IV

When you move to a new place, life has a way of feeling like it’s crawling by while it’s actually moving faster than ever.

Amber’s new life in Knubbig was becoming a steady blur in the face of all of the changes that she had been both enduring and fostering—so much so that it was getting harder and harder to remember what life was like back when she wasn’t living in a small town, being a relatively successful mayor’s assistant, with a girlfriend and… well, friends.

Conversely, that means that it was also getting harder for her to remember a time when she didn’t have to wake up early to mix special protein milkshakes for her boss. After so long doing it, it felt like it was second nature by now.

Wake up, take a shower, get to the office, put appetite enhancers in the mayor’s personal Keurig coffee maker, file some paperwork, put those high-calorie protein shakes in the minifridge under the desk in the corner of the office, do a couple of tasks, make sure that Sherry got her important notes for the day and performed whatever mayoral tasks that were required of her… and then lunch.

After that big uphill battle, the days just sort of melted away.

Back home, she hadn’t had any of this. It may have been a little more stressful than what she was sued to dealing with, but she was already so much more fulfilled in her new life in Knubbig than she was back home.

Why would she have wanted it any other way?

*Got time for lunch today?*

Amber took a brief moment from her hectic schedule to smile down at ther phone as it buzzed to life—a surprise text from Linda was always a welcome addition to her usually busy mornings.

*For you, always.*

As soon as she heard the telltale sound of Sherry’s dragging footsteps from the other side of the mayor’s door, Amber slipped her phone back into her blazer’s pocket. It was better for her to make sure that Sherry received her full attention from the moment she showed up to work.

And whenever she did, she always made an entrance.

The heavy wooden doors spread apart fast and fiercely as Sherry stormed into her office, a recognizable Apple Dumplin’s box tucked under her arm and slightly ripped along the opening. Her one hand practically squeezed a pastry dry as she thundered her way inside, grumbling like a stormcloud as she descended upon her desk and tossed her belongings harshly onto its surface.

“I. *Hate.* Drive-Thrus.”

“I know?” Amber tried to act surprised, “That’s why I picked up your breakfast?”

Sherry shot Amber a nasty look as she toddled uneasily to the big chair that sat behind her desk, placing her box of donuts down with a comparative amount of care when compared to her smartphone and purse.

“I was in that line for *twenty* minutes.” Sherry lowered her carriage into the seat, landing on the black pleather with a slosh that reverberated in her fatted gut, “And while I was sitting there, I popped a button on my jacket, and I don’t know where it is and my car is *so* fucking small that it’s uncomfortable for me bend down and—*ughhhh*.”

This was par the course for what had become of Amber’s job description in the Mayor’s office. Listening to the Mayor bitch about her day and the (sometimes) menial hardships that drove her deeper and deeper into comfort snacking.

“Is the coffee ready?” Sherry griped

“Sure is, let me just—”

“Don’t skimp on the half and half, I need it today.”

“You got it.” Amber flashed a toothy grin.

Under the guidance of her infernal mentor, Amber had been slowly sabotaging Sherry’s diet and whittling away at her willpower; to the point where Amber considered this just as much her job as actually helping her boss run the city was.

While Sherry worked in the material plane, Devlin worked on the spiritual—slowly pushing her towards making self-destructive decisions in the name of comfort and a deserved indulgence until Sherry barely registered that she had been taking enough shortcuts to see that she barely left her office anymore. At least, when she was on the clock.

And the results of a tag-team assault of Amber and Devlin working their magic on Mayor Klein’s waistline had been getting more and more prominent by the day.

“Ugh.”

Sherry huffed as Amber handed her a cup of coffee, filled to the brim with enough dairy that it looked more like chocolate milk than the sort of beverage that her boss had asked for.

“I need to get back to the gym.”

Laying a hand on her paunch as it distended outwards, Sherry’s double chin creased as she looked down in disgust. It had become big enough that it formed a little shelf now, and rested heavily in her plush lap whenever she sat down. The changes elsewhere in her figure were noticeable as well, though not nearly as much as the developments that had started at her waistline and expanded outwards. For such a tall woman, she was becoming increasingly wide as well.

“I’d be more than happy to look up a few recommendations!” Amber chirped helpfully, “It might be good optics to see the Mayor in a local gym instead of at a big chain.”

“Yeah, do that.” Sherry groused as she leaned backwards, gripping the handle on her coffee cup, “M’starting to get a little too big for my tastes…”

Of course, Amber knew that Sherry would forget all about jumping back into the gym. Whether it was Devlin seeing to that or just an innate laziness on her boss’s part, fostered by her machinations and enabling attitude, Amber wasn’t quite sure.

But it was nice to know that all of her hard work wouldn’t be undone—and that Devlin wouldn’t have to chew her out for her boss visiting a gym.

“Mmm… in the meantime though, you wanna swing by that new place downtown?” Sherry asked through a mouthful of donut, “They’re—rrrp—supposed to be the best sushi place.”

“Weren’t you supposed to hold the ceremony to break ground there a few weeks back?”

“Yeah, but… you know…”

Sherry ran a hand self-consciously over the swell of her stomach. A thick sigh escaping her as she leaned backwards into her chair, palming her fat belly with a firm hand.

“Optics.” Sherry said sourly, “Can’t have the people thinking that their mayor is getting fat off of tax cuts.”

“Uh-huh.” Amber smiled sarcastically, “I’ll see what I can do—if Linda wants to head there, I’ll text you and ask what you want me to bring back.”

“You better.” Sherry burped again, “It’s hell getting delivery here on time…”

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“Sherry wasn’t kidding.” Amber said with no small amount of amazement in her voice, “This place is great.”

“I’ll say…” Linda hurped as she leaned back in the booth, “Gimme… oogh… gimme the soy sauce, baby?”

Amber happily handed the bottle over to the other side of the table, where Linda struggled to lean forward over her supremely stuffed stomach.

“Ohhhh yeah that’s the stuff…”

The chunky brunette drizzled the stuff all over what remained of a truly epic sushi lunch. The hungry look in the Sherriff’s eyes was beset by a certain acknowledgement that she should have probably stopped eating by now. Even Amber could see it—Linda was really pushing herself to finish this time.

“Careful, sweetie—you’re gonna pop right out of your uniform if you keep this up.”

That… hadn’t been exactly what she’d wanted to say. But at the moment, it had felt like the fun, flirtatious sort of thing that the New Amber might have said.

It had worked.

“You’d… uff… you’d like that, wouldn’t you?” Linda chuckled hoarsely as she skewered another sushi roll with her fork and raised it high towards her mouth, “mmm… me popping another button at lunch and showing a little skin.”

As much as it had confused her… Amber would have liked that. Very much.

It was difficult exactly to say where these feelings were coming from. Even though she had known that she liked other women for most of her life, she’d never been particularly drawn to the sort of especially soft, curvaceous women that had been catching her eye recently until she’d moved to Knubbig.

Until she’d met Devlin.

In the back of her mind, creeping more and more to the front with every creeping pound that was added to Linda’s lucious ass as it filled out her khakis, Amber had a sneaky suspicion that the gluttony demon she’d allied herself with had been tinkering with more than just Sherry’s appetite. It was the only way to explain why someone like Linda was letting herself go so quickly… and why she was finding it so erotic.

“I don’t… hff… know what’s gotten into me lately…”

“Besides a whole bunch of food, you mean.”

“Yeah…”

Linda panted weakly as she struggled to take bite after bite of sauce-drenched sushi roll. It dribbled on her brown button-up, leaving little dollops of red orange along her collar. Linda’s double chin flexed as her mouth hung open, her soft pink tongue licking up the residue that had run around her mouth.

“Ugh… take it away from me.” Linda finally said, pushing her plate away, “I’m just gonna… I’m just gonna eat it if it’s right in front of me…”

Amber cocked a curious brown eyebrow at the discarded plate. It still had plenty of food left on it.

*It’d be a shame for it to go to waste…*

“I don’t think so, Sherriff.” Amber purred as she readied her chopsticks (another side effect of not being the most clumsy person in the world—chopstick skills!) and primed another mouthful for her girlfriend, “You’ve still got some food left on your plate.”

“Hnn…haaahh…” Linda looked weakly at the roll, her brown eyes crossing needfully, “Nooo…”

“Oh come on.” Amber pouted, “It’s just a few widdle-bitty sushi rolls.”

Linda continued to pant hotly at the food for what felt like minutes as she visibly contemplated, and then surrendered to, her desires…

“Okay.”

Amber smiled wickedly as she lowered the roll towards her girlfriend’s waiting mouth, the Sherriff of Knubbig herself struggling to lower herself down and let the sodium-rich roll lay flat on her tongue.

“Say ahhhh”

“ahhhhh”

Once the piece had hit Linda’s tongue, Amber could swear that she felt a shudder. The way that Linda munched and crunched weakly on the New York Fried roll, struggling to breathe as the buttons on her blouse threatened to go at any minute, looking down and rubbing her taut gut as it pressed hard against her uniform…

“You want another one?” Amber asked with a wry grin

“I… I don’t know, honey…”

“It’s goooood?”

Eventually, Linda caved.

And despite the immense pleasure that came with hand-feeding (well, chopstick-feeding) her girlfriend sushi rolls from across the table, Amber knew that something had to be up.

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“Sushi, huh?” Maddie teased, “And *I* wasn’t invited?”

“Come on, this is serious.”

“Oh fine, you big baby.”

Out of Amber’s regular cast of familiar faces that she dealt with in this tiny town, Maddie was the only one who had managed to not gain too terribly much weight just by merit of being around her. Granted, Amber didn’t see her as often as she did her boss or her girlfriend, but she saw her enough (and went out to dinner with her enough) that Amber was a little surprised that she hadn’t started to pork out.

Like Linda.

Sherry, she knew about. Sherry’s weight gain was more or less the goal here. What it took to keep her atrocious luck from coming back and screwing up everything that had been going so well for her since she moved to Knubbig.

But the fact that Linda was gaining weight at such an astonishing rate wasn’t part of the bargain.

What’s more, the fact that she wasn’t *upset* about it was more than a little odd too.

When amber had moved to Knubbig, Linda had been a hard-bodied, sculpted sherriff that took her job a little too seriously. But now she was doughy and mild to even the slightest suggestion that Amber pulled out.

It was… kinda hot.

“Well you know, people change in relationships.” Maddie said with a noncommittal shrug over her coffee cup, “The person that you meet isn’t always the person that you date—maybe this is just how the Sherriff is when she’s in a committed relationship?”

“I guess you could be right…”

Amber hadn’t ever been in a relationship that had lasted this long. And even if she had, she certainly hadn’t been in enough of them to be the expert on how people changed when they started dating other people. Maybe Maddie was right? Maybe Linda was just adjusting to what it was like to have a girlfriend…

Maybe *she* was adjusting to what it was like to have a girlfriend?

She had always thought that she liked it when her women were stern and hard-nosed, but with Linda getting so soft around her…

Well, getting so soft *around* in general!

The thought of the changes that were going on in her girlfriend’s body were enough to make Amber reconsider everything that she’d ever thought was attractive in another woman’s form. The soft tummy rolls and the fat ass, squeezed into her khakis. The soft double chin that creased every time she spoke so much as a word, and the round cheeks that bulged out with every bite of donut or drink of coffee…

Linda was getting fat almost as quickly as Sherry was.

And Amber was actively fattening her boss up! That was the part that she couldn’t share with Maddie. Whatever frame of reference that either of them had for a “normal” rate of gain had been thrown out the window due to Amber’s *own* machinations!

That… hadn’t been as unappealing as Amber had thought it would sound…

“Look, all I know is that ever since I’ve started hanging out with you, *my* clothes have been getting tighter too.” Maddie stuck out her tongue, “So maybe it’s your fault.”

Amber froze, however briefly, as she slowly realized that Maddie had been making a joke.

“Yeah…” Amber dredged up a laugh from the back of her throat, “Maybe I’ll just have to move back out of Knubbig for your and Linda’s sakes!”

“Sherry’s too.” Maddie took a sip of her tea, “Have you *seen* that gal lately?”

The rest of the restaurant seemed to fade away to the humming that rose slowly from Amber’s inner ear. Her chest ran hot as she suddenly realized that the corners of her new life weren’t quite as separate as they seemed. Despite the fact that Maddie was her boss’s personal shopper, something about the idea of them meeting outside of her control rubbed Amber the wrong way…

“Yeah, she’s… getting kinda big, isn’t she?” Amber laughed weakly, “I’m… gonna head out for the night.”

“Are you sure? We just barely got started—”

“I’m… not feeling too well.” Amber offered weakly, “I think it was something I ate.”

That seemed to be good enough for Maddie. Though she didn’t seem particularly convinced, she offered to pay for the check and let Amber go about with the rest of her night.

And the rest of her night was going to be eventful indeed…

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Amber still wasn’t used to coming home and expecting someone else to be there, waiting for her.

But a few times, more than enough for it to make her think twice before bringing Linda back to her apartment, Devlin would be waiting for her.

Sometimes she’d be standing there, right where the door opened. Other times she’d be doing things that were discerningly human and mundane. And yet others, she would be standing at the back of the hallway. Not menacingly, but perfectly still. Silent, and statuesque.

Perhaps it was because she had been thinking of Devlin all throughout the ride home from the bar. Perhaps it was because it was getting to be near the end of the month. But for whatever the reason, Devlin had been there, on the couch, with a pizza and the clicker in her hand.

“You’re home late.” She said with a little nibble, “You out having fun tonight?”

“…yeah, I went out for dinner with Maddie.”

“Ooh, Maddie Sedson. Beautiful blonde billionaire.” Devlin slurped her soda, “Don’t tell me you want me to be jealous.”

“I… I’ve never really been good at banter.”

“You’ve never been good at most things—that’s why I’m here.” Devlin chuckled darkly, “What’s up sport? I could hear you thinking about me all the way home. Don’t tell me that you’ve missed me.’

“I haven’t heard from you in a while.” Amber crossed her arms over her chest, “Like… you know… in my head.”

“I haven’t needed to tell you want to do.” Devlin shrugged, popping a garlic bread ball past her lips, “I *do* have other clients you know—how it gets done isn’t really a big deal. And you’ve clearly got good instincts.’

“What do you mean that I’ve got good instincts?” Amber took a few steps forward

“like you know how to do the job that I’ve assigned you.” Devlin snorted, “Calm down, spaz.”

“But… but I’ve been noticing some *changes* lately in everyone.” Amber muttered with uncertainty, “And I wanted to know if—”

“You wanted to know if it’s because of my *horrendous, awful, insidious* influence.” Devlin muted the television, turning towards her and throwing an arm behind the couch, “Right?”

Amber didn’t answer right away, but she held her stance.

“Well… the answer is somewhere in between, I *guess*…” Devlin rolled her eyes, “But if you’re asking if I’m the reason that all of your friends are getting fat… the answer is *no*.”