, wary of nosy neighbours and passers-by. This wasn't the kind of conversation you had on the doorstep. "Come inside, come inside."

As soon as May stepped through the door, her gaze wandered to the large camera honed in on her. She kicked herself and looked away immediately. By far, the steepest learning curve involved pretending she couldn't see people she could see: the steady-handed camera operator to the left of her father, the young lady extending a boom mic over their heads, the straight-faced dictator sat high on his director's chair presiding over the scene like a commander overseeing his platoon. No one was there. She kept forgetting. It was just her and Mr August standing awkwardly in Ms Petal's house.

April was related to Mr August in the same way May was related to Norman. They didn't need method acting to engineer the dynamics of a father-daughter relationship. May had never lied to her dad about her whereabouts whilst galivanting around the neighbourhood in barely any clothes but, thanks to recent misfortunes, she did have parallel shades of personal experience to draw from. When her dubious moneymaking endeavours came to light, he was no less displeased and befuddled than Mr August appeared staring down his daughter.

"April, what the hell are you doing?"

He did such a good job at sounding annoyed, May recoiled and almost forgot her line again. "I, well, I'm selling Girl Scout cookies." Surprisingly, her shaky and uncertain delivery escaped a cry to 'cut!' She presented her box of cookies with a big, fake smile. "See!"

Mr August saw all right, and he scrunched up his nose at her chocolate chip delights. "Okay..." But that still didn't explain, "Why? And what the hell are you wearing?"

Honestly, in Mr August's shoes, she'd be asking the same thing. "Uh, because I need the money to buy... a new Xtransceiver?"

"Cut!" Roshi grumbled something and ordered Snap to come over.

"That was good," said the camera operator, "but he wants you to do it with a little more energy, a little more spunk."

"Spunk?" May asked uneasily.

"Yeah. Think, a bumptious little know-it-all with a bad attitude. Basically, ninety percent of teenagers. This should come natural to you."

May shot him an incredulous look. "Excuse me?"

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, hey. Chill, bro. I'm only the camera guy." He backed out of the shot holding his hands up.

May bit her tongue on a retort as the director yelled, "Take two. Action!"

She slipped back into character with a start. "Uh, because I need the money to buy a new Xtransceiver?" She poured sarcasm over her second attempt, adopting a tone she'd never use on her real father. "Like, hello, I've been saying it for weeks, and you don't wanna bump up my allowance."

Mr August hmphed. "Maybe if you did more chores around the house. But no, instead, you go around looking like a floozy trying to get people to buy your cookies!"

"Floozy?" April huffed. "This is standard issue uniform." Whatever organisation issued *this* as standard uniform wouldn't last long in the real world, May thought, or at least hoped so. Her dad stayed faithful to the script, ogling her scanty attire with disapproval before losing himself in the valley of her mountainous cleavage. The lecherous gleam in his eyes had become familiar to her in the past couple of months; it was the same leer many a randy boy fixed her in the woods, except ten times more uncomfortable coming from a family member. May understood he was only acting, but still. Both he and the camera zoomed in on her big bosom. His stare might've dragged on forever if their overlord didn't intervene.

"Cut!"

Norman punched the air. "Drat! Forgot my line again."

"Word of advice," Snap whispered, "You don't always have to follow the script down to the letter. We're shooting porn, people. You know the scenario. Go with the flow." The co-stars nodded thoughtfully. "Run it back."

"Floozy?" May repeated. "This is standard issue uniform!"

Mr August gave his daughter a onceover, unimpressed, lingered on her bosom long enough to be caught on camera, then sputtered his line. "That's a little, uh, are you sure they gave you the right size, honey?"

"Wha... don't you like it?"

"Well, I mean, it's not that I don't..."

"It's perfect!" May chimed in fabricated glee. April performed an 'innocent' twirl so her father (and the audience) could get a better look, the spinning skirt rising off her bottom, flashing the back of hot-pink panties. "Oh, Dad, never mind. You wouldn't know fashion if it Hyper Beamed you in the face." A statement true for both Mr August and the man playing him. "Don't try to change the subject. Are you cheating on Mom?"

"Never!" Norman rebuked instantly. Then his indignant features slackened as he remembered he wasn't Norman. "I mean, I..." Mr August struggled to find the best words to limit his culpability. "I... yeah, I might've..."

May found it endearing how difficult it was for him to say it, even in-character. "Oh my God, Dad!" April shrieked.

"But it was just this once!"

"And with Ms Petal?!" The horror on her face multiplied. "She used to babysit me when I was a child!"

"I know, I know." Mr August sighed. "Your mom and I, we're working through stuff right now. Like, tough stuff. We've hit a bit of a rough patch and..." He sighed again. "You know what, I don't expect you to understand. And I don't want to put any of this on you anyway. I know I'm wrong and I'm going to fix it, okay? I promise. I just need one thing from you."

April crossed her arms and quirked a brow. "...what?"

"I need you not to tell her you saw me here."

"You want me to lie to Mom?"

"No, no. Not *lie*, exactly, just, like... not mention it?"

Sounded like lying to her. "And how am I supposed to do that? We all live in the same house!" A house that was about to get infinitely more awkward regardless of the outcome of this discussion.

The melodramatic script had Mr August get down on his knees. "Please, sweetie. I promise I'll make it up to you. Anything you want."

"Hm..." April twirled one pigtail with her fingers, devising an adequate kickback for her silence. "If I do this for you, you have to buy cookies from me."

The look on his face turned from agonising dread to pure delight. "Absolutely!" He leapt to his feet like a man light from getting off easy. "How many boxes should I –"

"All of them." April didn't flinch. His face fell. "All 52 boxes."

"Honey, that's going to cost me over 250 Pokédollars! On Girl Scout cookies."

April shrugged. "That's how many I need to get my Rufflet Girl Scout Badge. I mean, it's either that or –"

"Fine," he ground his teeth. "I left my wallet upstairs. Look at you..." He shook his head with disgust, "out here blackmailing your old man. You really have changed, May."

"Cut!" The director shook his bald head in frustration.

Snap hurried over. "It's April. Not May."

"Oh, right." Norman facepalmed.

"You guys were so much better though! Do more of that." Snap winked. "The big man would've stopped you if he had a problem with it."

May was glad *somebody* enjoyed their performance. She hated it. Particularly the last bit when he used her real name. Could it have been a slip of his tongue? Possibly. But she couldn't help feel her actual dad concurred with part of the script. Just last night he'd accused her of changing for the worse, and here he was, double stamping his convictions through Mr August's voice. She hadn't heard a slip of his tongue; she'd heard a Freudian slip.

He still harboured resentment for her decision to strip for money.

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"And... action!"

"Look at you," Norman repeated, "out here blackmailing your old man. You really have changed, April." The line touched Norman unexpectedly. He felt for Mr August, forced to discover a side of his daughter better left undiscovered. Perhaps the most damning indictment was he could imagine May frolicking in something as skimpy as her delinquent character. Hell, he didn't have to imagine it; he saw it for himself whilst hidden in those bushes. "Is this how you like to make all your money now?"

"What...?"

"Blackmailing people into buying your cookies?"

"Oh," May said, her suspicions abated. She thought he might've been talking about something else, and she might've been right. "Uh, no? It's all on the up and up."

"Up and up, my ass. You mean to tell me you haven't done anything... questionable to sell Girl Scout cookies?"

"No way!" May retorted quickly. Then she remembered she wasn't May. "I mean, I might've..."

"April!"

"Only one time, I swear!"

Mr August crossed his arms and huffed. "You're in big trouble, young lady. Come here." He ushered her into the living room and sat her down in an armchair. "I need you to tell me everything that happened."

She fretted. "...everything?"

"Everything."

She itched her arm awkwardly. "I'm not sure you want to know everything, Dad."

He planted his elbows on his knees and leaned in fixing her a grave expression. "I do."

The air between them thickened. The room fell tense and silent. The cameras honed in on their facial expressions. Their eyes met and then –

May broke out laughing. Norman, too, suddenly dropped his serious face and chuckled at her reaction, at himself, at the lunacy of their situation. The director grumbled "cut" while the rest of the filming crew had a giggle at their contagious laughter.

Norman didn't realise how much he'd needed something to make light of their miserable predicament. For Arceus's sake, he was in the middle of shooting a porno with his own daughter! If he didn't laugh, he'd cry. The look of grave importance on his face coupled with the likelihood she'd forgotten her lines again was probably what led to her break in character. It was a serendipitous reminder they weren't who they were pretending to be. Snap cued them up for a retake and the co-stars tried again, a little lighter and less guilt-ridden pushing onwards.

"Tell me everything," Mr August demanded.

"Well, um, I, like..." April stumbled on her words as dictated by the script.

He thought pitching forthright questions might give direction to the interrogation and present her the opportunity to marshal her thoughts. "Did you flirt with any older men?"

"...yes?" she admitted shyly, wary of his reaction.

Mr August kept a poker face and pushed forth with his questioning. "Did any of these men invite you in their houses?"

"Yes. One."

"Who?"

"Mr Fillaho."

"Mr Fillaho! Ugh! Always knew there was something rotten about that creepy neighbour. And you went in?"

"Yes..."

"And... what happened next?"

"Um –"

"Did he try to make any moves on you?"

"Uh, kinda?"

Mr August frowned. "What do you mean 'kinda'?"

"He said I was really pretty... and that he liked my uniform."

Mr August eyed her long legs as she sat in the armchair, one shapely thigh crossed over the other, her skirt so high half her bare ass cheek kissed the cushion. "You don't say..." he murmured absently, "and did he mention what part of your uniform he liked the most?"

"Um... up here." She motioned across her chest.

Reluctantly, Norman followed the script's directions: he took the box of cookies out of the Girl Scout's hands and away from obstructing her salacious bust. Somehow, the tiny white top crammed the enormity of her breasts in all its snugness, albeit not without puffing out massive cleavage that tantalised the eyes. Mr August could see why that dirty old man took a liking to his teenage daughter. And Norman doubted he'd be any different than those boys throwing Pokédollars at May to bare her chest. He could admit, to himself at least, his daughter boasted one of the most magnificent racks on the planet, overshadowing the size and perkiness of her mother's. Norman didn't blame Mr August for ogling, and ogling. And ogling.

May looked a little uncomfortable, though it was impossible to tell how much was down to believable acting and how much was the cringe factor of her dad leering at her big juicy tits. Well, she could glower all she liked but this whole thing was her idea, and he was only following the script! Norman propped up his disconcerting behaviour on the back of those two facts. And, talking about the script, he recited, "I can see why. Mr Fillaho must've been really overjoyed to see you on his doorstep."

April gave an awkward laugh.

"So... what happened next? After he took you inside?"

"Um, we talked a bit. I showed him my cookies and -"

"Was that all you showed him?" Mr August interjected.

She looked down, embarrassed, then uttered a timid, "no."

"Oh, sweetie," he said in his concerned father voice, "he asked you to show him your tits, didn't he?"

April nodded shyly.

"And you did, didn't you?"

She nodded again. "He said he'd buy some boxes if I did."

"Mhm. Of course he'd say that. So, how did you...?"

"How did I what?"

"Show him your tits."

April looked confused by what she'd heard. "Well, I mean, I just kinda... pulled down my top, like this." She mimicked the motions.

But mimicking wasn't enough for Mr August. "Go on."

"Go on? You don't mean –" She shot him an incredulous eye. "You don't want me to actually take down my top right now?" She laughed at herself for even asking the question. But Mr August's face remained deadpan. "Like, seriously?" she asked again. "Like, take it down for real for real?"

He gave a small shrug. "If you don't want me to tell your mother, you need to own up to everything, April."

Apparently, in porn logic, owning up to her transgressions involved re-enacting said transgressions in front of her oddball father. From the moment they had read it in the script, Norman and May anticipated apprehension when they got to this point. She glanced to her right, where Snap stuck a hand out from behind the camera and gave her a thumbs-up, encouraging her to proceed. The angst in May's eyes ran deeper than the character she was portraying. Whilst Norman remained out of shot, a subtle nod reassured his nervous daughter and gave her permission to do what everyone on set eagerly awaited her to do. May squeezed her fingers into the snugness between her bodice and her jampacked breasts. The rush of nervy excitement that had afflicted Norman in the bushes returned threefold. It had all ended one big, penis-dwindling disappointment and spawned some notion of unfinished business between his eyes and her bosom. There'd be no unruly runts to sabotage her unveiling this time. He wiped his brow. *Jeez, am I sweating?* No other pair of tits had worked him up this much. Norman was one inch from sliding off the edge of his seat when she finally tugged on her bodice.

It didn't take much of a tug either, barely a flick of her wrists, and – *WHAM* – out popped her incredibly large, incredibly perky melons, bursting into the open as they eagerly escaped suffocation. Pink nipples flicked out of their confines as the tit-meat surrounding them wobbled free. Her cleavage ate the 'kie' and 'Gi' of her 'Cookie Girl' sash, sinking the green strip in the crevice of her mounds.

Mr August gawked. "No... bra...? That part of the dress code, too?"

April turned her crimson face away. "I might've made slight adjustments," she mumbled through the corner of her mouth.

"Yes. I... noticed." And so, too, did Norman notice; his teenage daughter bore the chest of a full-grown woman. Before, he'd ogled her development in secret, but now, she knew what he knew. She saw him seeing her, watched his eyes glaze over with sordid admiration, and Norman imagined her estimation of him as a father took a hit. Granted, he still had the excuse of acting to fall back on. "Wow," he said, whilst trying to remember his next line, "uh, so, after you did that, he bought the cookies from you?"

"Not quite..."

"Not quite?" Mr August said in a 'tell me more' tone of voice.

"Well, I had to shake them a little."

"Shake them a little?"

"Yeah. Kind of like..." April shimmied and her untethered mounds put on a jiggly demonstration. Her father was transfixed. Snap crept closer, training his camera on her dancing tits, and gestured for her to stand up. April found better mobility on her feet, her boisterous bosom swinging side to side with nipple-swaying vigour. She put her hands behind her back in apparent bashfulness, but then made her big titties bounce from only the energy generated in her bobbing hips and torso.

A big thumbs-up from Snap.

Norman's mouth hung agape. Her seamless transitions through several tit-shaking, boob-hopping variations impressed and frightened him at the same time. She was a little *too* good at stirring the milkshake. Just how often had she been tormenting horny little boys out there? Too often. She appeared more confident shaking what her mother gave her than she did spouting lines. Fortuitously enough, his little exhibitionist had trained herself for this precise moment, for trumpeting her mammaries in all their massive, magnificent glory before an intimate audience.

He'd never forget how she'd always come running to him when she was a little girl, eager to show off some drawing she'd coloured in or some splodge-shaped Mudkip she'd painted with her chubby little fingers, anything for his validation or a pat on the head, or a 'Wow! Well done, sweetie! Now run along and show it to Mommy!' Simpler times. If only parenting remained that elementary. Now here she was, over two feet taller, parading her latest (perhaps greatest) talent yet in front of Daddy's appraising eyes. It would've been easy to criticise her, harder to acknowledge the pride and modesty she'd sacrificed to right his wrongs, to get them back home when all other roads looked inexpedient.

Well done, sweetie.

April concluded her vigorous stint of cardio with an exhausted "phew" then plopped back down on the armchair, her plump performers giving one last wobble before settling on stillness. "Wow." Norman's amazement showed through his character. "That was... wow. And then he bought your cookies?" asked Mr August.

"Yes, but, um..." She fiddled with one pigtail. "He offered to buy twice as many boxes if I... did a little more."

Mr August gave a slow nod as his imagination coloured in the details. "Yeah, I get it."

"You do?" she said nervously.

He stood up and closed the distance between them. Although she'd expected his approach from reading the script, her face grew nervous as his crotch zoomed in on her. She looked up like a timid child. "This is what that dirty old bastard wanted, isn't it?" Mr August unfastened his robe. "I need you to show Daddy *exactly* what he made you do for those cookies." He opened his robe and, once the unmistakable bulge in his boxers hit her sights, May turned away and got up.

"Oh my God," she muttered with her face in her palms, "I can't do this." She walked off set and out into the backyard.

The baffled director shrugged and issued a needless, "Cut." He and everyone else on set exchanged anxious expressions. They had no show without their lead starlet.

Norman stood there flummoxed, looking every part the sleazy slob in a bathrobe. Concern weighed heavily on his features as he regarded the backdoor. "May..."

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May looked to the clouds and questioned her life choices. Who wouldn't after confronting the image of their dad's tented undergarments? Maybe she was wrong for thinking she could go through with this after all. On the flip side, her dad appeared to have shaken off his pre-performance jitters and readied himself to plough through the scene. Either, he had really committed himself to the character and his promise to do things her way, or... he was genuinely looking forward to fulfilling their contractual obligations. *No*, May thought dreadfully, it couldn't be the latter. It couldn't be that her father actually *wanted* to dance the dirty tango with her. But... guys couldn't fake erections, could they?

The door creaked behind her.

May glanced over her shoulder to see Snap stepping into the backyard. He'd left his camera inside, suggesting he was coming to her as a concerned pal as oppose to a mercenary of the filming crew. She hadn't decided if she could trust him but, in her current state, his appearance caused less anxiety than if it had been her father emerging to check up on her.

"Everything all right?"

"What do you think?" May said. "I just had to see my dad's semi up close."

"That's rough." Snap pulled out a cigarette and a lighter.

"You smoke?"

"Uh, yeah?" He lit the end of his cancer stick. "The things I've had to see and capture on camera... trust me, kid, you'd be smoking, too." He took a puff and coughed up smoke straight away.

"Right... when did you start, yesterday?"

"Something like that."

He really did seem like the kind of kid who'd try anything to appear different from the crowd. "How old are you anyway?"

"Same age as Ash."

"Yeah, that makes sense – wait, you know Ash??" May was stunned. This was the first time anyone in Dytopiah referenced a personal acquaintance of hers outside of the region.

"Yeah, once upon a time," Snap said nonchalantly. "And I know you know him, too."

Her mind was blown. So many questions. She'd been isolated so long she'd forgotten what it was like to connect with anyone on common ground (besides her fellow castaways). "How did you mee-"

"Does it matter? We're here now. If you really wanna talk about it, maybe we can, after we're done with all this icky business." He nodded his head back at Marc's Fun House.

"Fair enough." There was a time and place for everything. "So, how did you wind up in Dytopiah?"

Snap took another puff. "That doesn't matter either," he said between another fit of coughs. "Just another sap story. Gone from taking pictures of wild pokémon to taking pictures of wild babes in the buff. And now this. Heh. I'll spare you the details. When you think about it though, being here is not all much different than holding down a nine-to-five."

"Huh?"

"I mean, we're exchanging our time and expertise – maybe even some of our values – to ensure our survival, regardless of how much we might love or hate what we're doing."

"Uh..." May thought this whole experience was *vastly* different than working a nineto-five, but she wasn't keen on sparking a futile debate right now. Time and place. "Maybe? I can see where you're coming from though."

"What I'm trying to say is, maybe you'd have an easier time if you looked at this shoot like a job instead of the be-all and end-all of your existence."

True, perhaps, but much easier said when you weren't staring at the excited nether regions of the man that sired you. "I'm trying."

"You read the script before you got here, didn't you?"

"Yup."

"So, you had to know everything that's happening in there was always gonna happen."

"Knowing it and living it are two different things," May argued. "It's complicated."

"Yeah, it is." He took another puff, but stifled his cough this time.

"Doesn't seem like it for him though." She looked back at the house where her father and a filming crew awaited her return. "I guess it would be a little easier – and less icky – if I knew it was as hard for him as it is for me."

Snap shrugged. "It looked pretty hard for him where I was standing."

May narrowed her eyes and punched him in his arm. "You're not helping!"

"Whoa, whoa, hey, chill out! I'm only the camera guy."

"Tell me though..." She lowered her voice. "Did you give him anything to help him... you know... *rise* to the occasion?"

"Your old man?" Snap shook his head. "I offered, but nope. That 'semi' you saw – that was all him." Exactly what May had feared he would say. "Anyway, we should get back in there, yeah? Trust me, we all want to get this over and done with. It all hinges on you and your dad. The quicker you get things right, the less retakes we have to do, the sooner we all get to go home. Make sense?"

May nodded thoughtfully. "Yeah."

"Fantastic."

"Oh, one more thing."

"Yeah?"

May pulled the half-burnt cigarette from his mouth and smeared it under her shoe. "Better." She beamed then headed back to the house.

Snap half-smirked at his tarnished cig and followed right after her.

The silence on set amplified the sound of the door knob twisting. Everyone perked up. Norman dropped the script and rose to his feet as May returned in more collected fashion than she'd fled. The crew was on their toes waiting to see what she'd do and hear what she'd say. Snap walked in a few steps behind her. Norman tried to read his face for details and received a sly wink in return.

. . .

Must've gone well then?

May sat down in the same armchair she'd escaped minutes ago, breathed in, then out, and said, "Okay. I'm ready."

Norman took her proclamation with a pinch of salt. "Honey, are you sure? I didn't mean to freak you out. It's not too late for us to stop if you –"

"I'm ready," she reiterated, staring blank ahead. "We already signed the contract. The time to turn back is behind us. Let's just... we can do this. The sooner we get it right, the sooner we get out of here."

"Well, yeah." Her sudden show of fortitude took him aback. Whatever that kid had said to her really did the trick. "You're not wrong. I just want to be extra sure that you're –"

"I am ready," she said, staring him dead in the eyes. And if her words weren't persuasive enough, she emphasised her conviction by pulling down her bodice, leaving her breasts in the same state of nudity she had before.

Something fluttered in his chest at their reintroduction. Her capricious response was good enough for the filming crew; the director straightened his back in his seat, the boom operator raised her mic overhead, and Snap and the photographer, Dennis, aimed their cameras at the co-stars in position. With everyone else on board, Norman could only shrug. "Okay." Just seeing his daughter's exposed chest reinvigorated the blood flow below his waist with alarming ease and haste. By the time Roshi called out "action!", Norman was good and ready, too. He unfastened his robe and repeated the last line, "I need you to show Daddy *exactly* what he made you do for those cookies."

This time, May rooted her behind to the chair, even as every fibre of her being must've been screaming at her to look away.

Mr August didn't keep his daughter waiting. He pulled up his vest and relieved himself of his boxers with a dramatic tug for the camera. May had been instructed to act shocked but, when the long, thick, meaty slab of manhood sprung from his waistband and swooshed an inch past her face, very little acting was necessary. The monstrosity entered stage right with a mighty thwack against his abdomen. April recoiled as the smack echoed in her ears, her eyes bulging to their fullest, her mouth frozen in astonishment. The dick reveal would not require a retake.

It helped that her first glimpse happened right then and there, Norman thought, in front of the camera. Although it worked out in their favour, he hadn't been holding back in hopes of prising a genuine reaction from his daughter, but rather in hopes she wouldn't need to see his member. But see it she did, extended hands-free across the width of her eyes, only her shocked mouth visible beneath its girth and the large sweat-drop trailing her forehead above. Her big, blue, trembling eyes showed Norman straightaway that that neighbour boy wasn't packing nearly as much. It was a reaction he'd observed on many a pretty face before meeting his wife, but one he'd never expected to see on his daughter.

"Good stuff!" The photographer snapped. "Hold it right there – lovely!" Dennis snapped another. Both Norman and May were kind of frozen in the moment, making it easy for him to circle them and capture a dozen stills from different angles. He knelt down at Mr August's crotch for a close-up. "Whoa. Big boy, aren'tcha?" *Snap!* "Daddy's packing, alright. Beautiful knob you got there, sir." *Snap! Snap!* "Seriously, look how pumped and sturdy it is. Such a beautiful monster. Sir, your manhood is quite the standout specimen, a glorious phallus sculpted by the Legendaries themselves for this industry." "For fuck's sake," Alice said, "stop being a creep and just take the damn photos."

"Well, excuse me for trying to make the talent more comfortable."

"Every time you open your mouth you make them more *un*-comfortable!"

"All right, all right." Dennis rolled his eyes. "Sheesh," he muttered for only Norman's ears, "someone's got a boom mic stuck up their arse this morning, didn't they?"

"I heard that!"

Norman got lost trying to follow all the quarrelling voices around him. In the end, he shrugged. He had his own internal conflicts to contend with and not a moment to spare paying attention to theirs.

Dennis got over Alice's criticisms and returned focus to what Marc Stone paid him to do. The bespectacled photographer motioned for Norman to shift two steps to the left. He did, awkwardly. The repositioning moved his erection away from obscuring the Girl Scout's face. "Perfect! Now you." He pointed at May. "I need you to grab it right at the bottom and hold it up like this." He demonstrated a firm grip.

May shot him a look that said, 'you want me to do what now?' Her irises tentatively slid to the corners of her eyes, sizing up the task in her peripheral vision. Norman noted her hesitation and nodded his approval to make contact.

One by one, her coy digits curled around his shaft, and met so much girth her fingertips barely reached her thumb on the other side. Her gentle grip was indicative of someone very cautious about treading forbidden ground. They avoided eye contact, wise not to turn an awkward situation even more awkward. He stared at the walls and the ceiling and the windows and the director's bald head (anything that wasn't his daughter) as May pulled slutty faces demonstrated by the photographer: one moment she pursed her lips a breath away from his cock-head, and the other she stuck her tongue out provocatively. Dennis took headshots of each pose before moving on to the next. All Norman had to do was stay hard while his anatomy was turned into a phallic prop, held up in all lurid manners beside her face; one shot even compared his length to her forearm. He just about beat her by half an inch.

"Lovely!" Dennis beamed after the last shot. "And that's it."

"That's all?" May asked, dick still in hand.

"For now. I'll do more as it feels appropriate. Carry on." He stepped aside and Snap setup a tripod in his place.

The camera operator adjusted his equipment then gave the co-stars a thumbs-up. "It's all on you, guys."

Norman fought a flutter of nerves. "R-right." The director allowed them all of six seconds to get back into character before demanding action.

Mr August cast down a leering gaze on his half-exposed daughter. May conveniently had his erection in her hand when the cameras continued rolling. April looked up at his towering figure through quivering eyes. Norman remembered his next line.

"Show me," Mr August said, "how you convinced him to buy your cookies."

"I, uh –"

"Licked it, didn't you?" His suggestion blanched her features. One beat later, she conceded a slow nod. "Show me."

April parted her lips and her pink little tongue poked forth. She drew towards his enlarged mushroom tip. Mr August shut his eyes, perhaps out of guilt, perhaps out of imminent pleasure. Then he felt it; something cool and moist dabbing the end of his erection. *Oh my*...

The hesitant dabs turned into broader strokes and soon she was full on flicking at his frenulum. Norman swallowed every sound threatening to escape his throat, every admission his daughter's tongue felt incredible on his tip. She must've kept her eyes closed, too; how else could she muster the gusto behind those long, rigorous licks? Whatever she was doing, however she was doing it, it was working. She had his dick growing even harder. As her courage flourished, so too did her reach, her strokes wetting the underside of his rigid shaft from bottom to top. He shivered with illicit delight. It had been far too long.

"Psst! Psst!"

His bliss was interrupted. He cracked an eye open and scoped out Snap on the sidelines. The camera operator pointed two fingers at his eyes then motioned them towards May, then levelled the same gesture to her motioning towards her father. Norman understood his directions straightaway. It wasn't enough his daughter was tongue-stroking his cock on camera, the scene required them to make eye contact, too.

Mr August wrenched his eyes open. The pigtailed girl wore an expression of sweet innocence, juxtaposed with a raging hard-on against her cheek. What a little hussy April turned out to be. Mrs August would least be pleased. But if April stuck to her task, maybe her mother didn't have to know. "And then what?" he asked.

"And then..."

"And then you sucked it, didn't you?"

"Daddy..."

"Honey, you know the deal." He nodded down at his waiting cock. "Show me."

April aligned his big dick with her little mouth and gulped down a lump of nerves. She opened wide. He braced himself. She sealed her lips around his bulbous head. Then mopped her tongue over the dome of his sensitive flesh. She scrunched her face a little, in what he assumed was a reflex to sampling her daddy's precum. He had the complete opposite reaction; some degenerate part of Mr August was aroused by the justice of his little girl tasting him. It felt apt that the bitterness he held towards her slutty behaviour wound up smeared on her tongue. "You like the taste of cock, don't you?" he mocked. "Go on. Have some more." He gently pushed two inches through her orifice.

"Mmph!"

"Suck it," he demanded, like the script ordered him to.

April began working her tongue on cue and rocking her head back and forth in gentle rhythm. *It's really happening. My own daughter's... giving me head.* On and off script, it was a depraved reality Norman and Mr August shared. Whenever Norman and May shied away from eye contact, Snap reminded them to re-engage, for the scene's sake he insisted. Since neither co-star was keen on shooting retakes, they followed his directions to the best of their limited experience. Her big blue eyes looked up at him as she sucked incestuous dick.

Things got intense. The stringent eye contact made the moment inescapable. They'd crossed a boundary they could never uncross, with nearly half a dozen witnesses surrounding them. Incidentally, staring at one another helped them forget there were other people skulking in the room, at least when Dennis's camera wasn't flashing sporadically mid-fellatio. Norman shuddered to think what Marc's client would do with all these images of his daughter's innocent face stuffed with cock.

April surprised Mr August when she abruptly hastened her sucking.

"Ooh," he cooed, "now we're going somewhere."

She pulled back and lurched forward far enough to consume one-third of his length, again and again. This was much more the groove and cadence Norman enjoyed his blowjobs. Like mother, like daughter. Well, not quite; it had been years since Caroline put this much passion into servicing him. They still enjoyed a healthy sex life but familiarity had a way of dulling profound sensations. The irony was May probably wouldn't be putting this much effort into it either if not for the cameras and tacky script. Oh well, Norman might've been destined for lacklustre blowjobs the rest of his life, but not Mr August.

"Psst! Psst!"

What now? Can't a guy enjoy a decent blowjob from his daughter without some git interrupting him?

Snap mimicked a talking mouth with his hand. Oh, right. The gesture reminded Norman of the brief he'd gotten before shooting began and, more specifically, two keystone rules they'd drilled into his head: one, 'hold your load' until such a time the director permitted him to release and, more pertinent to Snap's signal, 'talk your way through the scene'. Supposedly, the quickest and dirtiest way to convey their characters' thoughts was to outright speak them. The client expected a lot of saucy, if not lazy, exposition to pad out the action. Norman would never say half the shit they'd scripted him to in a real-world scenario, but hey, this wasn't the real world, and he wasn't Norman.

"Yeah, that's it," Mr August encouraged her huskily, "show Daddy how you sold them cookies." Norman cringed on the inside but got the thumbs-up from Snap to keep going. May didn't let his seedy comments break her out of character. The cock-gobbling Girl Scout serviced Mr August with much appreciated gusto. "Ohhh," he moaned despite himself, "April... you little minx..."

Said little minx twisted the base of his shaft whilst bobbing sloppily on the top half. She took his breath away, more amazing than she had the right to be. Well, of course, this wasn't the first time she'd got her hands on dick. Like her promiscuous character, May had admitted to sexual relations behind her father's back. It hadn't been a full 24 hours since Norman found out and, while he'd supressed his disappointment to a degree, he was far from done processing the revelation. Unresolved feelings toyed with his head, morphed April's face into May's and Mr August's cock into Brendan's. *Is that why she's so good at this?* Had she been visualising that little pipsqueak this whole time?

Norman grunted. "You really do love sucking dick." There was a bitterness to his tone. "Don't you?" The pointed question evoked a flicker of uncertainty on her face. She must've asked herself if they were still acting. Whether it was April or May, he couldn't know for sure, but the Girl Scout pumping and tongue-massaging his cock hummed in the affirmative – yes, she really loved sucking dick. "Say it." He unburdened her chops of his muffling manhood and allowed her to obey.

Two ragged gulps of air steadied her composure. "I... love sucking dick..."

Mr August was stunned, Norman even more so. She really took ownership of that line, almost like... she actually meant it. Now Norman had to ask himself just how many times did she and that neighbour boy do the dirty? Once or twice... a week? Every day they were out journeying together? Did she sneak him into her room when he and her mother were sleeping? Norman was infuriated, despite the only evidence being planted by paranoia. One time was too many! He thought they agreed she'd wait till she was 21? Well, if running around and celebrating how much she loved sucking dick was the way she chose to live, he could certainly treat her accordingly.

"Heh, you little slut." He put his hand atop her beret hat and angled her forehead upwards so that her eyes were staring up at his manhood throbbing angrily. "Open your mouth." She looked nervous but did as she was told. "Stick your tongue out." She complied. He held her head in place with his left hand then grabbed his cock with the right and slammed it on her tongue repeatedly, a resentful judge hammering down his meat mallet to reign order. "Like dick, do you? Then you should be loving this." Each thwack sprayed spittle off her jutting tongue. April took her punishment without rebuttal as camera flashes captured stills of her daddy's dick landing on her stuck-out runaway. Mr August wagged his cock side to side across his daughter's parted lips and her breath oscillated as the bulbous head swept on and off her orifice. "Like being a nasty little Girl Scout?" She moaned a meek 'mhm' like the cock-starved floozy she was. Mr August obliged her.

"Mmmpphhh...!"

"Uuaah!" His dick butted its way into her warm, little cavern, his meaty girth stretching her lips to their fullest. Mr August gave his daughter more than she deserved, half of his baby-arm shlong stuffing her face to the brim. Who did she think she was, blackmailing her own father into buying her cookies? He'd make sure she earned every penny, starting by renting out the space between her rosy cheeks.

Mr August put both hands on her temples and kept her green beret hat in place as he pumped in and out of her face. Outlined in their pre-coital briefing, 'red' was the safe word either performer could invoke to cease any sexual activity at a moment's notice, but it was kind of hard to say anything that didn't sound like 'mmmppghhhumm' while throbbing wood punched at your throat like a battering ram. Norman lost himself in punishing his daughter for loving dick by nearly choking her with one. Squelchy throat noises and a chorus of "ncguh, ncguh, ncguh" followed his cock to-and-fro her orifice, slobber overflowing from her used mouth and dribbling all over her exposed tits. Every so often, she'd tap his thigh three times in lieu of employing 'red' and the secondary signal would slow his thrusting when it became too deep or fierce. Mercifully, for her sake, Norman still had enough wits about him to spare her throat.

Spit lathered Mr August's cock when he finally extracted it. A long string of saliva clung from her bottom lip before breaking as he pulled away. April looked winded, took a moment to catch her breath and relax her facial muscles. Norman found some consolation (and pride) in knowing May wasn't accustomed to his proportions. If he had shoved in any more than half of his manhood, he would've been fucking her oesophagus.

Dennis stepped up wielding his hand camera. "We'll need a few more shots." He had Norman stuff her mouth again and turn to get the best angle of her cheek jutting out. *Snap!* Then he pointed the lens down from above, ensuring her spit-drenched cleavage made the backdrop. *Snap! Snap!* May appeared every bit the sloppy slut she was portraying and any one of these explicit shots would make for an appropriate cover photo. Before filming began, Norman imagined he'd want to distance himself from the whole ordeal the second they wrapped up, but all the camera flashes going off stirred some curiosity to take a gander at the end product. Not that he wanted to relive face-fucking his teenage daughter in any way! Of course not! He was just... curious. And that curiosity addled his brain as Dennis *snapped*, *snapped*, *snapped* away. Snap rearranged the performers during the short break in shooting. Norman was moved onto the armchair and May positioned in front of him. They avoided speaking or even glancing at each other whilst the cameras were latent, not quite prepared to abandon the pretence of their characters. Dennis complimented Norman's ability to sustain his erection between takes, but it probably had less to do with him, and more to do with the lack of erections for the past seven odd months, at least none he could appease in the way he would've preferred to. His dick stood at full mast raring to continue.

"Action!"

April bent over and the back of her pleated skirt rose, granting the strategically placed camera a shot of her pink undies. Between her parted legs, her dangling breasts bobbed to the sounds of sloppy suction. Mr August lounged with his legs spread further apart than hers, his husky grunts and groans barely audible above her noisy chugging. While her pert rear and the underside of her bouncy bosom made for erotic viewing, Snap sought to provide the customer several angles. He picked up the camera and panned it round the right side of the bent-over blowjob.

"Hoooh yeah, just like that," Mr August encouraged his daughter. The fraught tapping on his thighs ceased now that she controlled the length of cock taken in with each swoop of her head. "Keep this up and – ohhh, fuck – I might just have to – urgggh – buy every damn box you got for next week, too." She smirked around his cock. "Would you like that, sweetie?" She moaned an emphatic 'mhhmmm!' through her mouthful. "Then you better not fucking stop."

She showed no signs of it.

When her back started to cause her discomfort, she bent her legs into a low squat whilst keeping her lips latched to his veiny pillar. It was during this transition Norman noticed Snap had moved round the armchair and was filming from above his left shoulder.

The camera operator whispered past his ear, "eyes up," reminding May to connect with their would-be audience. "Good. Now slow it down." She looked deep into the lens

while she languidly, sensually, roved her moist lips over the swollen head of his penis, seemingly allowing the viewer to imagine themselves in Mr August's enviable position. Fortunately (or unfortunately), Norman didn't have to imagine.

The soft touch of her lips and the slick of her tongue had him clenching his butt cheeks on the chair and wrestling moans. It took all his willpower not to grab her little head and thrust upwards through her skull till fountains of jizz flooded her gullet. He'd already been warned about busting too early and the only thing worse than shooting a porno with his teenage daughter was having to start all over again.

Mr August took the much tamer approach of coiling her long pigtails in his fists whilst allowing her to rock her head at her own pace. "Look at you go," he said breathlessly, "Really like the taste of Daddy's dick, don't you?" That one was hard for May to nod along to, even cock-deep in character. He liked that she was ashamed and yet couldn't stop herself either. "I bet I taste better than that neighbour boy, too, huh?"

May lowered her eyebrows and bunched them together.

That wasn't part of the script.

She pulled his cock out of her mouth and turned to storm off set for the second time.

Shit. Norman had slipped up. 'Neighbour' and 'neighbour boy' were only a word apart, but to May and Norman the difference was monumental, the implications traversing fiction and reality. If she hadn't deduced it already, she certainly deduced now that her dad still had a bone to pick with her secret boyfriend. Oh well. Norman was done hiding it, done pretending they could sweep it under the rug. He'd make sure his feelings were heard, even under the guise of their cheesy porn scenario.

"Hey, where do you think you're going, young lady?" His stern fatherly voice rooted her to the spot. "We're not done here, April."

The filming crew looked puzzled by this abrupt divergence from the script, but the director held off from yelling 'cut' when May turned back to her father.

"Come here. Sit." He patted his lap.

May gave him a wary onceover. While it was a command he'd dished out regularly to her and her brother growing up, he'd never done it pantless before. Again, Norman winked, suggesting he wasn't really mad and it was all part of the character. The sly gesture was enough to convince her to take up the vacant space on his lap.

Snap shrugged and the cameras kept rolling.

"Now listen, sweetie, did you really think I wouldn't find out?" he muttered in her ear vaguely. "You know you shouldn't be keeping things from Daddy." For April, that meant whoring herself out to sell cookies; for May, that meant Brendan. "You know it hurts Daddy when you keep dirty little secrets."

The tenor in his voice was unexpectedly heartfelt. She gave a sympathetic, "Yeah..."

"I don't like it when other guys look at you," Mr August continued. "When you show them these..." He leered down at her chest and whispered, "Fat, juicy, extraordinary tits of yours..." He ogled the pink buds poking through strands of her long pigtails, then brushed the tresses aside for the cameras to appreciate her large areolae and stubby nipples. A light touch of embarrassment mingled with the blush makeup on her cheeks. The last time he had her mounted on his lap she was a quarter the size and flat as an ironing board, drumming not an ounce of temptation in him. Now, even if he wanted to resist, the production obliged him not to. "They're so special. I bet that grubby old bastard couldn't wait to put his hands on them. Sort of like... this."

He raised his right hand to his daughter's bare breast.

May gave a small shudder, her bosom rebelling against incestual touch.

Norman whispered, "It's okay, pumpkin. We can do this." He turned into Mr August and said aloud, "Oh, honey, your tits are so soft and incredible. I bet he touched them like this, didn't he?" Mr August went on to re-enact the neighbour's supposed groping. He roamed his mitt-sized hand over the roundness of her breast. The script gave him license to knead her supple mound and he wasted no film taking advantage of it.

Sheesh, May, when did your body get so erotic? If you weren't my daughter...

Norman stopped himself from completing that thought.

Nonetheless, with all eyes and cameras on him, he lived out the fantasies of many a horny boy wandering the woods, running his palm across the plump tits they'd only gotten to see from a distance. May wasn't writhing and wriggling like she had been when those bullies accosted her. She made an unlikely exception to her 'no touch' rule and, after a minute of his much more tender, much more expert handling, he felt her easing into Daddy's lap. The tension in her muscles dissipated. She loosened her shoulders and relaxed her back on his recently waxed chest. As much as Norman was performing for the cameras, the featherlike strokes circling her neckline and trailing down her cleavage stirred his daughter in much the same way it worked on her mother.

"You like that, sweetie?" he mouthed in her ear.

She responded with a breathy moan, "Mhm."

"That's good," said Mr August. "From now on, no one else gets to touch my sweet little Girl Scout like this, okay? You don't want Daddy to feel hurt again, do you?"

April shook her head gently.

"Good girl. No more neighbours, no more ... secret boyfriends. No one."

She nodded in a dreamy haze. "Mhm."

"No one except Daddy," he breathed huskily in her ear.

"Mhm..."

"Say it. Daddy wants to hear you say it, sweetie."
"No one..." April mewled from his erogenous touch. "No one gets to feel me except Daddy."

Mr August grinned behind her ear. A part of Norman did, too. He almost wished it was May talking, assuring him she'd revert to the sweet innocent girl she once was, but he knew it was impossible. The sooner he ridded himself of that fantasy the better. May was a child no longer. She was very nearly a full-fledged woman now, a woman with ample breasts that craved stimulation. So, after skirting atop her cleavage for a good while, his hand made a triumphant return to her bosom, two fingers flanking her right nipple as he squeezed down on the malleable flesh beneath it.

"Ngaah!"

The moan rushed out her lips with such volume and abruptness, her face turned red with embarrassment. Everyone on set had just witnessed a genuine expression of her arousal.

"You like how Daddy plays with your nipples?" He tried to divert her attention back to the script. Albeit, the constant nipple stimulation only made it harder for May to get her lines out, and yet, her jittery reaction played well enough for the cameras. They allowed the take to continue, allowed him to keep groping the busty teenager sat in his lap. "Oh, baby girl, you're getting turned on by this."

April blushed furiously. "Yeah... it feels good, Daddy..."

Snap appeared a short distance in front of them, setup his camera about half the armchair's height, then made a parting gesture with his hands, pulling palms far away from each other till Norman acted on the prompt.

"Well then," Mr August said, "let's get you even more comfortable."

He squeezed his right hand between the unbelievably soft flesh of her thighs, pulled her right one to the side, then her left one the opposite direction. The rearrangement, instigated by Snap, had her legs fully separated atop her father's lap with a crotch shot of her pink panties staring down the camera. And what a shot it was, divulging the plumpness of

her vulva through a luscious cameltoe. Norman couldn't see it from his vantage but, if Snap's emphatic thumbs-up was any indication, his daughter looked quite the peach down there.

She played up her shyness and pushed a hand down on her skirt.

"You know you can trust me, right?" He reached round with his other hand and placed it over hers. "Daddy will take good care of you." He gently pulled her hand away as his silky voice unarmed her. "Better than any man, child or boy ever could." Norman felt that true of himself, although he'd never had the inclination to apply it sexually. Mr August, on the other hand, had stumbled on the perfect excuse. "You do still want me to buy those cookies, don't you?"

April gave it two seconds of thought, then nodded. Wow. Nothing could get in the way of this Girl Scout's entrepreneurial spirit! Not if the lazy writers had anything to say about it.

Mr August looked calm and collected on the outside, but Norman's heart was pounding against her back, a concoction of nerves and guilt and excitement he hadn't felt since he was about fifteen and his first girlfriend snuck him into her bedroom while her parents were away and her older sister was preoccupied watching movies with her boyfriend in the dim-lit living room. He had the same thought then as he did now. *This is really happening*. Like then, the object of his temptation, well, tempted him; April raised the hem of her skirt ever so subtly, inviting him to plod along with their scripted interaction.

An invitation he couldn't turn down.

Daddy's hand crept up her teeny skirt and prodded inside. He quickly discovered his daughter had a ridiculously fat pussy, the fleshiness of her lips palpable through her thin panties. "Whoa..." She couldn't bear to look at him as his beguiled digits took stock of her genitals. But what really had her cheeks flaring scarlet was when he roamed to the netherest of her regions and announced for everyone in the room to hear, "It's wet."

Norman hadn't lost his touch, despite his decades-long devotion to one woman. Granted, being capable of arousing his own daughter might not have been something he should be overly chuffed about. For the purposes of filming, however, it helped, and even more so once they'd eventually get to the more... hardcore aspects of the shoot.

While he rubbed his middle finger up and down her cleft, Mr August murmured in his daughter's ear, "You're a nasty little Girl Scout, aren't you?"

"Mhm..." She purred. His petting turned hotter, heavier, and soon she was stirring in his lap, the mounting pleasure making it impossible to sit still.

He felt her excitement on his fingertip, a small blotch soaking through her pink panties. Poor girl had probably been just as sexless as he had in the bowels of Dytopiah. Her brisk and effortless arousal scrubbed any doubts Norman might've had about her sexual expeditions in the wilds. She was much too horny to have been getting dicked down on the regular. His daughter might've been an opportunistic stripper, a cocktease for Pokédollars, but she was no liar. He knew it now. He felt it.

Her sex was hot in the palm of his hand as he prodded his middle finger at the base of her fleshy lips, only her wet panties preventing him from breaching her sacred walls. Now seemed as good a time as any for Mr August to remind his scandalous daughter about their little arrangement. "No telling Mommy I touched you down here," he muttered in her ear, "she'd be so mad."

"She'd kill us both." They snickered like naughty children. "I promise I won't tell Mom if you don't."

He put on a mischievous smirk. "Deal." Through shoddy writing, Mr August had gone from getting busted for cheating on his wife to convincing the would-be whistle-blower not only to keep it a secret, but to engage in the same debauchery she'd called him out on. Satisfied with their renewed pact, he groped her with renewed abandon, grabbing at her fat mound of a pussy. "Ooh!" She jumped and her legs shut at his sudden greed.

"Spread them," he demanded, not only to benefit his handsy manoeuvres, but to benefit the camera's point of view. "Spread those fucking legs."

He suddenly adopted a more sexually aggressive tone, as if the hint of pussy on his fingertips awakened some carnal part of him. May couldn't say no to her father, especially when he commanded her with such authority. She drew her legs apart and Snap moved the camera closer.

After luring his teenage daughter onto his lap, the twisted Mr August proceeded to educate her on promiscuity by molesting her, rubbing her private parts vigorously over her little panties. Her breath hastened. She couldn't prevent the moans from escaping any longer, not while her papa pressed, prodded and played with her puffy pussy lips. Her chest heaved and her enormous breasts wobbled in tandem. The effect of his fiddling trickled up and her big nipples were soon standing on their ends.

"Look how fucking horny you are already," he said in a chastising tone. Although, who could blame her for succumbing to his expert handling? Daddy knew best. Apparently when it came to his daughter's body, too.

"I'm..." She could barely string two words together. "It feels... good, Daddy..."

Mr August reached for her left breast and coordinated a two-pronged assault on her pleasure centres. His tit-and-clit stimulation cajoled erotic whines from her deepest, dirtiest depths. She writhed in his lap as he did everything to stir the juices flowing in her skirt, everything but pull her panties to the side and dip a finger in her wild waters. The script wouldn't allow him to. At least not yet.

Snap reminded them to face each other.

Scarlet flooded both their cheeks, his for doing what he was doing to her, hers for what was being done to her. As their eyes reunited, a primal connection superseded their familial bond, and seeing one another overwhelmed by lust nudged that instinct to fulfil their

unabashed desires. Their faces drew nearer and nearer, and neither of them seemed to realise. They ceased being Norman and May in that moment. Not Mr August and April either. Nor father and daughter. Simply vessels of lust desperate to pour into each other. So close, he felt her hot panting on his chin. She glanced at his lips. He glanced at hers. Their lips came dangerously close to touching...

But Norman veered away.

He settled on a much bigger, less intimate target instead. Her right breast. It was right there for the taking and he swooped his mouth over her big puffy nipple. He latched on around her areola and sucked so hard she cried out in ecstasy when he pulled up the supple mound and let go with a lascivious pop. The delicacy left a lasting impression on his chops. He had to swoop down for more. On his second serving, he savoured her nipple in his mouth and rapid flicks of his tongue evoked stuttering moans, her body shuddering at random. Her voluptuous tit-meat stretched and elongated with the tug of his lips, then snapped back and jiggled into its perky globular form upon release.

"Oh my – Daddy, you're going to – *hnnnng*," she murmured breathlessly, "you're going to m-make me... make me cum..."

Hearing the dirty words part his daughter's lips thrilled Norman in a way it shouldn't have. All her panting and heaving convinced him it couldn't be *all* an act. She wanted it. Her young, writhing body threatened to succumb to sensory overload from the touch of his lips and hands alone. She needed it. Her pussy damped his fingers as he pressed into her drenched panties and sucked on her nipple. All her time in isolation had primed May for a desperate release and Norman couldn't believe he'd be the one to deliver it, and on camera.

That was if she didn't catch him out first.

Amidst writhing in pleasure, she rubbed her tush against his erection. It started out incidental but progressed into a wanton grind. With his pillar of manhood raising the back of her skirt, she stroked his shaft up and down between her cheeks, their softness caressing him on either side of her sunken panties. He released her breast and exclaimed "fuck!" in a hot whisper. "You're making me so fucking hard right now."

The horny Girl Scout gave a naughty giggle. "You like that, Daddy?"

Did he?! If Norman allowed her grinding to continue unchecked, this short movie would become infinitely shorter. "Are you being a bad girl right now, hm? Trying to make Daddy cum?"

"Mhm... you love it when I'm a bad girl, don't you?"

Was it possible to love and hate something at the same time? "You little tease."

"The sooner you cum, the sooner I make my biggest sale to date," April reasoned.

"Heh. So that's what you're playing at." It made perfect sense as far as the script was concerned, but Norman had a mandate of his own, one that prohibited him from busting a nut before the final segment. May knew this, too. She needn't try half as hard as she was to coax seed out of him. Was it overzealous acting or perhaps a surreptitious test of his durability? "Nice try, but your ol' man ain't some easy nut to crack."

In response, April rearranged herself in his lap, laying his dick down beneath her crotch so she could grind the wet part of her panties along his length. Her luscious lips parted ever so subtly on his girth as she drove her hips back and forth. Norman throbbed beneath her heat, all but eager to impale his daughter right there and then. That sopping wet pussy was practically begging for it.

In testing his patience, she was testing her own, growing comfortable in the lap of luxurious pleasure. She reclined on his chest and curled her right arm round the back of his head, moaning as she rubbed herself into a hedonistic fit. Norman got the distinct impression he wasn't the first thing the horny teen had dry-humped lately. Well, if she was going to use him to get off then he'd take no shame in scooping up her great big tits and playing with her puffy nipples. Her bosom jerked and out came her loudest, neediest moan yet. She writhed back and forth with impassioned hips, gnawing at the agonising itch in her loins. "S-slow down!" Norman puffed. Her nonstop gyrating pushed him closer and closer to the edge. She ignored his pleas and brought him to within seconds of shooting his load directly at the camera trained on their groins.

But April abruptly seized up.

The tell-tale signs of an orgasm washed over her body and trickled down to her toes. She gave a dreamy sigh as tension evaporated from her muscles. Norman's sigh was one of relief after abating a nuclear disaster. Once he cooled from the shock of his teenage daughter cumming in his lap, he remembered they still had half a scene to shoot.

"That was..." The line teetered on the tip of his tongue. "...really naughty of you."

April giggled. "It was, wasn't it? I've been a really bad girl." *Really* bad. She came without him. "I'm sorry, Daddy. Here –" She flipped her tummy onto his lap and jutted her rear end up. "I guess you'll have to spank me now."

Well of course he would. Mr August regarded his mischievous child spread across his lap like a hot platter. Norman had never spanked May before and she'd grown past the age it might've been appropriate. Porn logic said otherwise. It must've fit into the client's long list of twisted fantasies. Nonetheless, they'd signed up to do this, and May presented herself for the scheduled punishment. He raised his hand with a slight tremble then brought it down on the back of her skirt.

His attempt ended more a light pat than a severe swat. She made the most of it anyway and cried louder than the contact warranted. The whole thing had been comical from the script level and looked even more comical in practice, what with Norman's half-hearted spanks and May's overreactions. It went on for half a minute before the director gesticulated at his performers as if to say 'what the hell is this?' Behind the camera, Snap made strong swinging motions with his arm.

I know, *I know*. It wasn't that Norman failed to grasp their expectations, but rather, he didn't want to hurt May for some scumbag's entertainment. He had his limits. And the

contract never stipulated how hard the spanking needed to be. The smug glee he garnered from exploiting this little loophole was short-lived however, when he got opposing feedback from the one person he least expected.

"Harder," April muttered. Mr August struck her a questioning glance. Norman never considered May might actually want a spanking. Perhaps she didn't but felt her sins had earned her one. He might've been inclined to agree. She looked up at him over her shoulder and nodded encouragement. "Harder, Daddy."

Norman put more oomph into his next swing. May started after underestimating the sting. Norman worried he'd overdone it but she giggled off her initial shock and baited him to continue. He brought his palm down on her butt again. She squealed, for real this time.

Mr August spanked the naughty Girl Scout on his lap with impunity. She deserved it for selling blowjobs alongside her cookies. And May deserved it for stripping in front of random strangers. While a reluctant part of him might've respected her drive to accumulate funds, a good father couldn't let a bad deed go unpunished. Her offenses demanded more than a time-out, more than her usual grounding. Norman realised he wouldn't be at liberty to discuss her transgressions with her mother either. May got to escape that shame. Her brother would never find out and neither would her friends. In fact, the only direct punishment she might endure could be right here spread across his lap. Suddenly, Norman didn't feel so bad about dishing it out.

"Ah!" she cried.

"That'll teach you to stop taking your tits out!" He smacked her bottom again.

"I'm sorry, Daddy - ah!"

"Not yet but you're going to be!"

Mr August flipped her skirt onto her lower back, ridding her bottom of any buffer the layer might've provided. All that lap grinding had left her panties in disarray; the right side of her underwear had sunk into the crevice between her buttocks and the crinkled left side was

halfway there. He didn't bother correcting the lopsided wedgie, simply gawked at the roundness of her exposed cheek. She would've been feeling the coolness of the open air and the heat of his endless stare. He couldn't help tracing his palm round the curvature of her bare bottom. His tender stroke ended with an abrupt *SMACK*!

May cried a real cry. The *PAH* of his large palm meeting her naked flesh resounded round the room. Music to Norman's ears.

In full view of the recording audience, he spanked his teenage daughter for the first time. The boom mic captured every clap and subsequent squeal, sure to make for crisp, crude audio in post-production, her pained cries a sound he'd savour for aeons. Norman used the stage to address his deepest disappointments and rain judgement on her ass one stinging slap after another. His palm bounced off her bare bum and sent subtle jiggles rippling through her tautness. In between strikes, he rubbed a soothing hand over her reddening cheek, if not groped and pinched at her tenderness before raising his arm again. Each swat released some tension inside him, chipped away at the resentment he'd been lugging in his heart. She took her hiding without complaint, even when harsher strikes could merit the safe word. The scripted punishment absolved her of guilt the same way it absolved him of bitterness. She'd learnt her lesson and he'd handed down his discipline, her ass cheeks burning red, his palm itching hot.

"Go on," Mr August said. He allowed her to climb out of his lap then stuffed his dick back in his boxers. "And don't let me find out you visited Mr Fillaho again."

"Yes, Dad." April bowed her head, pigtails dangling shyly.

"My wallet's upstairs in the drawer."

"Thanks a ton, Daddy!" She bent over and planted a big fat kiss on his cheek, as if he'd given her nothing more mundane than a new bike, as if she hadn't had his dick in her mouth just minutes ago.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah. You earned it. I'll buy your little cookies."

She giggled with glee and skipped to the staircase.

"And cut!" called the director.

The filming crew downed their tools and Norman let out a heavy sigh. What a day. Their long stint of uninterrupted filming appeared to please the director, his frown slackening as he reviewed the footage. He allowed everyone a few minutes to stretch their legs. Norman and May stood on opposite sides of the room, still uncertain on how to operate around each other after everything they'd done in character. While Alice and Dennis tended to the leading Girl Scout, Snap approached Norman with a nod.

"I'm impressed," said the camera operator. "You held yourself back while keeping it all very convincing."

"Thanks?" It felt strange taking credit for spanking his teenage daughter in front of a bunch of strangers. Nonetheless, Norman was thankful the scripted rearing helped him expunge his umbrage and inspire the freedom to forgive her.

After the short break in filming, Snap setup the tripod at the bottom of the staircase and the director ordered May to climb the steps nice and slow. The leering camera tracked her ascent through an upskirt shot of her panties. All the prying eyes below followed her every step of the way till she turned on the landing and walked out of frame.

Unbeknownst to April, Mr August would sneak upstairs right behind her, where the scene was set to reach its ultimate climax.

Norman steadied his nerves and exhaled through his nostrils. *We're almost done*. Just one last part to shoot – admittedly, the hardest part – and once they got through it, they were practically home free. The reminder hauled his foot onto the first step but Snap held his arm out to stop him.

"Hold on there, Big Daddy. Just one little wardrobe adjustment you'll need to make before we head up there." "Huh?" Norman didn't like surprises, especially under these precarious circumstances. "What... adjustment?"



Chapter 10 - Lights, Camera, Incest!

May's heart raced as she stood outside the bedroom door. What just happened downstairs... actually happened. Not only had she given her dad a blowjob (that impressed him?), but he diddled her till she dry-humped herself to orgasm! No, no, that wasn't her. She hadn't done all those things. That was April.

The same April she'd conceived amidst her expeditions in the woods, and birthed amidst her encounter with March. April lived long before the script had written her into life. The pages merely constructed the perfect playground for her manifestation. April had come out to play, to express all the unholy desires and deviance May couldn't or taught herself to supress. Perhaps it was April that lifted her top for the very first boy. April that weaponised her womanly assets for survival. April that saved them.

As May tapped her foot behind the door like a nervy songstress prepping to go on stage, she left a crack open for April.

"And... action!"

May took a deep breath and walked through the door.

They'd turned the bedroom into a film set, with half the room occupied by the crew and their equipment, and the other half furnished with a dresser and queen-sized bed arranged conveniently for camera angles. Her eye jumped to the personnel instinctively but she quickly reminded herself their half of the room didn't exist.

Humming a cheesy tune, April fished Mr August's wallet out of the dresser and opened it to wads of fat Pokédollars bulging from its pockets, way more than what they'd agreed upon for all her cookies. She looked back over her shoulder to make sure no one would witness her tip herself one little extra banknote, or fifteen. May dropped the wallet in a fumble that couldn't look more contrived if she'd cried 'oopsie!' to go along with it. The director didn't call for a retake and so she bent over with her legs straight and her butt sticking out profusely. She dallied about, took her time picking up the fallen money whilst pretending not to sense the presence creep into the doorframe behind her. Unbeknownst to the ditzy Girl Scout, her father silently enjoyed the view. She finally collected everything off the floor and put his wallet back on the dresser when –

"April!" he shouted.

She jumped and spun around, coins tumbling from her greedy paws. "Daddy!"

He pressed his fists on his waist and huffed. "Where do you think you're going with all that, young lady?"

"Oh, this? Heh heh heh, I was just, er, I was just..." Like April, May hadn't the faintest clue how she'd explain herself if her dad ever caught her stealing from him. She fluffed her lines the way she would've if the situation was real. Also throwing her off was the apparatus strapped to his forehead, a small camera someone thought had been a good idea to attach between segments. She quirked a brow at the lens then glanced to the filming crew as if to ask, 'who put this there?' With his eyes glued to his monitor, the director raised a hand and gestured for them to continue acting out the scene. May turned back to the headcam and gathered the dirty old man now had a POV shot of all the action.

Norman shrugged and she took that as a cue to ignore it like he was.

"You were just what?" Mr August said sternly, thrusting them back into the scene. "Stealing?"

"Uh..." She looked down at the nicked banknotes in her hands and improvised her next line. "I thought you wouldn't mind if I took a little extra."

"Without asking? That's called 'stealing', little missy. And here I thought that spanking set you straight. Tsk, tsk." He shook his head, disappointed. "You know, I read something once that said when unruly children misbehave," he stated, approaching her in slow, sturdy steps, "it's really because they're vying for their parents' attention. Is that what's happening here, April, hm?" His towering frame loomed over her tiny body. "Are you still craving Daddy's attention?"

April didn't know how to respond. Neither did May. The script tugged on some subconscious yearning for him to be a bigger presence in her life. "Daddy, I –"

He snatched the Pokédollars from her clutches and chucked them on the bed. "I'm here now," Mr August said, though she heard Norman's voice, Norman fulfilling his promise to try things her way. "Anything for you, baby girl. You do trust Daddy, right?" May couldn't think of anyone else in the region she'd rather shoot this video with, twisted as it were. She nodded timidly. "Good girl. Daddy knows best." He cupped the side of her face and stroked her cheek with his thumb. The gesture came off pure and loving till his gaze descended upon her bursting cleavage. "Mmm, yes, you definitely got *all* of Daddy's attention now, baby girl." May didn't mean to look but the lump in his boxers bulged as he murmured the salacious words. Acting or no acting, he couldn't fake *that*, could he? She could only hope her mother had floated into his mind's eye. "Don't worry," he said huskily, "You're in very good hands. Daddy knows exactly what his baby girl needs."

He lifted her under the arms like a child, then shoved her back onto the bed.

May yelped in surprise. Her tush bounced on the soft mattress before she fell onto her back. He clasped her ankles and dragged her down, her butt skidding across the silky sheets till she reached the foot of the bed. May was taken aback by his sudden aggression, his sudden eagerness to complete the scene. He flicked her little skirt onto her tummy and revelled at her stained panties. Snap crept closer with his camera for the audience's sake. Mr August spread her legs and created a clear shot of her lush cameltoe.

"Thanks for the Girl Scout cookies," Mr August said, "but what Daddy's really craving is this here Girl Scout nookie."

May cringed at the tacky dialogue as said 'nookie' took centre stage. She could feel them staring through her panties, ogling the crevice down her phat pussy mound. Sure, she'd flashed her cameltoe once or twice in recent memory, but never this up close and personal,

never before her father's eyes. He goggled like all those little perverts on Route 304, his inner gormless teen lurking beneath the surface. His hunger looked convincing. A little too convincing. And unlike the little reprobates she'd kept at arm's length, her dad acted with impunity towards any 'no touch' rule.

Mr August pinched her plump pussy over her panties as though he were testing the ripeness of fresh teenage fruit. May blushed furiously. Not only because her father appeared to be inspecting her genitalia, but because her nether lips proved lush and swollen with lust despite what should've been deflating circumstances. What was going through his head as he realised his daughter was so hopelessly horny her body reacted even to his touch? The last thing she'd presume was '*hmm, this looks so delicious, I need to taste it*!' and yet, seconds later, that was exactly what he'd be doing.

He peeled her panties to the side and dug right in. May gasped when the tip of his tongue made contact, and shivered when it slid up and down her slit. "Ooh…!" Arceus! It had been so long since anybody soothed her this way, if ever. Brendan had only gone down on her once and made a hash of it in his hurry to the main course. Not Mr August. Her father indulged in her starters more thoroughly than her boyfriend ever cared to. Whether his meticulous tonguing was a product for the cameras, or he'd developed a genuine appetite for April's cuisine, May mewled her appreciation all the same, rubbing her tits as Daddy tasted her inside and out.

May found herself getting annoyed whenever Snap interrupted her cunnilingus to direct Norman. He had her dad stop and spread her labia so the camera could see how sleek and pink she was on the inside. Before filming began, they'd shaved May clean, leaving her pussy as bald as the day she was born. It came as no surprise considering, along with the pigtails and flush makeup, they played up her youth in every conceivable way. She didn't want to imagine what kind of creep would eventually be salivating over her plump, hairless mound on video, but the constant directorial input reminded her none of what was happening concerned her pleasure. It didn't matter if every lick and flick was impelling her towards a second climax; when the camera operator called for a different angle, they stopped, then repositioned themselves to suit the director's momentum-breaking instructions. *This is no way to have sex*, May thought, then remembered they weren't required to enjoy themselves, only appear to be.

Norman was reminded to vocalise his actions and took to moaning while he ate her pussy, like it was the best thing he'd ever had the pleasure of putting in his mouth. He hammed it up more than he had tasting Skrumpton's Steaks. Even though it was all an act (she thought?), the deep exaggerated murmurs turned her on, the thought he enjoyed munching on her half as much as she enjoyed being munched on.

"God, this Girl Scout nookie is amazing!" he said breathlessly before reuniting his lips with her nether lips. "Definitely the sweetest flavour in your box."

Off camera, Snap gestured for her to speak, too. "Oh yeah?" May said with some hesitance. "You like... eating your teenage daughter's pussy?" She cringed.

"Mhm. Oh yeah," Mr August murmured. "So good. Way better than chocolate chip."

"Yeah? You think it needs to go on the menu?"

"Only Daddy's private menu." He lapped up her juices with noisy slurps. "Like how Daddy eats this pussy?"

"Yeah..."

"Bet it's never felt this good when he does it ... "

"Mmmm... boys my age don't know how to do it that good..." Brendan would've died if he heard that.

Mr August spread her petals with his fingers and his head-cam captured the little pink hood sticking out the crest of her folds. Fixing a lust-drunk gaze on her, he slowly lowered the tip of his tongue towards her love button. Anticipation shimmered in her big bright eyes. Tongue met clit. The breath she'd been holding vacated her lungs all at once.

More needy moans poured forth as he tongue-flicked her bean. She couldn't take it, not without crying "Oh, Daddy!" at the top of her lungs.

"Mhm! Baby girl, you taste so good!" He appeared more than content trapped between her trembling thighs, swathed in the heat of her crotch, but that didn't satisfy the explicit visuals demanded of their audience. The camera operator prodded him to keep her legs apart so nothing obstructed the view of Daddy's tongue brushing the inside of his daughter's pussy and assaulting her sensitive clit. All the while, Dennis snapped zoomed-in pictures.

May covered her mouth, embarrassed at how loud her moans were becoming, eyes wide with disbelief. Brendan never made her scream from the mere stroke of his tongue. As a matter of fact, it had been astoundingly easy to keep their sexual antics quiet from her little brother sleeping next door and their parents further down the hall. A blessing in disguise perhaps, considering if her boyfriend ate her out half as ravenously as her father did, she would've woken up half the neighbourhood the first time she'd snuck him into her room. Her dad was disgustingly good at munching her bald pussy, applying perfectly weighted strokes and pressure on the swollen pinkness poking its head out of her clitoral hood.

May was seconds away from going off script and cumming in his mouth when Snap called for him to pull away. She lay on her back, frustrated, chest heaving as Norman did what he was directed and took a step back from the bed. *Dang it! Could a girl just get her pussy eaten out by her Daddy in peace?*

"Look at you. Daddy's nasty little Girl Scout." Mr August smirked. "You want it so bad, don't you?"

April nodded, though it just as easily could be May.

"Show me how much."

"Show... you?"

"Daddy wants to watch you play with your nookie. Can you do that for me, honey?"

'For me' meant for the cameras. Incidentally, May had garnered experience stimulating herself in front of an audience, albeit a one-man audience, a boy her age she'd happened upon in the woods. Her hands moved with practiced motion, one to her hardened nipples, the other to her pussy. She steadied her nerves and worked her fingers. Mr August watched from as short a distance as March stood from April. May fed off the memory, the feelings of sexual liberation and wanton desires, the ministrations of mutual longing. She forgot herself, her pride sinking as April swam to the surface, to her rescue once again.

Mr August shed his own inhibitions, his own clothes, as he observed the Girl Scout descend further and further into lust, kneading her breasts and rubbing her nookie with mounting urgency. His boxers hit the floor. Before May, stood the impeccably toned, impeccably nude figure of her father, nothing save the head-cam on his person. Unlike last night when he came out the shower, May didn't shy away from curiosity; she flagrantly stared at the massive shlong dangling between her dad's legs, easily longer than March's and much, much thicker.

Arceus... that thing could take a fucking Ponyta's eye out... I can't believe half of it fit in my mouth.

Marc Stone hadn't underplayed his size in the slightest. While she'd made out a decent impression from sucking him off and grinding in his lap, there was something about seeing it hung bare in his birthday suit that hit different. He'd been shaved clean, too, only adding to the mirage of his incredible length. May got so distracted ogling her dad's cock, she didn't notice she'd stopped rubbing herself.

"What's the matter?" Mr August asked. "Never seen one this big, huh?"

Her cheeks burned as she shook her head. Seriously, was her dad part-Machamp?

"Heh. Well, this is what a real man looks like, baby girl. Think you can handle it?"

Honestly... probably not. That thing looked like it could split her pussy in two. "I don't know..." And that went for both May and April.

Mr August shrugged. "Well, you're going to learn today."

The sound of that frightened the inexperienced teen, and yet, might've excited her even more. *What the hell is wrong with me?!*

"Keep touching yourself. Let Daddy watch."

April followed his orders, a good girl keen on pleasing her daddy. She met his thirsty gaze and rubbed her heat. Snap circled back behind Mr August, where his tall lean frame consumed the shot from shoulders to knees, his firm buttocks at centre stage while his daughter's legs lay spread on either side of him. Seconds later, the camera operator panned back to a full frontal, where Mr August had pumped his semi to maximum stiffness. All on film, father and daughter masturbated furiously just an arm's length apart.

April took a hold of May's faculties and couldn't care less who else was in the room. She longed to be filled and jammed two fingers up her entrance. Frantic, knuckles-deep. Her pussy squelched and sputtered on the sheets. Mr August stroked the length of his throbbing erection faster and faster, relishing every second of her peep show.

"Ooh... yeah... good girl..." he muttered through haggard breaths. "You're making Daddy... so fucking hard right now... you want Daddy's cock, baby girl?"

"Mhm..."

"Say it. I want to hear you say it." And so did the boom mic above them.

"I want... I want your cock, Daddy." The faint admission tiptoed from her lips.

"Oh yeah? Where do you want it?" he whispered hotly.

"Mhm, right here." Right where her longest digit dipped in and out of her wet snatch.

"You dirty, little thing. You want Daddy to stick his cock in that phat pussy?"

"Mmmm... do it..." April dared him on May's behalf.

"Oh yeah?"

"Yeah..."

I can't believe I'm begging my dad to... Her chest thumped at a thousand miles per hour as he inched closer. His erection cast a long shadow over her midriff. The sheer size and girth of him intimidated May and yet revved up April's dangerous curiosity. Mr August and April egged each other on with dirty utterances. He closed the distance between them. Like March, August found himself practically masturbating on top of her.

"Mmm," he droned, "so freaking sexy."

If this were any other movie, he might've had rotten tomatoes thrown at him for his wooden delivery. But as it were, his wooden delivery was exactly what the production team counted on. And Norman didn't disappoint.

Mr August grabbed her wrist, pulled her out of herself, then replaced her sleek digits with something a lot harder and thicker. He bypassed the panties to breach his daughter's teenage walls, grimacing as his bulbous tip pushed through her near-virginal tightness. A deep moan threshed its way out her throat. May experienced a stretch she never had with Brendan, her pussy wrapped around the girth of her much bigger father. Thank fuck her natural juices kept her well and truly lubricated. Despite how thoughtfully he eased into her, a little pain accompanied each gentle thrust, seeping through her little mewls.

"Oh, God!" Norman blared, his cry untethering months of moral restraint. The carnal relief in his exclamation told May he hadn't done this with another woman in a long time, possibly throughout their duration in Dytopiah. Trust her father to be loyal to a fault. May's sense of guilt, for ultimately becoming the woman who'd break his faithfulness, was dulled by the novel sensations of his shaft moving in and out of her, scratching an itch that had been gnawing at her loins for weeks. At long last, they found the relief neither of them realised they'd needed, and from each other, no less. Silence imbued the sex-filled room as the weight of their incestual tryst fell upon the fixated crew. The spectacle froze Dennis's trigger-happy camera finger and May imagined Snap gawking from behind the tripod. If either of them was to be believed, they hadn't expected their day to go: lights, camera, incest! But hey, neither did she and Norman. And here they all were.

Snap snapped out of his trance to remind them once again their sex tape would be no good without the debauched commentary.

"Ooh yeah," August breathed hotly, "God, that pussy is so fucking tight, baby girl."

It was such a porn thing to say but, he said it with so much earnest in his breathy murmur, she believed him. Not to mention, the stretch of her own hole gave her a feel of absolute fullness, his cock brushing against the sides of her tight walls. She would've loved to lay there silently and take in the pleasure of slow, sensual penetration, but Snap wouldn't let her forget to think up something a porn star would say. "It feels good... Daddy... your cock is so big..."

Snap gave her a thumbs-up.

"Yeah?" August pulled back till his cock-head came an inch from vacating her snatch then drove back in to her guttural moans. "You like that, huh? Like Daddy's fat cock tearing up that little pussy?"

She nodded through a moan. "Mmm, yeah... you're way bigger than my bo-" A little bit of May slipped past April's lips before she caught herself. She hoped they'd edit that part out. "...way bigger than I thought."

"Bigger than you thought, ey?" He took her stumble in his stride and improvised his dialogue. "So, you been thinking about Daddy's cock?"

May caught onto his improvisation and followed suit. "Maybe... a little..."

"Wow. Been a horny little girl, haven't you? How long you been craving this cock?"

"Um..." The first thing that sprung to mind was, "since I saw you coming out of the shower... that one time?"

"Oh." Norman blanched. Her answer caught him off-guard. May regretted contorting an actual event that happened as recently as the night before, lest he really believe her fabricated admission. He didn't let the curveball throw him off character for too long before jumping right back into August's skin. "I don't blame you. Your old man is quite the hunk. And you're quite the sexpot yourself."

It was May's turn to blanch. "Wha... what?"

"What? You think I haven't noticed? Those shorts getting shorter, those shirts getting tighter? The way dresses hug your womanly hips more and more? And those tits... God, those tits..." He didn't let her blush stop his oversharing. "They've grown so big and juicy, sweetie pie, and show no signs of stopping... have always wanted to suck on them..."

May was at a loss for words. Was he being serious right now? Of course not. It was all acting. Right? But did he have to make it sound so...? She really didn't want to think about it, especially now, with his manhood a quarter way inside her. "Daddy," she whispered in a soft chastising tone, "I can't believe you..."

"What? I may be your daddy but that doesn't make me blind. I guess we've both wanted a piece of each other."

"I guess..."

"You're not going to tell your mom, are you?" he whispered.

"No, Daddy," she whispered back. "I won't tell Mom."

He continued the shallow thrusts at a leisurely pace allowing them to invent sleazy porn dialogue for their depraved audience. May wondered if calling it '*that* pussy' was his way of separating *her* from the genitalia he so eagerly indulged in. Whatever the case, the director approved their improv well enough to let it flow without calling cut. August dipped his stick in the Girl Scout's cookie jar and let the cameras know how much he loved it.

Following the script, he flipped her onto her hands and knees, her pink shoes hanging off the edge of the bed. August raised her skirt and pulled her panties halfway down her parted thighs. When he entered her from behind, Snap was lying on the bed with his camera zoned in on her face, capturing her eyes and mouth growing wide at the precise moment Daddy pierced her cunt. May hadn't exaggerated either, shocked at how much larger he felt from the rear. At least she didn't have to look her father in the eye while he fucked her.

And boy, did he fuck her.

May couldn't imagine what kind of horridly unsteady footage was being recorded with her bent-over body rocking the entire bed, her face jerking to and fro Snap's handheld camera. Big, hanging breasts swung between her arms and her long pigtails dangled loose until August grabbed them both and tugged her head back. His lean, muscular torso appeared in the shot behind her, rocking back and forth to the sounds of her ass cheeks getting clapped.

"Fuck!" April cried. "Daddy, aah! You're so deep!"

"Unh! Yeah!" He grunted. "Act like a cock-loving whore and that's exactly what you're gonna get! A big –" He thrusted. Pulled back. "Hard." Thrusted again. "Cock!" He sheathed himself to the hilt and held put inside her, almost deep enough to rearrange her organs, certainly deep enough to rearrange her facial features, fixing her visage in a crimson cross-eyed ahegao.

The whole thing... it all... fit. How...? She could feel his sack kissing her nether lips as it hung out of her plugged entrance. He barely gave her a breath to get accustomed to utter fullness before sliding back and ramming her to the hilt once more, ripping a shrill cry from her lungs. *Arceus!* And again, another sharp thrust. Every inch of her cavity filled with swift vengeance, punctuated by the rippling smack of his pelvis against her bare butt. Her daddy taught her to take it like the woman she pretended to be and, sure enough, the pain receded

with each full-length thrust and mingled with the pleasure of being stretched to her limits and pumped unceremoniously.

"Yeah, that's it," August said, "That's a good little Girl Scout slut. Daddy's gonna get all his money's worth for them cookies."

"Yes - hnguuh!" she grunted as he thrusted. "Yes, Daddy!"

He moved both ends of her pigtails into his left hand so that, while he tugged, he could use his right to slap her ass. Apparently, he hadn't been satisfied with the hiding he'd given her on the couch, that or he'd grown addicted to his palm bouncing off her taut round cheeks. Amidst fucking her doggy and calling her "Daddy's little slut", he spanked her sporadically between thrusts.

And it kind of felt... good? Deserved? Mostly somewhere in between.

To be so completely humbled and put in her place by her father. May *had* strayed from her morals in the pursuit of money and she harboured no doubt any one of those boys she'd ran into, given the means and opportunity to get away with it, would've done no worse to her than her father was right now.

The little perverts would never know it but, one by one, their grubby faces flashed across her eyes with each spank, their comeuppance dished out hot and spicy from her father's palm. She'd teased them to oblivion; their young susceptible minds stood no chance against her eyepopping, nostril-erupting bust, and she'd pranced away richer for it, untouched, untouched until now. How they'd cheer if they could see the same breasts she had flashed before them swinging wildly long past the five seconds they could afford, the same cameltoe she'd teased stripped bare and ploughed right through its phat lips. Her dad put such thorough might into fucking her it felt as though he injected their unrequited lust in each thrust, slamming 'that pussy' for all the little nitwits who never could. Heck, she doubted even Big Bruce would've been this aggressive if he'd gotten his way with her up against that tree, and he certainly wasn't working with the same hammering rod battering her cunt right now. May took the hard pounding in reluctant memory of her supposed victims and grew to welcome the lingering sting of her cheeks getting slapped.

Fucked ragged, she fell onto the side of her face, with her ass still propped up and her father's torso pumping away in the shot. Between his laboured grunts, August talked up how "fucking amazing" and "super tight" her "little Girl Scout nookie" was, and April's "oh, God, don't stop, Daddy" utterances got muffled in the sheets. Snap lay on his side and brought the camera so close to her jerking face, her panting fogged the lens.

Just when May thought the discipline couldn't get more intense, her dad grabbed her by the waist and hoisted her ass up higher, her skirt completely spilling onto her arched back. He gripped her sides tightly and rammed his cock through her stretched hole with monstrous speed and overwhelming depth. A chorus of shrill, ear-piercing cries joined the rapid claps of her ass cheeks. That long, hard dick of his punched past her G-spot in quick succession, hitting depths Brendan never had, and probably never could. Within seconds of the upturn in intensity, her body shuddered with the tell-tale signs of another climax.

"Aah, aah, aah! Ooooh! Daddy!" she squeaked out the side of her mouth. "You're gonna make me – hoooh aaah – you're, huaaa, gonna –"

"What?" Mr August barked. "Speak up!" He barely slowed down to give her ass a hard slap. "You're gonna what?"

"Mmmph!! I'm gonna... gonna..."

"Gonna what?" He egged her on to say it.

In her fucked-silly daze, May forgot the cameras they had to play to. "I'm gonna -"

"Louder, baby girl. C'mon!" He shoved it in deep as he could.

"Aah, fuck!" May blurted out. "I'm... I'm gonna cum..."

"What?" He stuck his thumb in her butt.

"I'M GONNA FUCKING CUM!"

Anyone within a hundred metre radius of Marc's Fun House would've heard her high-pitched announcement. As if screaming the words suddenly granted her permission, May came through on her promise, surrendering to the most powerful orgasm she'd experienced yet, feet curling in her shoes, hands clawing at the sheets. And, most embarrassing of all, Snap was right there to capture every second of it, there to zoom in on her flushed features the moment her face contorted and her eyes rolled to the back of her skull. To think, somewhere someone out there was going to get a close-up of her fuck-face mid-orgasm, tongue hanging out and all. Perhaps, it was only slightly less embarrassing than knowing it was her father who'd evoked such a reaction.

"Wow," Snap said. He stood up off the bed and regarded his camera as if he'd captured the footage of a lifetime. "That was hot."

He'd have to forgive her for not being enthused that a bunch of strangers just watched her cum hard from getting railed by her father. While she lay sprawled out on her front recuperating, Mr August fell onto the bed beside her, equally exhausted if his rising chest was anything to go by. The filming crew allowed them a moment to breathe but they both knew it wouldn't be a wrap until the director secured his coveted money shot.

Snap suggested May help her dad recover his stiffness, to be his fluffer, after the downtime softened him somewhat. "Use those." He pointed at her breasts. Then simulated her taking the crop top off completely. May pulled it over her head, shy despite the fact her big breasts had already been hanging out of her skimpy attire. "Hold on, that can stay." Snap pointed at the 'Cookie Girl' sash looped across her shoulder and torso. "Awesome. And let's put this back on." He placed the green beret hat atop her head, then awarded her topless 'Girl Scout' look two thumbs up. "Perfect. Ready?"

No. I look silly in this! Then again, what wasn't silly about porn?

Nestling her chest between her father's legs, May avoided eye contact until Snap counted them down to action.

May turned into April and April took August into her bosom. She hid her gaze in his washboard abs as she massaged his sandwiched dick back to life. It didn't take long either. She didn't know what to make of her own dad becoming so hurriedly rigid from the hug of his daughter's breasts. More impressive still was his stamina. She thought Dennis had been exaggerating his praise but her dad truly exhibited some masterful control of his release. The only other boy she'd tried it with would've nutted halfway into doggy and that was if he'd made it past one of her zestful blowjobs. Perhaps, in another lifetime, her dad would've done well taking a stab in this industry.

Did I... just admit my dad is great at sex?

She couldn't unthink it, couldn't ignore him throbbing in her bosom. Norman Jr had woken up alright. Her pussy tingled past the soreness of its recent pounding. Sheesh, who knew Daddy's dick could make her so insatiable? Nonetheless, her loins got a chance to cool as this part of the film required little more than a tit massage.

"Hey," he muttered, "Look up, sweetie. Daddy wants to see those pretty blue eyes."

April dragged her gaze from his abs, up his chiselled chest, and met his enamoured expression looking up from the pillow. She squished her fat tits together whilst rubbing up and down his veiny erection. So much dick to cover. Too much, in fact, without a portion of upper shaft and cock-head sticking out her cleavage. But August had a solution for making that disappear, too.

"Suck it," he ordered his daughter. "Put those pretty little lips around Daddy's cock and work that tongue, sweetie." He gently tugged down on her pigtails and she lowered her mouth onto the bulbous tip poking north of her mounds. "Aaaaah, yes! That's a good girl."

April fed off her father's encouragement and bobbed her head in tandem with her breast strokes. She swept her tongue round the circumference of his knob. He grunted in pleasure, Daddy's little girl doing him proud. May couldn't stop thinking about what he said earlier, about noticing her body mature from childhood, about longing to get his hands on her developing breasts. If it was true, this must've been heaven for him, completely enveloped in his teenage daughter's bust, the envy of boys her age. He clung to her pigtails and thrusted through her snug tits, straight up her mouth between her hollowed cheeks. *GUCK*, *GUCK*, *GUCK*! Gods was Daddy thick. He force-fed her cock until he tired from thrusting his hips, then laid back with further instructions.

"Sit on it."

April loved the way it felt in her mouth so much she couldn't wait to straddle him. Adrenaline dulled the soreness in May's pussy as her insatiable alter-ego lowered herself onto Daddy's pillar of meat. Plenty of natural lubricant accompanied the stretch around his girth and it proved even more pleasurable than the first time. April sighed when she finally got to the bottom. But the job wasn't done there.

"Ride it."

How was she supposed to do that when her womb felt so bloated she could hardly move? August trusted her to figure it out and again ordered her to "start riding". He slapped the side of her ass hoping to jumpstart her momentum. The whole filming crew was waiting on her.

"C'mon. Giddyap. We haven't got all day you know? Ride that fucking dick like your Girl Scout badge depends on it."

"Okay, Daddy."

April cared about acquiring her Rufflet Girl Scout badge as much as May cared about winning Contest Ribbons. She channelled that energy into her character and raised herself high enough that only about half his cock remained lodged inside her. Without abandoning her sense of fullness, she rocked her hips to the more digestible length of manhood, quickly adopting a tempo that had him moaning at her dexterity.

"Fuck yeah!" He grunted. "Ngh! Keep going, baby! Just like that!"

She planted her sweaty hands on his chest for balance. "Unh! Ooh Daddy," she whined, "it's so frigging big!" So big she had to slow down to walking pace.

"Of course it is! Why do you think - aah - your mom's stuck around all these years?"

Gosh, does he really have to bring up Mom while I'm on top of him? Yes, it was part of the script, but they'd kind of being playing it fast and loose anyway. Icky as it might've been, May had to accept she had now become a part of her parents' sex life, become privy to details she might not have wanted to hear. She couldn't let it distract her from the incestuous Girl Scout she had to play. "I don't – mmm – I don't blame her... it's so amazing..."

"Yeah? You like riding Daddy's cock while Mommy's away?"

"Mhm..."

"Ooh, you little slut."

"And you - hnggg - you like fucking your - ooh - fucking your teenage daughter?"

"Oh yeah," August said, breathlessly. "Your pussy's fucking incredible. Sure you weren't a virgin?"

May genuinely chuckled. He sure made her feel that way the moment his thick cock pried her cheating cunt open. Brendan took her virginity but her dad introduced her hole to a new world. "I'm sure, Daddy. You're just so big."

"And you're so unbelievably tight."

"Ngh, yeah?"

"Oh yeah. Much tighter than your Mom."

May blushed. "Daddy..."

"What? It's true. Those young tits are much fatter and perkier, too. Look at them go. So fucking sexy. You're bigger than your mother ever was, you know?"

Not that May was comparing bra sizes but, yes, she had noticed at some point in her development. Still, it was useless information she never imagined would amount to anything, or be brought up by her father in the vein of comparing her to his wife, to the very woman that gave birth to her. May knew he was only saying it for the cameras but hearing him even vaguely imply she might be a better lay than her mother put an odd sensation in the pit of her stomach. She and Norman had already crossed the line with their bodies; was there still a line with their words?

"Well, you're the biggest I've had, too," April said, avoiding veering further from that potential line.

"Mmmmm... my nasty little Girl Scout loves big dicks like a little slut, huh?"

"Mhm!"

"Say it."

"I love riding big dicks like a little slut."

Mr August grinned and caressed the side of her face. "Yes, you are. *My* little slut." He slipped his thumb between her panting lips and May read the cue to suck on it. "Fuck," he whispered, "you're so hot, baby girl. Looks like Daddy raised the perfect little skank. Oops. I guess no father is perfect, huh? But you are. Perfect for me. I made you... perfect for me. I love the way that pussy grips my cock so tightly. I want it all," he muttered hotly. "I want it all right now."

He stuck his hands up her teeny skirt, clutched her waist and slammed her all the way down his rod. May squealed in surprise, an explosion of pain and pleasure shooting up her muff. Norman cried at her sudden tightness engulfing him whole. He couldn't get enough of his daughter's hot snatch.

"Give me all that pussy!" He pulled her up and slammed her back down.

"AAH!"

"Argh, yeah! Like Daddy's huge cock?"

"Yeah, Daddy! I love it!"

"Then take it all, slut!" He slammed her down again.

"HNNGAAH!" Every slam felt as though it split her pussy in two. And yet, April cried out from the consequent pleasure. "Yes, Daddy! I've been a bad girl. Teach that naughty pussy a lesson!"

Mr August grunted as he impaled his own flesh and blood. He trained her young cooch to take him all, one deep plunge at a time.

A quick learning slut, the Girl Scout was soon dropping on her own, impaling herself down her tight middle. Snap captured a shot from her rear, where the back of her pleated skirt fluttered about her bouncing ass, while Norman's headcam afforded the director a shared view of her large breasts jiggling overhead. April didn't let anything stop her pleasureinducing groove, not even May's thought some creep would enjoy a first-person perspective of her riding them for all they were worth. From stripping for random strangers to fucking her dad raw in front of an intimate crowd; May really had turned herself into a spectacle, her metamorphism into April nearly complete.

"Ooooh yeahhh!" she cried out to the ceiling. Who knew dad-dick could be this good? No, it was great. It was '*I don't give a fuck who's watching me whore out*' great. The type of dick that made one lose their senses, forsake blood boundaries, dig their claws into Daddy's chest and ride him absolutely ragged, hitting spots she hadn't hit in months of humping hotel pillows.

After a rigorous burst of cowgirling her horse-dick father, May doubled over, catching herself a foot from collapsing onto his chest. Their eyes locked and they exchanged hot, heavy breaths. The unexpected proximity froze them in place. No awkwardness this time. Though May couldn't tell if it was because they'd dissolved into their characters or if they'd fucked the awkwardness out of the situation. Were these August's or Norman's eyes leering at her lips so hungrily? Whatever decency had kept them apart the last time they drew this close was lost somewhere between him eating her pussy and her bouncing on his cock. April threw her face onto his and an urgent kiss set their lips alight.

If you'd just walked into the room, you'd be forgiven for thinking long-lost lovers were reuniting right before your eyes, for no father and daughter made out with the passion exhibited by Mr August and April. Heads turning, lips meshing, he gladly accepted the tongue she plunged down his face and groped her ass so hard it parted her cheeks, giving the camera a peek at her pink little asshole. They put their hands all over each other like horny teens that had snuck off at a party. Snap, Dennis and Alice all exchanged bemused looks that said, 'hey, this kissing and make-out session isn't part of the script, is it?' Even the director shrugged his shoulders. Hot footage was hot footage and the cameras kept rolling.

It seemed strange, perhaps, that kissing could feel more intimate than engaging in penetrative sex, but May truly felt as much when he wrapped his big, strong arm around her back and deepened their lip-lock. He kissed her like she'd never seen him kiss her mom. Maybe her parents reserved that kind of passion for behind closed doors, considering the pecks they shared in front of her and Max were often met with a collective 'ew!' Oh, Max, if he ever saw what she and Dad were getting up to now...

Snap practically had to pull them apart and move them on to the next position in the script. May sat on her haunches facing his camera while Norman repeatedly shoved his meaty phallus up her tight channel. His dick stood so tall that even when his butt was on the bed, his cock-head remained inside her. Several inches of shaft disappeared in her skirt with each upwards thrust. Snap had her lift the pleated hem, divulging explicit visuals of her plump pussy getting stretched and pummelled by her dad's upswinging ballsack. Her pleasurable moans only added to the soundtrack of smacking flesh.

Then May spotted something she least expected.

In the throes of sheathing her dad's cock, she inspired excitement in the form of a tent stretching Snap's pants. So much for being a consummate professional. After claiming he'd shot so many pornos nothing on set could ever turn him on, there he stood, his camera trained on her and, right beneath it, so too was his dick. Either Snap was a bad liar or he'd just discovered a guilty pleasure in watching family members bone one another. May wasn't put off, oddly enough. She read his coy boner as a salute to her performance. Heh. Did that make her the ultimate exhibitionist on Dytopiah?

For all the imprisonment she suffered trapped on this island, it pushed her to sexual liberation, to cultivating the erotic being lurking within, to celebrating her sinuous curves and bodacious bust. She'd walked into Marc's Fun House a timid guest and she'd be walking out a bona fide exhibitionist (if she could walk at all). May took the reins and squatted on his pole at her own heated pace. The camera stared up at the undersides of her wobbly breasts hopping and dropping towards the viewer. Head bouncing, her beret hat slipped more and more off-centre. When the socially awkward photographer moved in to take his millionth snapshot, the same guilty bulge appeared in his trousers. Watching her peers get turned on watching her, got *her* turned on, too. May spread her legs wide and bounced on Daddy's cock shamelessly before their indulgent audience.

Mr August veered off script when he stood up from the bed and held April in the air clasped in a full nelson. He stunned them all with his strength, locking his fingers behind her head whilst his forearms kept her legs high and spread in V formation. Her tongue lolled out the side of her mouth as he fucked her senseless in mid-air. Needless to say, Brendan neither had the strength nor the height to ravage her with her feet this high off the floor, her pink panties dangling off a bobbing ankle. May always knew her mother was a strong woman but, wow, was she taking these kinds of poundings on a regular basis? She didn't know whether to feel sorry for her, or envious.

One of many powerful thrusts sent the Girl Scout's teetering hat clear off her head. Did wardrobe even matter at this point? Did the cameras? The script?

The would-be porn stars lost the plot in a red haze of passionate, athletic sex. May never doubted her daddy loved her, but boy, did he *love* her good, pistoning his hips upwards relentlessly. No boy would ever be good enough for his little girl and, after this savaging of

her bald little pussy, it might've rung doubly true. How was she ever supposed to feel Brendan again? Or any normal-sized boy for that matter? Jaded, it hadn't been her will but her entanglement with August might not be so easily untangled by turning off the cameras. She'd never be able to turn off this memory for the rest of her life, the day her daddy wrecked her pussy in front of horny strangers, brought her to orgasm twice, and fucked her so good a third was near inevitable.

Norman dropped her onto the sheets then climbed on. He knelt where she spread her thighs and reinserted himself with urgency. Dennis stood to the side capturing stills of her desecration while Snap recorded the missionary sex from the opposite end. Per the latter's instructions, Norman clasped her above the wrists and pulled her arms down her sides. Her straightened biceps pushed her fat wobbling tits together, emphasising their lusciousness for the viewer as they jiggled up and down wildly from her father's momentous thrusts. His POV camera was certain to gift Marc's client the vicarious experience of fucking the naughty Girl Scout hard, her scarcely clothed body rocking atop a pool of dispersed Pokédollars, a picture worth 200,000 words.

May had to admit, to herself at least, she'd completely forgotten about the money throughout several segments of filming. She'd forgotten if she was May or April. Was she fucking Mr August or Mr Petalburg City Gym Leader? Her very own dad? It felt... the same. The unexpectedly amazing dick disoriented her, blurred the script's lines amid reality's, drew April into May, May into April, and Mr August Norman ploughed through them both.

As the quaking bed squeaked beneath her, neither performer could remember their lines, or maintain the composure to utter any sound that wasn't an incoherent grunt or husky moan. Daddy pounded that teenage pussy like his life depended on it and, in certain ways, it did. He fucked her for freedom, filled her up, fulfilled their contract. This was what May begged for, what May desperately wanted, even if the road back home was through her pink puddle. Her pussy squelched for Daddy's cock, squelched amid high-pitched cries and compromised bed springs. The pleasure mounted in her core, shot to her extremities and then, she saw nothing but hot white. Her pussy clamped hard on her daddy's dick as her back arched off the bed.

May's window-cracking cry rippled across the corn fields.

Seeing his daughter cum so hard for the third time finally pushed Norman over the edge. "Oh shit!" He pulled his cock out of her impossibly tight grip and female ejaculate sprayed his torso, clear droplets catching the bottom of his face. May covered her mouth with both hands, shocked and embarrassed watching herself squirt for the first time. She probably got some on the camera, too!

Norman blinked away the surprise spurt (as if it wasn't the first time he made a woman do that), pulled her hands away from her face, stroked his shaft a couple of times, then did her one better – blasted hot white ropes across her entire body, hitting everything from her tits to the headboard. His masculine essence proved a lot thicker, muskier, stickier as he returned the favour showering it all over her. Norman delivered the massive money shot Marc paid for, and then some, hosing down her face with so much DNA she had to screw her eyes and mouth shut to avoid consuming would-be brothers and sisters. Even as May lay there drowning in spunk, he squeezed and flicked his cock at her, emptying every last drop of his loaded scrotum.

May wiped the semen from her eyes when he finally backed off the bed. *Freaking hell*, *Dad... a little overkill?* Granted, she'd cum on him first.

"Wow," Dennis said.

"Wow," Snap agreed.

"Wow." Alice nodded with a frown.

The director stood up from his chair and May noticed he, too, sported a crass bulge. He initiated a slow clap. The rest of the filming crew joined in. "Ladies and gentlemen," he announced. "That's a wrap!"


Chapter 11 - Family Matters

May stood by Norman at the negotiation table, clothed and decent once more, while Marc Stone sat in front of bodyguards reviewing the raw footage on a tablet. His headphones spared her and her father the embarrassment of hearing themselves in the throes of passion. Still, she tapped her foot anxiously, knowing the men on the other side of the table were poring over explicit visuals of their indecent acts.

What if Marc decided their performance wasn't good enough? Would he veto the contract? What if he asked them to reshoot the whole thing?

Every time Marc glanced up from the tablet to scan the pair of them, her tummy flipped, although his micro expressions were impossible to make heads or tails from. She wished she could be more like her father; Norman was statuesque, his expression stony, more annoyed than intimidated by what Marc Stone had in his possession. Her dad gave the impression he'd leap across the table if the shady entrepreneur did anything other than approve their efforts. Albeit, Marc didn't appear any more intimidated by her father than vice versa. A stalemate of sorts, but May and Norman knew deep down they were in check, and all the pieces truly laid in Marc Stone's favour.

A particular timestamp in the footage drew a smirk from him. It was unclear whether he liked whatever he saw or whether he relished the power he'd had in making them do whatever he saw. In any event, Marc Stone decided he'd seen enough. He turned off the tablet, took off his headphones and stood to his full height.

May clasped her shivery hand.

Norman drew in a huge breath.

Marc casually fastened a button on his expensive suit. He put a hand on the heavy briefcase then slid it across the table. "Impressive. You two exceeded all my expectations. A deal's a deal."

May let out a huge sigh of relief.

Norman's puffed-out chest deflated a little.

"It was a pleasure doing business with you." Marc extended his hand. "Consider your debt settled. You're free to go."

Norman didn't raise a finger, let alone legitimise their dealings with a handshake. He stared at Marc's open palm until the conceited mogul put it away.

May, too, harboured mixed emotions on the matter. On one hand, she was grateful Marc stayed true to his word and they'd be heading back to Hoenn at long last, but on the other, she absolutely despised what he'd made them go through to get there. She couldn't bring herself to utter the words 'thank you' but gave him a poised nod in reluctant acknowledgement.

"Well then," Marc said, a little taken aback by the lacklustre thanks, "whenever you're ready, have your people call my people, and I'll have the private jet fired up. Till next time..." He put on his violet shades. "Toodle-oo."

Before he could step away from the table, Norman broke his silence. "Aren't you forgetting something?"

Marc turned to him. "Hm?"

"Our agreement."

"Oh! Yes." Marc pulled the odd-looking sapphire gemstone off his pinkie finger and placed it on top of the briefcase. "To be honest, I've hardly cared for the unsightly thing. I've only kept it this long because possessing it is a thorn in my brother's side. Perhaps, it's high time I ascended above that anyway. Do with the rock as you may."

Norman pocketed the large ring. "Oh, I will."

May was just as confused about his interest in the chiselled stone as she had been when he first brought it up as a make-or-break condition to signing the contract. Whatever its significance, the ring had clearly played a role in pushing him off the fence. She'd have to remember to ask him about it sometime. For now, the only thing looping through her mind was 'home sweet fricking home!'

•••

Norman knocked over a box of old brittle papers teetering on the edge of an office desk. He hadn't seen it behind his elbow when he spun around scanning the room. The sudden thump and flutter of papers startled him in the deathly silence. This abandoned building was creepy enough without scaring himself halfway to hell. He supposed that was part of the reason Zinnia chose it for her base of operations. Who else would be eccentric enough to call this place home?

Speaking of that sexy, ass-kicking oddball, where was she anyway? "Zinnia? You here?" He called out to nothing. "Zinnia?" He sensed no movement, no footsteps crunching on paper, no shifting shadows emerging from the corners. "Of course you're not here. You're probably out there doing... whatever the hell it is you do."

No matter. Norman found a clean sheet of paper and fished a pen out of a broken drawer.

Hi Zinnia,

It's me, your favourite stalkee. Yeah, I'm still alive. Somehow. Turns out avoiding Hyper Beams is actually good for your health. Don't say I never listened to you.

On a serious note, I'm writing this to let you know I finally found a way to repay you for all the times you saved my life out here. Remember that slippery, little Key Stone you've been turning this region upside-down hunting for?

Yeah, I found it.

You won't believe where and what I had to do to get it but, anyway, the important thing is I got it. By the time you read this letter, I'll probably be halfway across the globe, far away from this blasted shithole. Come find me in Hoenn. My daughter and I finally found our ticket back home! I swear to protect this Key Stone with my life until you take it off my hands. Hey, maybe you'll even get to meet May.

Anyway, I know you're not one for words so I'll keep this short and sweet and end it here.

Thank you for everything. My children still have a father thanks to you, and my wife a husband. A rash, boneheaded husband at times but a husband nonetheless! I hope you find yourself someone special, too, someday. I'll always consider you a part of our family.

Be well. Stay strong. I'll catch you in Hoenn.

Yours truly, Norman.

He reread the letter twice and corrected spelling mistakes before dropping his pen. The thought of leaving her the Key Stone somewhere in this building did occur to him, but he didn't want to risk the off-chance of some vagrant stumbling upon his note and beating her to it. He ransacked the room for Sellotape and stuck the letter on the office door, impossible to miss the next time she returned to the premises.

. . .

"No shit?? You better not be pulling my leg, man! You better not be pulling my fucking leg! Tell me he ain't pulling my leg??"

May chuckled at Jake's restrained optimism and utter disbelief. "My dad's not pulling your leg. We really do have a private jet waiting to fly us all back to Hoenn."

"What?! OH YEAH!" Jake leapt and punched the air. "You guys... man!" Emotion welling up his eyes, he squeezed May and Norman in a suffocating embrace that lasted nearly

as long as their time on Dytopiah. "You hear that, buddy?" He ran back to Skarmory under the bridge and wrapped his arms around the bird's steely neck. "We're going home! We're gonna get you all fixed up!"

The flying-type raised its one good wing and bayed at the heavens.

May and Norman couldn't help beam from contagious mirth. Their sacrifice wouldn't go down in vain.

After what felt like hours of Jake running in circles shouting 'woo-hoo!' like a madman under a bridge, the celebratory atmosphere took an awkward turn when he stopped to ask, "How did y'all get freaking Marc Stone to let us hitch a ride on his private jet? Didn't you steal dude's watch?"

Norman gave a sheepish laugh.

May looked down and itched the back of her neck.

"Uh," Norman said, before swinging an arm around Jake's shoulders. "Who cares, man? We're heading home! That's a story for another day. Besides, I'd have to kill you if I told you."

"Is that right...?" Everything turned quiet and serious for a moment, then Jake suddenly burst out laughing. "Then don't tell me shit! Whatever you did, man, good work. Let's get the fuck up outta here already!"

May and Norman snuck each other glances of relief. They could only pray everybody else would be as easily diverted from the details.

. . .

May leaned against the window watching shapeless puffs drift across the night sky. All the arm space, leg room and luxury Marc Stone afforded them couldn't put her mind to rest. They were halfway through a twelve-hour flight, halfway back home, and she hadn't

managed a blink of sleep. Instead, she was subjected to a myriad of thoughts and emotions, and Jake's raucous snores from the other side of plane. The poor man was exhausted. They all were. The last seven months took chunks out of their lives. But it was all behind them now. Some thousand miles behind them. So why had May let her anxieties sneak onto the plane with her?

Maybe this was all just part of the hangover from Dytopiah. Maybe all she needed was a good night's rest in her own bed and she'd wake up to her old life. Maybe then she'd be prepared to look at Brendan and her mother in the eye without feeling like the biggest bag of Miltank excrement.

"Hey."

May started. Looked over her shoulder. "Hey ... "

It was her dad standing in the aisleway, fatigue set in his ghoulish features. "Can't sleep either, huh?"

May shook her head solemnly. "Nope."

He sighed. "May I?" He gestured towards the seat beside her.

"Sure." She sat up from her slump and scooted to make room for him, although there was plenty already.

They stared ahead carrying weary expressions. A thick wall of silence held between them, but she didn't have to glance over to feel the same thoughts torturing him. Stripped bare of their on-screen counterparts, they'd barely spoken a word since filming concluded, neither knowing where to start the conversation. Was their father-daughter relationship still salvageable? Less than a dozen hours ago he was literally *inside* her and gushing about how incredible it felt. May rubbed her thighs together under the thin blanket as a lingering reminder of his girth pulsed in her core. Norman spared her from broaching the awkwardness and spoke the first words. "We had to."

May looked down at the twiddling fingers in her lap. "Yeah."

His chest heaved in her peripheral vision with a heavy exhale. "A lot of people wouldn't understand. It's a good thing they don't have to." Jake's snores filled the precarious silence that followed. "I'm proud of you."

She furrowed her brow. "Really?" A strange thing for a father to say after not only witnessing his daughter's porn debut, but being a part of it.

"Yeah." He laughed, the irony not lost on him. "You did good."

She did? In what way? Her tenacity, her hustle... her performance? "Thanks, I guess?"

"I love you, May. It doesn't have to be awkward between us," he said, staring straight ahead. "We're going to get plenty of that with other people. Might be too soon right now but I want you to know if you ever feel like talking about it, you can always come to me. I mean, quite frankly, who else can we confide in besides each other?"

He was right. They wouldn't dare tell anyone about their incestual antics, let alone their sex tape's existence. Perverse as it ended, their doomed father-daughter vacation brought them closer together in a roundabout way, trapped them in a bond of secrecy they prayed would last a lifetime.

"Hey," Norman said. "It'll all be okay." He put his hand over hers in an innocuous gesture that often comforted her, only this time there was a static to his touch, a heat that charged her cheeks and zapped her extremities. She pulled her hand back, her blush deepening. Norman gave an awkward laugh. "Oh, right." He put forth his fist for a bump instead. "Maybe we're better off starting here." "Heh. Maybe." She effected the proposed fist bump. Perhaps their relationship needed more than mending, a rebuild from the bottom up. They could only grow from strength to strength from here on out. Feeling her father present and hearing him say he'd have her back was all the assurance she'd longed for.

May took in the big, wide world outside her window, the golden rivers of city lights waving them back to civilisation, and her chest swelled with hopefulness. Was that Kalos or Sinnoh stretching to the brink of the horizon below them? Was that bright arrangement of circular lights the Super Contest Hall in Hearthome City or her eagerness to recognise landmarks drawing them closer and closer to home?

"Hey, Dad, do you think that's –" She stopped mid-sentence upon turning and discovering her father fast asleep with his arms crossed and his head lolled back against the seat. She gave a small warm smile. "Sweet dreams, Dad." Then whispered, "Love you, too." She turned back to her window with a yawn.

May didn't remember what happened next; one second she was leaning her temple against the window searching for Jubilife City amongst the pool of lights, the next she woke up with her head laying on her father's shoulder. Despite her grogginess, she gathered exactly what time of day it was when her line of sight caught her dad's unmistakable morning glory. Unbeknownst to her, Norman woke up equally surprised to find himself staring down his daughter's blouse, her milky cleavage peering up from within.

"We're home!"

May and Norman both jumped at the sound of Jake's voice. She shuffled away from her father sheepishly as Jake bum-rushed their window and pointed at a bustling port town down below. "Look! Slateport City!"

"You're right," Norman said, rubbing his eyes as he stood to look over Jake and May's heads. "Home sweet home." May recognised the port town immediately, having ridden her bike back and forth between Petalburg and Slateport on several occasions. She wasn't sure where the plane would touchdown but they wouldn't be more than a few hours away from home.

. . .

Finally.

"Coming!" Max shouted from the other side of the door.

May's heart was pounding through her chest.

Although he'd sounded annoyed at the doorbell interrupting whatever he'd been doing before it rang, her little brother looked anything but after opening the front door. His jaw dropped, frozen, as though someone had paralysed him with a Freeze Shock attack in the doorway. He might as well have been staring at two ghosts. May's face was brimming with emotion; her, too, unable to move, unable to speak. She could swear he'd gotten a whole foot taller! Had they been gone seven months or seven years?

"Hey, buddy," Norman said from behind May, holding his composure. "Long time, no see. Been holding the fort down while I've been gone?"

When Max finally picked his jaw off the floor and raised his spectacles from the tip of his bony nose, all he could do was shout at the top of his lungs. "Mom! Come quick! Dad…" he added sombrely, disbelief in his tenor, "Dad and May are back."

They all heard Caroline drop and break whatever she was holding. Her footsteps came rushing with more urgency than a stampede of Tauros. A tear had already wet her cheek by the time she reached the door and, once she'd visually confirmed the news, she shoved her way onto the welcome mat and threw her arms around her long-lost husband and daughter. The floodgates burst open as both May and Caroline broke down into sobs and tears. Her mom squeezed her so tightly it felt like her innards might implode. Norman planted a kiss on his wife's forehead as a tear rolled down his cheek. He pulled Max into the familial embrace and for several solemn minutes, they stayed huddled on the welcome mat wrapped in each other's arms.

Max reached for the only piece of luggage on their person. "Let me take that for you."

Norman firmed his grip on the briefcase. "That's all right, son. I got this." He winked.

Max found his overprotectiveness a little curious but he wasn't one to pick a fight with his father. After prodding and commenting on the hollowness of Dad's cheeks, Mom bustled inside and beseeched them to follow suit as if she intended to prepare something to restore their fullness straight away. Max hopped in right behind her, yelling back to the returnees, "I can't believe you're not dead! You guys need to tell us *everything* that happened!"

May looked up at their neighbours' upstairs window with wariness in her eyes.

"Hey," Norman said softly.

May looked down to her side and found he'd extended a supportive hand. She clasped it in her own. They inspired brave smiles of one another and, together, walked into their home, walked into whatever trials and misadventures life had in store for them next.

THE END

Author's Notes: Thanks for reading! Please help me become a better writer by sending me your feedback. Whether you hated it or loved it, I'm open to hearing all opinions as long as you're genuine and respectful about it. You can drop a review at <u>lemonzsauce.com</u> or hit me up at <u>reviews@lemonzsauce.com</u>. I do my best to respond to all reviews.

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. . .

Special credit goes to *chiwino, yuki usagi (snowcanvas), ririmon, dd, zukky, gez1313, Hagarza_P, Fujimori Shiki, sana!rpg, jazz-and-pizza, bolobolo, kaito draws* and *inkertonkun,* for the artwork that inspired this fan fic cover! As of the time of this writing, you can find more of the artist's work here:

https://gelbooru.com/index.php?page=post&s=list&tags=chiwino

https://danbooru.donmai.us/posts?tags=yuki_usagi_%28snowcanvas%29

https://danbooru.donmai.us/posts?tags=ririmon&z=5

https://rule34.xxx/index.php?page=post&s=list&tags=dd_%28artist%29+

https://hentaiera.com/gallery/894458/

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https://www.skillots.com/search/profiles/16717?category_id=54&locale=en&tab_index=1

https://www.pixiv.net/en/users/7683594

https://www.hentai-foundry.com/user/jazz-and-pizza/profile

https://gelbooru.com/index.php?page=post&s=list&tags=bolobolo

https://www.patreon.com/Kaitodraws

https://danbooru.donmai.us/posts?page=2&tags=inkerton-kun

As always, thanks again for reading! Have a nice day and take care!

Sincerely yours, j.j. scriptease.

