Squared Off

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Written by Septia.

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-Gwwhrbbchchslsllghs- The noise — comparable to that of a steamroller trudging over a bale of dough — caught the guardian mid thought. He turned back to the mistress, to whom he had just delivered her brunch; a feeling that stuck with him seeing they were no longer lugging around the five kilo block of Cloud-Dala cheese.

“Young mistress?”

“MMmfmprh?” Antoinette turned to face their query, palms warped a tight clutching the hunk of dairy she was in the middle of stuffing down her gob, its edges warping their face from her cheeks to the edge of her lips.

“Are you well of body? Should you not be feeling well you have us-.”

“At your beck and call yada ya,” the mistress dismissed, “your pretty face's got more pressing matters to sweep up, yeah? Giving dishes baths and feeding furnaces and what's not, I am all dandy pandy enjoying my brunch in peace,” she explained, and plugged the cheese back into her maw, giving it a few telling suckles.

The guardian curtsied and left the young mistress to her own devices, the door to the feeding chamber closing shut with a click that resonated throughout the hall.

-Cggrrsllslgh- Her stomach gurgled. Bentoinette peeked down, then struggled in chomping through the plush, rubbery texture of the cheese block tucked in her maw, -chhrth- chomping through it so that it pinched the chunks outside the grasp of her lips, pinched flat and drooping. -Bbwwpthg- stacking onto her stomach. Her, broad, flattened, upper stomach.

“Hjrmmf,” she mumbled, cheeks contorted around the gradually melting meal, fingers roaming down to caress the edges of the gut hidden beneath er cyan dress, tips trailing out the smooth surface and bending to ninety degrees down the straight lines marking the edge of her belly, bloated into the shape of a cube.

“Sport, I wasn't you still jammed up stuck in there?" she addressed her stomach, or rather, the servant within, or in fact… the servant she had gorged herself on several days ago.

“Would you not have checked out by now? I'm a widdle boggled that you are hanging around,” she said and gave the top of her belly a swat, the skin rippling with a contained echo — a drum skin which had grown slack due to lack of care. “I am of the fact viewing myself, or least my tummy tum, as more a motel than some fancy resort. One maybe two night stays, capiche?” -Ggbrls- Of course there was no response. There hadn't been for days.

“It's not like I have not mmmm, I haven't baked chocolate in the last while either, so, what gives ya belly bum?”

Still the lack of responses. Further perplexing, was that sound. -Smmttch- -Bwhgts- another swat, another echo, the vibrations of a hollow peal, instead of the congested slog of a servant stuffed torso. The brunch proved a valid distraction, focusing on sinking her teeth through broad chomps of the pliant, yellow dairy clay, the smacks of her lips and faint rumbles of her tummy expanding into the empty chambers.

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“Greetings mrs. Moriblo, I trust your ventures have been successful?”

Moriblo stepped out of the vehicle with a hand at the bow of her sunglasses, the other arm clutching over her middle.

“Had to step in for several surgeries, there's been an increase in cold feet devourments lately,” her voice was precise and alert; a vinyl record’s needle tracing over its disc.

“Mam, did you not say you were 'overloaded' with paperwork?”

“Exactly,” Mrs Moriblo answered without sparing them a glance, then heaving herself up the stairs to where her the servant was ready with the door open.

“Mommiee~,” came the sing-song greeting from inside.

Mrs. Moriblo rubbed down her forehead as she was both relieved at hearing the singsong tone of her daughter, though her headache imposed otherwise.

“Guess? I snatched up this dohickey watch a few days ago, think it is like a wrist arm watch? Thought it could be fun to inspect it together…”

Moriblo smiled, the kind of smile that betrays your exhaustion, yet remains the most genuine of expressions. "Of course, so then, where did you find it, my darling Bent-…” As her arm slid off her face, and she met her daughter's gaze, her eyes wandered south. A full stomach on her daughter was not out of the ordinary, nor was it the fact she had spent the last while caring for and getting intimately acquainted with similarly stuffed abdomens over the past days. It was… the shape. Somewhat hidden by Bentoinette's dress though the edges of the cubed shape were pronounced with creases in the cloth trailing down the garment. At the bottom she saw the flat end of the gut, the same skin-colour as her daughter, it wasn't a trick. If it was, she was not amused.

”…Tinette……” She mumbled, hand clamping her sunglasses and dragging them off her face as she strode forwards, bag laden eyes exposed as she grabbed her daughters hand and dragged her up with them.

“Oush, What is the big deal? Mom, why are you so whack?”

“We are going,” she cut off, and gestured to the servants not to persue them. The craft room laid littered, a ticking formed a drone, a sound which laid present in the back of the mind, where it had to be banished least not the ticking would tear on the nerves.

Bentoinette sat on the table, tools and parts swept aside by her mother, so she could have a space to examine her daughter. The touch and prod of her fingers warping he cubed stomach, grabbing and jabbing fingers repeatedly.

“Mom, this isn't necessary, my gut tunnels just gotta bang out and work through some stuff.”

“Who did you eat.” her mother said, clearing off more of the table, sweeping away crafts and projects the two had tinkered with so Bentionette could lay down flat. -Bbrnwnth- her stomach bobbed, jostled in the manner of a chunk of congealed gelatine, warped and shifted, but it kept its shape through deformation in its bobs, soon returning still. It jutted out form Bentionette's abdomen as a crate, as wide as her hips and keeping those proportions in its height and depth, with the exception that where in connected with the rest of the girls body it smoothed out to an inward slope dressed in stretch marks, though this was something familiar in itself.

“Mom, Mom, this hurts like balls.”

“How ironic,” she mumbled, and tapped her knuckle around the navel.

“Moma,” Bentoinette cried out.

She stopped. Her arms still coiled over the gut, though merely staring, feeling the flat bulk under her grasp, panting. “Dear,” she began.

“Mm, I am not ya tiny girl any more.Better apologize, you can tell and let me know stuff, this whole thing boggles me too.”

She stepped back. “This is not natural.”

“I didn't do nothing unusual.”

“Sweetie I have worked with enough case files to know the severity of these occasions,” she began, then grasped her chin, “This I… have never seen.”

“Sweetie. I can not stand by and do nothing. You have to realise what this could mean for you if-.”

“You could should ask first, I'm not ya patient, I'm ya daughter.”

Mrs. Moriblo turned silent, stepping back. The moments capture by the ticking injecting into the silence. She turned and walked off.

Antoinette's eyebrow sloping. “Mom? What are you doing?”

she stopped at the door. “Getting help. I have to take action now. I couldn't bear seeing this develope for the worse.” She grabbed the door. “I am sorry.”

“Mom wwai-.” -Cttch-. The door closed. -Ckltch- and locked.

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B is for box, but it is also round.

Regret laid piled in mrs. Moriblo's chest. Whilst calling other experts and rescheduling the hospital's hours to make up for the lost time this would cause, her mind made lists of actions she could have done instead: letting the servants watch her, let her stay in her room, tell her everything. Time, however, may not be on her side. She had to act quickly, and she had to act now. That is what she told herself when she headed back to the crafts room with a clique of experts in tow. Answering questions from the limited observation she had gotten, all whilst planning on how to make it up to her daughter later. A day of unrestricted access to the dairy chamber? Costly to replace the hoard knowing Bentioinette's hunger, but anything to see her daughter smile again, anything to have her understand.

“Bentoinette, I am coming in, I have brought friends who will help us solve this. I promise I will make it up to…”

The room was empty. Dread crept up her spine, following the beat of the clockwork ticking forth throughout the chamber, her eyes darting with the rhythm, until they landed on the window, wide from which a graceful breeze blew.

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"I am not her, patient, subject,” Bentoinette mumbled, arms clutching around her chest, the frills of her cyan dress flittering in the breeze, the thicket of the forest encompassed her, far from the uncommon paths she'd taken when she had played with the kids that once owned the premise.

“I am a big, strong girl now,” she said, feeling herself dip back into childish lingo and shaking her head. “Just gotta smooth and clear it up myself.” She mumbled, striding further into the woods -ckktch-. She heard the crack of a twig.. Frozen in place, teeth gritted, she spied around her to find its source.

A plot of loam encircled by trees laid an imposing shape, a brown abdomen as nearly as wide as she was tall moving along the calm breath. Stepping closer, she saw the shape, she was sure to stay silent, so the elk would not awaken.

Bentoinette's eyes shone up. The solution had been so obvious.

“It cannot stay blocked up,” she mumbled grabbing her gut with a warm rush of glee, “if I stuff myself with something much huger.” An elk over two meters in height was a venture surpassing her experience, though the thought of it had already sent -Ghhrbrsllgsh- growls of greed through her abdomen, and there hadn't been much to munch on in the crafts room.

“Looks like its your lucky day, you'll be rich rich fat on my thighs tomorrow,” Bentoinette snickered and crept up to the elk's rear hooves, making sure it was in deep sleep as she lifted them up, yawning her maw wide agape, and letting her lips trail and morph over the soft, furry hooves.

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Mrs. Moriblo sat with her face clutched in her palms. Sometimes one of her expert colleges came up with a thought, encouragement, or theory. She met assurance of her daughter’s safety with the same way she metthe theorems that could cure her once she was found… silence. Leaving her alone was out of the question. Though this late into the evening, an awkwardness begun to fester in the room as a rank mold.

-Ckkktch- The door flung open, a servant rushed in.

“Mrs. Moriblo, they found Bentoinette.”

Still no reaction… face fused with her palms.

“Mrs?” The servant pried, infected with the moulding air of the room.

“Where.” She stated.

The servant hesitated. “At the hospital, mam.”

The moment stretched. Silence elongated as a rubber band, tension growing solid as everyone knew it could only take so much pressure, before snapping back. Or worse, breaking.

The mistress's head rose from her grasp. Specs of makeup diluted down with tears and trailed down her face. Her jaw trembled. She took in one, heavy breath.

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B secretive, this story took many turns.

She appeared peaceful. A sterile environment of chalk white walls and whiter sheets did that; the air of peace a hospital brought. She had seen this sight numerous times. Seeing Bentoinette in the same state, shouldn't have been different. The sheets contorted straight and over the dome of her abdomen, the squared shape beneath a harrowing shape, though with the blanket, its appearance was muted, smothered. A pipe trailed down Bentoinette's throat, aiding her breathing. Several teeth were missing, right cheek ruptured. Several ribs collapsed under blunt trauma.

It bothered her that this sight could be anything resembling peaceful… Still, she couldn't look away.

“Lasting damages are to be expected," a doctor said, joining the dampened atmosphere, "we are doing what we can, by the scans we expect the hoof of the elk was caught in her gullet before she was-.”

“I read the files.” Mrs. Moriblo's reply came with the flat delivery of a cogwork.

The doctor gave her a nod. "Of course." They glanced to the clock. “We are approaching the end of visiting hours.”

Five ticks passed.

“How long can I stay?”

The doctor peeked back at the time, then shuffled his note board under his arm. “As long as you need.”

He left before she could reply. Though, everything felt so distant now. Even as she sat down by her daughter's bedside, Bentioinette felt miles away, the same way she felt at work. She reached for Bentoinette's palm. Fingers recoiled… if she hadn't treated her that way, maybe… The smell of salt arrived, mixing with the cleaning chlor of the sterile room. Time ticked away, in congruent with Bentoinette’s breaths.

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A beginning.