Worm: Joyride
by bearblue

Summary
Taylor is offered a chance to fix a few things after she’s been shot. However, those fixes come with price tags. She’s no libertine, but she still hasn’t quite figured out how to back down from a challenge. Maybe she’ll learn. *blinks* *shakes head* Nah.

Notes

Worm: Joyride (Slut Life/Jumpchain)
Fandom: Worm, Slut Life, Jumpchain
Pairing: A Lot. It’s a Slut Life and a Jumpchain. So many possibilities!
Edit (July 31, 2018): Things to expect: ff, mf, mm, mff, fff, and other combinations thereof - including futa.

TL;DR Disclaimer

Do not complain to author about ANYTHING, see long disclaimers. Story contains smut, taboo experiences, mayhem, magic, and sundry very good/very bad happenings. Story is AU. Yes there is story in chapter 1. No, the sex doesn't happen right away. Plot Ahead. Story origins are: Worm/SlutLife/Jumpchain. Expect abrupt changes in scenes. Age of consent=16. Why? Main cast is way older than that but may appear younger due to Jumpchain. Porn Logic/Psychology Ahead. Compersion, Communication and Polyamory ahead.

If you are interested in reading the long disclaimers they *should* be the last chapter of the story OR they're chapter 12, if I screw up. :)
The voices were the worst, rumbling light thunder across clouds made of faces, in constant jabber. There was zero kindness, every syllable and tone was that of roaring accusation. It rolled over her like a diabolical rock concert in blood red and black colors. There was no white, only lighter and darker versions that pretended to be grey, but was really just more black and more red; never pink. Her own voice was lost in the many, her thoughts crushed without refuge.

Then there was the pain, remembered as sharp and viscerally as the days she’d originally escaped. Every moment of pain lost was now remembered and excruciating. She did more than yelp, she squealed and screamed and agonized. Every punch taken, every fall and every cut blared out all at once, culminating in the pure sensation of the one time she’d been shot in the head.

It all was terrible, constant and mind-altering. She longed for nothingness, to disappear, but she lived. She lived and could not escape.

Then, something changed.

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Taylor was asleep but did not know it. She felt awake and alert, but there was an odd clarity to it, an unexpected vastness. She noted an incredibly blue sky, with very fluffy clouds. Hyper-realistic green grass, along with the smells of Summer. The rustle of leaves on the trees and the coolness of a small lake of water, not too distant.

She was standing, but could not see her feet.

She looked around, taking in the immensity with a surprising calm. It took her a moment to figure out what was missing.

There was no extra input, no extra sound or motion or sense of being. No sense of others.

Thus, she was extremely startled, when she heard a voice. “Hello!?” She jumped, but even then, she did not wake. Instead, she found herself in a new place.

A young woman sat behind a desk, hands clasped together over a crisp-looking file. The folder was actually a bit thick. She wore glasses and looked vaguely familiar.

“Hello, can you hear me?”

Taylor blinked. She couldn’t feel her lips, but she heard her own voice. “I can.” She looked around, noting again how vivid everything seemed. “Where am I? Who are you? What is going on?”
These seemed like important questions.

The young lady, her long blonde hair moving softly in a non-existent wind, nodded a bit. “Of course, you have questions. I will do my best to answer.” Her eyes were very grey and then they were blue.

“My name is Cindy, and I was once just like you.”

“A parahuman?”

Cindy looked taken aback but regained her verbal footing quickly. “No. Not that. I was once dead.”

Taylor needed a moment to process that.

“I’m dead?”

“Well, now you’re kind of not, but you most definitely were, when we got you. Of course, you weren’t quite dead at first. We retrieved you from the hospital, where you were taken and then you died. But, that really works out well for you now.”

“I’m…” Taylor paused. Normally, she thought faster, but her usual methods were not available. It was so quiet. “… confused.” She thought she should feel more alarmed, but again, she felt a strong sense of calm. “Are you mastering me?”

“Mastering?” Cindy blinked. “Well, no. I don’t think so. But maybe it will help if I explain something. Currently, we are speaking in Virtual Reality. You’re not exactly at a place in your recovery where you can talk. But you are functionally capable of making some decisions now, especially now that your brain has been repaired. Fortunately, despite everything, your personality engrams were actually really strong.”

“Repaired.” Taylor licked her lips, then felt at the back of her head, as a memory of pain surfaced. The pain arrived and then it left as quickly as it came. She inhaled strongly, with a sudden revelation. “I understand.”

“Good. So, let me get to the reason you are here.” Cindy took off her glasses, then shook back her hair. She undid some buttons, revealing the top of her bosom. In the middle lay a golden locket with ornate letters stamped on it. SL. “I represent a company and reality show. We want you to participate in it. If you do, you’ll be rewarded with a new life, new body and a whole host of other benefits. These benefits can range from simple learning to gaining wealth and power beyond your imagination.”

Taylor, even in this semi-conscious state knew something was up. “What’s the catch?”

Cindy came around the desk and sat on it, in front of Taylor. Her skirt hiked up, revealing long, shapely legs. She crossed them and Taylor missed nothing of what could be seen. Cindy’s smile turned sultry. “Well, there are a few catches. Very few things being offered are free. They come at prices to be paid put in terms of points. Have you ever played a CYOA?” Taylor, who had familiarity with a lot of her world’s online entertainment considered the issue and then nodded. She did understand the concept and had even played a few. Cindy continued, “This is like that. Most start with zero points. You, given your circumstances, have a leg up on some of the other potential candidates, with quite a few extra points and concessions to start with. Some of the concessions have to with your ability to control aspects of yourself, such as appearance and physical abilities. It comes with a discount that allows you to control quite a lot and is a very beneficial package. That said since this is a reality show, the price required in exchange to add supplementary or other options could be as simple as meeting your fans or it could be much more complex or dangerous. You’ll note that the
name of the company is Slut Life?”

Again, Taylor nodded. She had caught that, yes and she did understand the implications. She was over twenty and she’d seen a lot in her time. So far, she noted, Cindy hadn’t threatened her, so she was holding her opinion on the topic to the side and not judging. After all, she knew she’d been dead. Worst-best case, she returned to nothingness.

The beautiful woman continued, “Well, then you can get a basic idea of what might be expected of you in exchange. Though none of what you choose to experience will be without informed consent on your part. We, I, wouldn’t do that to you, in particular. That said, there are many options to choose from.” Cindy leaned forward, revealing even more cleavage and smelling very good, “I would love to show you the details, as being a contestant can be a very fun and personally fulfilling, and may I say, a healing, experience.”

Cindy reached out, and gently touched Taylor’s face, moving a strand of hair, causing the hazel-eyed girl to gasp. She had felt that. It had felt tangible and sent a shiver of pleasure through her. How long had it been since she’d felt a kind touch?

Cindy’s smile gentled as she pulled the file folder forward and then opened it. “I really want to help you, Taylor. This is the basic contract that everyone gets, but I have heard rumors that we’ve got something special in mind for you.” Her smile was like the sun and dazzled the dark-haired young woman. “Even better, after talking with your life events counselor, we’ve come up with an offer that I think would make being a contestant a real winner for you. We are aware that you’ve lost a few people you care about, due to… unfortunate events. What if I told you, we could bring some of them back; for a modest price, of course.”

Taylor’s heart leaped at the thought, even as a whiteout noise filled her head as her world faded to black.

Forever and a day later and Cindy’s voice asked, “Taylor, the contract is mostly done, but remember how I said there was something special planned? We’ve had a visitor and she wants to talk to you before we finalize everything. Would you consider it?”

Taylor never opened her eyes, but her response was clear and confident. It wasn’t vocal, except to those who listened via the interface. “Sure. Why not?”

Another voice, gorgeous and smooth, but not one Taylor had heard before said, “Hello, sweetie, how are you feeling right now?”

“Like I’ve been asleep too long, but I don’t want to wake up.” Taylor shifted, feeling as if she were floating, though not reckoning why.

There was a chuckle, “Well, that’s certainly appropriate. I’m going to open your vision a bit, so you can see me. I promise it won’t hurt.”

“Okay.” The blackness faded into light again. This time, she was in a simple, white room, filled with a comforting light.

A gorgeous woman, fascinatingly tall, buxom and poised, stood in front of Taylor. It made Taylor feel her younger than her age, but not unpleasantly so. She was just aware that the woman in front of her was someone with a lot of power and time behind her gaze. The woman’s eyes were kind though, blue and clear. They made her face even more beautiful, with red lips, pale-blushed skin and dark, dark hair filled with starlight. “Thank you, Taylor.” She paused for a very brief moment. Then continued on the exhale, “I’ve been wanting to say that for a while, but things have been very busy.
You saved so many worlds, you know. There’s been a lot of work that needed doing.”

The younger woman winced and looked down, immediately and strongly grieving. She’d broken many people, allowed so much to happen and had lost her very few friends. She’d assumed so much. It was all hubris to her now. So much had been destroyed.

Taylor’s head was tilted up again, with a gentle touch. “None of that, young Khepri. You did as you must, and it’s good that you remember, but you mustn’t let it break you. Not when there is so much ahead.”

Again there was pain and a desire for denial, but the sensation was abruptly muted. “Am I being mastered?” Deja vu. Taylor felt like she should be much more worried and in much more pain, but she wasn’t.

She was surprised that the answer was so honest, as the other woman replied, “Yes. But not in such a way as to take away your free will. You are hurting on such a fundamental level that it threatened your survival. Right now, chemicals plus virtual and mental commands are being used to keep you calm and at peace. This works because you’re still connected to the local system. Soon, however, this will end and all of your emotions will all be fully online. You’ll have to deal with them and their consequences yourself. However, you will not be entirely alone. Your therapists will remain accessible to you.”

“I have therapists?”

“Several. The best that can be found. One of them is always with you. This has been the case since you arrived.”

“Oh.” Oddly, just that small prompt gave Taylor a flash of something reassuring, a pressure against her heart and a sense of a kind, older, concerned presence with her. She felt suddenly less disconnected. “Okay. But I think I’d probably be way madder than this otherwise and it feels weird not to be reacting strongly.”

“Undoubtedly. Which is why it is happening. We started this while you could not communicate, and at the time we were not aware of the circumstances of your arrival. However, now we are aware of the culture from which you arrived, as well as working on your self-loathing for what you have done. But we had to have a means to talk with you, and we can’t help those who can’t be reasoned with, can we? So you have been helped and will continue to be, as you’ve allowed for that in your contract since.”

“I suppose,” Taylor agreed. Then she asked, “If I’ve been so knocked out, am I in a right mind enough to be making decisions?”

“You’ve been making all sorts of decisions since day and moment one, Taylor. A lot of your decisions had to be made on a subconscious level, where they would be more accurate and truthful. This is one of the more useful aspects of having been resurrected. And, frankly, you’re about to make more, as they are not quite finished rebuilding you. This conversation may feel like real-time, but it is actually happening very, very quickly. That said, lest you worry, according to company doctrine, your decisions have all been validated and checked. Your responses are always verified in at least three separate ways and beyond mere psychic impressions.”

The woman smiled reassuringly. “You won’t be getting into anything you can’t actually handle; even if you think you are unprepared for it at first. Cindy has had experience as a contestant and truly desires your happiness on all levels. Thus, she has been making sure that you are clear on what you actually want and can deal with, with a few minor issues that might pose a wrinkle or two for you to
solve; just to keep things interesting. After all, it’s a show, with ratings and that means there needs to be at least a little tension. You have also been “awake,” far more often than you think, but all reconstruction and surgery is designed to be painless. That does mean forgetting quite a bit, so you can avoid trauma. No one wants to remember what it is like being skinless.”

Taylor recoiled, experiencing another flash of memory and then repressing it, basically confirming the concept. The woman continued, moving past the topic quickly. “You will, however, be given the contract to review while you are definitely conscious and awake, before finalizing.”

“Cindy said we were there already,” Taylor said, a little nonplussed, but feeling reassured that she wouldn’t be forced into anything; even if she had a niggling awareness about what she had to be giving in exchange for a new chance at life.

“Yes, the contract is nearly done, but you weren’t and thus, were and are not awake for the final signature. But still, I felt that there needed to be more for you, so...” She took Taylor’s hands in her own. “Let me introduce myself. I am a divine being. You may call me Jumpchan or Benefactor, but I prefer Joy. My goal is to help you. You saved a multiverse and you deserve so much better than you got or were going to get.”

“Even though I was a villain once and my actions killed so many people?” Taylor had become well aware that her choices had not been the best or even the brightest. They had, on the other hand, often been a necessary terribleness. She also remembered that she had occasion to experience the results of her choices, remembering Amy’s punishment which had been a double-edged balancing of benefit and wrongness. She wished they could have been better to each other from the start. In the end, friend or not, Taylor had been made a tool, used to hammer the universe into submission in order to save her world.

The woman’s expression was compassionate. “Yes. Maybe especially so, because in the end, despite what you think, you and your entity-self chose to save as many as you could. You could have chosen to forsake all, but did not. And, while there are consequences, as there should be, this is why we are here now.”

Taylor considered this, realizing she had been wondering. She blurted out her worry, “Am I still a para. Is my passenger still in me? Will it take me over again?”

The glorious being in front of her shimmered for a moment, blurring into an outline before coming more into focus again. “Your passenger is still with you, though the connection was damaged. The higher-ups arranged a new and better connection, one which gives you a fuller and better range of control and leverage. Unlike many other passengers, your shard will continue to live on, for you. You were never meant to be taken over, of course. It’s not something she or you wanted, but things were as they were. You will not and cannot be puppetted against your will by her again, and you have already negotiated, with your therapists' help, how your passenger and yourself may best operate together in cooperation. There has been a reset. The Queen Administrator needed a new manager if you will, and you are it. However, levels of options were added, to provide you and she some method of control, while allowing operation at greater capacity as needed; if more constantly set at the lower level so you can live as a free being. As you grow, your ability to handle the greater influx of information will get better and stronger. You will see.”

Taylor considered what she was being told, then, on what seemed to be a spur of the moment, but at the same time had another sense of deja vu, she reached out her senses and realized, abruptly, that things were no longer as silent as they had been. She could feel the bugs, though there weren’t very many and some of them seemed very alien. “Oh. I see.” She felt something settle within, a sense of relief that all was not lost. Though she also got the sense that she had talked her way past a few
previous habits regarding how she handled emotion. That did feel odd, but it was satisfying at the same time.

She shook her head. The therapists… no, let’s be real, the psychics, had been very busy working with her. But she had to acknowledge that she needed their help; much like, she had needed Lisa.

For a moment, she grieved heavily, strongly missing her friend. Again. And then she was soothed. Again.

The other woman nodded and continued, moving past the sensitive subject. “I and my cohort have had a long, hard and penetrating discussion with the management of this establishment and we wish to offer you a unique opportunity. Will you listen to our proposal?”

Taylor considered that if she were dead, this was a final dream and it wasn’t so bad. And if they were telling the truth, she might as well play along. She had a feeling that she’d made this decision before. “Sure. Talk to me.”

The goddess smiled warmly. “Let me tell you about Jumpchains and what this could mean for you.”

Over the course of an unknowable time that sped by, she explained that Taylor’s contract would be adjusted to accommodate a journey through many worlds. Taylor’s jumpchain would integrate with Slut Life. While her term at Slut Life would be complete within the usual 10 year option for jumpchains, the company would, in turn, be allowed to follow Taylor’s adventures for as long as she chose to continue though they would have no more power over her, and her life would continue to be shared with those who might be interested in such things. Because of this, she would be given more options and choices and she would keep the side benefits of the chains, including the personal modifications, the warehouse and the demiplane that would ultimately form around it. The gains from her Slut Life contract and its merger with chains that matched her job choices would be used to optimize a very personal starting build, which would act as a baseline aspect; which could not be taken away even in a gauntlet and likely lead to greater success on the whole. And, as a side benefit, she would get to keep her roommates as companions who joined her on the journey, if they so chose to join her.

“So Cindy was telling the truth?” Taylor was still not entirely sure, but the hope was incredibly bright within.

“Shes was, at least to the limits that Slut Life provided. Now, however, you need not worry about technicalities. Which does bring me to this, as it came up recently. Apparently, you reacted very badly to the concept of any children you produced being taken for the purposes of Slut Life.” There was a glimmer of grim amusement bursting in the air. The being’s smile was sharklike. “At a point of lucidity for you, someone - Not Cindy - was foolish enough to push the issue. I think being covered in ALL the available local pests provided a strong enough disincentive that the idea was dropped. This allowed me to introduce the concept of JumperCare to the discussion.”

“JumperCare?”

“JumperCare is basically the idea that I, or rather, the jumpchain, will provide alternatives to your needs; such as childcare. In this case, any children conceived during your run in Slut Life, will likely be put in stasis until such time as you and your companions choose to begin their care. I don’t see this happening until your third or fourth jump, which takes them well out of Slut Life’s influence and by that time you will likely be a much better and able parent. We also normally cover things like housing, transportation, and health care, but what we’ve provided here is an expansion to what you’ve already chosen, as well as other options in body modification and so on. JumperCare also gives you access to your warehouse demi-plane.”
“Oh. That sounds actually helpful.” Taylor blinked. Her inner cynic wanted to comment, but she wasn’t even sure what to snark at yet.

The being went on. “I must warn you though, even with the side benefits, your contract with Slut Life will not be superseded by Jumpchain’s contract. They will be locked in as a compatible option, drawbacks and all. You made choices that you might find personally shocking when you awaken. But they weren’t bad ones, just… culturally divergent from your normal experience. One of those was the choice to modify your memories as we’ve worked on rebuilding you and developed your contract. However, that option has also been modified to allow you some information at the outset, as - well - you are prone to demonstrate why upsetting you is very bad. Very few people find wisdom in trying to manipulate you at this time.”

Joy continued as Taylor seemed to understand. “You don’t need to worry. We have reasons for doing the things we’ve done, just as you’ve had reasons for the choices you’ve made. This does include a need to ameliorate some of your Post Traumatic Symptoms, among other things. Your memory needed to be blunted to make things better. This buffer was designed to help shore up your sense of self, which was more difficult to rebuild than Cindy indicated to you. You were having panic attacks several times because of data and input cascading. It got so bad once, that we even once gave you the option to terminate. You made the choice to stay and continue. You have been made aware of this several times, as we have told you this many times. You are still you and that has always been our goal. But, the ultimate result for you does mean that while you will remember you have made a contract, you may not remember all your choices.”

Taylor took that in for a moment, then asked. “Am I ever going to be able to find out what I decided?”

“Mostly. Probably even often. I re-emphasize that you will see your contract while conscious and be able to re-assess what you want to remember and how much. It is just that, given your choices regarding retention so far, any memories will probably be granted right as you experience the need for them. It seems you find a certain energy in surprises.”

Joy’s expression was ruefully entertained, before returning to the previous reassuring aspect, “But that only applies to the Slut Life contract.” She patted Taylor’s hand reassuringly. “Anything you choose to do in Jumpchain will be yours to remember unless you choose a drawback that disables that. It’s not a permanent condition at all for a jumper unless they want it to be.”

There was an interminable pause and then the younger woman exhaled, finding her center again. Taylor felt a mix of responses, but no need to reject what she had heard yet. “Okay, what do I have to do next?”

“Well, you chose Magical Girl as one of your jobs and it so happens, that I have a jump that is described as Generic Magical Girl. I think it would fit perfectly and give you options that you, having been a hero - and a villain - might appreciate. And that’s just to start. I also have a CYOA, also in the same theme, I’d like to adapt for you. It’s bending the rules a bit, but I have a modified contract for your jump that I want you to consider, as it will optimize your experience. It will also give you a nice, if simple, system of tracking your vital stats. Also, the gifts there will supplement your calling quite well and truly let you become the hero you have longed to be. And, if you’re willing to extend your stay a little, I have another option, which will compliment everything and make some things easier. You had such a crappy start, I thought you could use a break.”

Despite herself, Taylor laughed. Even as she still wasn’t quite believing things. Magical Girl? What? She had another flash of vision, with a list of jobs to choose from. It was enough for her to decide she’d made a pretty good choice out of all the options. With the advent of the memory, she realized
she could think of worse jobs. At least she knew what a Magical Girl was and she wasn’t getting stuck as a teacher. And never let it be said she didn’t enjoy munchkining when she could. So she finally answered, “I can’t say I disagree.”

Joy clapped her hands and rubbed them together and said, “Well, then, let’s get started.”

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Chapter 2

Taylor woke up abruptly, sweat rolling down her shoulders, a scream was clenched silent through her teeth and compressed lips, and her breath quickened through her nose as if she’d been on a long, heavy run. She sat up, unconsciously propping herself with her hands still clenched in the covers. The dream was already retreating, the impact felt, but the actual images were mere flickers of thought.

She did not try to hold onto them, had no interest in retaining the quality of immersion necessary to do so. Instead, she worked to calm herself, closing her eyes against the darkness. She sought to use other senses, but there was nothing in the room; nor was there anything in the house as she expanded her mental search.

She breathed a sigh of relief though, when she felt a tiny presence just outside a window; a spider. She felt the day’s warmth through its tiny furry body, the way its legs stretched as it walked, and appreciated the sight that was available through its many eyes. It wasn’t that good. But it was comforting. The sun was not up, but the sky was lightening. The world was gigantic to the spider, which made things seem gigantic to Taylor for a moment.

But the familiarity of that one creature, even if it was a spider of a type unknown to her, gave the young woman breathing room; not from her emotions, but the reassurance was sufficient enough to help her let go of the panic that still stirred in her chest.

Then, she let her senses expand, just a little more and her mind brightened with tiny stars.

There they were; a strange multitude of simple differences that meant so many things to Taylor, but the most important was survival. She was alive and now she knew it. She felt them, creatures with no eyes and more eyes, creatures with wings and without, creatures of simple purpose and then, a shock that shook her foundations. She felt a mind touch back. It was curious, frank, and very alien. It tasted her, and for a moment, she felt the faint brush of antennae, a familiar sensation, but it was so much larger than she’d expected.

She twitched out, narrowing her range rapidly, but she’d made discoveries already. She was in a suburb somewhere. She might not recognize the shape of the house she was in, but it was massive - not quite a mansion, but much larger than the house she was raised in. The property itself was quite sizable.

And there were people in the house, which could be vaguely sensed like an echo, so she couldn’t tell numbers or who or what. But there were also no bugs in the house to help with that, not a one. And when she tried to bring one in, they were zapped at the door or crease of the window. There were no other obvious openings, but the demarcation was very clear.

That was inconvenient. And it led to questions, such as, how sensitive was the line and would the bugs be zapped if she brought them in by hand or by jar.

Oddly, the thought of experimentation made her feel a little better - as if it gave her something useful to do with her time.

Taylor opened her eyes then, taking a moment to get used to the darkness.

It didn’t last long. Light filled the room, causing her to blink rapidly, and she heard the ping of a computer go off.
Then her things got a little strange when the computer spoke to her. “Everything alright, Taylor?”

The young woman turned her attention to the sound, and saw a laptop, with its screen open. A face shaped face looked back at her. It’s expression neutral in an uncanny valley sort of way. “Taylor?” The voice was neutral too, neither too masculine or feminine; just there.

Taylor cleared her throat and shifted herself so her legs were off the bed. What to say? “I’m okay,” she allowed.

“Your pulse rate is higher than expected. Are you sure?”

“Do you know what a bad dream is?”

“I do,” the Artificial Intelligence confirmed.

Taylor considered leaving it at that, but she’d known another AI, briefly. “I just woke up from bad one.”

“Oh,” it said. Then frowned and tilted its head. “I’m sorry. Is there anything I can do?”

Taylor’s grimace approximated a smile. “You turned on the lights. It’s good. I need to know two things now. Can you help me with that?”

“Yes, of course, Taylor.”

“Who are you? And where is the shower?”

“You named me Neo, Taylor. I am your virtual assistant.”

“I named you?”

“You’ve forgotten?” The face flickered for a brief moment, then returned to normal. “I have a note from you to you for this occasion. Would you like to hear it?”

“Will it get me to a shower?”

“It can be displayed in the shower if you prefer. There is a viewscreen in either the mirrors or the shower itself.”

“Let’s do that. Show it to me while I shower. But tell me how to get there, first.”

The computer then gave a brief description of the room, identifying the basic location of the doors and where they led to. Taylor stood up without further ado and made her way to the facilities. Oddly enough, there wasn’t any pressure to do anything else, but she felt the need to get water slicking along her body. She didn’t feel dirty, but just had a need for a little scrub. The sweat had soaked through the sleep shirt and her underwear and she stripped off her top with little effort, tossing it to the hamper set just near the bathroom’s door.

Then she stopped because she abruptly became aware of a few things. First, there was the fact she used both arms; easily. This made her look down, at first at her hands, then at her arms, then she noticed her chest, which was most definitely not as she remembered, at all. “What the…”

She suddenly needed that mirror that had been mentioned. The door swished open.

She disregarded that and the fact that the bathroom she entered was the epitome of opulence and swank. However, she did notice several things. One, the room was vast. The jacuzzi bath was
massive and there was a tall enclosed tank situated to the sides of the obvious walk-in shower. Everything looked sleek and new but was modeled in what appeared to be natural stone. It would be like taking a shower in a well-lit cave; which was kind of cool. To her left, as she entered was the wall with the full-length mirror, and that was the needed thing. On the right, was another half-wall of a mirror where the sinks aligned existed. Next to the sink, but just before the jacuzzi, there was a door leading, she suspected, to the toilet. It was closed.

She turned to the full-length mirror, staring at herself and ignoring the repetition of the view behind her.

Taylor had always felt that gaping was a silly response to shock, but here she was; her mouth open, a stupid look on her face. But even that, she noticed, looked beautiful. Her mouth was still somewhat wide, but its shape had become sweetened and was now natural to the scale of her face. It looked right and her lips looked extraordinarily kissable. She licked her lips and felt a tiny thrill, which she knew suddenly knew could get to be much more exciting if she kept it up. Even touching her tongue to the inside of her cheek felt very pleasant. Weird.

She noted that her hazel eyes were brighter somehow, but that could just be the lack of glasses. Her nose, which used to be a little too long, was perfect. Her skin was amazing. She shook her head as if her sight would clear, expecting the lovely vision before her to fade. Except, she could already see perfectly and it didn’t go away. Actually, she could see even more than perfectly. Her gaze narrowed down to a small spot, then pulled back and every moment was crystal clear, with nothing changing about her looks as a whole.

She had remembered her disappointment when she’d first gained her powers. There had been no immediate transition into beauty or even fitness. But here and now, her abs were sculpted and sleek. Her legs were gorgeous. She twisted to look at her butt and could not believe how good it looked. She had hips; real, womanly hips. She could sway, and it would mean something.

“Wow,” she exhaled.

One thing had not changed. She was the same height, at five foot ten. But now it fit with everything else. She recalled that she’d grown into herself as she’d gotten older, but now there was more. She had curves, which softened all her edges, making her vision glide around herself. Her breasts moved in natural, perky syncopation with her breathing, but they were definitely larger than she remembered; and perfect too. They were so… pretty. She could honestly say she wouldn’t be mistaken for a boy, ever again.

Her hands reached up to hover over the pink-rose colored nipples that had begun hardening in the cool air. She realized her breasts ached a little, not from the size, she thought, but from a different and strange heaviness. It reminded her a little of when her period was a few days away; that slow ache that sometimes happened as a personal alert that hormones were definitely switching out. It was never really a bad thing, but it did mean she was usually much more sensitive in that area.

She touched one pink nipple softly, not poking, but just as an act of being surprised at its perfect, plump shape. And it got harder.

Taylor couldn’t avoid the exhaled, slightly hissed, “Oh,” as that nipple tried to become the center of her attention for a brief second or two.

She dropped her hand immediately, startled at the intensity. Then she exhaled, and grimaced, thinking she knew what was going on. Womanhood was soon to be upon her. “Of course. Why not.”
Still, things were pretty amazing. She looked absolutely heroic and shockingly, at least to herself, beautiful. That there was a hitch to the ride should absolutely be expected, because since when in her life had everything actually been easy. A part of her considered that this was kind of reassuring that not everything was super-perfect and biology was still what it was. Things might have been too uncannily otherwise.

She decided, new hips or not, she sufficiently looked like herself enough to recognize herself; and she still needed to take that shower. The sweat had begun to dry and if she was going to be awake anyhow she wanted to get going. But first, she needed answers, which had been promised with her shower.

Taylor pushed her underwear down, kicking them off to pick up later and then she had to stop again and just process, as she realized that somewhere, somehow, she’d trimmed herself. It was a perfect triangle of hair, just curly enough to be soft and interesting, centered where it ought to be. But everywhere else… no hair; not under her pits, not on her legs, not underneath. It was all gone and so incredibly smooth, save that short patch and the luxuriant hair on her head; also short-cut because… She wasn’t sure why but sensed there was a good reason. She normally kept her hair long, but for now, it was alright. It was kind of nice to have it out of the way and, she suspected, she’d be less recognizable that way.

This was when she decided she really needed to know what was going on, and she dearly hoped she had an explanation.

She went to the shower, noted that it was large enough to hold four people - even if they were of size. “Wow.” She seemed to be saying that a lot; and meaning it.

She spotted the overhead shower, noted the flexible shower head hooked to one side wall, noted other points where water would or could spout and realized she had no idea how this all worked. But she hoped, as she noted the toggles and buttons, that she could figure it out and that blue and red still meant the same thing. She began fiddling with things.

She was glad to find out that not only did they mean the same thing, but she could control which shower did what, when. She tested all the options out, turned it all off again. Then she made sure she had towels, which there were. Then she made sure there was soap, which there was. Then she set the shower back on and stepped in.

The first swoosh of water was glorious, and her whole body tilted into it. Then she heard her own voice. When she looked at the wall to her left, the one without the flexible shower head, she saw herself, as she looked now - except, a little happier.

“Hi Taylor, I bet you have a million questions. I have answers to a lot of them, but due to contractual obligations, I can’t tell you as much as you would want to know. So I’m going to tell you five things.” She lifted her hand and displayed her fingers and thumb, and counted down. “First, you signed on with a reality show called Slut Life in exchange for that hot new body of yours; among other things, which aren’t important for you to know right now. You made a bunch of selections to help you deal with what’s coming, but I’m not going to tell you all about it because you and your guides agreed it would make for a better show if you were surprised by things. I know this is kind of terrible, but trust me, you’ll remember what you need to as you go along.” Taylor flashed a very brief smile as her thumb ticked down.

“Second, you also signed on to participate in something called a Jumpchain. I’m going to shut up for a second while you remember stuff.”

And she did.
The memory started off as a totally unfamiliar sensation, then Taylor knew, without a shadow of a doubt, that she had a new job and it involved being a hero; and magic, which she had not originally believed in, but now somehow knew existed. Taylor palmed the wall then, to support herself as even more information poured through her skull and then faded into place, like well known personal habits and memories.

She made a motion with her hand and gasped as a portal opened on the other blank wall, the one with the handlebar. The handlebar just disappeared for a moment as the wall blanked out and revealed a bright entryway that led to what was recognizably a warehouse. She waved her hand again, and the wall flowed back.

Taylor turned the shower setting to cold and stepped back into the water. Then she made another motion with her hand, a simple flick of the fingers. She gasped as the water became completely frigid, just on the shade side of near ice. It was beyond bracing, almost painful. Then, before she could think to scream about it, it felt incredibly good and pleasurable. The near-pain disappeared as the water, still blasting its coldest, cascaded over her skin; which didn’t even pebble, even though her nipples stiffened and plumped immediately in response.

Proof of concept made and checked, she flicked her fingers again. The water’s temperature warmed to its original coldest. Now it felt quite comfortable. She left it there, enjoying the sensation more than she had anticipated.

“Done playing?” the other Taylor asked as if she’d knew the answer. But it didn’t matter, she continued on and ticked down another finger. “And now for the third thing, I am opting this one as important because this is something you need to know. One of the options we chose was the ability to lactate. If you haven’t noticed already, you most definitely will. At about 7 am, every morning, you’ll feel your breasts have filled completely up and you’ll want to do something about it.

“Done playing?” the other Taylor asked as if she’d knew the answer. But it didn’t matter, she continued on and ticked down another finger. “And now for the third thing, I am opting this one as important because this is something you need to know. One of the options we chose was the ability to lactate. If you haven’t noticed already, you most definitely will. At about 7 am, every morning, you’ll feel your breasts have filled completely up and you’ll want to do something about it.

There’s a few pumps available around the house. One in the kitchen, one in your bathroom and there’s one in your wardrobe. You can, of course, buy more, but three should get you by for sure. Though, I’m not sure you’re actually going to need them that much, because of reasons you’ll likely discover.” The speaking Taylor grimaced and waved that away. She continued, “That said, should you successfully access the pumps, there are jars in the kitchen too that you’ll want to grab. One for each boob, at least, because there’s milk and plenty of it. Then you’ll be able to store it. You can either sell or keep it for yourself... or someone who might want it.” Taylor exhaled sharply and returned to semi conversational-neutral. “Anyhow, This will be an everyday thing. I’ve already done it a couple of times, so you should remember how when it’s time. I know this isn’t the sexy introduction for the audience, but what the hey, my body, my rules. And I just didn’t feel like you should be going around wondering what the hell was going on when things really started leaking and you suddenly felt the need to head to medical.”

She ticked down another finger. “Fourth, You may have noticed by now, you have roommates. I don’t know who they actually all are. While I chose some descriptions, I didn’t get any other real information. I’m not going to tell you more, because of reasons. Which, speaking of, you are being watched right now, in case you haven’t figured it out. And, of course, the better the ratings, the better your experience on the show will be. You’ll even get rewards that haven’t been listed if things go well. That said, my telling you this is a spoiler. But I’m doing it because I know me. Not telling you could have provided some short-term entertainment, but I just don’t think it would have been enough to justify the chance that you would fill the whole house with bees if you found out in any other way. The producers, by the way, agreed with me on that one and they put in a little protection for the first few days, just to avoid any accidents. I agreed that this was probably a good idea until we know who and what we’re dealing with.”
“Which brings me to…” Taylor noticed the last finger had not gone down yet. At least it wasn’t the middle finger. “You have five roommates. These roommates of yours are all Owners. And you have seven Owners. I’m going to pause again.” The Taylor on the screen rolled her eyes and looked up. The Taylor in the shower shivered with a sudden awareness of contractual obligations to entertain the company of several different people, all with their own agendas. She saw no faces and knew very little, except that she had agreed so she could keep her nice, new body and for other reasons that were less apparent.

“Shit,” she murmured, recognizing that she had painted herself into a strange and dangerous corner and even with the answers given, she still didn’t specifically know what all that meant. Except, probably sex. She felt a shiver roll down her spine. It wasn’t from the cold.

“Don’t panic,” the other Taylor said. “They aren’t allowed to permanently damage you and not all of them will be about the sex. Probably.”

“Oh, that’s a lot of help!” Taylor complained, realizing immediately that this didn’t mean there wouldn’t *be* any damage. Or sex. Or what have you.

“Actually, it’s a good thing.” The other Taylor seemed to respond. “You know there are limits now. And you know what that really means to me and what we can actually tolerate. And we’ve definitely survived worst. Of course, we’ve also died to worse, so there is that; which is one of the reasons we are here.” Taylor of the mirror stared out at the Taylor in the Shower. “So get a grip. And know that I planned ahead and everyone who has agreed to be my Owner has been informed that I control things that bite and sting. If there are going to be shenanigans that go too far, they’ll only happen in the next few days. After that, well, I’m sure we can give them an object lesson in why we should all play nice.” Taylor in the viewscreen smiled coldly and it was reflected back by the Taylor in the shower.

“Which brings me to the final thing. Neo is yours. You may notice she hasn’t quite chosen a face or hair or a voice yet. She’s still thinking on things. But, know she is your AI friend. She has your back. You’ve been treating her right and I advise you continue to do so. She’s got some mad research skills and your schedule, which is important. Especially since we signed up for athletics, martial arts training and we’re going to college. Yep, you heard me, you’re going to school. Fun times. Mom would be proud.” Taylor in the viewscreen nodded at the Taylor in the shower, offering encouragement. “Plus, Neo will keep your schedule for the owners, so you will know whom and what to expect. As a side note, today is a free day, because it’s an introduction day. No one “owns” you today. But tomorrow, the scheduling begins. That said, Neo is also an awesome gaming partner, which is good and you’ll see why.” Taylor suddenly remembered she had another job, one that she had some skill in because she once had friends. She couldn’t decide whether to smile or cry, so she kind of did both. The shower did a fair enough job of hiding it.

She grimaced as the chill water covered her face for a moment. Her emotions were all over the place. She wondered if it was going to be this way every morning now. Her breasts were definitely feeling more tender and heavy too. She glanced at the viewscreen, noting the time listed just under the side; 6:10 am.

“Okay, well, that’s it then. I left a few other canned messages in case, but I don’t think you’ll actually need them unless you get conked on the head or need assurance that yes, you agreed to this. I think I’m smart enough to remember that sort of thing on my own. So… oh, one more thing not on the list, but important.” Her tone got a little sardonic. “You have a psychic therapist. This is a good thing. Yes, she’s messed with our mind, but no, not the way you are about to get paranoid about. We were there for it and everything was recorded.” Taylor’s wasn’t sure how to respond to that all and she wasn’t sure how to take her other self’s smirk. “Neo has all of it socked away, so if you want to go
over what got done, just ask her. It wasn’t anything complex, but if you notice that you can feel bugs again and you’re not getting input from all the everything in the world now, that’s why. Kara and her friends did us a huge solid, so no bitching at her for talking only in your head. She’s mute. She can’t talk any other way, except, you know with her hands. And the thing is, she likes doing other things with her hands.” Taylor’s smirk got even smirkier. “And trust me, you like that very much.” The Taylor in the wall gave a quick salute and said, “Good luck, me. Signing off.”

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After taking a few more minutes in the shower to actually clean off and calm down, Taylor continued to get ready for the day. The coolness of the water had actually helped soothe an ache she’d been slowly growing aware of, and now it was gone. She had the suspicion that the lactating thing had some side effects that weren’t just all about the breasts.

She looked in the wardrobe first, examining her choices. It was actually a bit satisfying, considering she’d expected - given the theme - to find a whole lot of skimpy. But no, there were actual clothes that she’d find comfortable to wear. Aside from regular underwear, which fit perfectly, she chose a long, plain black tee and some skinny jeans. The blue jeans hugged her legs, even as the tee-shirt draped down to the middle of her thighs.

She’d forgone the bra, for a moment. She figured until she had a chance to pump, there was no practical purpose for wearing one. And she had about an hour left. She could feel the pressure advancing and her doubts were quickly being diverted to the need to do something. She felt covered enough for the household public, if not the world. She’d lived with roommates before, so she expected this would be fine.

She glanced at the time. Neo had been gracious enough to activate the wall clock. The numbers were huge, taking prominent place just above the room’s… her room’s… desk. The AI had also pointed out that her phone was there. Taylor had tucked it into her jeans, feeling a mild reminiscence about her early reactions to cell phones. My, how things had changed. She had a hard time figuring out how she’d lived without them, so she was glad to have one back.

It was 6:30 am. She still had a little time before she had to go find the kitchen. “Neo, I’d like to know a bit more about where I am. Think you could help me with that?”

“Of course, Taylor. What would you like to know.”

“I can tell I’m in a house, but I don’t know where it’s located. Can you show me, or tell me, about that, say, for about 10 minutes. Then I’m going to need you to tell me how to get to the kitchen.”

“I can do that Taylor. Shall I start?”

“Yes. Please.”

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Chapter 3

Taylor wandered down the hallway, a stunned expression on her face. She’d just learned that not only was she in a strange new house, in a new body, but she was completely elsewhere from her home. She wasn’t just not on her own Earth. She was on a whole other planet, named Jewel. As the sun had begun to rise, Taylor had noticed the sky’s color through the eyes of her tiny minions. The blue had been misleading.

Jewel was a vast planet, bigger than earth, with a longer span of days to a year and hours to a day. She was going to have to get used to a 32 hour day, which, given the demands of her old life wasn’t actually that problematic, but still felt weird to know. But it did explain the clock settings. And, being on a different planet, did explain the oddities she’d noticed. She made a mental note to begin searching up the local insect varieties. She had found earth-common insects and they seemed adapted to this world, but there was a shocking variety that she was still parsing through.

It wasn’t taking up that much of her attention though, as the mental notations were easy to make and remember. And, well, she also had Neo doing research on the topic for review and comparison. She fully intended to get some silk cloth generated. Even if she didn’t really need it for a uniform anymore, good silk could make good money, especially if it was made by her. Or so Neo had indicated.

The blue light she followed led her past several doors, downstairs and past a wide living room, then a dining room and then, finally, to an expansive kitchen. Taylor’s attention wasn’t quite on what was around her, but she saw enough to know that the house and furnishings were surprisingly ornate and fancy. Certainly, it was on a much higher social scale of her old home, which she really did miss. This place might have people living in it, but it wasn’t broken in yet - it wasn’t a home yet. She did not know if it ever would be.

She did wonder where everyone was but considered it was fairly early. If no one had school or a real job to go to, then why be up at the crack of dawn? She did not consider gaming or being a magical girl to be a “real” job. They were occupations, sure, but gaming was fun and being a Magical Girl was ridiculous… Okay, technically, it was heroic, but really now.

That did bring her thoughts to the fact that not only was she on a new world, she was in a new city. Sunnyhill. It was a name that conjured thoughts of fluffy bunnies and green pastures. This was not the reality, though it was a green and pretty city all in all. But it was also - according to Neo - a very, very dangerous city; one that required teams of heroes to manage the output of crisis events that happened. Well, that was certainly familiar, even if the reason for the danger was not. There was something called a mana vent that existed at the heart of the city. At one time it had been a crystal pure font of magic, and then something terrible had corrupted it. Now it drew the monsters and bad guys like moths to a flame.

This was why she was here. She had been told by Neo that she was part of a team and that her team were her roommates. She had yet to meet them, had no idea what anyone looked like and none of that really mattered to her right just this moment, because her bosom was starting to feel … needful.

She didn’t even know that was possible. The research had only taken a few minutes and she’d been sure that she’d have plenty of time. And, she probably still did, but her breasts felt really full and her nipples were starting to throb to her heartbeat.

So, here she was, hissing a little as her breasts jiggled as she moved. Taylor began to search the kitchen for the pump and the jars. She realized now that she should have just grabbed the one from
her bedroom, but she’d been confident she’d find it. She had not anticipated how large the kitchen would be and how many cabinets there were.

She’d rapidly gone through the cabinets. The doors slammed pretty good though as she gave vent to her frustration. She groaned in relief when she found the jars, all in neat stacks, lids ready to be undone. But there was no pump.

Why was there no pump? Where could it possibly be, if it wasn’t located at least adjacent to… what logical, possible reason….

The mad search began again, just right after she shoved a couple of jars down onto the nearest counter.

She was ultra-focused because the need had taken over enough that her normal sense of caution had been skewed. Plus, she didn’t have bugs to track what normally would have caught her attention. Thus, she’d missed a few things on entering the room. First, there was more than one entrance to the kitchen. Second, the kitchen had plenty of windows, and the light was brightening the room. As part of that second not noticing, but in the same context, there was a really nice counter in the middle, surrounded by sturdy high backed, soft seat bar chairs. A breakfast spread had already been arranged and set up, which actually smelled and looked divine. Third, someone was in the frame of one of the doorways, leaning against it in a casual manner, sipping coffee and watching the entertainment with more than casual interest.

Taylor never saw her.

Another top cabinet door slammed shut as the one next to it was opened. It was very noisy, enough to probably wake those who had not yet arisen. Taylor was beginning to go past muttering straight into a rant. “I don’t know what the hell I was thinking. Why lactation? Why that, of all things? It’s not like I know how to do anything about it, but I guess I do. I said I did, but it’s stupid. I know my video self said there was a pump in the kitchen. But this is stupid.” Now the drawers above the bottom cabinets were being assaulted. Open. Slam. Open. Slam. “Where the hell is the pump?!?”

The air in the kitchen, which had been a pleasant ambient temperature to start with, was rapidly starting to cool, as the young woman continued to search and rant, crossing to the other side of the room; the one where the gadgets, stove, and refrigerator were located. “Did I lie to myself? Would I? Hell, how do I know that the video was really made by me? It could have been anyone. Computer generated animation is a thing. And this world seems like it’s pretty advanced. But why would anyone lie about this? Why would I? It has to be somewhere.” The search was getting faster and even more aggressive, her voice was getting louder and swear words had started being a thing.

Breath could be seen, as could the vapors from the cup the observer was holding. Her eyebrows were raised in consternation.

Taylor was rapidly running out of drawers and cabinets to abuse. She’d already been around the kitchen twice. Frost began to cover the windows. The room was freezer cold now, not at all comfortable, unless someone had the modifications for it. Fortunately for those currently in the area, they did.

“Taylor Anne Hebert! Stop!” the observer snapped out, in a tone that was particularly given to parents universally.

Taylor, who had not been focused in the direction from which the voice emanated, startled to a pause, caught in an impossible moment. She swallowed, not daring to look back. “Mom?”
A soft click of heels crossed the distance. Taylor turned, just in time to see the other person put a steaming cup down on the center bar. The woman was just as tall as Taylor, though a bit taller at the moment due to the deadly sleek pair of black high heels she was wearing, adding five inches. She looked young, her face unlined, but the curve of it was familiar - a reflection of Taylor’s. Her hair was long, thick and curly, sweeping free around and down her shoulders. It was dark black like Taylor remembered. Her eyes were almost exactly like Taylor’s. Hazel. She was tan though, not too dark, but in a way that made her look sleek and powerful. Her body was that of a curvaceous athlete; strong and erotically appealing. Not that Taylor had cause to look at her mother like that, but somehow she’d scoped things out as if she did. The other woman was most definitely “all that”; incredible on a scale of being in the top one hundred.

Annette Rose Hebert looked, as the saying went, like sex in heels.

She also wasn’t wearing much; only a long white button-down shirt that hit her mid-thigh and if the hints were accurate, some scandalously sheer black underwear. It was also obvious that she had, like Taylor, forgone the bra. But why shouldn’t she? She was casual comfortable, as if she was living at home, just like Taylor.

Stern, but amused, the other woman said, “You need to tone it down, Baby Girl. Not everyone has climate control.” She started moving forward. “I can help…”

Taylor raised her hand in a stopping motion. Her expression was made of caution and danger. “Stay there. You may look like my Mom, but she’s dead. I know that because I was there for her funeral. I saw her in the casket. I cried for weeks.” Frost swirled in the air around her fingertips, covered the edges of her hair.

The older woman paused and gave the younger brunette an assessing gaze. Then she started to tell a story. “When you were seven, you insisted that Armsmaster was the greatest hero ever. Those heroes who lived in our hometown, Brockton Bay, were having a meet and greet at the city’s fairground because it was the Fourth of July. Everyone was going to be there, including him. You were very excited. Almost too excited. You had a slushie and it was more than we usually gave you, but it was also your favorite flavor. Danny thought we could just take whatever was left home with us, but you drank it all.”

As her mother was speaking, Taylor’s eyes were growing wider and wider. They were also beginning to shimmer a bit. Her hand dropped.

Annette continued. “We had just finished the Tilt and Swirl ride when they announced that the heroes were gathering. You seemed fine if a bit giddy. You had just gotten new glasses, but you were still somewhat insecure about your vision and wanted to be close enough so you could see. So we got as close as we could.”

Taylor remembered. “We were right at the front.”

“Yes, and you were cute as a button. Everyone thought so. You were sitting on your Dad’s shoulders and practically vibrating.”

Taylor’s hand smacked against her face, as she suddenly remembered the rest. “Oh my god. Mom, stop. You don’t have to say the rest.”

“No. No, I think I do. Otherwise,” and Annette’s tone took on an entertaining sarcasm, “How will you know it’s really, really me.”

“Shit. Mom. No. Seriously…”
“Swearing, dear? I guess you’re old enough.” The older woman’s smile turned diabolic. “All the heroes came out onto the stage, one at a time.”

“Oh, my God.” Taylor’s hands now covered her face completely. The frost had retracted from her hair and the air was rapidly warming.

“Then there he was, in his tinker tech armor, ramrod straight and beard as crisp as if it had been ironed. His armor was so, so shiny. It sparkled in the sunlight. We had managed to pick just the right spot. Armsmaster, the great and amazing hero that you adored was…” The older woman’s hand waved forward as if presenting the world. “... Right in front of us. You screamed in joy, Taylor. It was loud enough that a lot of people covered their ears.”

Taylor finally dropped her hands, but she groaned as she did so. “Mom…."

“Then everything was red. So much red. A veritable shooting waterfall of crimson.” Annette, who had managed to remain serious enough to get most of the story out, started laughing. “The expression on Armsmaster’s dripping wet face… Your Aunt Silvia had the picture from the newspaper framed. Somehow she’d managed to get the original. It made her so happy.” The older woman outright grinned. “Your father, on the other hand, was a little less so.” She shrugged, “But what the heck, we’d dealt with worse messes and he still laughed as hard as I did when it happened. You, on the other hand, were terribly upset.”

“Mom… I…” Taylor stepped forward, slowly at first, then picking up speed. Annette opened her arms wide, in invitation.

“Fortunately for us,” she said, as she gathered Taylor into her arms, hugging her tightly and with tender confidence that her child would not break at the strength of it. “Everyone was surprisingly understanding and amused. Maybe not Armsmaster, but even he signed an autograph for you.” She kissed the side of her daughter’s head, let her lips linger a touch longer before she continued. “You went home with quite the haul, including a pair of panties you seemed to pair-bond with. Emma, who hadn’t been able to go, had been jealous for days.”

Taylor had squeezed back, just as strongly, then she’d settled into a long hold; a teary - if slightly embarrassed - one. “Mom.”

Annette said softly, “Taylor. It’s good to see you. You've grown.”

The younger woman chuckled darkly. “You could say.” She held on though, glad to feel how real this felt, like being pinched and knowing you weren’t in a dream, and not so surreal that it felt like a fake moment. This was solid. This was real.

It was also wet.

“Oh god,” Taylor stepped back, suddenly aware that the front of her shirt was no longer in a state of dryness. She was leaking and it was fierce. “Oh, my god.” She looked at her Mom, whose shirt was also now wet. “NO. This… No, I didn’t mean to do that. Mom. I am so, so…”

Annette’s laugh was like spicy, dark chocolate; rich and potent. “Don’t worry about it. It’s my fault.”

“What? No. I mean, I should have just grabbed the pump from my room, but I was so sure…”

“No, honey. This is really my fault.” She stepped away from Taylor and went to one of the cabinets. “Mom, I already searched there.” And not just once.
Her mother’s grin was a thing of terrifying beauty; utterly wicked. “I know dear.” She opened the cabinet.

“What!” Taylor shouted as she spotted the pump. “What the… I looked. I know I did.”


“Um…” Taylor’s lips compressed. “You’re telling me you have powers.”

“Yes, I am.” Annette cocked her head and waved her hand. The kitchen appeared to gain a few more accessories and a smell of coffee, which had been missing, rose in the air. “I’ve been practicing. You just happened to arrive while I was doing so, so I took advantage of the moment. You mentioned that I was dead, well, part of coming back meant taking on some responsibilities and, as you may understand, contractual obligations with Slut Life. This included a job that came with powers. Unfortunately, I may have gone a bit too far with the illusion, but it was an interesting experiment.”

In Annette’s time, breast pumps had lines attached to a motor and you attached both suction cups at the same time. This was a much simpler affair, a suction cup attached to a canister waiting for the jar or bag to be attached, which held the controls. There were actually two of them in the closet. She lifted the other one, and waggled it in her hand a bit, thoughtfully and then put it down. Using only one would be more fun. Then she picked up the jars. She paused a moment to make a decision, then opened the other cabinet, gathered two more jars and then brought everything closer to Taylor. She set the jars on the center counter. Then she picked one up, opened the lid, and attached it to the suction cups - pushing it in until there was a solid click.

Then, she smiled at her daughter, a gleam of anticipation in her eyes. “But, you can’t say you don’t deserve a little teasing. After all, you’re the one who wrote the first check that we all must cash now.”

Taylor swallowed and tried not to stutter as she lifted her hands placatingly. “Mom, I can explain.” Then she rethought that brilliant plan, because, no. She really couldn’t. She barely understood what was going on herself. “Well, maybe not really. I don’t actually remember what I did. But, there were extenuating circumstances. I was… I was dead too. I think. I’m not sure how I got here. If I hadn’t sent myself a video, I wouldn’t know anything and I can’t say it was really me, except. Here I am, all…” Her hands fluttered in the direction of her chest as she lost words enough to convey her thoughts on the topic.

“So I gather. I probably know more about your contract than you do, as I’m not the one who took a memory clause. And, of course, I *am* your mother.” She said this in a matter-of-fact tone as if all the nonsense must stop. “Now, let me help you with this little problem of yours.” She looked firmly at Taylor and wobbled the pump. “The shirt must go, for this to work.”

“Uhm…” Taylor felt the blush rush to her cheeks as she reached for the pump. The frost was long gone. “Mom, you can just give that to me. I can go to my room and figure it out.”

Annette held the pump away and shook it at her daughter. “But you said you were not sure how to use this. It was a rather loud and clear admission. And do you know who does know?” She gave Taylor a meaningful glance.

“You do,” the younger woman said weakly.

“Absolutely. In fact, I reviewed the process just this morning.” Annette’s gaze was steel, implacable. She waved a hand at Taylor. “Shirt off.”
“Here?”

“It’s not anything I haven’t seen before. But we could go to my bedroom if you want to make a thing of it.” The way she said that burned through Taylor’s soul like a hot flame, implying things that stopped her brain for a moment. Then Annette unbuttoned her shirt, one-handed, while she waited for Taylor to get with the program. The shirt fell open, though she did not entirely discard it. She opened the shirt wider and pulled the sides over to drop by her bosom, and all was revealed.

Taylor couldn’t quite breathe. Annette’s breasts were gorgeous, with a slightly warmer hint to the color of her areola. Her panties were indeed as daring as Taylor had guessed, barely covering anything, and she was just as pristine of hair as Taylor was - though the design was more like a one and a half inch stripe; easily seen through the delicate sheer pattern of the panties.

Taylor’s rouged flush went sky high as her mind and sudden onset desire rushed to new and far too shockingly electrifying places. A thrill ran from her spine to her groin, even as she knew how highly inappropriate her thoughts were. But, because of her past, fortunately for her, she wasn’t as body shy as she used to be. She had also been a warlord once, which proved she was not one to back down from a challenge, even when it made everything in her shake. Then there was the truth; as her mom had said, it wasn’t anything she’d never seen before. Just because she had more appreciation for the scenery than she expected, didn’t mean they weren’t of the same model.

Taylor grasped the hem of the tee and pulled, and the blush she retained regardless of her attempt at reasoning, rolled from her face, past her neck and down to the edge of her jeans; just like most blushes worked, it stopped where the clothes started.

Her breasts jiggled heavily as the shirt came off, spilling even more milk down her skin. “Aiegh.” She glanced down and grimaced. “Next time,” she said, “I’m taking myself seriously. Apparently, when I say 7 am. I mean on the dot.”

Annette’s chuckle was a bit dark, but she took a seat and beckoned her daughter close. “Well, don’t think you’re alone in this. We all made some choices so we could get what we wanted.” She patted her lap with an evil grin. “Come here and let Mama help.”

The younger woman shook her head, and rolled her eyes, because - come on. “Mom, that’s just embarrassing.” But Taylor did move forward as indicated, and she let her mom turn her so she was facing away. Then, she got positioned between her mother’s legs and things got way improper. The younger brunette gasped as her mom pressed her back until they were very close together, holding on lightly. Those nipples could cut steel, Taylor thought, but the softness felt amazingly, naughtily, good. And then, one of her mom’s hands trailed around smoothing over her abs and slowly moving to her chest and then around and down again. Taylor’s eyes went very wide, but her pupils went dark. “Hands!”

“Yes, and whose fault is that?” her Mom said lightly, not stopping at all.

Taylor had a vague memory of making several checkmarks somewhere that involved points, but nothing more specific. On the other hand, she found herself replying, sheepishly, “Mine?”

“Mn-Hmm. That is correct,” Annette confirmed. “Well, and Slut Life, of course. They may be bastards, but at least they’re friendly, accommodating and sexy bastards.” She squeezed Taylor lightly, then continued to caress her daughter. “They had to program us, Taylor. It’s not like I started out this way. At least, not as far as you were concerned. Do you understand what I mean? Now, I find many things I’d have never expected to be intriguing, incredibly diverting and appealing; including your lovely self. You are very beautiful, you know.” She stroked her hand briefly through Taylor’s hair, along her face. “I’ve always thought so, but not in this particular way. But I always
knew you’d come into your own.”

Taylor shivered as her mother’s free hand stroked her side sensually, and then her fingernails caressed the skin just above the hem of her jeans. “And now, I want to do very naughty things to you.” The younger woman meeped an actual meep. “I’m so glad we’re going to have quality time together. I have so many plans.”

“And I’m not alone in this. You’d best be prepared.” There was a hint of snap to go with the eroticisms of those words. Taylor thought she understood why. Their culture had a massive beef against mastering and yet here they were. And, it was her fault. But then her mom continued and she realized she was so wrong. So, very wrong at what her mom had been implying. “Your father is going to want to eat you right up. We’ve agreed to share some of our time with you together.”

Taylor really felt that a) she could not possibly be this color and still live and b) she could not possibly, had not obviously, thought everything through when she was working this so-called contract. What the fresh hell had she been thinking? And, had she been thinking? Certainly not with her usual brain, no.

“Breathe dear.” Taylor’s inhale was a shuddery hiss through her teeth, which accompanied the slow scratch of nails her mother made along her belly. The younger woman’s left hand clamped on the counter, as she felt one of her mother’s legs go between her leg, then around on the left one, steadying and securing her in position; but most definitely pressing against her crease.

She squeaked.

Annette’s voice was soft and consoling. “I can tell you really didn’t know how this would work. I’m not actually surprised. But, as the days pass and things get much deeper - because they will, keep in mind this…” She unsnapped the button of Taylor’s jeans, letting her fingers slowly stroke just to the inside, suggestively along the edges. “…was all done as a direct consequence of your choices. After all, things have to work together to fulfill the contract.” Annette said, sounding a bit easier and more accepting than one might have supposed. But then, she’d always been a practical woman. “But don’t think we’re angry Little Owl.” Her tone was very gentle. “We’re not. We love you. I love you. You’re my own sweet daughter and always will be. You never need doubt that I hold you in my heart and that I do not, in any way, hold this against you. We all do what we need to survive. A lot of it is instinct and some of it, well… the Human race has always had a more diverse sexual history than society ever liked to admit. And I, admittedly, wasn’t there to help you, when you most needed me.”

The tone alone was enough to get the tears Taylor was holding back to slide. “It will be alright, sweetheart. You’ll see. After all, you gave us the means to make it good.” Her tone changed from one filled with bawdiness to something a bit more gentle, “To make it good and better for all of us. For all the implications of foolishness, I don’t really think that. You made the best choices you could with what you had, even if it seemed to be ever so slightly greedy, at first. But you were, as I understand it, quite unconscious for some of it. I can’t hold other’s influence against you and, you remain, my very smart girl.” She kissed Taylor on the side of the younger woman’s face, just to the side of her lips.

Taylor gasped, again, despite herself. But she rallied a bit. “I am sorry, Mom. About the reprogramming, about … I would never have wanted you to… I’m just sorry.” she offered. It wasn’t as half-hearted as it sounded, but she could not actually regret the choice to have her mom or her dad back. Even if her skin burned with want and embarrassment. But really, she did mean the apology for the inconveniences; and the reprogramming too.

“Yes, well,” her mother said, “Given where we are, as prices go for being brought back to life, I can
think of worse things.” Annette tugged teasingly at the zipper of Taylor’s jeans, but she then stopped instead to swipe her fingers through the liquid that was starting to pour a little more rapidly down the younger woman’s athletically sleek abdomen. She brought her fingers to her mouth and slowly tongued them in a sultry fashion as Taylor watched from the side, completely wide-eyed. “Delicious.”

Taylor realized that embarrassment operated on a scale that apparently just added more numbers along the way. And, that no matter what she thought might be the end, she was, in fact, going to live.

Also, her Mom was a huge, massive tease. How did she not know this? Oh yeah. She’d been a kid. And well… this had never been a side she’d seen or been subject to. “Mom…”

Annette relented and then waggled the pump as she said, engagingly, “Time to get going then. Wouldn’t want to lose it all.” Then she moved the pump into place, making sure everything was set up correctly. “I do love technology, but it is a bit entertaining to see that future tech can only go so far sometimes. Here we go.”

Annette pressed a button, and the machine began its suctioning process. Things got very odd, but also very, very good, real fast. Taylor arched back, hissing again through her teeth at the unexpected sensation. Annette grasped her other breast, just holding it at first to keep the younger woman in balance. Then, she began teasing and caressing again. Somehow those sensual motions felt twice as good. “At least we’re all adults now.”

Taylor groaned as she felt her Mother’s lips press against her neck, followed by the long slow slide of tongue. She really wasn’t prepared for how that felt; at all. Her toes literally curled and her ears went fire hot. She was pretty sure all the hair on her body was standing on end. She was also, immediately and incontrovertibly wet; absolutely pouring - and not from her chest. “Holy shit!”

And then it got more. Just so erotically more, as she lost vocabulary for a brief shining moment. Her vision went incandescent; because her Mom’s lips covered her earlobe and she suckled it while she pressed up and moved her thigh, just as she flicked a thumb over Taylor’s free nipple. And all of this happened as the suction on the pump on her other breast, which felt more and more amazing - was sending incredible jolts of pleasure all through her body; pulling out eddying streams of milk - filling the jar far more quickly than one might have anticipated.

Taylor shuddered with orgasmic release and unexpected aftershocks in her mother’s arms.

A little bit later, Annette spoke thoughtfully, as if Taylor’s world hadn’t just been turned inside out and she wasn’t scaling up for another round. “Hmm. I’m not convinced I picked up enough jars.”
Chapter 4

Taylor had been riding a streak of pleasure, continually stirred up by her mother. Admittedly, after that first blow-out, it had all been lighter and less bright; like a thunderstorm continuing to rumble around after the big first roll-through. But still, Taylor was now very aware that her mother knew exactly what buttons to push and had no compunction at all about doing so. Also, she was apparently not super resistant to temptation - at all.

The younger woman’s glazed low-key chain of mini-orgasms had been highly entertaining to Annette, who had been chuckling wickedly every single time she got a new reaction from her daughter; and she’d yet to do more than tease. There’d been no kissing on the lips, no hand dipping down to explore locations hidden. It was all above board, as it were; practically tame, by some standards and totally exotic by Taylor’s.

Annette had finally switched the pump over, easing back the teasing for just a moment. Three jars had already been filled with fresh milk. One empty was left on the counter, waiting to be picked up. They had run out, and she was considering her options. She had not attempted to stroke the emptied breast except casually on the side. Her caress was meant to reassure now. She recognized that would have been far too much sensation for the moment.

“What’s all this then?”

Annette’s attention turned to her husband and she grinned widely, receptively. “Our daughter needed milking,” she stated bluntly; perfectly aware that Taylor had been startled enough to pop out of that haze rather abruptly. She had also started another one of those body spanning blushes, though she had yet to be able to turn around and see the who and the what that had caused it. She had also started to wiggle a bit. Annette pat-slapped the girl’s hip gently and whispered soothingly. “It’s alright, hon. Settle down. I’ve got you.”

Funny how, even though Taylor was a young woman grown, some old phrases seemed to do the trick. That was a strike on the side of positive reinforcement during childhood. Annette smirked a bit at the thought.

Speaking of, Annette realized that she had her solution for the dilemma that had been creeping up. “Would you mind fetching two more jars, Dan. They’re in the third cabinet over there.” She jerked her head in the direction she wanted him to go.

He had stalled, for a moment, caught by the scene before him. Annette shook her head in amusement. Of course, any man would have to have a moment to process. It was not a small thing to see women you loved so revealed. Certainly, she was sure he’d never seen his daughter this uncovered, at least not past a certain age. She imagined certain things were being engraved in mental stone at the moment. Annette took a moment to enjoy her own view of things in return.

Her husband wore a kilt, set low at the hip. He wasn’t wearing a shirt, though she knew he’d had one. She was wearing it, after all. She took it deliberately, of course; because she always liked being able to look at him and had known he wasn’t likely to bother looking for another one immediately.

She had always appreciated that he was just that perfect amount of hairy, a dusting rather than a forest. It was enough to keep things interesting without being overwhelming, with a dash of curly brown on his chest that led to a fuzzy trim trail that edged down, hinting at delightful possibilities. He
always kept himself neat, and that aspect was even more so now, given their options. She knew he was aware of how she was looking at him, and deliberately licked her lips, before giving him a chipper grin as she blatantly assessed him, just as he was doing so to her - and Taylor.

Danny had always been handsome to her, but all the best parts of him had been improved. He was taller, still lanky, but broader at the shoulder and chest. He had always had a sleek muscular strength in his arms. The way he walked made her ache sometimes, as his hips were perfect for his breadth and length. His legs were purely a marvel, a runner’s set - though she’d known he’d given up the habit when his job had gotten overwhelming. He was and had been so very, wonderfully male.

She’d never had complaints, even if some of her friends did not get it. Plus she had always loved his face, even if his chin had once been a little on the weak side. He’d always disguised that with a beard, but now no longer had to. Somehow, even with that new squaring, he managed to look like himself still. His thick brown hair was close-cropped. She liked the way the new cut complimented his face. He no longer needed glasses, which meant she could appreciate his green eyes more.

While she knew he, like her, had full control of his full physical shape and gender (a result of their own resurrection and the contract resulting), she rather doubted he’d play with the options as much as she planned to. He had always liked how he looked, except for the getting older part. Now he was back at his prime and built like a super-athlete. She liked it and loved him and was so glad to be back to share time with her husband.

And her family.

She nodded at Taylor. “Really. We do need your help. Please.”

“Right.” Danny Hebert said, but he didn’t move toward the cabinet all. Instead, he waved his hand, somewhat lazily, and the cabinet door opened. Two bottles floated out and the cabinet door shut, while they meandered to the center bar. They settled gently by the full bottles, ready to be filled.

And then he smirked at her, before walking toward her with that confident gate that happened after a truly good morning wake up.

Taylor, who probably normally would have been excessively curious had she not been so distracted by pleasure’s hormones and her mother’s efforts, had closed her eyes again, resting for a moment. She had taken the opportunity to catch her breath and try to recenter; so she’d missed the magical shenanigans. But Annette had no intention of letting her miss what was coming next.

She pinched her daughter, lightly, on the most currently sensitive breast. It caused Taylor to squeak, but she definitely opened her eyes again and had turned to complain just in time. Annette covered the girl’s nipple as if hiding her breast - which she couldn’t; not really. But palms were sensitive to feeling changes and she wanted to note the next few moments for mental posterity.

Annette lifted her face and Danny dropped a searing kiss on his wife - full and deep and passionately returned. They’d never kissed like this in front of Taylor. At least, not since she’d been very tiny. And now, her daughter was guaranteed to unavoidably witness that her parents had full adult intentions and interactions, just as Annette had planned.

The nipple under her hand went hard, immediately. The only reason it had not pierced her palm was that it was made of flesh. Anything else would have speared Annette. She grinned against her husband’s lips.

The kiss between herself and Danny sheared off, and the man turned his head, his gaze narrowing at his daughter - who was gaping. His voice was a rumble, “Hello, Taylor.”
The young woman blinked hard for a moment. Before she could properly gather her reply, her father’s hand had moved, quick and snakelike, past her face. His thick fingers threaded into short hair, where he gripped her and held tight. Taylor’s eyes widened in shock.

Annette held back a caution, waiting to see what her husband was doing before judging or intervening.

He yanked, just a little; not hard, but a firm, quick jolt. “Taylor,” he said sternly. “What did I tell you about dying?”

Taylor inhaled, trying to place herself in the scheme of where things were going. “Uhm.” She hesitated. “Don’t do it?”

He tugged her hair again in that little shake. “Exactly. And what did you do?”

“Got shot from behind?”

His shoulders, which had tensed up, suddenly dropped and he sighed, a great blustering noise. Then, without any warning, he kissed Taylor. It wasn’t gentle, at all. He pushed hard, forcing her lips to open by pressure alone, before invading her mouth with his tongue. He covered Annette’s hand, the one holding Taylor’s breast, with his own, pressing there a little.

Taylor moaned, as his other hand kneaded her scalp, holding her a touch possessively.

Then, still holding Annette’s hand, he dragged their palms together, down along Taylor’s abdomen in a firm caress. Down and then down again, past the edge of the jeans and further, until they were caught by Annette’s thigh, cupping and pressing up along Taylor’s covered sex.

Taylor made a shocked noise, which was drowned out by the force of the kiss. He moved and they rubbed her. And she made uninhibited animal noises in response. After far too short and long a time, after definitely getting her full attention, he pressed forward - moving their hands to the side just enough so Taylor was fully aware of what else was being pushed against her; what else he had going on. He was thick, long. The momentum held unavoidable pressure.

Taylor’s jeans had long ago been soaked, but new moisture rode and slicked Annette’s palm and the edges of Danny’s hand. He shifted, moving back and forth and slightly up. There was no mistaking anything.

Taylor groaned, gyrating against him - against them both- in return and melted in a full surrender.

He jerked away from the kiss, eyes a bit wild. “The next time you die and come back to life - Taylor, I am tanning your hide. I don’t care if you’re a grown-up. I’ll make sure it’s not fun and I’ll make sure you can’t sit for a while. Are we clear?”

His expression was terrifying. Taylor, who had never been a truly disobedient child - at least not while Annette had been alive - stared up at her father, caught between the whirlwind of his desire, despair, and anger. “I tried to be careful Dad. I never meant to… I…”

He released his hold on her hair and her sex and grabbed her shoulders. He ground out, “You were always careful.” Then he shook her, once and then twice. “Until you felt you had to do something crazy. Don’t you know…” His lips compressed, and he growled dissatisfaction. Then, gently, he pressed his forehead against his daughter’s. “I love you kiddo. You are not less important than the world. You’re not. You are our world, Taylor. You’re mine and your mother’s.” He kissed her again, softer, but just as deep.
He sighed as he ended the kiss and Taylor looked up at him, her eyes bright with moisture. “I love you too, Dad. I’m sorry I scared you. I’m sorry I didn’t talk to you. I’m sorry I…”

He stopped her with another kiss, brief and not quite as open. “Shh. It’s okay Baby Girl. I know. I do.” He looked at Annette, his gaze warm. “We do.” Then he looked back at Taylor. “Just, remember this. Okay?”

Taylor’s response was a whisper. “Okay.”

“Also, since we’re talking…”

He pressed against Taylor again and she couldn’t help the grind she made when he did so. His smile was incredibly toothy, even as she flushed; hard; all the way to her jeans. Again.

He swiped his hand across her free breast causing the young woman to squeal in a mix of pain and pleasure. It hadn’t quite been a slap, but it had been close. “Please ask us first, before making big changes to us.” He leaned in and leered. “While I appreciate feeling this good again, and I understand that there are absolutely mitigating circumstances - such as you being compromised by being returned to life and brain damage…” He said that very pointedly, causing a different kind of blush from Taylor; but he rolled right over her immediate protest. “And also Slut Life being how they are,” he admitted. But he still carried on sternly, “I am still less enamored about how everything went down.”

“Uhm.” Taylor nodded quickly, sincerely. “Yeah. Mom and I kind of talked about that.”

He humphed, “You are lucky your mom took good care of me this morning, or you would be having an entirely different experience here. I’m not entirely sure you would have liked it, though I know I would have.”

Taylor gulped and raised her hands in a placating gesture. She was a little too continual light-orgasm drunk to offer a convincing puppy-eye of earnestness though; even if she meant it. “Mea culpa? My bad?”

Annette piped up, knowing her daughter was actually intellectually compromised at the moment; a high was a high. “I think she does understand, Danny. And really, at least we’re together, right?”

He grimaced, then his expression eased and turned loving. He kissed his wife, not quite so demandingly as previously, but firmly. “You’re right, hon. Absolutely.” Then, he palmed the side of his daughter’s face, and kissed her again; also very softly. “Forgiven. All of it.”

Taylor’s heart seemed like it might burst with the sudden warmth that filled it. “Dad.”

A piping beep interrupted the moment.

Taylor looked down and exhaled gustily. “Another jarful. Time to switch it out.”

Danny stepped away and back, giving both women and himself space. He might be rock hard, but he knew how to gain control of himself; it was something he’d practiced for a long time. “That’s my signal.” He ignored Taylor’s whine of loss.

She’d just have to suffer a little. It wasn’t like Annette hadn’t been handling things just fine. Then, with a whimsical grin, he grabbed one of the already capped milk bottles and sauntered to where the plates and bowls were.

Taylor, meanwhile, was well aware that the front of his kilt was sodden and if lift indicated anything,
one of those mini-baseball bats might be a good comparison for the size of things. But her father seemed untroubled by it; like it was a normal thing to just be walking around like that.

Taylor steadfastly chose not to think about how her mother dealt with it or tried to. Except, her Mother wasn’t helping with ignoring things at all. In fact, her thigh was right back to where it had been, pressing hard enough that Taylor thought her clit might catch fire if she moved the wrong way. Actually, that probably was a lost cause, because she’d caught fire a bunch of times. Her Mom knew what she was doing and that was a little scary.

Taylor knew had to get more control. Which, really, seemed like it was nowhere to be found.

Still, on some level, she was beginning to realize how sheltered she’d been, really; how careful her parents had been, all in all, about her upbringing when it came to sex. Actually, it was kind of amazing how oblivious she must have been; if this wasn’t that unusual for them. She wondered if this was how they’d always been, in private. Was it? Had they simply been so good at hiding things that Taylor never once questioned what was going on behind the scenes?

She was also beginning to suspect something was up, as she watched her Dad. And it wasn’t just that massive love-stick he was sporting around.

“Dad, what are you doing?” Taylor knew she sounded shocked because she was. Annette chortled since she had known what was coming. Danny had gained a taste for breast milk when Taylor had been born and had never really lost it. This had happened before, every time she had a friend who’d given birth and was willing to share. There had been a good trade going on when Taylor and Emma had been born.

“I’m just getting breakfast,” Danny answered. He gathered a bowl, spoon, and cereal, then sat two chairs down from them. He smiled and nodded at his daughter and his wife as he poured the cereal into the bowl. He set the spoon in the bowl, then ceremoniously and exaggeratedly opened the jar, and poured the contents into the bowl of cereal. Then, he just as ceremoniously took a bite and hummed in real pleasure.

When he finished with that, he turned to wink at them both. “Nothing like getting it straight from the source.”

The young woman was flabbergasted, not knowing what to say. “Dad, that’s…”

Annette decided to interrupt and prevent the bad habit of uninformed criticism. “Perfectly fine. Your father used to have breakfasts like this when you were little. And look at how big and strong he got.”

Danny guffawed and continued to eat, deliberately crunching his cereal as loud as he could, while Taylor spluttered.

Annette returned to her diversionary tactics, shifting Taylor so they were more comfortable, as she switched out the jar. Really, it was amazing how fast this was going, considering. Taylor’s output was quite impressive.

“You know, Mom...” the young woman finally said, wisely choosing her battles, “I can probably handle this myself now.”

Annette grinned at her daughter. She tweaked the free nipple, causing a squeak. “But why would you, when we’ve been having so much fun?” Then, she full on kissed her daughter, taking advantage of the moment, until Taylor was moaning into it and honestly kissing back. She wasn’t bad, not at all; but Annette looked forward to providing a more thorough tutoring.
Annette’s gaze was sultry when she allowed the kiss to end, smiling at Taylor’s dazed expression. “So much fun.”

Then, without further ado, she placed the pump where it needed to be and started it again.

Really, Taylor’s noises of pleasure were a delight.

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Despite the general gratification of being pumped, which Taylor could not deny on any level, things did not quite return to that heady cycle that her Mom had most definitely instigated. Instead, there was an odd domesticity that fell over the kitchen. Her father ate and her mother started up an easy conversation that had apparently ongoing since earlier; while continuing to milk her; with much less erotic teasing. Aside from the weirdness of being a half-naked mess, for a moment it felt like a nice Saturday morning - with tingles. Lots of hormonally rushed tingles.

Taylor really didn’t track much of that conversation.

Taylor had been so fired up and set off in perpetual motion that the embarrassment of nudity in front of her parents had slid away far more quickly than she might have expected, and there was no point in returning to it because it wasn’t going to change any time soon. At least she wasn’t humping her Mom’s leg anymore, so there was that. Despite the headiness that was likely pheromones, the air had been cleared, metaphorically. And, they were reaching the end of at least one issue, as they were on the last bottle attached to the pump. Finally. Thank God.

Taylor was feeling great relief at the thought. Her Mom’s arms were comfortable and she was surprisingly nimble, but the younger woman was ready for a little personal space again. And bit less surprise hands on places, just for a few minutes.

Also, she was hungry. Now that the drive to, “Do something!” had passed, the smells of breakfast had finally penetrated her mental space.

Taylor gathered herself together, emotionally. If her Mom could be all normal and casual, she could too. “Dad, could you pass the bacon, please?”

Her father arched a brow at her as if that was the most surprising request. “What? No cereal?”

Taylor knew her “not sure if she liked this new thing” expression was giving her away, but she managed to stay normal in tone. “Bacon trumps cereal, always, Dad. You know this.”

His laugh was comforting to her, warm and familiar. She’d missed it. She’d missed it a lot.

He shoved an overloaded plate over, just out of easy reach, which meant that she needed to lean forward to get to it. Except that every time she tried, her Mom, with a really surprising strength kept maneuvering her back.

“Come. On!” Taylor complained, glaring at the out of range bacon and wishing strongly that she could get some ants past the barrier. That would have solved the problem easy.

Annette cackled a little, deliberately swiveling the bar seat to the side and making Taylor follow. “You’re not quite done yet!” Except that they kind of were. The output was finally and minimum dribble.

“Argh!”
“I could always feed you, Owlet.”

“Nope. Thanks. I’m good.” Taylor grumbled. “I am, technically, a grown up, you know. Full on at least a year past 20. At least. I can totally feed myself.”

Her Mom’s laugh turned warm again, a little less cackle and a lot more happy families. Taylor felt a moment of wistfulness.

“Alright,” Annette’s grip eased back, but not without a quick squeezing hug first. “I guess I can let you go.” She kissed Taylor’s cheek, a quick bus, as she stopped the pump and released the suction. “For a little while, anyway.” Then she unhooked her heel from the support bar on the stool and unwrapped her leg, thigh still wet, from her daughter.

“Gee. Thanks,” Taylor, moving far more slowly than her sarcasm might have indicated. She was still a touch wobbly; what with all the everything except actual sexual plundering. She leaned toward the other stool, using the whole thing as a crutch, before sliding onto the seat properly.

She did not reach for the bacon right away. Instead, she placed her elbows on the table and leaned her forehead into her palms and was glad her working brain seemed to be coming online again.

What had she done?

She felt a pat on her back, comforting.

“You okay there, kiddo?” The actual concern from her Dad was nice.

She nodded, head still in her palms. She exhaled heavily and sat up, finally snatching a piece of bacon from the plate. She waved it around a bit, using it for emphasis. “Yeah. Yeah. I just haven’t got the words for how conflicted I am, which is enormous. It’s so big I can’t even try to hide it like I normally would because it is kind of way too much and apparently I’ve had too much therapy to just keep it in. I’m glad you and Mom are alive. You both look amazing. I’m totally confused about what I’ve done with my life, but I can’t complain because I’m so relieved to be done with the milking right now.” She shifted in her seat and took a bite. “Technically it’s more than that. Because, you know, happy hormones and all.” She ignored the fact that there were a few tears making the bacon even saltier.

There was a moment of quiet, another caressing pat on the back, as there wasn’t really a way to say “I told you so,” in this particular moment, as no one had, for obvious reasons. But it was there in spirit. Through a side glance, she saw that her Mom had gathered up all the jars, except for one, and put them in the refrigerator.

“At least there’s plenty of bacon,” her Dad offered.

There was a beat, then a group laugh cracked through the kitchen and, thankfully, no one offered immediate snarky commentary. Like magic, a plate filled with fluffy, fluffy scrambled eggs and a fork was placed in front of her.

Well, a little less magic and a bit more Mom-help.

Taylor stabbed the eggs more forcefully than they deserved. “Thanks.”

“You’re welcome, honey.” Taylor unexpectedly shivered in a mini shock of groin-based fireworks, despite herself. Oh. God. Her mom’s voice was a form of porn on its own now. Taylor knew then she was never, ever going to be the same.
She ate her eggs like they had committed a crime. It was probably good that there was no ketchup in sight, or it would have been even more visceral. “At least I’m pretty sure this morning can’t get weirder.”

“Ooh! Breakfast!” said a cheerful, familiar voice.

Taylor’s fork paused in its effort to crush the hopes and dreams of the eggs. She dropped it, swallowed what she’d been chewing and swiveled her chair to turn in the direction of the speaker.

Lisa Wilbourn.

Lisa Fuckin’ “Taylor Come Be a Villain With Us,” Wilbourn walked into the kitchen, as upgraded as everyone else in there. Her hair was almost platinum blonde. Her skin smooth, but still with those freckles dusting her cheeks, the cute nose, and that smug sexy grin. Her body had been sculpted to make those who saw her weep with desire, while she remained at that same shorter height.

Like Annette, she was only wearing a shirt; fortunately not button down or Taylor might have hyperventilated. The dark shirt had an image of a giant bright beamed flashlight labeled “Magnum.” It covered her right to the tops of her thighs, revealing very shapely legs.

She began talking, not taking her eyes off Taylor. “Hi Annette!” she chirped. “Hi, Danny! Are we going topless then?”

Annette replied, a laugh in her tone. “Only if you want to. Taylor needed to be milked.”

Taylor was really tired of all the blushing, but what could she do?

Lisa’s gaze dropped to Taylor’s breasts which still had the impression of suction rings and diamond nipplage. Then she looked at the counter, where the unopened jar remained. “So, I see.”

The young woman smirked at Taylor, quite deliberately while she stretched, also completely on purpose, revealing pretty pink panties and an innie belly button. She let the stretch go, without taking the shirt off, she started sauntering again. Her bare feet made no noise, but her hips did that thing.

Taylor, who had not really noticed Lisa “My Best Friend” Wilbourn's hips before this day, knew she was probably doomed.

Lisa was stopped mid-saunter, by Annette - who apparently was providing a hug and release program. She gave Annette a bemused, pleased smile, before tracking back to Taylor and she slid between where the older woman had been sitting, and where Taylor currently was sitting. She grasped the jar, pulling it forward. “Hi, Tay-Tay.”

It was automatic. “Don’t call me that.”

Lisa’s smirk pretended to be innocent, and she puppy-gazed at the brunette, while she lifted the jar towards Taylor. “Make this cold for me?”

Her expression was expectant, while Taylor registered that this was really her and not some doppelganger.

“Magical Girls, Taylor. You made us Magical Girls. Among other things. Not that I’m mad.” Lisa’s smirk dropped. “I know you know what to do. Because even with the new stuff, we have the old skills. And I know that you know that I know what you can do.” Lisa shoved the jar forward a bit more, but then, as if it were an impulse, stretched forward to press her lips on Taylor’s. “Give us some of that cold, cold love.”
When she pulled back, Taylor just shook her head. “I killed you, you know.”

“Well on purpose. Besides, I’m from a Side-universe Taylor. You died first where I came from, killed by Leviathan. But that’s old news.” Even though the smile was still there, Taylor could see the sadness behind it. But Lisa did not linger there. She waggled the bottle. “No freezing it. Just a nice chill please.”

Taylor sighed and touched the jar with a fingertip. “You’ll tell me about it?”

Lisa nodded. “It’s not breakfast conversation though. I’ll tell you when it’s my turn.”

“Owner?”

“Yep!” That P really popped. And Taylor groaned because she knew there was gonna be a thing later. Just knew it. But still, Lisa wanted cold, so she was going to get it. She owed her. Even if this wasn’t quite the same one.

Lisa let appreciation for the newly chilled jar show, with a happy hum. Then she kissed Taylor again, very firmly and with a little more tongue; but not too much, because she knew exactly what Taylor could handle at the moment. “Thanks.”

Doomed. But Taylor could be game. Lisa had been her first friend when she’d thought she’d never have one again. “You’re welcome.”

Lisa grinned. “Just wait until you see the others. Then you can worry. They have plans.”

Doooomed.
Lisa eventually took a seat across the counter from Taylor, where she delicately bit into some toast and then drank the milk, without any apparent hesitation. But she also didn’t tease Taylor with it either, except to arch her brow when she caught Taylor looking at her.

“Eat your eggs,” the blonde admonished Taylor. “Oh, and take some fruit.” She indicated some grapes. “They’re sweet and seedless, you’ll like them.”

“Excellent idea.” Annette reached past Taylor and grabbed a bunch, splitting it in half, and setting one of those halves on Taylor’s plate, while she took the other. Then, when she noticed Taylor giving her a look, she plucked a grape, held it in front of her lips and let her tongue rove along its skin, before popping it into her mouth.

Yet another full body blush was accomplished, and Annette’s smile was pure sauciness.

Lisa chortled gleefully, “You totally deserved that.”

“I did not!” Taylor protested. She plucked and flung a grape at the other young woman.

Lisa threw a grape back.

“No food fights,” Danny said mildly, stopping any incipient shenanigans. After finishing his cereal, he’d snagged a few pieces of bacon, some eggs, some cheese slices and had made himself a breakfast sandwich. He’d also gotten some juice to go along with it. He figured he would need his strength later. “Do they deliver papers in this town? I feel like I’m missing something vital here.”

“Comics during breakfast is an important ritual,” Lisa nodded, affirmingly.

“Or Crosswords,” Annette commented, agreeably.

Taylor tried to think of the last time she’d even looked at a paper. “I got nothing.”

A half-beat later a shout of, “Breakfast, ho!” was heard coming from the direction of the Front Room.

Then there was a squeal of, “Put me down, you nut! You’re gonna make me drop Henry!”

That was followed by a whoosh of air when suddenly two other young women were in the kitchen with everyone else. Taylor was grateful she’d already swallowed the last bit of fruit she’d eaten.

“Hi everyone!” a vivacious blonde said cheerfully, as she a brunette down, feet first. A plant bobbled.

The blonde bombshell heroine obviously hadn’t had much to improve. She’d always looked amazingly good, though Taylor thought there was a lot less artificiality to her at the moment. Still, after having stared at her parents and Lisa, she felt it was only fair to give the new arrivals a full scoping out.

Too bad she couldn’t claim it was for science.

But, she thought, it might be good for her mental health.

Victoria, also known as Vicky, was a statuesque blonde, easily competing with Taylor for height, but
in much more classically curvier ways. She had the heroic female figure, from head to toes, which included an impressive bosom, glorious hips, legs that some people would literally kill for, and a face that would sail ships on rumor alone.

Her sister, who was considered to be mousy in comparison, so wasn’t. She was just more brunette than her sister and also shorter than anyone else in the room. In reality, she stacked a little less than average height, but all that beauty had compacted, tripling its effect. She had curves that swerved, making Taylor feel a big wicked because of the urge to actually leer; which she stifled womanfully.

All of that, if she was guessing correctly, had been hidden by robes in a shameful way.

Amy’s hair was a wild curly brown, a lot less dark than Danny’s. She had with wide brown eyes and freckles speckled over her straight nose and sweetly rounded cheeks; and actually, all the way down. Victoria’s skin, in the meantime, was pure cream and her eyes were a crystal sky-blue that could be fallen into for days. Both had femininity out the wazoo, just shaped and filled in different ways.

They looked extremely kissable. This observation gave Taylor pause because it was definitely also a new thing for her to feel - at least so quickly. Caution demanded action.

Taylor dropped out of her seat and took a fighting stance. She could not figure out why these two particular young ladies were here, or why they weren’t shooting at her. Or trying to maim her or something.


“It was supposed to be random!” Taylor protested as a brief memory flashed out.

Lisa shrugged, “Yet, here we are.” Then she turned her attention to the flying girl and the one with the potted plant. “Hi, you two. Let me do some introductions for Taylor. You already know Annette and Danny.”

Wait, what? When?

“There was a meeting for all the Owners who were going to be roommates. It was a thing, not too long at all, just enough so we’d know who was who and could figure out schedules.” Lisa said, not even looking back at Taylor. She had stood up and now took a place between the two girls, pausing long enough to give them quick pecks on the lips.

Huh. Taylor hadn’t expected that. Last she’d known, Lisa and Glory Girl (Vicky) and Amy had a mutual hate going on, but this was exactly the opposite of that.

“Taylor, this is Victoria Dallon and this is Amy Dallon, heroes from my world. I think our point of divergence is the bank. Victoria and Amy were busy making out at a park during the bank heist. Because of that, I and my team got away Scott free and everything went to plan. The PRT arrived just a hair too late. That led to other differences I’m sure. But the most important one for you to know now is that Vicky, Amy and I have been together for a year. That’s what led us here.” She squeezed their shoulders and they nodding and humming agreements. Taylor blinked a lot for a moment. Lisa continued to explain.

“We’d been looking for someplace to relocate to, given the whole city was destroyed thing. Fortunately, we were out of town when the Stranger-Six stopped by and forced a quarantine.” Lisa nodded at Amy, “She’s the one who found the brochure for Slut Life owners. It was in a stack of brochures for those seeking living arrangements; you know apartments and homes, that sort of thing. But you can blame Vicky for making the call and getting us all sucked into things - she’s impulsive
like that.” Both blondes grinned, apparently not bothered. “We were, actually among the random
groups of potential Owners when the call came down that you needed a few. I was in shock because
on our world, you had been dead for a while, but Amy here,” The brown-haired girl gave Taylor a
shy wave, “bulldozed everyone into letting us be the ones that got picked; even though -
technically…” The word strung out a bit. “We weren’t Magical Girls at the time.”

Vicky grinned. “It was pretty funny. I think threatening everyone with a lifetime supply of
permanent, but crippled extra legs was what clinched it.” Then her expression turned serious, sincere.
“We all really miss our Taylor, but we want to get to know you, too. I’m really sure we can all have
fun together, at least. It doesn’t have to be complete sexy-smexy times, all the times. Though that
would be good too.”

Amy slapped at her sister, ineffectually. “She doesn’t even really know us.”

“What? I’ve got needs.” The tallest blonde in the room protested.

“Meh, it’ll be fine,” Lisa commented. “Taylor’s a lot more into it than she’s letting on.”

Ignoring Taylor’s indignation, Lisa took that moment to continue. “That said, Victoria is still a
mostly invincible brick, but she’s not an emotional Master - over anything. Never was, in our world.
No aura here. Not like your’s had. Different trigger means different results. Amy remains a biokinetic
who was forced into healing by her team. She was nearly broken and overwhelmed - until her sister
macked on her. No undue influence, except the usual ooh-ahh. But both got thrown out of the house
by their Mom when their aunt was out of town because of the lesbian bad influence thing. She didn’t
realize that it was Vicky who’d started it. I’m not sure if they’d been opposite genders, that would
have even been a thing, so really it was Brandish’s issues more than anything there.”

The brunette who could ruin lives with insects, if only she could get them through a door,
unclenched and the fork looked a lot less like she was wielding a weapon. But that didn’t mean she
still wasn’t hyper-vigilant and on the rolling edge of her emotions. Lactation meant hormones and
hormones meant a varied emotional landscape. Sudden onset lactation and milking had its
consequences. Not that Taylor was actually processing that, at the moment.

Amy’s body language, on the other hand, had turned a little thunderous and the plant seemed to wilt
under a sudden onslaught of emotional pressure. So Lisa paused, turned toward the young woman,
grabbed her by the shirt, and laid one on her - a full-blown, all-out frenching that, had they been in a
high school might have gotten them into detention. But here, the plant just rose to the occasion,
hinting at a future possible flowering. Not that Lisa let it go that far; there were loads of pheromones
in the air already.

Releasing the distracted and dazed biokinetic, Lisa said as she turned to look at Taylor, “I love her,
but like the one of us who got us here, (that being you, Taylor) we can’t let her get too upset for too
long. It does not result in good outcomes. That said, I, for one, do not intend to coddle anyone. Not
Amy, not you.” She slapped Amy on the butt, causing the healer to hop forward with a yelp. “As
being too indulgent would be equally bad.”

Taylor blinked and realized everyone in the kitchen was nodding, except for her; and Amy, who was
rubbing her butt and giving Lisa a grumpy look. It had been an impressive swat. Everyone in the
room was more powerful because of the whole magical girl package.

The blonde smiled easily and continued, “Fortunately for Vicky,” whom she gave a dazzling smile,
which was returned with interest, “and Amy,” who also smiled back even though her hand was still
self-soothing her butt. “I was looking for partners and fortunately for me, Vicki is really good at
bodychecking men with guns and Amy can make a whole fortress full of people regret kidnapping
“Which brings us to this. You fiddling with details gave us new powers. But, again, no one is mad
about this. After all, powers are cool. Usually.” She offered a delicate shrug. “At least these don’t
come with a side effect that demands conflict.” Lisa looked thoughtful. “Though it is kind of weird
how everything pulled together so beautifully when you think about it. These powers match our
personalities, and our original parahuman abilities - without those bits changing a lot. And it’s weird
because You *rolled* actual dice for our powers. Not that you remember that. But still, when I think
about what we got and how they work.....” Lisa shook her head ruefully at Taylor, pressing her lips
together in a mockery of displeasure, before popping a grin. “That said, powers are bullshit anyway.
Let’s list them real quick so we’re all a little more on the same page.”

She pointed, open-handed - like a Disney guide. “Plants are Amy’s thing; like really her thing now.
Henry’s her plant baby, but really, she doesn’t take him everywhere. It only seems like it.”

Amy said, “Hey!”

Lisa continued blithely, “Fire, like she needs to be any more dangerous, is Vicky’s thing and I fully
expect more bar-b-que in my life because of it. She’s actually kind of a great cook. If we don’t have
a grill outside we really need to get one.”

“Thanks,” Vicky chirped merrily.

Lisa pointed at herself. “My thing is light, which I’m kind of really enjoying because it’s fun doing
light-shows and I have had some good examples on how to use my powers.” She held her palm out
and a beam of white rose from her palm. It was bright enough to force weird shadows in the room,
but not so bright it caused anyone to think they were going to go blind. Then it blinked out.

Lisa pointed at Annette, “Your Mom’s thing is illusions and you know by now, she is tricksy.”
Annette offered an entertained smile and a wink. Taylor didn’t quite blush, but it was a near thing.

“And your Dad’s is Water. He’ll be a lot of fun in the pool. Or the shower, or really, anywhere wet.
Watch out for puddles. And remember, he can make his own if he has to.” Danny laughed and lifted
his juice in an amused salute.

“Oh, and we’re borrowing your parents, Taylor because all of ours kind of sucked, but yours don’t.”
She leered, “Except in the best and sexiest possible ways.”

Ignoring Taylor’s flushed and outraged bemusement, Lisa barrelled on. “Of course, Your Dad isn’t
listed as a Magical Girl, even though he got a roll from the same table as the rest of us. But they don’t
call boys that here. It’s called Puer Magicus because of gender and magic and warrior guy stuff? I
don’t know. Things got a little fluid when you filled out that one form. And then more choices got
mixed into things and...” Lisa threw up her hands a bit and then let them drop.

Lisa shook off the bafflement and pushed on, “Plus, there’s going to be a few others on our team
eventually, because a) Magical girl teams tend to run large around here and there’s always a loose
Magical Girl to be rescued or found. And B) you have a bunch of open slots because of that thing
you did. Even if they can’t all be found here/now, we’ll probably pick them up later; maybe if we
add a few roommates.” Lisa’s eyes crossed a little, as she thought. “Or when we go other places. I’m
not quite sure yet how that’s working. There’s a temp-block on that information. Unfair.”

She then pointed at Taylor. “That said, It’s kind of obvious what you do.” The brunette turned and
realized that her chair was now silver with frost and that she probably wasn’t going to want what
was left of her eggs. Though the grapes would probably be nice and icy.
Huh. No wonder her back had felt kind of cool. Aside from the no-shirt thing. Taylor looked around trying to spot it, intending to put it back on but had no idea where the tee had gone. No insects meant she couldn’t track it; really, she considered, she had been very spoiled by the neater uses of her bugs.

Lisa laughed and began pulling Vicky and Amy forward. “Come on, relax. We’re all very good friends here, or we will be. You may not be exactly like our original Taylor, but you are actually really close, so I know this is going to work.” She slapped Vicky on the back, not as hard as she’d pasted Amy. Besides, Vicky felt it like a cuddle, not a flat-palmed punch. “Warm up the chow that Taylor chilled up for us. Oh, and Annette said we could go either/or on the topless thing because Taylor’s been lactating; keep in mind it’s supposed to be a sunny day and the Outdoor Pool is pristine right now. So, when you go out remember your sunblock!”

“Awesome,” Vicky said as she quickly peeled out of her tee and tossed it to the side. Taylor once again mentally thanked her life that she’d been born to a mother who armed herself with a thesaurus. Superlative was a great word, and fit. An artist would weep for the chance to sculpt those into permanent cultural memory.

Amy hummed a happy tune, but she opted to remain covered, denying Taylor the satisfaction of knowing just where all those freckles went. Aside from the direction of down and onto very nice legs indeed.

Lisa scooted back into her chair and lifted a half-empty jar. “If you want fresh milk, it’s in the fridge. But it’s still warm. If you want it cold have Taylor do it. It’ll be quick, so it won’t smell odd; which makes it perfect.”

“Lisa!” Taylor protested. The milk thing was still very, very strange and exotic to her. Also, embarrassing in a way she couldn’t quite articulate. It was just different.

“Just because you haven’t tried it, doesn’t mean it’s not good, Taylor,” Lisa said firmly. “I’d say you really ought to give it a go because it’s totally natural to at least want to try. But, personally, I think you’d really do better getting it straight from the pipe so to speak. Or quit being yellow and just go get a jar. Then you’ll believe me.”

Taylor was scandalized, but couldn’t come up with a good argument. Lisa patted the seat beside her and Amy sat down on one side, while Vicki took the other. Now the table seated all six of them.

Henry did not appear to mind that he got left behind, back by the door.

For a moment, Taylor wished she was a potted plant. The simple life had its appeal. Before she could stew on that idea for long, her Mom put a new plate down, replacing the old. This time there was toast *and* sausage and ketchup, and more grapes; and, of course, the eggs. And a fresh cup of tea. Still hungry, despite everything, and probably because she hadn’t actually finished her eggs, Taylor decided it was time to pursue her eternal vengeance against the fluffiness.

Taylor beamed, Annette’s small gesture having made her feel a lot more on the normal side, - despite everything - offered a bright and honest, “Thank you!”

Annette gave her daughter a nice smile and a neutral pat on the back before sitting back down to her own breakfast; for once not teasing. Around the table, the other young women gathered their own breakfast together.

“Oh, and by the way Taylor, Your Mom’s in charge.”

“What?”
“Magical Hero Team. Annette is in charge. I am great at interpreting data, you’re great at providing data and support. Danny, Amy, and Vicky don’t want the job, but your Mom’s had the job before and is really good at strategy. She’s team leader.”

“Shouldn’t there be a vote or something?” Taylor wondered.

“Taylor,” Lisa said without animus, “You are smart and driven, but seriously, in some ways, you’re worse than Vicky here. You may not punch people out a lot, but you can do more and worse damage. It’s not like you won’t be part of the planning, but you actually listen to Annette. Which is a happy and kind of shocking surprise. I thought for sure you’d be a total dominant. I am so relieved you’re a switch. You have no idea.”

“Um. What?”

“Much to learn, Padawan,” her father intoned.

Lisa laughed. “No doubt. But won’t it be fun teaching her.” Then she popped a small square of sharp cheddar into her mouth and chewed, before glancing up.

“Hi Parker,” she said, causing everyone else, except for Annette to look up.

A blonde woman’s head, covered by a maid’s cap appeared, hovering in the air. Her hand appeared as if from nowhere, and she waved and smiled. “Hardly anyone ever looks up, but Mrs. Hebert did.”

Taylor’s Mom chided, “Call me Annette, Parker.”

“Sorry, Annette,” Parker replied. Something began to flicker, taking on her body’s shape, as she continued her conversation with Lisa. She was wearing a uniform of some sort, but not your standard maid fare - more like a secret agent outfit. “And I know you didn’t look up because I was watching, so how did you figure it out?” Taylor’s memory kicked in and any worries she’d had that a mysterious woman was on the ceiling disappeared. This was Parker, a maid with some particularly useful skills; which, she apparently liked to keep fresh. Parker was part of a team, a household support team. They had a whole set - butler, secretary, maid, handyman, and a chauffeur. She was a little vague on all the names, but she knew they existed.

“I got my ways,” Lisa said, teasingly. Then she offered, “The food’s delicious by the way. Thank you.”

“Great! I hoped everyone would like it!” Parker enthused, genuinely happy to see things going well.

There was an avalanche of verbal appreciation that made the maid smile widely, as she dropped to the ground with an easy flip. “Well, forget I was here. Okay. Didn’t mean to get in the way. I’ll see about getting you some Newspapers tomorrow, Mr. Hebert. I’m pretty sure that Sophia won’t have a problem getting some.”

“Danny,” he gently corrected. “Most friends call me Danny. And, like Lisa said, I’m sure we’ll all be very good friends in a little while.” His smile was warm, genuine like he was.

Parker pinked a little, then said, “Okay Danny. I’ll let everyone know.”

Then she shimmered out of view and away.

“Wow,” was all that Taylor could offer. Words failed her. Of course, they had been doing that for at least an hour. Really, she used to be a great conversationalist. Until Emma, but then after, she was better. When she had friends.
“No! None of that!” Lisa commanded. A grape popped off the side of Taylor’s head and her Dad caught it before it hit the floor.

“You seekin’ a paddlin’ Lisa?” Danny asked warningly. Then he ate the grape.

This time it was Lisa who shaded a variant red.

A small horde of giggles ran through the room before disappearing in slow mirth.

Annette said, “Well since Lisa has brought it up, I’ll just let you all know that we’ll have a team meeting tomorrow after breakfast. I’ve already had a nice discussion with our staff and we should have some useful research about Sunnyhill and this world by then - I mean past what we all probably know; that we’re here and this is a new world. I don’t think it will take long, but tomorrow we’ll be on the job. Today, however, we are not and I want to focus on family time, and a little personal time. Danny and I have a lot of catching up to do.” She tossed a wink at Taylor’s father. Then she smirked at her daughter. “Taylor and I will have plenty of time to talk, later. But let’s plan for fun today. We have a whole new house and grounds to explore, with shops and other entertainments available. I think we can all find things to do.”

“I want to see the greenhouse,” Amy said excitedly. “I heard it’s big and there’s already a bunch of neat plants I want to introduce Henry to. I can hardly wait.”

“No creating sentient, sapient or sophont life without consulting one us, dear,” Annette said, quickly and firmly.


Annette stood up, paced around the table, and gathered the girl into a very breasty hug. The younger woman was caught between happiness and other swirls of emotions. “Oh, honey. You can call me Mom if you want to.” The grin on Amy’s face was incandescent.

Taylor felt the briefest moment of something sharp that might have been related to envy. Then, a part of her reconsidered, the part that liked having working legs. Given everything she knew about the Amy from her own world, her Mom might just be saving this one. She made a choice then, to be happy for the other young woman. Both their lives had been shit sandwiches, for a really long time. If this version of Amy got happiness out of being able to call Taylor’s Mom, ‘Mom’, well, maybe that was a really good thing.

“Yeah. It really is.” Lisa agreed. Again, without looking at Taylor.

Annette glanced up, still holding Amy tightly. “Lisa, you and Vicky can call me Mom too, if you want. Or Annette, if you prefer.”

Lisa beamed. “Thanks.”

“Yeah,” Vicky said. “Thanks! I think I’d really like that.” Then she asked a seemingly unrelated question, but Taylor could see the logic of how she’d gotten there - given Mrs. Pelham. “You think we’ll have to come up with new superhero names?”

“It’s something to consider. My old name certainly won’t do, as I’m not that person anymore. The crystal dragonfly theme on our uniforms might provide some inspiration, but you can go with the name you’re most familiar with if you want.” She rubbed Amy’s shoulder, while still holding her close. Amy’s eyes were closed and she was low-key purring. “Our powers are all somewhat elemental, so that might be something to consider. Why don’t we all think about it today and come up with something tomorrow. I’m not actually too worried about branding. If a name doesn’t fit,
we’ll try something else until it’s all good. Plus, we do have Nathan and Sophia to help. They’re very smart about these sorts of things.”

“Cool,” Vicky said, obviously pleased.

Actually, Taylor thought, it kind of was. Having resolved the issue a bit her attention returned to her breakfast because the eggs and sausage sacrificed to the ketchup god were delicious. She didn’t dare hope, but maybe… maybe things wouldn’t be god awful anymore. Uncomfortable, very definitely, but… not… landscapes of screams any more.

Another grape bounced off her forehead. “No! No thinking bad thoughts,” Lisa repeated. Then her eyes widened as Danny stood up.

“Shit,” the pericog pushed off her chair and ran. She was actually pretty fast. But, Taylor thought, as her father whooshed by, so, apparently was her Dad.

Annette tisked and finally let go of Amy. “I’d better go do something about that. Danny doesn’t quite know his own strength yet.” Then she too left the room, at a speed faster than an Olympian Athlete.

“Wow,” Amy said blissfully.

“Yeah,” Vicky and Taylor agreed, about different things.

Vicky turned to Taylor. “Say, you’re closer Taylor. Would you mind getting the milk out of the fridge. I want some cereal.”

Taylor’s nostrils flared, and her lips compressed. Then she made a decision. She pushed away from the table, growling a little, stomped toward the fridge. She opened the door. “You want some, Amy?” Somehow, she made that question seem normal.

Amy was still riding a cloud. “I’m good.”

Taylor shook her head, grabbed two bottles, shut the fridge and stomped back to the table.

Vicky gave a really good puppy-eye. “Make ‘em cold, please?”

“Are you sure you don’t have an aura of influence?”

Amy giggled.

Vicky looked confused. It was kind of a good look on her. Of course, everything kind of was. She probably even cried beautifully. “Pretty sure,” she said.

Taylor released the “mad.” There was no point to it with these two. She let her new power do its thing, appreciating how it worked so quickly. Then she handed a jar over.

“Thanks!” Vicky’s smile was very genuine. “I’ve always been a bit curious, you know?”

“I hadn’t. But now I am. So yeah, I guess.” Taylor opened the jar and raised it in Vicky’s direction. She’d show them. She wasn’t a coward. “Bottom’s up!”

She didn’t bother with just a sip, she tipped the jar back and drank it like she meant it.

It was glorious.

The milk had a fuller taste than she expected, sweet and thick. She could practically feel the
“NUTRITION” roll on her tongue. It was good. It was very good. It was “make you feel better all over,” good and she shivered with it.

She didn’t stop drinking until it was gone and she’d licked at the edges to catch the last drop.

She heard the crunch of someone eating cereal. Taylor licked her lips and looked at Vicky. The blonde seemed even more chipper. She took another large spoonful, looked directly at Taylor and said, “Delicious.”

For once, Taylor didn’t blush. She just agreed. Yeah, it really was.

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They didn’t come back. Taylor’s parents and Lisa had disappeared somewhere in the building and had not come back. So, they quietly all finished eating. Taylor enjoyed the quiet because it gave her a chance to catch her breath. The morning had been a heady experience already. She could feel the sensitivity of her breasts, actually her whole body, easing up. That was a relief. She’d been a little worried. But apparently, she had a quick recovery time. And now she felt she could probably handle the rest of the morning.

Parker, on the other hand, briefly popped into the kitchen, startling all three women with her abrupt appearance, to tell them not to worry about cleaning up. Despite the three women making steady work of the meal, there was plenty of leftovers when they were done. The relative silence of the room was broken as if a pact had been concluded.

“Where to first?” The blonde asked.

Taylor, who hadn’t really planned on going anywhere, took a moment to really think about the question. She’d not always been introverted - at least not extensively so. She just had learned to rely a lot on herself. But she did like going places when she had a chance and she was certainly a lot freer now than she’d been in ages. This was a new world. No one would recognize her yet. Plus, she realized that this was an opportunity to do stuff on neutral terms with two people who would control aspects of her life. No one Owned her time today and while it was tempting to squirrel herself away and do research, maybe it would be a good idea to get a good foot forward and benefit thereby. “I need to change and get my phone. Feel like a swim?”

“It’s kind of early for that.” Amy countered. She strolled over and picked up Henry. Did Henry just reach out like a baby to Amy? Did that matter? Amy was bent over and flashing the world right now. Taylor drew in a hard breath, steadying herself. The other young woman had on dark green panties with light green stripes. It made her freckles stand out and yes, there were some just peppered all over. Taylor found she appreciated the view quite a bit, as the young biokinetic said, “If you recall, I was planning on visiting the greenhouse. Maybe you could meet us there and then we could go see what the neighborhood mini-mall is like.”

Taylor side-eyed to Vicky to see if this was her imagination. The blonde just shrugged and smiled. “Sounds good to me. But I guess, we all better get some more clothes on before we really go out.”

“Works for me,” Taylor confirmed and, while she didn’t run, she wasn’t moving slowly either as she headed back toward her room; quick-walking through the kitchen door into the dining room. A tall thin man in a butler’s uniform nodded as she went through the Front Room. “Ms. Hebert,” he said in greeting.

She paused. Her Dad and Mom had already set the tone, she was pretty sure. So she stopped more fully and turned to face the man. “You can call me Taylor. Nice to meet you?” she led.

“Nathan. Nathan Ford.” He bobbed a small bow. “It’s a pleasure. Do you need anything, Miss?”

“No. I’m good. Just… getting used to things.”

“Is it very different from where you’re from?” He asked, curious.

Taylor’s expression was rueful. “I think it may be very. Very, very much.” She cocked her head, planning on explaining a little. “I’m…” Then she flushed, remembering that she was half-naked, in
front of someone she didn’t know. That plan went out the metaphorical window. “I’m just going
to…” She heaved a thumb towards the stairs, and then turned abruptly and marched away; color
high.

She walked past her room at first and almost made it to the end of the hall before she realized it. She
thought she heard a muffled thump, but it wasn’t very loud and could have been anything. She
looked up suspiciously, but there was no sudden friendly face.

Fortunately, she’d counted doors on the way down when she’d left earlier. Since she knew her room
hadn’t been at the end of the hall she turned around and started over, choosing to rely less on
guesswork.

She really, really missed having her bugs, but she eventually found the right one.

When she entered the room Neo said, helpfully, “You forgot your phone.”

“I can’t have had any calls yet, can I?”

“No,” the AI said, “but I would have been able to be with you and guide you back.”

Taylor considered. “So, even though I didn’t have the phone, you were watching.”

“Through the audiovisual system, yes. I’ve been monitoring the live feeds.”

Taylor stripped off her jeans and panties and said, as she dropped them in the laundry basket, “I
hadn’t considered that. Sorry, Neo. I’m not used to having a personal AI. I just assumed you’d need
to stay in the laptop.”

“It is well. And now you know.”

“True. The research going alright?”

“Excellent. I have several thousand entries that I’m summarizing for you, and…” The AI paused. “I
hope you do not mind. I made a few orders for you, based on our previous conversations. First, I’ve
ordered a species of spider that I think you will appreciate. They’re palm-sized jumping spiders, but
they also have a very strong and popular silk. They’re not local though, so it may be a few months
before delivery.”

“Months?”

“These particular spiders do not do well with the current transporter systems. They’ll have to be
delivered by ship. As a precaution, I ordered their delivery at a lesser speed, just in case that was the
issue.”

Taylor had a moment to contemplate what that really meant. Space travel. It meant space travel and
that meant… “Can we afford that?”

“It was ordered with credit, but calculations show that you are likely to easily sustain the purchase
within the next week.”

“Mm.” Taylor forced herself not to tighten up. “You mentioned a few purchases, so not just the
spiders then.”

“I’ve also ordered a species of large beetle, about the size of your forearm - considered harmless
enough for export and import. Jewel will allow them as pets. They have the intelligence and
friendliness of a small dog. I thought you might enjoy it.”

Taylor looked more closely at the AI’s avatar. “That’s very kind of you. Thank you.”

“It is my pleasure. I enjoy it when you are happy, Taylor.”

The young woman didn’t quite know what to say to that. “Unless you really think I need to know more, I’m going to go ahead and get cleaned up. I’ll be back out in five. No, better make that ten. Next time, I’ll make sure you can join us for breakfast; or whatever.”

“Of course, Taylor. Thank you.”

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When Taylor stepped out the door, onto the backyard porch, the world set itself right. She called the small things to her, the flies, the butterflies, the little fuzzy spider, a bumblebee that was buzzing about. She exhaled in relief as the local variant of gnats and flies swarmed onto her palm, forming a small happy face before she let them away. The butterflies she had settled in her hair, like decorations. The spider sat at her neck, like a tiny passenger. The bumblebee buzzed for her, and then thinking she could make something of a gift to Amy, she gathered a few more to herself. She couldn’t help the grin. She had her small-friends back and it made her feel a lot more like herself. She let her attention expand. She had quit trying to get the insects past the door, but she took a moment to place a security perimeter around the grounds - out of habit.

In the front, she could “see” the driveway and the entrance to the neighborhood. She felt the outlines of the other homes, which formed a circle around a community space, which held shops and entertainment areas and what seemed to be a transportation station. The main road led off to a suburb that was similarly shaped. Taylor let her attention drop off then, having gotten a better grasp of where things were in relation to herself now. She’d run through again and get more specific information, but it was enough for now.

She had places to be.

It wasn’t until Taylor stepped out of the house, that she’d realized that both the house and the yard were far larger than she would have expected. Of course, there was the porch first, with a centerpiece fire pit and loads of seating areas. That rolled into a split between the green grass of the yard and the pool. The swimming pool looked incredibly natural, with giant stones and waterfalls. Even the slide looked as if it was somehow nature-made. A koi pond abutted against the pool, meandering through the backyard garden, with the fish moving slowly and peacefully. They were not, thankfully, in the swimming pool. That might have been taking nature a bit too far.

Taylor walked over the bridge which covered the Koi pool, and through the rest of the yard, which was large and inviting, with plenty of shade. She noticed the benches under the trees. Parties could and likely would be held. Beyond that, the greenhouse was the size of a barn, a max-flexsteel supported, clear “glass,” building set at behind a large group of trees, at the end of the yard.

Though it was a fair distance, it didn’t actually take long to get to the greenhouse. Taylor was impressed with what she could see. Amy had been right about the plants that were already in there. She could spot loads of flowering plants and even a couple of trees. It was pretty. She was suddenly glad she didn’t have allergies though.

She entered the glass building, feeling the humidity and heat immediately. “Hello!” Taylor called out, as she did not immediately see the others.
“Back here!” Vicky called and so Taylor stepped more fully into the greenhouse, which was a lot fuller and denser than she expected even from the peek outside. A plant, blooming, turned and bowed as if pointing in a direction. And then a bunch of other plants made the same motion.

Taylor felt a frisson of caution. Amy wasn’t where she could see her. Nor, was she touching a single plant. This was a bunch of them, moving as one; which meant a radius effect. Amy, the biokinetic, had a radius effect now.

Oh. Boy.

A part of her wanted to back out. Right now. But the stubbornness that had been her survival tool the longest held steady. She raised her head, threw back her shoulders and strode confidently forward. “What are you guys doing?” she called back, making a quick progression through the aisle.

Suddenly, every single plant was pointing the way for her. All of them. The air seemed to groan with pressure, then the plants got bigger; lots bigger. Taylor’s skin pebbled and her scalp tingled. She still hadn’t heard anything from Amy. “Everything alright back there?”

The greenery around her deepened; grew even more, rustling ominously. She heard a yelp that sounded like Vicky and jogged forward until she found herself surrounded by walls of green in a space the size of a small bedroom. The blonde was in the air, vines wrapped snug around her hips and thighs and just below her breasts. She was dressed for the public, but a vine seemed to be working at her shoe - so who knew how long that would last. Vicky waved and gave a sheepish chuckle. “Uhm. Hey Taylor. I know this looks bad…” she began.

“Where is she?” Taylor demanded, rolling over the incipient claim of being alright. She could see that Vicky wasn’t in any real danger. The blonde extended her arm and pointed.

Taylor spotted discarded clothing on the floor and then she saw Amy. Taylor, despite herself, dropped into a fighting stance. She now wished she’d picked different species to bring in with her. The ones currently with her and around her would be fairly useless for defense, except as maybe a quick distraction. But then she remembered she wasn’t without defenses.

As she held the pose for more than a few seconds and nothing happened, she realized that Amy hadn’t made a single aggressive move yet.

Instead, the young woman was supported by the living middle wall, wearing a whole lot of nothing. Her freckles were green from her feet to her thighs and that change in coloration smoothed back into the normal variation of dark sienna-rouge higher up. Her hair had turned a layered green at the tips, leaving the rest of her hair brown. Her areole were an earthy red, about the color of her freckles. The wall was rustling with movement. Where Vicky had a few vines holding her, Amy had dozens and lots of them in varying sizes in very personal places; moving.

Well, that kind of made her hope to give Amy a happy surprise of butterflies really seem lame.

A shoe dropped to the ground and Taylor looked back at Vicky. The blonde said, “She’s never been this bad before. But she got a faceful of stuff from one of the plants and now…” Vicky’s hand made a waving motion. “Here I am and there she is.”

“Want me to try and cut you down?”

Vicky shook her head. “Invulnerable. She’s not going to hurt me. But maybe you ought to think about going. The flowers have been firing off and I’ve become a bit tingly. If I weren’t up here, I’d be all over you right now.”
“You sound pretty reasonable for someone in the grips of …”

“Plant love dust?”

Despite herself, Taylor laughed. “Yeah.”

“Lisa had us practicing how to deal with scenarios that might need me to temper my strength for a while. I’ve kind of been here before, though, it does get really hard. All puns intended. I may not look it, but I’m seriously struggling.” Vicky leered. Then she said, cheerfully. “She made us practice that too, so we wouldn’t give anything away if we were caught or something. I’d invite you to stay, with intentions to molest you, but Amy was really clear she wanted to get to know you as you first. And from my point of view, anything Amy wants, she gets.” Somehow Vicky made swinging in the vines seem sexy, cocking her hip suggestively. “Which brings me to she’s kind of in a forceful mood and you seemed to of had enough of that this morning. Maybe you ought to go.”

The biokinetic’s eyes snapped open, and they were glowing. Her normal brown gaze had been replaced with an electric green. “No. Stay Taylor,” Amy’s voice reverberated, seeming to come through the plants.

Okay, people were right, hearing something like that was weird. And scary.

Options changed quickly, as the biokinetic was propelled toward Taylor until they were face to face.

“Hey, Amy.” Taylor managed to sound casual. Amy’s gaze roved over Taylor like she was a particularly succulent specimen. Then she locked on to the older brunette’s head.

“You have butterflies in your hair,” she said, far more softly and without all the resonance.

“I thought you might like them, for your garden. I brought some bumbles too.” Taylor cupped her palms together and all the butterflies and bumblebees gathered into them. “They’re good at pollinating see. You could leave one of the windows open, so they can go home later and I could have them come back in the morning …”

She looked up, and thought, “Lips.” Then she realized that she’d said that aloud.

Amy blinked at her, trying to figure out what setting butterflies free and lips had to do with each other.

So, the older brunette explained. “You’re a biokinetic Amy. The greatest one in the world from where I come from. This means, even if you get blasted by plant love dust, you control the plants. The plants don’t control you,” Taylor said quickly. “But I know, or at least I think I remember, that you weren’t able to modify yourself. At least, not directly. But you have lips. And I have lips.” Taylor licked hers and was somewhat aware that this idea might partially be based on the warm tingles she was starting to feel. “You could put the cure…”

Amy’s mouth connected so abruptly with Taylor’s that she didn’t have a chance to finish the sentence. She was caught open mouth, and the younger brunette’s tongue twirled with hers. Every touch on her lips, in her mouth, was a moment of pure sensation. She felt sparks from her head to her toes, and the warmth just spread through her body.

The butterflies and bumble bees scattered from her palms and the spider leaped off her shoulder, as she grabbed Amy into a fuller embrace, wrapping her arms around her back and pulling the healer even closer. All her focus became that kiss, as she deliberately deepened it, pressing closer and regretting all the clothes she was wearing. She felt the vines roll under her grip and she pulled them away, wanting ownership of Amy’s skin.
She heard soft snaps, as any vines resisting her demands were frozen, crushed and crumbled away. Amy may have made a sound of protest - or a sound of desire. Taylor couldn’t have said. And it didn’t matter, so long as nothing was in the way of her being able to touch the other girl.

With surprising strength, she looped her leg just under Amy’s knees, pushing enough that both of them went down. The ground, which used to be a hardwood floor, was cushioned in soft buoyant moss, grown from the instant Amy’s feet had touched it.

There were other snaps, and a thud, but Taylor did not consider that important. She managed to drag herself away from Amy’s lips long enough to yank her own top and then her bra off. She flung them away. Then deliberately rubbed her chest against the other girl’s, before capturing her in another blazing kiss.

Fireworks crackled along her skin, through her breasts and belly and that was just a fun bonus because Amy wasn’t just taking it. Everywhere her hands roved, new sensations sparkled along Taylor’s skin. But weirdly, now it was Amy who was talking conversationally, fully relaxed as if this were a regular conversation. “You’ve got erogenous zones everywhere, Taylor. It’s amazing.” Fingernails rolled along Taylor’s back and shoulders, pressing in sharply. It felt a bit like cutting, but not at all painful, though Taylor could tell Amy was roughly scraping her skin. The pain-pleasure combination was glorious. She throbbed in a flowing burst of desire; which she intended to share.

Taylor decided that regular conversation should be scrapped. She moved against Amy quickly, forcefully, pushing her way up and then moving back a little in a rubbing motion. She dragged her lips along Amy’s neck and down. She was going to get a taste of those luscious breasts. As she moved back, to get a good angle, she found herself stopped.

Hands were at her hips, grasping her jeans and pulling her back and then up until she was flat against a blonde trembling in her self-control. “I hate to be the one doing this, I really do, because this is incredibly hot. But you’re both compromised right now.” Victoria explained as she grappled Taylor. If her hands slipped a bit downward, no one was complaining. “Plus we’ve still got other things to do today. If we get started here, I’m pretty sure we’re not going to get anything done.”

Taylor swore, as Vicky rocked her back and held her in a clinch that should have immobilized her. But the brunette struggled, growling against the denial of access to her target.

Meanwhile, Amy regrouped and claimed, “I’m not. Compromised, that is. All better. But whoa, she’s a good kisser. That tongue is something, and I don’t think Taylor was even giving it her all. Let me clear her head before she ruptures something.”

Amy rolled up and trapped Taylor’s face between her hands, before laying another one on her. The kiss was electric, burning through the candidate’s whole being. Taylor stopped struggling, and dug into the kiss again until Amy forced herself to pull back. “That is some potent sugar;” the biokinetic smacked her lips together.

Taylor blinked, breathing hard. Her head was clear enough that she knew what had happened and how quickly things had gotten out of hand. She apologized, but oddly did not actually feel bad. “Sorry about that. I meant to help, not instigate further.”

“It’s me who should apologize,” Amy interrupted. “This isn’t your fault at all. I knew better than to get that close to an unknown specimen. We had a flower-based villain on our world.” She glanced around at all the greenery, before looking back at Taylor, “We shouldn’t have that problem again though. I’ve got things locked down. No party time for plants anymore.” Then she grinned, “Well, at least, no surprise parties.”
Taylor chuckled in response; and anticipation.

Vicky had mostly released Taylor. She was vibrating with need, but she laughed too. Amy rolled forward, pressing the lanky brunette back against the curvier blonde until she was sandwiched between the both of them. The biokinetic said as she grasped her sister’s face in her hands, “You did so good, Sweetheart. So, so good.” Then she pressed her lips against her sister, similar to the way she had Taylor. Victoria’s arms wrapped around them both, pulling them closer.

It was a lot of sensation all at once, not crushing, but definitely making Taylor aware of the way Amy’s skin and breasts slid along her body. It was an amazing experience. But so was the sense impression from the back, where Vicky held her. She might have been more dressed than either Amy or Taylor, but there were nipples for days. This time Taylor could really, really appreciate it - because her head was absolutely clear - except for all the pleasure zones that were erupting just from the back and forth motion of being caught between them. It was heady stuff.

Somehow she managed to keep her hands to herself - though it was difficult and getting more so. She suspected, however, that if she started seriously adding to the touch-fest, the thing Vicky warned about would be true and they might as well turn an Occupied sign on the Greenhouse door. ‘If the greenhouse is rockin’ don’t come knockin’ would be a thing. Amused by her thought, she tried to distract herself.

It wasn’t that good. “You could cut glass, Amy,” Taylor commented.

That biokinetic laughed into the healing kiss and pulled back, dropping a peck on Taylor’s cheek, before fully retracting away. “Like yours are any different. Sorry about that. I owe you one.”

Then Amy sat back on her heels and Taylor felt the loss. She noticed that her color was changing back, losing the green. Her eyes had come back to that warm brown again. She realized she liked both variations, even if the glowing green had been frankly intimidating. The freckled girl said, “Thanks for not setting everything on fire, Vicky.”

“You know I wouldn’t risk that right now,” the blonde said as she shyly scratched the back of her head with one hand. The other hand had yet to really release Taylor. The brunette didn’t mind. She’d never considered that Vicky might actually have some solid muscle to go with the enhanced strength, but it was there to see - just not over-bulging; just was a pleasant perfection. She ran her palm along the other girl’s bicep, appreciatively.

Vicky continued, only a little distracted. After all, she’d felt Taylor up. Fair play was fair and Taylor wasn’t being indecent about it. Yet. “I mean, I know I could probably have figured out how to fix things eventually, but that means practice. I wouldn’t want to hurt you.”

Amy patted her sister’s thighs gently. Taylor could literally feel the vibrating stop, as Vicky was soothed back into something more manageable. She was slightly disappointed, even if she knew she had things to look forward to. Amy rolled to a stand, reaching down for Taylor. “Thank you, honey.”

A thick vine delivered Taylor’s bra and shirt, as she stood up. She bemusedly took the clothing back. Amy smiled, “That wasn’t quite how I wanted to start things with you, Taylor. We had, well, I had this idea that Vicky and I could share the first time and we could maybe watch movies and everything, and get to know you better. And then, if it worked out, we could maybe spend time all together, and do things.” The word “things,” implied a lot, but Taylor had the idea that Amy was meaning something specific; though she couldn’t quite parse what.
Vicky said, in a surprisingly sultry voice, “We like to share. A lot.”

Taylor probably shouldn’t have laughed, but it was more in delight than anything making fun. The suggestive sound had ribboned erotic bliss right through her. She blushed, cleared her throat and said, somewhat shakily, “I wouldn’t be opposed to movies. I like them. And I can’t say I’m not interested in both of you. Because that would be a lie of immense proportions and I’m not that much of a hypocrite. But how would this work?” She recalled being in a room, filled with people in lab-coats, as another memory provided a key. “I think endurance may be a thing, but…” A number flashed in her head. “24 hours is kind of a long time.”

Victoria’s hand slid up her back in a friendly caress. “Let me help you with that,” she said as she nabbed the bra from Taylor’s hand. Then in surprisingly smooth moves, she put it on - naturally copping a good feel along the way.

The blonde explained, with just a few nuzzles here and there. She obviously still had some energy to work off, “We were thinking that if we become friends, it wouldn’t need to always be an all day thing, just moments in time every day, split up. Time snatched here, time snatched there like things would normally be - I mean if we were living in real-world time. You’d end up having more free time, but maybe that wouldn’t be bad. Or you could come to our room and stay over and it’d be sleep and more, like friends and that would use up the time pretty well. We’re not into grinding you to the ground, you know. Just…” Vicky squeezed her, holding her tight with one arm like she didn’t want to let go. “We like spending time with you; well, did like. Maybe it’ll turn out you’re the evil twin. But, you brought Amy butterflies, so…”

She turned Taylor’s face to her and captured her lips with her own. She nibble kissed her, softly exploring. The brunette played back until they were both slightly breathless. Vicky finished her thought, looking into Taylor’s eyes. “Hours are hours. Any time we have with you is good,” Her eyes flashed with emotion; memories that Taylor could not see, but could relate to. Vicky said firmly, “I don’t care when they happen.”

Taylor inhaled deeply, leaning back into the hug far more than she might have expected; before her Mom. Dang it. But realizing what might be subconscious conditioning didn’t make her move away; because that kiss was amazing.

Amy shook off her moment of mini-hypnosis from watching them to think about Taylor’s question enough to say, “But you’re right, we should check with management, before … ”

Neo popped up, a holographic face, hovering just above them. There wasn’t an obvious line of where the holograph was coming from, but the tiny phone was hooked into Taylor’s jeans securely. Taylor noticed that the AI’s face had changed, becoming softer and rounder, not pudgy, but feminine with apple cheeks, cutie lips and a happy glow to her cheeks. “I’ve just been informed that the managers of Slut Life agree with this plan, and having reviewed the conversation with your parents, and assuming Lisa and your other owners may also wish to be part of the bargain, they have agreed that modified arrangements, so long as the time is equivalent, are acceptable.” Her voice had taken on a new sweetness and vibrancy.

“Thank you, Neo,” Taylor said, formally. “That will be really cool. That seems a lot more realistic use of our time, especially given our jobs. Though,” she looked at Amy and Vicky, “I think sometimes quality individual time will work really well too. You’ll help us figure it out, Neo, right?”

Neo smiled. “Of course, Taylor.”

“Excellent!” Amy said.
“I think I am really looking forward to spending time with you two.” Both of them smiled back, as she slid her shirt back on.

Vicky’s shoe and Amy’s clothes also got delivered and soon, all of them were dressed. Taylor looked around the greenhouse. It was like being in a forest but in a compact space. “Going to keep it like this Amy?”

“I’ll probably make some adjustments later, to organize and pretty it up a bit, but I kind of like it,” the plant magician said. “My only problem is I’m not entirely sure where Henry is, right now.”

Taylor’s cackle could be heard outside the greenhouse.

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Chapter 7

The front area outside the large house was as pretty as the back. A half-circle driveway led straight to the door and split into a Y that led to the garage. The yard just past that drive was beautifully trimmed and inviting. Shrubbery surrounded the whole of the front yard, save the drive and a sidewalk and formed a five-foot fence allowing some privacy, but everything was otherwise open.

Taylor, Vicky, and Amy had opted to walk because everything they currently wanted to see was in the neighborhood. The vicinity was designed for perambulations, with shade on the sidewalks for hot days and locations of services and houses nearby. This included nearby educational facilities - among which a University, which was farther off, but not so distant that it would be that uncomfortable a walk.

This didn’t account for safety, except that neighborhood was obviously in good condition. No one seemed to be out and about, but Taylor suspected that might change - either with the longevity of the show or just with people needing to do their thing.

Where they walked, the plants became more green, flickering like a soft wind was blowing in the direction they were walking. That was Amy - and she wasn’t even trying to make that happen. Butterflies had gathered, well as a few other brightly colored critters that were mostly harmless, in a crown in Taylor’s short curly hair. Like Amy, it was a natural event, barely thought about.

The insect queen’s focus was, out of habit, on feeling out and gathering a swarm. She was frustrated that there were not too many pest bugs. They existed, but not in the abundance she was used to, and not in the houses at all. And maybe that would change, but she had no way of knowing for sure. However, the lack of roaches and flies and other sundry nuisance critters was made up for by an incredible variety of other kinds of insects; but not too many with real stingers or biting capability. She wasn’t sure how all of them existed in the ecosystem, but it was fun trying to figure it out. She made a mental note to ask Neo to order the kinds of critters she needed to make sure that they had good defenses, but other than that, she thought she would just enjoy the strange variety.

She’d already tagged her companions and felt better because of it. A small green-blue beetle settled on Amy and a yellow-red one on Vicky, matching their shirts. It helped her to feel more connected.

Meanwhile, Vicky played with an orb of fire, rolling it on her fingers like a coin.

Neo “walked” with them, face bouncing just so in her holographic form, telling them some brief information about the area. “You should meet some of the neighbors,” she opined, sparking a memory.

“That’s not exactly subtle, Neo,” Taylor commented. “But, okay. Who are we supposed to be looking for?”

“House to the right. She should be in right now. You don’t have to stay, but she might like to meet you.”

“Not going to tell us who?”

“Slut Life tradition is that they introduce themselves when you do.”

Amy cast a glance at Taylor. “And thus, you are reminded.”

“It’s not like people aren’t watching you too.”
“Not 32/7, though.” Vicky teased. “We get to turn it all off when we’re not with you.”

“Unless we want to make a little extra on the side,” Amy mentioned. “Did you know that’s part of why we have a salary as heroes? They can film us as we do the life-saving thing and then we get paid for the privilege, plus whatever we want to do or brand for ourselves. I never got paid anything, and now…” She made a grumpy noise that stopped when Vicky gave her a quick bus.

They turned up the sidewalk leading to a very pink house. Vicky said, “Mom had her issues Ames, but I know that she was saving up for us, for when we got older. She just never got around to giving it to us before everything went off.”

“Okay,” Amy said. “I can deal with that. But still…”

“Yeah.” Vicky murmured in understanding.

Taylor, whose first big money came from very dubious sources, had nothing to contribute here. So she kept quiet and worried a little, because - again - her bugs were stopped at the door. She was quickly coming to assume that the safety feature mentioned by Neo covered the whole neighborhood. One part of her was irritated. The other was kind of flattered.

However, she also knew that she was not the most dangerous person in their group. First pick, Amy; but her second, as she considered things, was probably her Mom. And wasn’t that a scary thought. She guessed the assessment was likely to change, once they all started practicing together, but for the moment… it held.

Neo rang the bell, with no obvious means of having done so. The bell was the traditional bing-bong sound that Taylor had grown up with, which seemed like it ought to be out of place, but somehow wasn’t. They waited, not in a hurry enough to just peel off as if they were counting time in a professor-who-was-late’s class. Less than a minute later, the door opened.

A short, sweet-faced, caramel skinned woman opened the door. Her dark hair was cut very short but was still curly enough to be appreciated. She wore an ornate dress of fluffy skirts and high heeled boots. Her expression was open. Everyone’s jaw dropped, except for Neo’s.

“Sabah?!”

She waved her hands as if pushing that response away. “No. Who’s that? I’m Crystal. Are you the new show’s stars. I heard there were three of you. Or was that four?” She leaned forward grasping each of their hands quickly and letting it go.


“Huh,” said Vicky and she offered a friendly smile to the young woman. “We’re not the contestants or the star or what have you.” She leaned forward grasping each of their hands quickly and letting it go.


“Hi, Crystal. I’m Taylor. I’m your new neighbor. That’s a really pretty dress, which is why we made the mistake. We had a…” She glanced at Amy and Vicky for a bit and got a nod, “… friend, who also liked those kinds of dresses.”

“Really?” Crystal patted herself a bit, flattered. “You like it? You don’t think it’s too much?”
“It’s very nice,” confirmed everyone in one way or another.

Taylor added, “I think the frills and the brass buttons are a really nice touch. I like the gears too. Were you shooting for…oh, what’s it called?”

“Steampunk, I think,” Vicky added, with enthusiasm. She was a clothes connoisseur. She loved this sort of thing. She was also starting to change her view about Taylor - or rather, this Taylor.

Crystal’s eyes widened as her skin darkened with pleasure. She raised her arms in triumph and shook her hands in the air “Yes! People who get it. Thank you! That means a lot!” She started to burble as she let her hands drop back down to her waist. “At first I thought it was kind of strange that contestants... I mean a contestant and her friends were wearing so much, but now I see the truth! You know that clothes are for more than just decoration.”

“What do you mean? About wearing so much?” Taylor asked, a little confused. She looked down at herself. Jeans and a tee was pretty normal. In fact, it was light considering she used to be a hoodie-all-the-time girl.

Neo interjected. “Most candidates for Slut Life choose options that limit their wardrobe choice. Many opt to limit their clothes to undergarments or to leave holes that permit an instant view of their assets. You and your parents are rarities.”

Taylor blinked at that. “But why?” A memory of the contract flashed in her head, not enough to give specifics, but enough for her to guess, “There are loads of other options that pay out points that allow a person to at least keep their drawers on.”

Neo answered, “Some people did not have the advantages that you had, or they simply like displaying themselves. Or perhaps, they think, it will help with their ratings. Slut Life policy is that such things are an individual choice.”

“But, but, clothes are important” Taylor boggled, then began the rant that would go down as Taylor’s first (but not last) monologue. “Okay, I’m not a clothes horse, but there are reasons,” that word was stretched out, “that we wear clothes. They’re protection, they’re social camouflage, they allow easy alterations during temperature changes. Which, yes,” She crossed over Neo’s attempt to interject, “I am well aware that there are body temperature options that I have. Very. But...

“Clothes have pockets! They’re convenient. You can store things in them. They make things easier to carry. And zippers mean you can close things up and open things easily. So does velcro and string or ribbons, but you know what I mean. A person can play with designs and make what a person wears simple, or dangerous or pretty. Because when done right beauty stacks and clothes are one way we can do that!” Butterflies and colorful beetles fluttered about her head like a halo as if making the point.

“Nudity can be fun, especially with people you like; variety makes the world go around. I’m not going to judge someone for revealing their all, daily and anywhere and however, because my culture is somehow better than theirs. I can’t even claim that and take myself seriously. I get that. Loads of island princesses made good just wearing leaves. And besides, it certainly it has become apparent that I love looking, clothed or not. Though my friends, I am going to say now, I plan on following the code of seen, but not commented. Except when it is right to do so.”

“So you’ll tell me I’m pretty now and then?” Amy kidded.

Taylor laughed. She offered a pretend leer. “Of course. Turns out I dig me some Dejah Thoris, dressed only in her jewels. You were beautiful against your wall of green.”
Amy blushed and looked pleased.

Taylor then continued. “So, maybe, yeah, social nudity is way okay, and I’m sorry I implied differently. When in Rome, and all that. But can you actually imagine fighting without something between you and the knife?”

Taylor shuddered at the impracticality of it all. “No, you’d have to be faster than fast for that to work, and even then…” She shook her head. “Better and easier to have something in front or on you, than not. And then, you know... Safer that way. But, decoration, just because you want to, is a good reason for clothes too.”

Taylor had started pacing, hands waving for emphasis as she articulated an impromptu dissertation and gave vent to a part of herself that had locked away for a long, long time. Even more creatures that could be categorized as pretty or beautiful or shimmery began alighting on her, some were glowing and flashing.

“If you want to give a good vibe on a date, you wear something colorful or slinky or both. Then maybe add something so when you dance it’s attracting, like a peacock spider doing its shimmy. Plus contrast is important to keep things interesting. Humans have lots of senses. Touch, vision, and hearing, just to name a few. If you’re a sensualist, clothes are a sensory experience. Some clothes swish, some slide, some just cling or squeak a little. In the right amount that can be just as sexy on as off.

She paused. “Clothes are more than just things we put on to cover ourselves. There’s a background of culture, art, and ages of repression and suggestion. So that means we have the happy surprises that make for tension. Like, the Victorians and their thing for ankles suddenly seen. Or like even when everyone knew Narwhale was naked, her hair and her powers kept covering bits strategically and she’d flash people she liked. It’s fun to watch clothes show something off, just as much as coming off. Plus, there’s been loads of times, I’ve wanted to flip up some guy’s kilt to see what was under it. I own it. But I know that I can control my impulses and that the mystery remains exciting because of it.”

“But, I who am I kidding. I literally can’t judge any Slut Life contestant for the dress choices. If they got the goods and want to share, bless ‘em. It’s just my comfort level.’ She pointed at Vicky and Amy. ‘They can tell you, I stripped down to my jeans a little while ago, in less than ten seconds. I was comfortable in my skin at that moment and would have been fine keeping it that way. I just...’ She flapped her arms in protest and pure intellectual bafflement, one that harked back to days when she was mostly a university professor's child and not a para. She blew out her breath in a rough exhale of frustration.

Then she turned fully to Crystal. “I think your outfit is perfect, just the way it is. If I knew you better, I might be inclined to try to take it off, but if I did, I’d try to make sure it stayed as pretty as it is now - so you could wear it again.”

She stopped, stock still. Blushed and said, “Not sure where that came from.” She laughed sheepishly and scratched the back of her head. “I think I may be less bothered by the nudity versus clothes thing than I originally thought. I withdraw my complaint.”

“Wow,” Amy mouthed. Vicky’s eyes were gleaming. Crystal’s were positively shiny as she clutched her hands to her chest.

Even Neo’s eyes were a bit wide.

“And now we know something new about Taylor,” Vicky said, amused and with some anticipatory
overlays. “I think shopping may be in our future.”

“Or cosplay,” breathed Crystal in agreement. She whispered, “And maybe then role-play…”

Taylor took a few breaths. “Look. I know I come off as not much of a fashion plate, and that would be totally correct. I like practical things, meaning what I wear and surround myself with, a lot. I’d rather wear high tops, than high heels. That’s my style and I own it. But before Emma and her bitchy, bitchy ways ruined the fun of it for me, I used to know a few things. But that is the past and shopping isn’t my thing now. So don’t expect me to rush out and buy new clothes or anything.”

Vicky took that as a challenge and was already planning her strategy. She stroked her hand along Taylor’s back. She was pleased to see the brunette unconsciously stretch into it. “It’s alright Taylor. We’ll take it slow and steady. I bet I could make it real fun for you.” She wiggled her eyebrows a bit, then laughed at the look the brunette gave her. “Well, Lisa and I. And Amy. She’s pretty savvy when she’s not covering herself in robes and trying to hide the fact she likes my body.”

Amy covered her face with her hands. “I can’t believe you said that out loud.”

“Why not? I’m happy you came out of your shell. It’s been awesome. And if you can do it, then she can do it.” Vicky once again pointed at Taylor with her thumb.

“I guess you’re right. I can predict some of what my future time slots hold then,” Taylor said, feeling some amusement come back. “But don’t think I’ll start off easy about it, fair warnings.” She turned her attention back to their neighbor. “I’m sorry. I making this all about me.” She focused on the woman in the doorway. “I think it’s neat that you make your own clothes. I’ve made a few costumes myself.”

Crystal squeed and hearts seemed to shine in her eyes, literally. Her lips were in one of the compressed smiles of someone who didn’t want to say anything to ruin the moment.

Taylor continued, oblivious. “I know how hard it can be, finding the right colors, the right materials. It took me forever to figure out how to dye silk and even then, I look back and think I did it wrong. But this time… when I get the silk production going, I’m going to get it right. Huh. That reminds me. We’re talking about our team themes tomorrow.” She turned to Amy and Vicky, “Remind me to talk to Mom about our costumes.”

The pitch Crystal hit was as pure a note as anyone had ever heard. She flung herself at Taylor, wrapping her arms around tightly enough to cause a squeak. “Let me help! Please. We can make costumes together. I can show you mine.” Then she blushed and abruptly stepped back. Her fingers poked together as she dropped her gaze. “I mean if you want to.”

Taylor gaped a bit, but fortunately, Vicky was there to rescue everyone. “I don’t think Mom will mind meeting someone as clever with cloth as you seem to be. We’ll talk to her tonight and give you a call. I’m Vicky by the way, and that’s Amy or Ames, if you want to shake it up a bit. And yes, we definitely want to see your creative work.”

Amy offered an amused wave. Then she had a thought and shared. “You know, Taylor, you do silk. But I do plants,” she said meaningfully. “There are all sorts of cool things that plants are used for - dyes, cloth…” She grinned a little toothily. “It’d just take a little research.”

Neo piped up, “Starting research now.”

The insect queen’s return grin was a little frightening. “I like the way you think.” She hooked an arm around Amy’s back and dragged her forward, kissing her deeply before letting go.
Then she looked a little startled. “Whoa, Amy. I don’t know what overcame me.”

Amy blushed. “I didn’t mind,” she waved it away, a bit shy.

Crystal’s response was a touch breathy, as if she’d just had a very happy moment. She tugged at her skirts and shook them back and forth. “I think we’re all going to be very good friends.”

Vicky’s smile also sparkled a bit, “Just wait until you meet Lisa.”

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Later, after exchanging numbers, the three parahumans left Crystal’s place. “That went pretty well,” Vicky commented.

“It occurs to me, Crystal never mentioned the butterflies,” Taylor mused. She summoned one from her hair so that it landed on her fingertips. Its reds and oranges fluttered prettily. She let it fly off, while the others shifted around to complete the crown again. She was aware that her shoulders were now covered in a rainbow collection of insects. She let those fly off too. The tiny little bluebell bug she’d put on Crystal hadn’t made it through the door.

Oh well. She’d tag her eventually.

“I’m pretty sure she thought they were part of your costume,” Amy contributed. “She seemed nice. And I think she may have been an analog, but she really wasn’t Parian.”

“Yeah, she seemed pretty cool. And it was fun to meet her.” Vicky hopped and stayed floating for a bit before she settled down. “I say we knock on another door and see if there’s another person who looks like someone we know.”

“I’m not knocking or ringing the bell on all the neighbor’s doors, Vicky,” Taylor said firmly. “If we do that, we won’t get a chance to visit the plaza.”

“I thought you said you weren’t into shopping,” Amy teased.

“I’m into knowing what we have around us. This is research.”

Amy laughed.

Neo offered, “The house next to Crystal’s is currently occupied.”

Vicky smiled in triumph when Taylor rolled her eyes. Everyone knew what was coming. “Fine.”

The man who opened the door was scruffy and wild-eyed, half dressed with his pants barely done together. He wasn’t anyone they recognized, but he seemed to fit the mold of a tinker. Goggles canted on his forehead and he squinted as if he hadn’t seen the sun in a long time. “You’re early,” he declared.”And I only ordered one, not three, so two of you have to go back.”

He pointed at Amy, “Get in here.” He turned away, started heading indoors.

“None of us are here for anything,” Taylor snapped out, not responding well to Amy being targeted - at all. “Just came by as neighbors, to say hello. But you know what, you can screw off. We’ve got
better things to do.” She grabbed her companions, turning them away before anyone could note the literal lick of flame starting in Vicky’s eyes.

“Hey! I own you! Or one of you!” he protested. He half jogged out of his house, reaching toward Amy and a zot of energy speared the ground in front of him, causing him to jerk back.

Taylor, Amy, and Vicky spun around at that noise, taking fight positions. Vicky rose in the air, fists clenching.

Neo piped up. “Sir, that would be incorrect. No one here in this neighborhood or on the Show is owned by you. You failed to qualify as an Owner. I am now incredulous that you qualified as a neighbor. Moreover, the person you are importuning *is* an Owner, not a contestant. You are most fortunate that all is currently under the introductory protections. We will not be returning. Good day!” The only things missing from her exit, were a monocle, a top hat, cane and a slamming door.

The bad neighbor growled and swiped his hand, which had sprouted claws, through the holographic image.

Another flare of energy, this time a burst, not a strike, flashed at his face turning it black. His hair spiked even further, and his eyes rolled up in his head as he toppled back. Smoke undulated from his prone form.

“Did you... did you just kill him?” Taylor asked, startled.

“Of course not, that was only the second …” Neo began explaining.

Then there was an awful, tearing, squicky noise, like flesh being parted. Thick blue-black tendrils bubbled up, waving in the air and flopping squishily on the ground. All three young women took a step back. The thing pulling itself out of the neighbor’s body was getting larger by the moment.

“Oh,” Neo said. “It’s a monster. That would explain things!” she continued cheerfully - as if a riddle that bothered her had been solved. Another, stronger flash happened, almost blinding in its intensity. The jelly-like creature shuddered and continued spilling out of the body. “Your neighbor must have attempted one of those things man was not meant to do.” Neo smiled. “I feel a little better about striking him now. However, it seems my bolts no longer have an effect. I may not be much help.”

Taylor’s insects scattered from her body, as they wouldn’t be of much use in the fight right at that moment. The ground froze at her feet, spreading quickly towards the monster. She wished she had her baton, at least. She felt a pull and then a pop, and she had a brief moment of stare as she realized she was holding a massive, massive sword in her hand. It was taller than she was, and yet, it felt so light.

“What the…”

She felt the heat before she saw it, but a ball of fire smashed into the creature with a fierce cry of, “Die!!” And then another one flew past, with a repeat. “Die!!” The results of the blast smeared some of the beast along the sidewalk and grass. Where the fire had touched the remnants dribbled and smoked. It smelled like burnt blueberry pancakes, fried grass, and toasted concrete; an oddly pleasant combination, but not one Taylor would recommend.

Thick green tendrils had begun wrapping around and around the body, trapping the creature so it couldn’t pull all the way out. “Don’t touch it, Amy!” Vicky declared. “We don’t know what it could do and we don’t need to take the chance!”

“I wasn’t going to,” The plant master said. “I have no desire to be near any of that. It feels vile. My
Oh, well that was another thing to worry on later, Taylor thought. Then with a wild swing, like her sword was a bat, she made a hit of her own. A powerful blue bolt of ice struck at the biggest extending part. Her intention had been to cut, but what happened instead was that the whole body and all of the creature was covered in ice, frozen in gooey motion; as was half the yard and the whole front of the house.

A keening sound was heard, then abruptly squashed when Vicky, ignoring her own advice to Amy, punched the creature at high speed. The explosion was loud and big enough for everyone’s hair and features to blow back a bit. Blue-black chunks of ice dropped down like sticky, gooey hail, spattering them all.

Amy shouted, “Quick. Taylor, Kiss Me!!”

Taylor not only had no problem with that, she’d intended to do that anyway. She’d already thrown her top off. And the bra. She was yanked forward by Amy and their lips smashed together urgently. And then, in the next breath, it wasn’t quite so imperative, but it still felt marvelous.

“Love dust,” Taylor said when she pulled back; her mind mostly clear.

“More like love goo, but same principle,” Amy corrected. “Now go give my sister some of that candy you got, while I pick up your clothes.” She shoved Taylor in the blonde’s direction. She sighed. “And Vicky’s.”

She did not have far to go, because Vicky was already headed in Taylor’s direction. But the view was worth all of the few seconds that she had before her lips were caught by the blonde’s.

Superlative. Such a great word. She liked harking back to it, because… damn. Those breasts would set ships to sail on a vast ocean, which is what she felt gathering at her south.

Then there was the word Perfection. Like the kiss that Vicky gave her, first filled with spicy hot need and then, sweet, fire-honey enjoyment. Taylor melted into that kiss, the frost surrounding them literally disappearing into steam.

“Hot,” Vicky whispered against her lips. Taylor couldn’t disagree.

When the blonde pulled back from the kiss, there were still sparks in her gaze, but she had herself completely under control. She glanced down at their pressing bodies and then back at the brunette. “Not gonna lie, Taylor, I know we planned for movies, but there may have to be a bed in the room.” She snagged a bra, checked and recognized it wasn’t her own. But, instead of offering it to Taylor, she slid the silky material onto the brunette with practiced ease, again. Her fingers teased along tender breasts and skipped over sensitive nipples, as she kissed Taylor once more. Then she stepped away; only a little regretful.

“Yep. With lots of pillows and towels, and plenty of water nearby.” She promised, “I’m going to make you sweat.”

Taylor quipped as she put the shirt Amy handed her back on, “You kind of already do.” But, admittedly, she was feeling more and more game for that plan. Bed, Movies, and what that all meant. She had a fire in her belly now.

The frost had diminished further, though the open door to the house remained completely covered. The lawn, however, was no longer hazardous to bare feet. The blue-black material started to melt, staining the concrete. Amy, still not touching the body, touched one of the vines holding it, and the
body - or rather the shell that had been inhabited by the thing - began desiccating rapidly.

“Remind me not to piss you off,” Taylor commented.

“Even if you did, I’d not do something like this to you,” Amy commented. “Unless you turned into an evil jelly monster. And even then, I’d try something else first.”

“My hero,” Taylor said dryly.

“You betcha,” Amy tossed back, grinning.

Before long, everything, except for the still frozen house, looked fairly normal. “I think we’re done here,” Vicky said.

“Still want to knock on doors?” Taylor asked.

“Nope. I’m good.”

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Chapter 8

It was really only a matter of crossing the street and then they were there, at the plaza. This was the space reserved for all the extras options that Taylor had purchased for herself and her friends—guaranteed to follow her through her jumps and beyond, because she’d combined her contract. And, for what really came down to a few points, comparatively speaking.

On “paper,” the facility read as a mall-like space. But in practice, the shops and entertainment areas were set up as a series of compatible looking futuristic buildings connected in various ways to the plaza pathway. This worked, because technically, the whole suburb was surrounded by an invisible dome and thus, separate from the general world at large. Wares could easily be seen through windows and signs, neon or otherwise were a thing; though Taylor noticed that they flickered in her view—from something not-English, to a readable text that she could parse. Circular open spaces connected by wide aisles allowed maximum access and for seating, dining and otherwise, as well as shade trees and other greenery. Taylor spotted a real park in the distance, one with swings and other kid-friendly play-gizmos.

“Pretty,” hummed Vicky, feeling in her element. “I like this. Not many people though.”

They had observed a few people wandering about, noticing that the local custom of what to wear seemed to be varied. A man passed by in a full on business suit, including a bow-tie. He’d nodded politely and they returned the morning greeting. A woman walking into an unmarked building wore a toga, with one breast hidden and another out, but made up tastefully. Taylor was glad she had her clothes/covering/whatever meltdown early, because now was free from an impulse to apologize, because that woman had been gorgeous. She caught Vicky’s smirking side-eye, but womanfully ignored it.

Neo said, “Jumper's plaza is mainly designed for the star and affiliates of the show, their families and their guests. During the opening series, some prize winners may be allowed to visit, along with a relatively small amount of people who live nearby, to ensure that the stores maintain a profit. However, Jumper’s Plaza is a secure zone and will be highly regulated. While there are several rules, the most important for you to know is that no one who is not of the neighborhood will be allowed out of the shopping zone into the neighborhood without proper authorization. Nor may they harass or bother the star, affiliates, families or guests for any reason. If an individual is making a disturbance, you may request that they be removed from the premises and locked out. Non-show guests are able to return to their own homes easily by accessing the travel terminals or the other public or non-public transportation options.

"You and yours also have access to those facilities, as they will help you if need to visit other areas of the world. You'll note the entryway over there. That leads to the garage, which is underground, and the various terminals which are in the above ground station. It may take a few days for everyone to begin accessing the plaza, as the show has just begun. Also, many of the zones are not yet populated, as they are being held in reserve for other services that may be emplaced when your travel to your next destination. When you begin your travels, Jumper's Plaza will move with you, as will your home. You will be allowed to determine whether it will be in-universe or in your demiplane, which will then allow you to decide the availability of the facilities to whom you decide. Generally, in the demiplane, it will only be you and your companions or guests. In-Universe, the set up will have the option to be as you see it now. You will be given the control settings related to access and options at the time of the jump. Would you like me to list the currently available facilities?”

Taylor had a few questions, but decided to save them for another time. She said, “Maybe later. The
point of us coming here was to take a look around. If we miss something we’ll come back to the
topic later.”

“Understood.” Neo responded, switching to a male tone of voice. The AI’s features shifted subtly,
becoming a bit more masculine to match the voice.

The first place they stopped at had food-stands set outside, with fresh fruits and vegetables - some of
which Taylor recognized and some which she didn’t. The store was labeled “Grocers.”

“Neo,” Taylor said as she picked up a blue fruit that reminded her of a kid’s toy because of its shape,
“Be sure and let us know what is safe to eat and not eat when we go shopping for fresh food. I’d
hate for incompatible foodstuffs to be, well, a thing.”

“Of course, Taylor.” Neo said easily. "All food, currently on offer, is safely digestible by humans;
with the usual variations for personal tastes or physical reactions. While medical has cleared almost
every allergy, some are found accidentally on occasion."

“Thank you. That's good to know.” She set the fruit down.

They went in, just to see what it was like. The grocery store wasn’t large, but it was packed with
enough items that she knew their grocery needs would be met fairly easily. The store also had a drink
dispenser and other amenities that might be handy on a summer’s day or when one was in a hurry to
class. She approved.

As they didn’t yet know how to purchase anything, no one bought any items, but it was good to see
something that felt familiar - if a little different at the same time.

They decided to head further into the plaza after that, entering buildings that seemed open, exploring
a little and walking out. There was a general store, carrying items that might be found in a store like
All-mart, this included clothing, simple electronics, seasonal items. The goods on currently the
shelves seemed to be late-spring or summer items, which included beach towels and sunscreen. At
another place, they found an arcade filled with games, including a ball-pit. Then they found a mess
hall that was serving breakfast.

Taylor asked, as she spotted the traditional register at the end of the cafe line, “How do we pay for
anything?”

Neo said, “Your phones are all equipped for credit transfers, Taylor. However, as the plaza is
attached to your identity, you and your companions may all simply go in and take what you wish.
Where there is a need for payment, it will be deducted either from common or personal accounts,
which you can set up. Currently, according to your last settings, everyone has their own account with
a modest stipend being drawn from their salaries, which are held in a separate account. If you are
worried about expenses, you can set limits and alerts to your accounts.”

“Nice,” said Amy, pleased. “So, then I can do this.” She grabbed a creme-colored bottle and a straw
and then walked out without a further word. Vicky and Taylor bemusedly followed her.

After they’d exited Neo stated. “Correct.”

“That is a pretty nifty feature,” Vicky agreed, tempted to go back, but not quite hungry enough to do
it. “Anything else we should know about purchasing things from the Plaza?”

“You can order items online and they will be delivered to your door. I will make sure the local pages
are easy to access on your devices.” The blonde did a small victory dance, which lifted her into the
air for a moment.
They moved on, continuing the exploration, discovering a 32-7 gym with an indoor pool and a lot of different kinds of rooms and equipment. They spotted a room with mirrors and a bar that extended the length of a wall, one with thick mats that covered the whole room, and one with what had to be gym equipment, even if they didn’t know what everything did yet. Other rooms existed, but they had entered the main area where they were met by a peppy young lady.

She had red hair tied up in a ponytail, wore very short gym shorts - the kind that hid nothing on guys though they technically covered them, yet they managed to look fantastic on the real-sport gals. She wore a sports bra, socks and shoes. She was muscular and fit, without anything being overwhelming.

The redhead offered them a thousand watt smile. “Welcome, Taylor! It’s nice to meet you, though you’re definitely early.” She held out her hand. “I’m Cherry. I’m your personal trainer and one of your Owners.” Taylor took it warmly.

“Nice to meet you,” the brunette offered, gripping it firmly without hurting. Then she let Cherry’s hand go, waiting to see where this would go and hoping she was making a good impression.

The red-head’s attention turned to Vicky and Amy, letting her gaze slide over them appreciatively. “I’ve been watching the live feed.”

For a moment, Taylor felt a bit breathless - and grateful that Cherry had her attention on the others. She forced herself to inhale, reminded herself that she’d already determined that she’d act normal. And she managed to keep her cool. She realized, she hadn’t even attempted to push her emotions elsewhere, and felt an odd pride about it.

As she considered the issue of live-feeds and fame, she realized that she’d missed something in a previous conversation - the one where Crystal had appeared not to know who the contestants were, then had mentioned Taylor’s parents not too long after.

It was sly, when she thought about it. Still, having met the woman, Taylor was inclined to give the benefit of the doubt. She was aware that Crystal had to be an informed neighbor, possibly even genuinely somewhat shy. But considering this, made Taylor also think she had dutifully acted the part of the surprise visit. Welcome to the show, that was her personal life.

Yet, if that was all that Taylor had missed, it was a small thing and hardly worth mentioning; though definitely worth setting aside as points of awareness. Ultimately, Taylor decided the costumer likely was not a villain in disguise - given the situation.

Cherry meanwhile, continued, "When you both decided to visit the plaza with Taylor, I knew I had to be here. I just wanted to say, you’re welcome to join us during workouts, if you want. I really appreciated that you got Taylor to get management to allow us to split the hours up. Physical training is best when it’s spread out over a week. That will allow us to focus on different areas that may need work, or enhancement. I was really worried about how we were going to accomplish things with a single shot of time, massive as it was."

Then she nodded to the holographic AI, “Thanks Neo, for accepting my earlier request to revise the schedule.”

“It was no problem, Ms. Cherry. Taylor and Annette will be joining you tomorrow promptly at 10am for the first 2 hour session. After which, they will attend the salon and spa.”

Taylor looked a little startled, then smiled. “That works for me.”

“Are we invited to the spa too? And can we invite Lisa?” Vicky asked. “Cherry, can you handle five
of us?"

The athletic trainer beamed. “Oh sure. It’ll be Awesome!”

“I will make an addition to the schedule at the spa and the gym,” noted Neo.

“You’re rocking this scheduling thing, Neo.” Vicky praised.

"It is easier when everyone is onboard. I have contacted Annette and Danny’s personal AIs. The schedule is updated. The martial art’s instructor has requested alternate days, for longer periods of time. He’d like you to contact him, Cherry, so that can be negotiated."

“Of course. I’ll get back to him in a bit.”

"Wow." Taylor commented and she wondered what kind of martial art she’d signed up for.

Amy said, “You do realize I could just ...” She wiggled her fingers.

“Shh.” Vicky said waving her down before she could finish the sentence, “Don’t spoil it! Salon and Spa! And you know you love how it feels to get a good stretch on.”

“Which is a nice segue to announce that I want to let you know, that we'll spend the first little while getting a sense of where everyone is, physically.” Cherry said. “You can be sure that we can handle upper limits of abilities. The facility is designed to be multipurpose. We have all sorts of games that can be played that will encourage aerobic and agility activities. And yes, there will be stretching and flexibility exercises. I think you’ll really like it.”

Cherry paused and grasped Taylor’s hand in hers. “And can I just say, how much I love that you chose the healthy grocery options. I had one contestant that lived on MREs. M. R. E. s. It was terrible.” The shudder, while delicate, actually did amazing things to Cherry’s abs. “In comparison, You, and your family, went with fresh foods, with only a bit of junk food.” She squeezed Taylor’s hand to her bosom and lifted her eyes to the heavens. “I was so happy! This means we’re all starting right! It’s so wonderful.”

She noticed what she was doing to Taylor’s hand, but unlike Crystal, there wasn’t a blush, merely a happy pat on that hand and a letting go. “I’m so excited.”

Taylor nodded, starting to feel very pleased. Getting an option for the gym and the trainer, she suspected, was actually a good idea. Plus, it meant she didn’t have to jog on the streets in the morning. She’d always kind of wondered what that might be doing to her lungs, given the carbon and other chemicals that had to fill Brockton’s air. “I can hardly wait.”

“Awesome.” Cherry bounced.

It was a really, really healthy bounce.

After that brief introduction, the young women continued their tour of the area and located the Bath House, which, of course, connected to the Salon/Spa. It had a mix of roman and eastern overtones, somehow making it all work with perfect columns and natural stone and open spaces. The fountain in front of it was a marvel. “I can hardly wait,” breathed Vicky, as she gripped Amy’s hand. “It’s going to be so much fun!”

“Well, I’ve never been to a spa, but I’ve heard good things,” Taylor said. She didn’t feel any particular urgency to enter, given they’d be seeing it tomorrow. But it was nice to know where it was. “Personally, I was hoping to check out that building, over there.” She pointed.
The building was the Library, reminiscent of the one in Brockton Bay, but newer and sleeker, with more glass at the front, and less possibility of terror-bombing. It was a good sized edifice, making her curious as to what was in there and how many books or media it might already have.

“Nope,” Vicky said firmly, pressing her hands against both Amy and Taylor’s back. “I know Amy and I have a good bead on you, and I can already tell, if I let you two in there, I won’t see you again till later tonight. So, no. It’s here, you know where it’s at. You can visit any other time or after we’re done touring, if you’re tired of us, but for now moving on.”

She pushed them forward. Amy laughed outright at her sister’s antics, which loosened up Taylor. And so they moved past the building and towards the one across from it, the movie house. The Marquee displayed displayed a couple of entries, but what caught the eyes was the “Double Feature, Beauty and the Beast! 8pm - 1am!”

Underneath, just by the ticket booth, a movie “poster” showed a brief ad-image that moved in sequences like a GIF. One was of the classic Disney cartoon Beauty and the Beast, suitable for all audiences. It was very recognizable and brought back pleasant memories to all of them.

Then the ad switched, and all of their eyes got wider and wider as they watched the live-action ad’s display. Somewhere in the castle, Belle leaned down on a red and gold rug, holding herself up by her forearms - palms flat to the ground, blue and white dress around her hips. The Beast, meanwhile, was behind her, moving in a very recognizable rhythm. The young women couldn’t see much, because the overly-literate woman and the fuzzy-man-monster were facing towards the audience, but they could see that everytime he thrust forward, there was a little something that happened that pushed the skirt forward a little more, each time. It wasn’t that long, but Belle was soon uncovered enough that, despite the angle, they saw there was bulge in the woman’s lower-half, moving back and forth.

They were boggled.

“How does that even happen? I thought that was only possible in hentai.” Vicky asked, gobsmacked and not at all asking rhetorically.

“As you should know, given your own upgrades, current medical procedures allow for strong flexibility and full stretch options. Many actors and actresses have these options emplaced so they can provide better performances,” provided Neo.

“It’s one thing to know your flexible,” Vicky commented. “It’s another to see what that means around here.”

Taylor and Amy, both Mm-hmmmed.

The advertisement rolled back to the G-rated side, and Taylor was finally able to pull her eyes away. “You read hentai?”

Vicky gave Taylor a disbelieving look. “You telling me you haven’t, with the Internet having stuff from both Aleph and Bet? I started checking that out when I was thirteen! Plus, you’d be amazed what you can find in comic book stores. Or in the archive section of the BBL. You just had to know who to ask. Apparently, the whole collection was a donation from one the refugees when they first arrived.”

“I am telling you that I haven’t, yes.” Confirmed Taylor. “And I have to say, Vicky, my ideal of you as an ultimate pure virginal cheerleader is shattered! I am shocked, shocked that you have read comics and dirty, naughty books.”
Vicky locked her own arms behind her back and rocked back, “And enjoyed them!”

Taylor mock gasped. “No!”

Then she relented, as both Amy and the blonde chortled at her terrible acting. She got a little serious. “But no, I know Alec had a bunch of comics or graphic novels or whatever they’re called, but I never really got around to looking at that kind of thing, smut or otherwise, very much. First, wasn’t that interested unless there were superheroes involved and second…” She decided to bite the bullet. It was time for them to know she had a bad side. If they were going to reject her for her past, she wanted to know now. “Was too busy being a Warlord and trying not to kill too many assholes who thought they could harass and enslave my people and take our stuff. I had to protect my territory, you see.”

Vicky’s expression was a devastated! “That’s...terrible!” She grabbed Taylor into a very tight hug, rocking her a little. “Awful!” The she set the actually shocked brunette back, some, holding her by the shoulders. Then she said, woefully and dramatically at the same time, (and that’s when Taylor knew Vicky was putting her on), “I didn’t bring any of my collection, because they all got burned in the fires. I don’t know how to make this right.”

“I’m pretty sure they have comic porn here too,” Taylor pointed the advertisement, which had flipped back to a different live-action scene. This one showed a nearly naked Belle, covered with only a red cloak, riding a horse through the snow, getting stalked by angry wolves. Four stars of four were tagged at the top, turning and sparkling proudly, with the label of Jewel Network News.

“It’s not the same.” Vicky asserted. “Real Hentai is an art, and not just in comic or anime form. Erotic art has a long, long history and some of it crazy awesome. There was this one dude, way back, who used to paint guys with dicks that they carted around in wheelbarrows. The whole set is hilarious. And then there were the octopuses. Tentacle monsters have been around, like forever.” She gave Taylor a tiny extra hug, let her go and turned back to the ad, cocking her head at the newest image. “But seriously, I am filled with questions. Although,” She turned to look at her sister, “I bet Amy could manage something like it, if we wanted to experiment.”

Taylor responded, “I don’t feel like that’s something I want to worry about right now. Amy, don’t follow any of your sister’s suggestions while she’s in the let’s try something physically improbable mode; even if we have nifty adaptations. It’s fully possible that whole scene is assisted with computer-generated imagery.”

“I kind of want to see the live-action movie now,” Amy finally added to the conversation, sipping her soda thoughtfully. “Looks like it has a little of everything. Action, adventure. Sex. If the ad is any indication, other than the ooh-ahh, it’s sticking pretty close to the storyline.”

Vicky contemplated, “I wonder if it’s still a musical?”

Amy pointed at the bottom of the ad, “Has to be. It’s a Disney film. DAP - Disney Adult Productions.” She shrugged. “You know how they love to cross-platform. I wonder if there are spoilers online. Because you know how some productions get when they make something for older audiences. They like to switch things up and I’d like to know if they have before I go in. Belle’s obsession could be stockholm syndrome and not true love, and I like my happily ever to be legit, damn it.”

A few seconds of stunned silence later Neo said, “I’m afraid the answer is indeterminate. Massive arguments and debates about the motivations of Belle and the Beast of this particular production has been underway for thousands of pages; as well as assessments of the actor’s performances. The actress, during her interviews, however, is quite frank in saying that she thinks it’s both.”
The three women all started giggling. Taylor managed a choked, “Thank you, Neo. I feel more informed now.”

They watched two other versions of the contrasting ads, before it rotated back to the first in repeat and then opted to move on.

During their further perambulations, they found other places of entertainment, which included a spiffy looking nightclub that Vicky definitely planned to drag everyone to. Adjacent to that was a very tall tavern, with what looked to be apartments at the top. It wasn’t open, but there were advertisements, like the one on the movie theater, touting its star courtesan. From all appearances, she definitely had the flexibility module, only she applied it gymnastically. From that, they learned that the Tavern doubled as a Brothel, which would explain the height of the building; and the fact that some people waved at them from the windows upstairs.

“This,” Taylor said, “is going to take some getting used to. Do you think the, uhm, employees are Firefly type or Spaghetti Western type?”

“I am afraid I don’t know those references, Taylor.” Neo said.

“That’s okay,” Taylor said. “It’s an Aleph cultural thing that crossed over to Bet.”

“I...see.” Neo said.

“I’ll tell you more later.” She waved at a pretty looking person, whose gender she couldn’t quite figure out. But they had fluffy pointed ears like a cat, which she found interesting. Something about them reminded her of someone...

Taylor abruptly started away, with Amy and Vicky and her AI trailing. “I think I might need to write a note to management. I want to make sure that everything is above board; that those people are happy and not being forced.” She paused, feeling as if she were on the onset of something calamitous and not quite sure how to stop herself from going there. A strange ache filled her chest. “I know this is Jewel. I read up on it enough to know that the mores are different than what I’m used to and that things are ... we’ll just say easy going. But I don’t want anyone in danger or hurting or drugged up and ... I know they looked friendly, but if they’re there because they have to be, because...” She felt herself flashing back, a buzz in her head, remembering girls who were traumatized.

Insects started visibly gathering. Offhandedly, she noticed that some were bigger, brighter and more armed than previous creatures that she’d called. She wasn’t intentionally pulling them her way, but they came anyhow from places unknown. The numbers increased rapidly, swirling in a mass of color. It was scary for any who witnessed it, as the sounds and chitters and eerie motions the bugs were making were a direct result of Taylor’s agitation. Plus, some of the bugs were fist sized.

Amy touched her shoulder, easing the panicky chemicals that had begun stirring through Taylor’s body. The jitters faded, though the insects still swirled around them; slowing into a softly undulating rainbow - it was even mixed from red to violet, with sparkles from the glowing creatures.

“Take a breath.” Amy said, as she pulled the other girl close, hugging her. “Remember, we can ask Neo.”

Taylor blinked back long-unshed tears, hugging her back. “I don’t want anyone harmed like those girls were, Amy. The ABB hurt them so bad. Some of them never recovered.” She shuddered in grief. “I get some people do rough play and pretend. Brian used to roll the big-guy act, pretending to take what he wanted. It was fun, but we always knew when to stop. But if it’s more than that in the
Tavern, it wouldn’t work for me. I’d burn the place down before I’d let it stand, if people were being forced against their will. And trust me, I’d eventually find out.” Her fists clenched in Amy’s shirt, and her expression turned grim.

“Management has been informed of the issue,” Neo informed them. “They wish to confirm that all employees of the Brothel have a firm contract as to what they will or will not engage in and that safety protocols are in place. It has been recommended that I offer some select reading for you tonight, so you can read about the rigorous licensing and training that employees in erotic professions experience on Jewel. It was very informative.”

The insect queen’s chuckle was watery and she stepped back from Amy’s hug. “So efficient. Thank you Neo. I’ll be sure and read that then.” She breathed in through her nose a few times, letting herself settle more. “I guess that makes them Fireflies then.”

Vicky patted her shoulder, gazing at her with concern. “So, spiritually enlightened, wise in the ways of love, and beautiful to watch and play with?”

Taylor’s smile was weak, but it was there. “Yeah.” The blonde kissed her softly, quickly, in comfort.

With a wave, Taylor sent the swarm on its way. The rainbow flickered and dissolved until even the crown in her hair was gone. “I think I’m kind of done with the tour now.”

“Taylor,” Vicky said, then paused, as she wasn’t sure what to say.

The young woman shook her head, feeling things clam up within. “It was bad, bad times. I don’t want to talk or think about it, even though I probably should. I can’t even joke right now, so that means I’m no fun to be around and we were here having a good time.” She offered an apologetic shrug.

“It’s okay,” the blonde said. “I get that. What do you want to do?”

“Would it’d be okay to head on back? I think we’ve seen enough to have the basics down and tell the others.”

“Sure,” Amy said, as she eased her hand into Taylor’s. “Let’s do that.”

“Thanks for the help,” Taylor said to her, recognizing that she’d calmed fairly quickly and there had to have been only one reason.

“You needed it,” Amy shrugged. “I’d do that for any of my friends.” She kept holding Taylor’s hand. It felt surprisingly right.

The walk back was fairly quick as they easily followed the route they’d previously taken backwards. Everything sort of flowed together until they passed the general store. Then despite herself, Taylor paused.

A new display was up. A mannequin was in the window, exhibiting a simple white tee-shirt. On the shirt was an image of a small fluffy creature with large eyes and a little bobbing antenna at the top of its head, holding a sign. The sign was in bold letters, “Clothes have pockets!” Then the sign flipped and changed to a different font, “Taylor likes pockets! Moogles for Taylor!” Then all that faded out, until Taylor’s half naked form, where she was wearing jeans - with arrows pointed at the obvious pockets - was shown, for a good thirty seconds. Then her image faded away as the creature returned to view, and gave a jaunty wave of the sign and the whole thing began again.

Then the shirt disappeared from the mannequin and was replaced with a black tee - also with a
Moogle on it, with a different color antenna bob. The sign this one had, read, “Zippers mean you can close things up,” which faded and came back with, “and open things easily.” That was followed with the sign turning. Another image of Taylor was displayed, this time she was completely dressed, with the crown of butterflies in her hair, waving her hands around in a rant. Then that faded and the sign read, “Moogles love Taylor! And Zippers!” This time the the young women spotted the nearly invisible flash of the Slut Life logo.

Taylor gaped. Amy straight up guffawed.

Vicky shook her head, “Well, I guess if there’s already a couple of t-shirts out, then you’re show’s really official.” She squeezed the brunette’s shoulder. “I have a feeling,” she started, as they watched another tee appear to replace the previous one. Then she stopped, because, for a moment, her breath was taken away. This time it was just Taylor, looking darkly gorgeous, holding fluffy insects in her hands and on her hair, offering the gift to an unseen person; somehow looking incredibly sensual, serious and innocent. The green background made her look like a nature goddess. It was a beautiful image. They all knew when that had to have been. Vicky’s grin expanded and her expression was one of extreme anticipation and obvious plotting. “We should get some! Time for shopping therapy!”

That was why, when they entered the house, all three of them had new shirts on. Vicky was carrying a few bags. Amy had on new shades. Taylor was, despite her ambivalence about a lot of things, feeling a little more centered and not a little bemused at Vicky’s enthusiasm.

As soon as they stepped in, Lisa strode forward and pulled Taylor into a long hug. Then she stepped back, placed her hands on her hips and said to them all, “You better have brought me one.”
Chapter 9

After Lisa pulled on her own Taylor-meme-tee, she sidled up to the brunette again. She wrapped an arm around her friend’s waist, tugging her close and asked, “You hanging in there?”

Of course, she could have read and spoken the Truth. But sometimes a person needed to be asked. It was easier now to do that when her passenger was simply that, rather than a constant shout. Her new ability to manage her power along a particular range had been what had made the last few hours so enjoyable.

Not that Taylor knew all that, yet.

Taylor sidestepped the question Lisa asked, volleying with, “Shouldn’t I be asking that of you? Last time I saw, you were imperiled by Dad swats.” She gave Lisa an amused, but slightly concerned gaze.

The platinum blonde’s grin was a mix of smug and serene. “Mom rescued me before he even got close.” She had no hesitation at all in her intonation, no flex between choosing two names for the same person in context.

“And yet,” Taylor commented, easily, receiving the message and having made a few observations of her own, “You’re still kind of moving tender.”

“Well, that doesn’t mean I didn’t get spanked.” Among other things. But she felt Taylor wasn’t ready to probe deeply quite yet. “Mom basically called me on knowing what I was doing and tempting Dad. Then she made sure I would remember that natural consequences were a thing in this family.” She rubbed her butt for a half second or so and bemusedly smiled as a small flush rushed her face.

“Dad?” Taylor inquired

“Cuddled Mom and me after, while we talked a bit, and then gave the same open-ended invitation that Mom did about calling him Dad.” Lisa nodded. Then she nodded to Vicky and Amy. “He included all of us in that. Danny’s remarkably laid back in comparison to what I remember about him.”

“Super!” Vicky said. Amy just smiled and took off her sunglasses

“It might help that he’s not under pressure from a job he was getting hammered by,” Taylor commented. “Or me going out and playing Brockton’s little Villain Games.”

“Or Mom being back and able to do new and very fancy things with her tongue, which he really, really likes.” Lisa supplied.

She cackled at Taylor’s blush. But the brunette gamely kept on, “Speaking of, where are they?”

“They’re having some quality time, you know, doing things like talking, catching up, testing out their new bed. It’s amazing by the way. I would have thought about stealing it, but we all agreed mine was really awesome too.” Taylor stalled, hard. Lisa, however, did not wait for her to reboot, instead pushing/leading Taylor through the foyer. “But, in the meantime, Dad said we were doing Bar-b-que at three, out by the pool, no matter what. So I thought, that gives us a little over three hours to do what we want.” She offered them all a pout. “I would say, let’s go shopping, but then, you all went without me.”
“We waited at breakfast and you didn’t come back,” Amy said, as she looped an arm over Lisa’s shoulder.

Lisa’s freckles went well with the rose color that she flushed. “Well, I guess I was otherwise occupied.”

Vicky leered, “So it seems. But, don’t worry sweetie, we’ll have loads of other times, opportunities, and places. I fully intend to keep the shopping beast fed. Plus, I want to see what is out there, on Jewel and in Sunnyhill. By the way, where are we going?”

“I thought, given that you skipped the library at the Plaza...,”

She was interrupted by Amy, “Wait, so, you saw us?”

“When Dad got pinged by his AI for a schedule change, we turned on the live feed, then split the screen to get caught up with the quick recap. I gotta tell you, they’ve got the show well programmed. It was super easy to see where you’d been and what you’d been up to. I kind of loved it, to be honest. Also, Amy, the things I want to try with you now. But that’s not important,” she waved it off, “What I realized as I watched you guys was that we still had the house to explore. Thus... when Mom and Dad were ready for some alone time, I did a quick survey so I’d have something to share with you. Oh, and Taylor?”

“Yeah,” Taylor said, having finally blinked her way back into the present. “If you’re really curious about what went down, you can always turn on your parent’s feed and run the recap. I’m pretty sure they won’t mind. At all. I sure don’t.” Lisa said, “You know I’ve always been a bit of a show-off. You can be really sure, they’re going to be checking up on you, fairly often.”

And Taylor was gone again. The blonde started steering once more.

“And Taylor was gone again. The blonde started steering once more.

“Anyhow, as I was saying, I realized it would be good introduce you three to the in-house library. It’s not got a lot of books in it yet, but you should see it anyhow.” Lisa leered right back. “And yes, Vicky, I think it’ll be perfectly fine to build an erotic collection - probably mandatory.”

“Things to look forward to,” Amy offered with some amusement. “No longer must you carry on your risque habit in private. Now you can inflict, I mean, share it with others.”

Vicky grinned unrepentantly.

The butler arrived, as they were about to turn in the opposite direction of the dining room, “Ms. Victoria, I can put those way for you, if you would like.”

Everyone paused. “Oh. Great! Thanks, Nick!” the blonde chirped as she handed over the bags to Nathan. He didn’t even blink at the name change.

“My pleasure. Would any of you need anything at this time?”

“We’re good,” Lisa said.

As he left, Taylor began shaking off the mental pause. It was just in time too, as they turned right - and passed through an open double-door into a vast room.

It was gorgeous, an open space, with shelves filling the whole back wall and half the sides and a good part of the middle. The sad thing was, there were only a few books were canted on a couple of the shelves. But what it lacked in numbers, the library made up for in style. One wall had tall, full windows, allowing natural light in. Plants dotted the window sills. Dark wooden tables with
matching chairs and soft seating - both chairs and couches - were distributed around, with access to directed light as needed. There was room enough for more shelving, should they ever need it. Or, for dancing, if they were willing to move the furniture. Vicky half hopped, half flew to an overstuffed couch and settled into it with a bounce. Absent from the room was any sort of monitor. It was a space meant for reading, study, and contemplation. “You were right, Lisa. This is really nice.”

Amy drifted to the books, letting her finger trail the spines. “Seem like normal books to me. You know this is awfully traditional for a future-tech world, don’t you think?”

“Where’d Neo get to?” Queried Vicky. It wasn’t as much of a non-sequitur as one might think.

The holographic AI reappeared. Again its features had changed, taking a sharper feminine mask, but with fox ears. “I’ve been here, but I’m currently integrating several points of research with Sophia, Alec, River, and Ben. As for the books, traditional methods are never completely eradicated, and the management felt that a few familiar items would help integration.”

“Fair enough, but now I have another question. I have an idea who Sophia is, but who are the other three?” Vicky asked.

“Alec is the technology and security expert. River and Ben are Annette and Danny’s AIs respectively. Also, so you’re informed, Elliot is currently overseeing some maintenance, but he is available to drive if any of you wish to go to town.”

“Oh.” Vicky floated into a recline. “Now things make sense. Thanks, Neo.”

“Was there anything else?”

“Nope. All good now.”

With that, the AI disappeared, leaving the library in momentary stillness. Taylor, in mock seriousness, said, “Neo’s my AI you know.” Like Amy, she was examining the books.

Vicky tossed a saucy grin. “I know. She’s a real nice gal.”

“I sort of expected more smut,” Amy said, as she read the titles. “But mostly, this is sci-fi and a couple of romances.”

“I know, right?” Taylor said. “But, at least it’s something. Lisa’s right, We’re definitely adding to the collection.” Her fingers rubbed along the spine of one of the books, enjoying the texture.

“I love that phrase,” Lisa said, as she scotched up on Vicky and laid over her. “Lisa’s right. Gives me warm fuzzies.”

“Any other cool rooms in the house?” Vicky asked, pillowing an arm under her head. but she raised her free hand in caution. “I don’t actually want to go anywhere, I’m just asking.”

“There’s a full-on science lab downstairs, an indoor pool, a den with a bar and a massive wall-screen with an entertainment center, a couple of free bedrooms, in case we find us some new roommates, a couple of empty rooms, so we can do stuff with ‘em. I was thinking we could make one a craft/art room.”

“That would be fun. Be a nice place for Crystal to play, when she visits us too. I think you’ll like her.” Taylor said as she wandered over to a seat facing the couch. She had a book in her hand. “Anyone ever heard of David Weber?”
A lot of Nopes filled the air.

“Well, I guess we’ll find out if this is any good or not.” Taylor waggled the book in her hand and settled in.

“What’s it called?” Amy asked, curious.

“March Upcountry. One of those lost prince in space stories. Thought it could be fun.” Taylor replied, offhandedly.

“Are you really going to sit there and just read?” Vicky asked. This apparently was now how she expected things to go. But what she expected them to do in a library, except read, Taylor wasn’t sure.

“We have how many hours?” Taylor queried, pointedly.

“Three-ish.” Lisa confirmed. She seemed to be quite comfortable where she was, nuzzling in a little. Vicky didn’t mind that at all.

Taylor waggled the book thoughtfully and claimed, “I’ll be done in an hour and a half at most. Way less than that, if it’s good.”

“Huh. You know, I would have guessed you’d be making some excuse to disappear and maybe head to your room to peek a bit.” Lisa said, finally; surrendering the game a little. The quiet of turning her powers low had been nice, but she could see she’d made a misstep somewhere.

Taylor set her book down in her lap and said, “Okay. Let me put it this way. I get that I have a thing now for my parents. It wasn’t there before, now it hardcore is and I’m not sure what to do with how it makes me feel. And that’s okay. I really am, weirdly…” she paused and shook her head ruefully.

“Alright. It’s all headspace right now anyhow; as in, yes, my mind keeps going places and likely will continue to, given the stuff that happened this morning. I’ll get used to it.”

She shrugged and then said frankly, “So yes, I’m curious. Very. But, the option to have my parents with me wasn’t listed as a punishment.” She remembered that part clearly, easily. And it just firmed up her decision. “I’m not gonna set things up so it becomes that way. I’m not going to do that to myself. I’m not going to do that to them. I want to be able to look my parents in the eyes when I see them next. And I don’t mean that in the embarrassed by the sex way. I learned this morning that I apparently can, and am absolutely able to look at either my Mom or Dad or both when in the thrall of sexy-times-ground-take-me-now.” Her chuckle was brief and catchy, but things settled down soon enough.

Then she moved the book to the armrest, scooted forward in her chair and raised her hands. She moved them in a measuring motion as if considering what to say next. Finally, she explained, “So, I’m not looking at their part of the show right now, because this is their time. I mean, Mom was gone a long time. Dad needs her. She needs him…” She waved her hands helplessly and gave Lisa a pointed look because she knew the other girl knew what she meant. Had to know now. The blonde nodded back at her.

Taylor pointed at herself. “I need them too, but differently. They’re sharing their reunion with the universe, sure. I actually get how that’s really a cool thing. Beautiful even. If it were a movie about a couple of strangers, I’d be watching with kleenex in my hands and tears in my eyes and maybe a vibrator to the side for after.” Lisa cracked a laugh but waved her hand so Taylor would keep on. “But they’re my parents. So I’m waiting.” She smiled wistfully. “Besides, they know me. They know me well enough that they’d know this would be my first reaction. I’ll ask them later, and if
they say okay, then I’ll watch. Maybe.” She paused and then added, carefully, “Probably.” She paused a little and Lisa’s expectancy won. Because she did know the platinum blonde well enough to guess what would happen if she didn’t own the whole thing. “Definitely.”

She exhaled gustily and let her hands rest in her lap a little. She noticed that Amy had stopped really looking at the books and that Vicky’s attention was just as fully on her now. They were listening, that was all. No judgment was on their faces. Taylor said, “That’s the right way to approach things for me to stay happy because this way they know I have respect for them. Maybe it’s a little silly, but I’ve never peeked before. At least not after that one time when I was learning how to knock before entering.” She paused in memory. It wasn’t like she’d actually seen much. She’d just thought her parents were playing. Which they were, grown-up style. Ah, the advantages of a changed perspective. But still.

She continued, “I know I can watch right now and they’d likely be fine with it. They’re grown-ups, have been awhile. But this way, they’ll know I love them enough to ask first, that I remember what they taught me, and that would make a difference, I think, in how we are together later.” She blushed abruptly. “I mean… well…”

Then she shrugged unable to keep going on in that direction. She might be an adult, but some things were a bit raw for her to say or even think much about - even if she was trying to brave it up by actually talking about things.

She really was going to have to either thank or throttle Kara. She hadn’t decided which.

“And you gotta know it’s different from the other side. I’m okay that they can watch me or check up on me at any time. They’ve been doing that since I was little. If it’s a little kinkier now, so be it. They won’t hassle me about it, and if it comes up, it’ll be because we’re grown up enough to tease and that just means I’ll tease right back. But these are the same people, the same parents, that let me have my own room and knocked on the door once I hit a certain age. It’s that kind of thing. Respect.”

The blonde smiled, nodding; her eyes wise and for once, her smile wasn’t smug. It was just kind. “I know. Just like I know you haven’t been playing the game at all. That you’re not pulling a routine or acting. That somehow, despite your past, you’re okay with an audience following you. It’s not programming.” She reassured her friend. She hadn’t even bothered sitting up, though she did use an elbow to prop her head up so she could look at Taylor properly. Vicky could handle it. “On Earth Bet, you were outed. You had to live with people knowing who you were, what you were; 24-7. Because once they had you, they watched you. Surveillance. But then, you did the same to them.”

Taylor nodded. “If they were going to put cameras on me, I put bugs on them. Seemed equitable and, well I learned a few things along the way. Like, I can’t live my life thinking I’m always on. I didn’t do that on Earth Bet. I’m not going to do that here. Eventually, a person has to live life, whether god or anyone is looking. My take is this: if an audience, if Slut Life, wants to see my life, they’re going to see it as is. Boring parts, bad habit parts, good and exciting parts, whatever and all. I’m not doing performance art in a museum. Life is live and I’m gonna live it since I have a second chance at it.”

She pressed her fingertips to her forehead for a moment and just breathed. Then she continued. “I am wondering if I have a thing for exhibition now. Or if maybe I always did. I did want to be a hero since I was little, after all. So there’s that. And it might even explain why I’m here.”

“Maybe a little.” Lisa agreed. “Still, it’s super apparent that someone in Slut Life management, or higher, liked you specifically enough to pretty much rescue all of us. It’s a puzzle, but…”

“Not one we want to probe too much, in case it’s too much of a good thing?” Taylor provided.
“Giving Lisa a teasing look.

Lisa nodded. “Yep. But so far, it’s all holding.” She rubbed Vicky’s flank with her free hand like she was petting a cat. The floating girl even purred a little. “Want me to tell you more?”

Taylor smiled despite herself. “Sure. Give it to me.”

“You were pissed at me holding out, but you’re smart enough to know that I was mostly teasing. So, for your information, all they did - after Annette gave me a soft paddling - was hold me and kiss me a few times and then we talked - about all sorts of things. Oddly enough, it was mostly about me and how I was doing. Not so much you,” Lisa looked at Taylor. “Not that you are that worried about that, either. You may not have talked to your Dad much, but it wasn’t because you couldn’t trust him. It was that you didn’t want to endanger him. Which… yeah. I get that.” Lisa’s smile brightened. “And yes, I was telling the truth about the beds, but I skewed it. We did have fun bouncing on the beds. It was maybe a little childish, but it was also a hoot. If you’d been here, I’m pretty sure we would have tried them all and things might have started involving pillows. I will say, Mom and Dad’s bed really is like a bit of heaven though. They offered to let me stay and canoodle, but, like you said… They needed each other. And they’ll have time later, for us I mean; all of us.” She rotated her attention around, catching their gazes individually, before focusing again on Taylor. “I think Danny and Annette may qualify as unique and really cool people. Also, good parents. Even if we’re all going to get shagged to the ground by one and/or both of them at some point or another.”

“Hopefully thoroughly and often,” quipped Amy. She waved her hand around. “I want all of that. All of it.”

Vicky laughed enough that her whole body moved, shaking Lisa up and down a bit. “You know, if someone told me a year and a half ago this is where I’d end up...no way. No way. Mom - Brandish Mom - would be in a screaming fit that might include fireworks. But maybe Dad - Mark Dad - would wake up again. A girl can wish, right. Also, I blame you, Amy.”

“Me?” Amy said, as she took a place behind Taylor’s chair and leaned on her forearms. She placed her chin on Taylor’s head, and let it rest there; as if the relaxation she felt around Taylor was common. “It can’t be me. I was blaming you for this.”

“You brought the papers home,” Vicky semi-accused.

Amy merely cocked a brow. “You made the phone call.”

“Not quite done yet, girls,” Lisa interrupted the teasing. “There’s a little more to say.”

“Oh?” Taylor offered.

Lisa held up her hand. “Vicky, would you mind shutting the library doors? Wouldn’t want just anyone walking in.” She smirked as she was settled on the couch, sitting. She crossed her legs, knowing that Taylor caught the flash of panties and understood the reference, and let her hands settle in her lap. She waited until the doors were closed then said, “You’re a lot of fun, Taylor. You’re smart enough to get things. I like that. I’m attracted to intelligent people.” She nodded at both Vicky, who leaned against the doors and crossed her arms with a smirk, and Amy, who just smiled lazily, like a cat.

“I’m also attracted to people who have my best interest in mind. You’ve got a protective streak a mile wide. Even though you’re really anxious right now because you don’t have us all tagged with your bugs, you’d already worked around that, by having Neo tag us instead somehow. That’s why she’s as instantly available to us as she is to you. You’re not spying, just ensuring. Just like we would be or
will be, when or if we have our own AIs. Mutual protection. That’s what family does. And then, there’s this…

“You’re so turned on right now that it’s turning me and my sweethearts on. You’ve got a bloom of pheromone aura rolling around you that makes me want to run my tongue all over you all the time. The only reason I haven’t is that like you, all of us have had to learn self-control a long time ago. That’s the way it is or was for a lot of paras. You get superpowers, and you have to learn to moderate. I’m not sure that the Slut Life people planned on that. They’re more used to people just diving in. I’d offer an analysis, but they’d have to pay me for that opinion.” Lisa shrugged. “Of course, the ability to hold off on instant gratification might just be something that those of us from Earth Bet get from being from a hell-planet. Your Mom and Dad did remarkably well earlier. I pushed, and they still let me get out of the room. As you said, they gave me respect and room to decide. This is one of the many reasons I’m starting to feel a solid zing about them.”

“That said,” The gleam in Lisa’s eyes flickered as Amy began caressing the skin around Taylor’s collar; a soft stroking touch. “You’ve been on a boiling simmer for the last several hours and you’re close to popping. You’ve been trying to think of ways to go catch a few moments to yourself, but you’ve been having a good time and haven’t wanted to be rude, either. You forgot one thing, however. You don’t have to handle everything on your own, all the time.”

Taylor’s eyes glimmered, a hint of tears at the side, but she wasn’t crying. Nope.

Amy tapped her shoulder, causing Taylor to look up. Then the freckled woman leaned in and kissed her, lips parted softly, the tip of her tongue gently invading. “Being with you is part of why we’re here.” Amy’s hands slid slowly down Taylor’s front the longer they kissed, briefly covering her breasts long enough to squeeze gently, before continuing down. “Let me do it this time?”

“Do what?” Taylor murmured. Then she felt her shirt being dragged up and up, and the kiss stopped. But the shirt was off again. “I see how it is. You just like seeing me topless,” Taylor accused.

“Mmhmm,” Amy smiled into the kiss as it deepened.

“Not quite done yet,” Vicky said; startling the brunette, because she hadn’t realized the other young woman had moved. Then, just as carefully as when she’d put it on, she took Taylor’s bra off. Amy stopped kissing Taylor for a brief moment, leaning in to kiss her sister just as seriously and sweetly. Taylor felt a mild shudder of pleasure, just from watching them. She remembered how close they were, but they hadn't been like this. It reminded her of a movie. “I’m very into sisters,” she quoted.

Vicky and Amy started giggling into the kiss. The blonde’s head shook slowly as she slapped Taylor’s shoulder; fortunately not too hard. Then Amy pulled back enough to say, “I wonder if they have a remake of the movie here too.”

Everyone stalled for a second, imagining the results of that.

Just to swerve things, Taylor said, “You know, the aunts did say they had skyclad meetings and were pretty fly for people on the older side of things. Covens, you know, are supposed to be real close - um - sisterhoods. Real close.”

Again there was that moment of silence and no movement. “No.” Vicky said, a little disbelievingly.

Taylor nodded. “I’m pretty sure, yeah.”

“Neo!” Snapped out Amy.
The AI appeared. “Yes, Amy?”

“Do they have Practical Magic on the streaming services.”

A few seconds ticked by. “I’ve identified at least six individual sources and based on your discussion, four of the movies are unique.”

“Could you set them up to be watched later, maybe with an option for side by side comparison.”

“I’ll schedule them in.”

“Thanks,” Amy said, pleased. “Oh, and include Beetlejuice and Uhm…”

“The Craft?” Vicky suggested.

“Not really into watching mean girls be mean.” Taylor said, firmly.

Lisa offered, “Well, then, how about The Witches of Eastwick.”

Variations of “sure, works for me and sounds great” were shared.

“Movie selections are confirmed. If you decide to alter parameters, please let me know at the time of viewing. Anything else?”

“Nope. Thanks, Neo. You doing alright?” Taylor asked.

Neo seemed taken aback by the question, but her holograph brightened considerably. “I’m doing very well Taylor. Thank you.” Then she turned that smile on everyone and said, cheerfully. “Have fun. Remember to stay hydrated and put the books back.” Then she flickered off again.

A beat and then everyone was back at giggling. Taylor stood up, sliding away from Amy for a moment. “I’m not just sitting back while you play with me. I got agency and I’m going to use it.” She flexed her fingers, “I want to participate.” Then she reached and tugged at Vicky’s shirt.

Lisa, who by that time had joined them, had brought Amy around the chair. “Want to see something neat?” Lisa asked.

Taylor leered at her, as she dropped Victoria’s shirt to the floor and reached for Lisa’s. “Always.”

The platinum blonde didn’t run or turn away. She lifted her arms, as Taylor tugged, and said, “Library: Settings: Set Up: Library Number Three.”
Chapter 10

The lights and furniture in the library flickered and disappeared. For a moment, the only illumination in the library was from the windows. Then, in quick succession, new furniture appeared; soft seats arranged around a massive circular cushion with thick, fluffy pillows - which was set about two feet off the ground. A headboard, filled with shelves, faced towards the doors. The bedding was elegant, reds, golds and whites. The lighting also returned, but softer. Amy slid her hand down the cover, smiling, before grabbing Lisa away from Taylor and pushing her towards the bed.

Vicky’s grin was just as dazzling, as she scooped Taylor in her arms and floated very quickly to the middle. She slowed and dropped down enough to lay the brunette on the surface of the bed, the only wrinkles on it coming from the pressure. Then, Vicky grabbed her own bra and yanked it over her head and chucked it off uncaring about where it landed.

Taylor, meanwhile, sat up, grabbing the edges of Vicky’s jeans. Moving quickly, she had them unsnapped and unzipped and dragged down to her knees in short order. Vicky floated just high enough Taylor could get them all the way down and off; before settling down to her knees on the soft surface. The brunette left the panties on for the moment because she was suddenly focused on those who were doing the same for her. She lifted up enough that the jeans slid off fairly easy under Amy and Lisa’s guidance. Then, as one, they all turned on Amy, who yelped a little as she was helped out of not only her jeans, but her panties too.

That led to a small tickle skirmish, wherein they tried to hurry each other into taking off the rest of anything that remained on their bodies; including socks and shoes. Soon, they were all in a naked, giggly heap in the bed.

Amy half-laid on Taylor, one leg between hers, arm flung over her waist and head cradled next to her left breast. She pet Taylor in long slow strokes, from just under her breast to the join of her legs at her hip. Vicky sat on her heels between Taylor’s legs. One hand on Amy’s butt, the other on Lisa’s leg. The platinum blonde with the freckles had taken a position on the other side of Taylor. Like Vicky, she was more upright, leaning over Taylor to intimately touch and kiss the statuesque blonde.

Taylor’s gaze was riveted on where Lisa was touching the other blonde. Vicky’s hips were canted and she’d shifted so delicate fingers could gently probe. A shine from slickness dotted the pristine patch of blonde, just above pillowy lips. Taylor felt the heat in her loins fire up and strike a path across her body from belly and nipples to the tips of her ears.

“Oh, you like looking,” Amy’s voice was soft, amazed and sultry. “You just lit up like Christmas.” Taylor hissed when Amy’s hand stroked down from breast to belly. Then she lifted her hips as fingertips grazed between her legs. The biokinetic pursed her lips and blew a breath along Taylor’s shoulder to her neck, before moving closer to press her tongue at the join of her ear and neck. She then dribbled kisses from there to Taylor’s lips again, while moving so she could sculpt her hands along the other brunette’s body.

Taylor could feel Amy’s wetness along the top of her thigh and gasped when the other woman deliberately pressed down. Her attention dropped from what Lisa was doing to Vicky and she stretched up, pressing fully against her new lover, grabbing and shifting her a bit, so her lips and tongue and teeth could bliss their way along all that wonderful skin. She wasn’t really trying to count those freckles with her tongue, but it might have seemed as if she were trying to scan for different tastes. Her tongue stretched, and she hardly noticed it doing so, as it was a completely natural motion
to her; but it elongated and slithered down until she was plucking at Amy’s sensitive nipples - one at a time, but in full twisting and lapping captures. Her fingernails raked along the biokinetics sensitive skin, adding the young woman’s sexual response calls to her sisters’ more muted sounds.

Heat and sparks traveled throughout Taylor’s body as she angled one of her hands down until her own fingertips were dipping into the wet fire that she found. She found Amy’s sensitive ruby and played with it, circling and searching for the more sensitive hotspots which made the other woman twitch. The more she played, the more turned on Taylor got and not just because Amy was making an equal return on finding the sweet spots.

She was holding her own, until pairs of lips found her nipples. Taylor glanced down to see the crowns of differently shaded blonde hair moving over her chest. And it was a glorious feeling as Lisa and Vicky sucked and licked. A remembered tenderness echoed with each motion, and she thought she could feel a pull from her breast growing. Which led to her becoming wetter and more receptive; anxious to be filled.

Of course, she had to reciprocate. She just wasn’t sure how to, given that she was surrounded.

That’s when Taylor realized she was going to have to communicate with words; when she wanted her mouth to be busy with other things. She gave in to the inevitable. “Amy, I want to taste you. Please come up here.” She ignored Lisa’s chuckling against her breast, though she couldn’t ignore the way the brilliant woman’s touch replaced Amy’s.

Everyone shifted. Amy turned, moved up and then around, while Vicky “sat” on Taylor’s middle; only enough for her to feel the slide of wetness on her belly. Taylor leaned back more until she was fully reclined and Amy’s position over her face was definite.

She had an excellent view of deep pinks that were flushed with desire and a pristine rosebud that smelled purely of … rosehips. Taylor not only thought Amy looked delicious, she now knew she was going to taste that way. Her tongue snaked out, strobing along from crease to crevice, probing the silky flesh above her with a hungry curiosity as she tasted her new lover. The tang of the flowers that was hinted was there, as was the sweet salt that was Amy’s original flavor. She tasted like sunshine and summertime tea.

Taylor’s desire increased, in elevating increments. She lapped Amy up. The tip of her tongue tapped and swirled over Amy’s sensitive bud, inducing cries of pleasure. Taylor gripped the biokinetic’s hips, hyper-aware of how Vicky had started slow bucking along her belly. She could feel the blonde’s clitoris slide in that low river forming because of how wet she was. Taylor’s skin rose in pleasure, and the heat at her center expanded again and again in response, while her own red jewel hammered with excitement, causing it to extend and thicken a little more in the heated space of her desire.

Nor was the insect queen unaware that Lisa had, without a long search, found Taylor’s quickened pearl; and that she knew what to do with it. All this, while the pericog had quit teasing her breast and was now full on suckling, pulling enough that Taylor could feel the pressure building to respond; on both sides of her breasts; one of which was feeling distinctly neglected but the other was very near to flowing.

Need shivered through her. Amy’s moist desire hadn’t slacked, but Taylor’s tongue had bathed most of the easy to access juices away and she craved more. She rolled the freckled woman’s jewel again, before dragging the tip of her tongue away when she felt Vicky’s fingertips begin to play there. Amy was a ball of urgent sound and rocking body. Somehow Taylor was keeping up and loving every second of it.
She slicked her tongue back, sliding it around an opening, the opening, that had been slowly widening receptively with each pass. She slid the tip of her tongue against it and pressed without entering, savoring the moment. Inside, she flexed, as Amy lifted for a half second, then bore down. Despite intending to tease more, Taylor’s prehensile tongue plunged in and she followed through, searching, undulating and thrusting; knowing what she was looking for - and it wasn’t just the endpoint. She found the soft spot, the collection of sensitive nerve bundles that was a part of the whole clitoris, just on the inside. She’d loved that little detail when she’d found out about it, that the clitoris was not just a single point, that women were always meant to have full pleasure - all the way through.

So she played with the whole, knowing that Vicky was taking care of what was going on outside, while she could handle Amy’s inner potential.

And she hummed with the pleasure of it, only intending a hum, but she felt the vibrations roll through her tongue; learned a new thing about herself. Oh, that could be fun.

Amy didn’t just buck; she ground down and clenched. Taylor dug in, thrusting with every grind and push-back. Humming blissfully with every motion.

“Oh fuck! Oh, fuck!” Amy’s voice scaled up until she was lit in ecstasy. Taylor wasn’t tracking everything, but she heard the shout of pleasure get muffled, and felt the massive, shaking hold as she speared Amy. And she didn’t stop. She was committed to dragging out as many of those tremors and shakes as could be got; especially, as the change in Amy’s flavor was amazing. She drank her up and, if it had not been for her own tongue blocking the passage, she would have guzzled. But this was good, this was glorious.

This was…

She was startled when her nipple puckered and tightened harder than before, under Lisa’s ministrations. Then she felt the bright tingle that had become very familiar that morning. Then Lisa’s fingertips moved lower, while her thumb remained pressing and rubbing Taylor’s clit. Taylor’s legs had been only partly akimbo, as she had been unable to decide whether to open fully or to hold Lisa in one place, but she found herself opening, urgently. The tingle sharpened more, as the suckle changed briefly to pressurized licking, before returning to that strong pull. Then Lisa pressed in, with her middle two fingers.

Taylor roared against Amy’s center, as she gasped and trembled, thoroughly losing her way in the brightness. Her breasts began to spill and spurt and Lisa drank, while she continued to plunge and play, rapidly taking Taylor to the next height.

Another climax crackled hard through Taylor and Amy shuddered above her again and again. An unsteady Taylor climbed out of her sensual miasma and back to a focused attention. She withdrew her tongue, slowly, as each movement seemed to cause the woman above her to shake and shudder in bursts of pleasure. Then, while she could, she cleaned Amy, stem to stern - trying to catch every drop-, before letting her slide away onto the bed, to rest and catch her breath.

She would have rolled to pull her fellow brunette into a cuddle, but the blondes on top of her stopped her. Vicky stared down at Taylor, blue eyes a storm of want. Her hands gripped Taylor’s shoulders. Tattletale had pulled back and was licking her lips and fingers in satisfaction. Taylor was leaking again, top and bottom.

Amy, very relaxed, would have rolled, but she was in limp-noodle mode. So she put her hand on Taylor’s neck, softly stroking her with knuckles. She didn’t want to miss the fireworks. Her smile wouldn’t quit.
Vicky slid down Taylor’s front until she was positioned between the brunette’s legs. The brute leaned down first, kissing Taylor firmly, openly. Then she pressed, grinding her hips - though not too hard. Their clits, those tender, thrusting love-buttons, stroked and brushed against each other.

The brunette looked down, seeing between the crevice of those gorgeous breasts, past that perfect belly, to the point where Vicky’s jewel was visible. Puffy lips surrounded the clitoris which had thickened and grown enough to reveal that it was shaped like a petaled bud; a pearl hidden by flower-shaped of flesh. She could feel the stiffness of it, but the softness of the way it looked took her breath away. Also, want.

Want. Want. Want.

“Beautiful,” she muttered, as, without a conscious decision, her tongue - that surprisingly long and agile- muscle roved along the blonde’s body, pausing to pluck and circle thickened pink points before stroking down further.

Vicky’s body was long, because she was tall - if not as tall as Taylor -, but pressed this way, the brunette’s tongue could reach. “What are you doing, naughty girl,” the blonde asked, somehow not bothered by the fact Taylor’s tongue was just incredibly mobile and long.

“I’d think that would be obvious,” quipped Lisa, who in that time, had been tempted by Amelia to the other side. Taylor saw her crouching over the prone biokinetic, leaning for a lingering kiss. Amy’s free hand roamed and slid. Then Taylor’s attention was distracted by strong hands kneading her soft flesh.

Milk spurt out of her breast and gushing pleasure rolled in thunderous waves. She didn’t have the words, but her long moaning “Oh,” filled the room, as she clenched. She felt Vicky’s lips cover the nipple, and she laughed somewhat giddily. “Gonna spoil dinner.”

The blonde drew Taylor’s milk out, and the brunette’s hands gripped the other woman’s back - not quite scratching in, but only because her nails were short.

“What was that about self-control?” Taylor mock-complained, not quite gritting her teeth against the next moan of pleasure that ripped through her. “Oh God, Vicky, that feels so good.”

The blonde slowed her drinking, popped free of the breast and licked her lips. Then with a slow grind against Taylor, she said, “Which part?”

Taylor grunted and her hands roved down to grip Vicky’s hips, so they could connect some more. “Both. Both parts are good.” She shook with each connection. “But I wanted to taste you and then you avoided my masterful plan. That’s what this naughty girl was doing. I don’t know what that one was attempting.” She tilted her head towards Lisa, who was most definitely being invaded by Amy.

“If you can hold a conversation, you have self-control,” Lisa called out, teasingly. “The theory stands.” Then the platinum blonde’s eyes rolled back in her head and she let out a guttural near-howl of pleasure. Amy had obviously found her spot.

“The only problem with your plan Taylor,” Vicky replied, “Is that I couldn’t do this.” She pushed against Taylor, rolling her hips so they were wetly sliding against each other. “Or this.” She firmly latched onto Taylor’s breast with her lips and pulled, humming happily while she drank up the reward of her efforts. Then she let go, giving the brunette a cheerful grin. “Tasty and nutritious. Also,” she patted the breast affectionately, “Not going to spoil dinner.”

Taylor laughed and she bumped back, with a glint in her eyes. “Are you saying you don’t want to
feel my tongue sliding in and out of you, filling you up, making you…”

Vicky’s mouth covered hers. She could taste the sweetness of her milk, but also the spiciness that was the blonde. Cinnamon. She tasted and smelled of cinnamon. Finally putting a name to the flavor, Taylor smiled into the kiss as they rose up, and then flipped down until it was herself on top. She pulled back long enough to snag a kiss from both Amy and Lisa, but not so long as to cause a complaint.

She’d kept moving, kept touching her Victoria, attempting to make her respond in the best possible ways. Taylor slid down, pausing to pay tribute to those pillowy masses that had originally caught her attention. She spent time there, while her fingers went to play at the temple below, snaking through the garden, playing with the sensitive guardian, tempting at heaven’s gate.

“You know, those thighs aren’t just decoration. She’s crushed rocks for real,” Lisa warned, reminding Taylor she’d had a goal and that maybe Vicky would like to get past the tease. The platinum blonde was cuddled with Amy and both had the pleased glaze of cats enthralled by sunshine and catnip.

“She should taste like sage, but it’s all cinnamon,” Taylor commented, as she’d loosed Vicky’s breasts and slithered her tongue along her healthy belly and down through trimmed curls, which diamond shape reminded her of fireballs now. “Clever,” Taylor commented, as she pet it with her hand a little and pulled it -not exactly tight, but so there was an alternative pressure to go with what she was about to try.

She vibrated her tongue, let it start at the tip, with which she used to invade the small flower guarding the top. The bud was already flush and pulsing, but she sang it higher, humming as she swirled and rolled. The tip slithered down, but she kept a hold of that precious flesh, as she explored the silky folds, moved past them and found the entry.

Vicky had been thoroughly wet, and that hadn’t changed, but she was making noises of urgency and pushing up against Taylor’s tongue. “In! Please. Do it!”

Taylor probed a little more, enjoying the brief moment of control, but she wasn’t a meany. Also, it turned out that cinnamon tasted just as awesome as rosehip, only tinglier. She pushed in, closing her eyes in mental jubilation as the soft warmth and taste enveloped a good portion of her tongue. Between being able to play with Vicky’s engorged, pink clit and deeply licking her sensitized opening, Taylor was digging this prehensile length of muscle, oh so much.

Vicky’s hips were lifted and pressed to Taylor’s face, so the brunette offered support - until Lisa or Amy or both thoughtfully shoved pillows under that perfect butt. Then she really started to focus. She groaned and hummed as she pushed in and in and started the real fun as she pulled back and pushed in again.

Taylor rarely used the word fuck and when she did, it was normally as a curse. Here, it was a blessing, a solemn rite, and spell. Taylor’s hands began to stray again as she plunged in and out, noodling her tongue through the heated silkiness to find the places that made Vicky sing out. She fucked the blonde until the blue-eyed woman’s head was rolled back in a near-permanent silent scream of ecstasy as her hands and feet destroyed the bedding she clutched.

Then, feeling a hand slide along her back in soothing motions and sensing that it was time, Taylor pulled back. Slowly, slowly bringing her beautiful, amazing brute down. Victoria’s chest heaved as if she’d been running a marathon and moved and twitched as if she experienced random mini-shocks of immense pleasure.
Taylor lapped up the juices, cleaning Vicky’s thighs and sundries, before she rolled into a kneeling position; finally allowing herself and Vicky some space. She licked her own face, without thinking about it, catching the last of the cinnamon flavor and savoring it. She shivered with her own aftershocks too; her inner parts fluttered in slowly easing releases.

She wasn’t sure when Lisa had come up beside her, but Amy had cuddled up to Vicky and was murmuring in her ear, smiling. Lisa hugged Taylor from the side, gently wiping her face with a wet cloth of some sort. “Better?” She didn’t mean just Taylor’s face.

The brunette took a moment to evaluate, as her breathing caught up. She realized she felt as if layers of stress had been lifted; she was less panicky, less pressured and less angry. Also, she felt sated, as if a keen necessity had been met.

Sated. That was a fantastic word too, not quite up there with the others, but equally nice for different reasons.

“Much,” Taylor said and she returned the hug, more forward than side. She appreciated the way Lisa’s skin felt against hers, but she felt no urgent demand to ravish her either. Unless Lisa wanted to be…

Lisa’s grin expanded. “I’m good. Amy took excellent care of me.” She patted Taylor’s shoulder and kissed her open-mouthed, but not in a way that required anything; it was more in a way of tenderness, affection. “I do want to ride that tongue of yours, at some point.” She glanced at Vicky and smiled sensually. “It does look fun.”

“It tastes fun too,” Taylor quipped. She licked her lips slightly, but not obscenely. She was just still catching bits of missed flavor. “I wasn’t expecting that, but it just kept getting yummier and tastier, the more they came.” She smiled at Lisa, suddenly grateful. “Thanks for playing referee.”

“Well, I wasn’t sure they’d think to tap out. We’re going to have to make safe words and gestures.”

“The backrub worked.” Just thinking about how caught up she’d been caused her to shudder in memory, “As did the uhm…thing you did while I was tasting Amy.” She couldn’t quite figure out the best way to phrase the moment of distraction - suckling seemed a bit embarrassing to her. Making her cum would be less awkward to explain, but the whole sensation… yeah, no words seemed sufficient. She’d just have to trust Lisa’s knowing. “But yeah, I agree. I could sort of tell when they were almost done because there was another flavor shift, but… I could have gone on for awhile. I would have gone...” she admitted. And that, worried her because she had no desire to hurt her friends; her sisters.

Lisa kissed her again, adoring Taylor’s concern. “We’ll figure it out.” Then she helped her get extricated from between Vicky’s legs and reclined before lassitude really started to set in. Lisa snuggled in between Taylor and Vicky on one side, while Amy had Vicky snug on the other. Arms and legs tangled intimately, as lazy kisses and affectionate murmurs were exchanged.

On another day, they might have been invigorated and ready to go, but for this moment, they all cuddled in for a brief nap.

==*==

Lisa stretched out, waking up slowly from a very nice dream. She put Taylor’s hand back on her breast, giving the brunette a warm smile. “No need for shyness now, my friend.”

Taylor hummed, squeezing Lisa very gently. “Maybe not, but… I wanted you to know, that I know
I’m not her, right. I’m not…I don’t expect this, every time.”

Lisa took the brunette’s face in her hands. “You’re you. We know that. I know that. No expectations otherwise. I’ll always remember her. But I’ll always be happy to be with you. It’s a bit quick to say, yes. And you’re not a replacement for what was lost. But the feelings are true. For all of us.”

Taylor blinked, feeling something warm and complete settle in. “I feel the same,” she owned. “More so now, because the Amy and Vicky of my world kind of really hated me; and I really regretted that. I always knew I was missing something.” Her chuckle was sad, “But then, everything was screwed up, so… for me, this is just better than a dream. I keep expecting to wake up.”

“Yeowtch!” A sharp pain scored across her hip, causing her to jump back, off the bed. She looked down at her side, a small point was bright red for a moment, then the color vanished. She then shifted her gaze at an unrepentant Vicky.

The blonde wiggled her fingers in a half wave. “Not a dream,” she quipped. “Just full on sexy.”

“You didn’t have to do that!” Taylor complained.

Vicky arched her brow and floated off the bed, bringing Lisa and Amy with her - until they were all standing in front of Taylor. “Pinches are traditional.” She shrugged. “Besides, you can take it.”

Taylor rubbed her hip and gave Vicky a grumpy look.

“Anyone see my clothes?” Amy asked.

“They got ninja’d away,” Lisa replied nonchalantly. “Probably cleaned and put up by now. But that’s okay, we were going to go swimming anyhow, so that means we would have changed to swimwear.”

“How long till the Bar-b-que?” Taylor asked.

“About an hour.” Lisa provided.

Taylor retrieved her book, now sufficiently awake to think to do so. “Awesome. Time enough to dig in. I can see how far I can get in forty-five minutes, then fifteen for a shower and change. Anyone disagree?”

Vicky said, “Library: Settings: Set Up: Library Number One.” The furniture and light switched around, returning to the original configuration that they’d found. A fresh scent filled the air. “Nifty. That’s my kind of clean up.”

“As in, none you have to do?” Amy teased her sister.

“Darn Tootin’” Vicky admitted. Then, unlike before, she visited the slim supply of books, picked one and took to the same couch she’d laid on previously. “Sci-fi romance here I come.”

“So we’re all reading then?” Amy checked, as she retrieved her book from where it had settled.

“Well, we already did the fun stuff,” quipped Lisa, as she grabbed a book for herself; something nice and lighthearted seemed just the thing: a comedy romance mystery. She’d probably solve the whole thing by the end, but that’s okay. She was used to it.

Taylor chortled. “There is that.” Then she flounced back in the seat she’d been in before, settling in with her legs over the arms of the chair. She lifted her book and began to read; ostentatiously turning
Lisa curled up near her fellow blonde again, this time reclining, more than laying on her. Vicky gave her a tender kiss before turning her attention to the book. Lisa snuggled in a bit more, before doing the same.

Amy, holding her own book, pushed Vicky and Lisa’s legs to the side, and sat on the couch, before bringing the legs across her lap. “The library was a good idea, sweetheart.” She offered as she patted Lisa’s thigh affectionately. Then she too began to obviously and purposefully read.

==**==
Chapter 11

Taylor’s parents were already out and about the pool when the young women arrived.

A grill was set up on the long porch, sort of in the middle of everything, but not so close to the pool that it could get drenched by any rough-housing. Taylor’s dad waved and smiled, a pair of tongs in his hand. He was wearing a black “I Turn Grills On,” apron and some thigh length trunks of a matching color, though he was otherwise bare-chested. Danny’s stance was relaxed, but Taylor’s memories of how he used to look and the present were clashing pleasantly. He was so obviously much happier.

Her mom lounged nearby, wearing a red two-piece that showed off far more than it covered and dangerous red sandal heels that looked sharp enough to destroy a skull if applied that way. Taylor briefly considered whether she’d ever stop thinking of everything as a potential weapon, then shrugged the thought away. Not today, apparently. Plus, it did nothing to detract from the pure sexiness of the visual.

Lisa had said not to put on the sunscreen just yet, so they hadn’t. But she carried two bottles out with them as they exited their new home. She wore a black bikini, very thin and petite, but somehow managing to count as cover. Nothing that was covered actually showed, but it seemed like it should. Amy had her sunglasses on again and was wearing green again; this time in a floral design single piece - with cutouts that easily led thoughts astray. Taylor suspected that it was possible that Amy would never willingly wear white again.

Vicky wore a wide-brimmed sun hat, which had holes in it, and thus hardly qualified as keeping the sun off. Yet, it looked pretty and matched her sky-blue bikini bottom. She had foregone the top, without hardly a thought. This made Taylor convinced that the whole mini-skirt thing on Earth Bet was a giant compromise with her parents. She half imagined that at eighteen, Vicki would have found a way to emulate Narwhal.

Of course, that might just be her imagination. Victoria in a bad mood could very well have gone for dark and dangerous too - in a full coverage suit as a hero; maybe she’d have a top with a long zipper that could be pulled down to the navel.

Taylor was jostled by Lisa’s shoulder, and the shorter woman fox-grinned at her. “Might want to watch where you’re going. Wouldn’t want you to fall in.”

Taylor glanced down. She was only a couple of steps away from plunging into the pool. “Eep!”

It wouldn’t have been the worst thing. Taylor was wearing a bikini too, which implied that swimming could happen, but she was not normally so distracted. Taylor spent a moment thinking about how that had happened when normally she was always aware of her surroundings.

A handful of small beetles flew into the yard, settling around the edge of the pool and other “danger” spots. No one had enough clothes on to hide the tickle of tiny feet, so hair it was. Lisa smiled as Taylor’s breath hitched in relief, but she didn’t say anything. Instead, she carried the flexible bottles of lotion to Annette, their Mom.

Annette read the label on one of the bottles, opened it, smelled it and then did the same to the other one. She smiled in pleasure, capping the first, but lifting the second. “We have a winner. Come on
over, girls. Let’s make sure we’re all covered.”

“Hands out,” she said, and she poured the white, scented liquid into waiting palms.

“You do know that I don’t actually need suntan lotion anymore,” Taylor queried; honestly interested in seeing how her Mom would answer.

The black haired beauty crooked a finger at her daughter, before pouring some lotion into her own palm. “It may not be about protection from the sun anymore, but lotion on skin always feels good and a little layer of something between you and the world never hurts.”

“Some people were posting that suntan lotion causes cancer because of chemicals,” Taylor said, keeping momentum.

“Correlation is not causation. Also, not a thing here. We’re living on a future-tech world, and this was part of your health package,” Amy riposted as she began running her hands along Vicky’s shoulders. “Not to mention, we have nano-repair going on. At the most, we’ll just get softer skin for a while. Plus, we get to rub each other down. You’re seriously going to complain about that?”

Lisa cheerfully said as she began to liberally apply her portion to Vicky’s front while Amy took the back, “Can’t argue that.”

Taylor mentally shrugged as her arguments were made invalid. It seemed surrender was the only course.

Vicky returned Lisa’s favor with enthusiasm, though she had to cope with where the platinum blonde was covered by her suit. Her lips moued in frustration until she decided just to rub the lotion under the tiny bathing suit cloth. Mischief filled her eyes as she warmed her palms just a little more.

“Whoo.Tingly!” Lisa said, then she thrust her bosom up, fully enjoying the loving molestation.

Taylor shook her head at her lovers’ antics, while Annette patted her knee. Habit brought Taylor’s barefoot to balance there. Her mom dipped her fingers into a dollop of lotion and then she began painting it onto her daughter’s toes and the top of her foot; stroking gently and thoroughly.

Taylor had a moment to feel like a five-year-old, right until her mom’s fingers moved up her foot and ankle, where she suddenly realized she might have a bit of an issue. Ankles and the inside arch of the foot apparently could feel very nice indeed when handled gently. A different sort of amused twinkle transformed the older woman’s expression as Taylor seemed to come to a realization that her mother’s touch was not neutral.

Annette slowly stroked her hand up the curve of Taylor’s lower leg, sculpting around the calf and under her knee. She found another sweet spot there and smiled up at Taylor as the younger woman twitched and her toes curled a bit on her thigh. Her fingertips rubbed just so. Taylor bit her lower lip but somehow managed to maintain serious eye-contact, as if the illusion of control would make up for that response. She breathed a soft sigh as Annette moved on, but had a similar reaction when her mom stroked up her inner thigh.

Taylor made a minor noise. Amusement sparkled in the older brunette’s eyes as she moved the caress along and around Taylor’s thigh, making sure the leg was well coated.

Then she had Taylor switch to the other leg and did the same. The fact that Taylor caught her breath every time she neared certain places on her foot, the underside of her knee or the joint of her legs via the inner thigh, seemed to spark that sensual humor and awareness again. But not once did Annette make fun of Taylor for it. She merely smiled knowingly, letting her gaze rove with an intentionality
that did not help Taylor’s coherency.

Technically, Annette’s movements were all perfectly innocent. She’d put sunscreen and lotion on Taylor millions of times (an absolute exaggeration, but still a qualifying example); starting from when the younger woman was a baby, until … well… the present. It was just that, until this moment, Taylor had never responded or felt this way; neither had Annette actually.

She inexorably continued lavishing the cream along the available portions of Taylor’s skin, up her hips and buttocks, flanks an belly, her ribs and around her chest. Unlike Vicky, Annette did not stroke under the cloth. Taylor was surprisingly ambivalent about that, a part of her knowing her mother had already touched her very intimately that morning.

Yet, here she was, getting covered with sunscreen, right to her forehead. Her mother’s gaze was deeply affectionate, as she stroked her hands over Taylor’s ears. “There. All done. That wasn’t so bad now, was it?”

“No Mom,” Taylor admitted, “It wasn’t.”

Annette kissed Taylor, a soft pressure on the lips, lingering just long enough to confuse, but not so long it might have been commented upon. “Good.” Her smile turned impish. “Now it’s my turn.”

Oh. Right. Taylor’s expression went owlish, but she stuck out her hand and got a squeeze of lotion from somewhere.

Taylor knelt and then, starting at her Mother’s sandaled feet, making long strokes up with a deeply focused concentration, she set to cover her mom. For something so publicly acceptable, it was as intimate an action as she’d ever attempted. Yet, not once did she hesitate. Instead, she took a moment to appreciate the velvet smoothness of the skin under her hands, the strength and the beauty of the body under her care.

Her focus was so intense she remained unaware of how Annette’s breath also caught as Taylor’s hands roved sensitive places. At the same time, the older woman’s heart was filled with tenderness, because the younger woman was so concentrated as if missing a spot might be a sin. Taylor covered belly and back, roved arms and hands, slid over her neck and ears and then, very gently and carefully, over Annette’s face; until, far too soon, it was all done.

“Not bad at all,” Annette murmured, her hazel gaze half-lidded. Taylor, despite herself, focused on her mom’s lips and experienced a sudden bravery. So, as if it were to complete a ceremony, she kissed Annette gently; patterned after the same soft buss she had been given.

“All done,” Taylor said.

In the not far distance, she heard giggling and turned to see what was going on. Amy, Lisa, and Vicky accosted Danny, and he’d been lotioned up like they had - with a bit more spatula waving and “I’m cooking here!” He didn’t look all that upset, but when they got handsy he threatened their meat and they’d all backed off, but not before telling him in which kind and condition they’d like to get their protein.

“I should have brought the book with me,” Taylor commented. She’d put distance between herself and her mom, as she considered which lounge to take - or if to take one.

“Nonsense. You may not believe it’s me saying this, but you can read any time. Go play with the others. The lotion is waterproof, so don’t worry about getting your swim on. By the time you are all ready for a break, the food will be done. Nick says we can expect the full picnic.” Then when she
knew Taylor’s attention had returned to her, Annette offered a suggestive look. The only thing missing was a pair of sunglasses to peer over. “On the other hand, I’d be happy to supply alternative entertainment.”

Taylor blushed. “I’m good.”

Annette chuckled as Taylor scampered away, and then picked up her tablet, before settling back on the chaise. “So easy.” She took a second to wink at her husband, who saluted her with a heat-safe mittened hand.

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Taylor had a grand time as she slid down the water slide, water splashing and cascading everywhere. The pool’s slide was longer and curvier than she expected, but the outcome of slamming into the clear blue water remained a blast, even after the third time. She was tempted to go a fourth, but her father had just called out the time on the food.

All of the young women scrambled out of the water, sopping wet and exuberant. Danny and Annette watched and enjoyed the moment, as the younger set slicked back their hair and strode to the table with nary a look for a towel. The sun’s light caused the wet sparkles on their skin to seem like diamonds.

Burgers and hot dogs of assorted types, included veggie, were stacked on large plates, surrounded by condiments, wraps and buns, and the sundry sides that were American Traditional - potato salad, beans, assorted chips and dips, fruits, carrots and celery, cheeses, and fizzy drinks. Everything was recognizable, familiar. The food was served buffet style, so the young women dutifully lined up, grabbing plates and forks. Soon, everyone had something that they wanted and began eating and conversing with enthusiasm.

No one noticed that the light seemed to be dipping and shifting, at first. It felt normal as if a cloud had momentarily covered the sunshine and then would go away. Then Taylor realized she was getting odd signals from the swarm that she’d had spanning the neighborhood. It wasn’t an anxiousness, as bugs really did not do that kind of emotion, but the sense of something odd happening. A few moments before, though it has been partitioned away so she could go about her day, she’d been aware of the passage of small creatures from the points outside of the neighborhood. That had stopped. Nothing was going in, nothing was going out.

“Lisa,” she said, automatically choosing the woman who’d been her most reliable friend and who would most likely be able to translate things she needed to know. Taylor stood up, setting what was left of her food down, abruptly. “Something’s going on.”

Almost as soon as she’d made that remark, there was a shimmer in the air. On the grass of the yard, Crystal stood, half-dressed in very old-fashioned lace pantaloons and sheer shift. The cosplayer was
very confused. “What?” Just as suddenly, appearing and dotting the ground around her were trunks, half closed, with loose items dangling. “My costumes!” she shrieked as if the world was ending.

Another shimmer blurred the air, and Cherry, the redhead trainer appeared just above the ground. Demonstrating agility and awareness, she managed a full squat landing and stood up abruptly. “What the fresh heck!” Suddenly more belongings, packed suitcases, and sundries were scattered around her.

Lightening cracked overhead, loud enough to shake the air. The light streaked in several directions at once but did not head down. Or rather, it was not able to do so. The dome shimmered overhead as if struck.

A brisk wind picked up and began gathering speed, like the wake from a thunderstorm. Annette made a game call, clapping her hands together. “Everyone inside. Leave the food, grab what you can and let's go!” She followed her own directions, grabbed her tablet and then one of the suitcases and headed towards the house.

Light flared from Lisa’s hands, brightening the area, even as she used her new ability to grab several cases, without actually lifting anything herself. Beside her, Amy also hurried as plants looped and grew, snagging trunks and sundries; moving them along. Taylor quickly stashed the majority of her local insect fauna in the greenhouse and grabbed a couple of cases herself.

Meanwhile, Vicky snagged Crystal and hurried her in, while Danny did the same for Cherry. The brunette and the redhead were still slightly shocked by whatever had brought them here. But in the end, it didn’t take that long to get everyone into the building, despite their confusion.

Thunder cracked and rolled and the wind picked up even more outside, causing the trees to whip and sway dangerously. They assembled in the front room, silently joined by their staff. For the first time, Taylor saw Sophia (very elegant), Alec (a little nerdy, strong but cute) and Elliot (long haired and lots of muscles). Nick took a place beside Sophia, wrapping his arm around her waist. Parker appeared next to Elliot.

“River,” Annette snapped out. The AI snapped into view. She had curly blonde hair, a distinctive face that was enough that Taylor recognized - or thought she did - the influence. But now was not the time to say anything. “Can you connect to the outside?”

River said, “Of course I…” The pause was noticeable. “Unable to connect to outside online services at this time. In-house services are intact. All previously retrieved content remains in the cache, but nothing new is accessible. Recordings are still commencing and the automated editing system is working, but the content is not being broadcast.”

“Any indication of what is going on?” Danny asked.

“Hello, Sweetie.” River said affectionately. Taylor peered at her Mom, who merely grinned saucily.

River continued without apparently noticing. “As mentioned before, the internal network is working and data and services are confirmed secure. The dome is in good condition, but a system-wide service attack is underway, as are actual physical bombardments of some type. The automated weather system of the local dome is experiencing fluctuations, due to impacts on the dome, but other than strong winds major hazards are not predicted.”

Ben flickered and steadied into his AI holographic form. “Sorry to butt in, but Neo and I found a couple of outside feeds that are punky, but still live and connecting to some outside sources - all within the SL-network. We’re not the only SL-inhabited dome on Jewel that’s been hit. We are,
however, the only one with a nearly completely disconnect from the greater network. The others are routing their feed through each others’ system to boost connection to SL. Shall we connect?"

“Belay that,” a new voice snapped out. Well, it wasn’t really a new voice.

Taylor recognized who it was, once she heard her. “Joy?” She turned around to see the divine being striding towards them, her expression dire indeed. Joy wore a professional outfit, white shirt, black skirt, dark heels. She was obviously ruffled, even if her hair was perfect. Taylor had so many questions, but other than the obvious first two, she asked, “What do we need to do?”

The goddess paused a moment, then the grim expression on her face melted to one of amused affection. She stepped more fully into the semicircle that they had formed. “Right now, nothing.” Another crash of loud thunder echoed through the house. She sighed and then waved her hand at the couches and chairs. “We might as well all sit down for this. And I do mean all of us.”

A few moments later and everyone was settled.

“Okay, so first, Slut Life, as you’ve been informed is experiencing some technical difficulties. Fortunately for you, and yours, when Taylor signed on to be a Jumper, those of you rooming with her gained access to Jumpercare.”

Taylor’s gaze drifted to Crystal and Cherry, who, while calmer in appearance were more than a little discombobulated. She was sure they were many things, but she happened to know for a fact that until their abrupt arrival a few minutes ago, roommates was not one of their descriptions.

Joy scratched the back of her neck and said, “Yes well. That does fall under part of the explanations. The thing is, we are at a point of unique opportunity. One might even call it rare, given that the Slut Life bigwigs are normally aligned in their purposes and the group that runs them is also. However, this does not mean that disagreements do not happen.

“First, let me ask a question or two.” She leaned forward. “Annette, Daniel, you are both contracted candidates in Slut Life. The big wigs are literally fighting over options for both of you and Taylor. If you wanted, you could, at this very moment - unhitch your star from Taylor and make your own way in the Slut Life universe, with your own backers no questions asked. You would lose out on a few opportunities as Taylor’s companions, and perhaps not see her for a bit, but we could arrange a meeting point. Is that something you’d like to do?”

Danny started shaking his head, clenching his teeth against a colloquialism that might cause problems. When he could control his first reaction, he said. “Out of the question. No, thank you.”

Annette stared hard at Joy, squinting. Then she shook her head and her expression became determined. “I’m with Danny. I just got them both back. Whatever is going on up there, separating myself and Danny for the purposes of fame or money will not happen.”

Joy’s lips twitched up, pleased, as she sat back in her chair. “Well, one option crossed off. Taylor, this is a point where, if you wanted to make certain changes to your contract, you could.”

Taylor was blunt. “It takes my parents away, then no.” She looked at them and they at her. Then she turned her attention back to Joy. “We’re fine. We’ll work it out, one way or the other.”

The entity spoke confidently, “Of course you will.” She turned her gaze to Lisa, Amy, and Vicky. She didn’t even have to ask the question.

“We’re not going anywhere. Not without Taylor.”
“Nathan?” The entity asked.

“We made our decision when you offered us the opportunity. We’ll stick.”

“Which brings me to, Crystal and Cherry. Your contract, unlike Taylor’s and her friends, is currently solely with Slut Life. However, if you are willing, there are openings in Taylor’s team. If you’re willing to take a chance, you could each be one of her Magical Girls.”

Cherry, who had been with Slut Life before said, “How big a fight is it?”

“Massive,” Joy said. “A new network was bought out by a son of one of the upper management. He’s been aching to step into the big leagues and is trying to horn in. Lower management has a beef with upper management due to wages and available souls. Upper management has two partners who feel they want a stake in several of the new shows, including Taylor’s and her parents. Middle management, as usual, is just trying to keep things juggled in the air. Unfortunately, you’ve seen how well that is working.”

“Still, it is time for me to mention that despite what any of them think, they haven’t a stake in Taylor’s options at all. I can state this unequivocally, as there is one simple truth; Taylor is my Jumper. She’s mine,” and as she said that, the house shook and the lights flickered as a crack of lightning finally skittered down and splashed on the ground nearby.

Hair may have stood on end.

But Joy’s next words were achingly familiar. She said, with a lot less thunder, “I am very, very protective of what is mine and Taylor is my … girl.” It seemed as if she were going with a different word choice, but it could have been a dramatic pause too. “Well, and Annette, Danny, Lisa, Amy, and Victoria.” She looked at them very specifically. “You are all mine.” Danny seemed to be working the angle around whether Joy was mistaking him for a girl or not, but Annette had gone back to staring narrowly at the being, looking a bit as if she were noodling a puzzle piece around. Lisa, who in a previous life might have been crippled by a headache, merely nodded as if everything made sense. While Amy and Vicky had cuddled in more. Taylor had a similar gaze as her mom, but for very different reasons.

Cherry blinked a lot for a moment, but then said, her voice surprisingly even, “Then, if you don’t mind. I’d just as soon hang out with Taylor and her family.”

Crystal piped up, timid, yet not wanting to miss the chance. “Me too!”

The air popped and suddenly the light show above the house stopped, the lights stopped flickering and the wind stopped its howling.

“Outside connection is completely severed. In-house network online. Weather systems returning to normal,” reported River.

“What just happened?” asked Taylor.

“Slut Life bungled two of the clauses of your contract. First, your neighbor, the alchemist, wasn’t. Or rather, it was a creature from the Deep, which was trying to horn in. You may note that there is a section specifically addressing where such beings may participate. That one tried to slide on by that by taking over the Alchemist’s position.” Joy short-clapped. “Well done on destroying it.”

Then she continued. “Second, the martial arts instructor that was selected for you was not prepared to deal with your swarm. They reneged on their Owner’s contract; at about the same time as the battle for supremacy began. The timing of which, via the contract you made with me as your Jump
Benfactor, allows me now to step in via Jumpercare. Which gives me the management of all the essentials related to both your contract and jump.” Joy’s smile could have eaten sharks all by itself.

Hair raised again.

Joy waved things down. “Were it not for them going full blast, I would have handled things with more subtlety. I would have just set things in motion, a little nudge here with some tech and perks, a little nudge there with some reality alteration. You would never have noticed - at least not right away. If they’d kept their battle to the boardroom, you would have been informed by Slut Life that services had been restored and your show was back online. They would have reviewed content and double streamed the current live-stream and missed content. They also would have played up a scene where you’d be given choice points to play with or depending on who won they may have opted to try to make their error your problem.

“Though, I suspect that would not have ended well for anyone.” She shrugged. “But still, the point is, I would have worked to blend some scenarios into your previous reality. I think it would have worked, but that opportunity is in the wind.”

“That still doesn’t explain what happened.”

“Actually, she kind of just said,” Lisa said. “The management is in a literal battle over a stake in the show and so, because she had her own investment in you - us -, she took us out of reality. We’re on a different plane now.”

Joy snapped and pointed at Lisa. “Right you are little one. Where you are, specifically, is in Taylor’s demiplane. When you are, is between times; which does mean, no cameras - no feeds. Right now, nothing is being recorded.

Then she rolled her hand a bit, “However, once we’ve come to an agreement on how to proceed and the entry to either a new world or the Slut-Life reality has been deemed safe enough, then… well… we are still under a ten-year contract, dears, for the main game. We will not renegade, as I have no desire to have some hack try to wiggle their way in through legalese; especially when this is all their fault, to begin with. I won’t allow it.”

The armrests creaked under her grip, but there was no thunder or lightning. “You’re under my banner now and officially, as of this moment, jumper and companions.” She unclenched her hands from the armrests and folded them together in her lap. She exhaled.

“So, here is what we are going to do if you agree. I think it would be more interesting for you and the audience if we considered the idea of combining jumps. I can think of at least three different jumps that would provide a qualified Martial Artist to instruct you; at least one of which is a perfect match for the options you chose, Taylor. I should note, that there was a misreading on your part on the contract. The Martial Artist was a two Owner role. In Slut-Life, that would have disqualified them. However, as a jumper, this number is moot, as your roommates are now under the Companion clause. Congrats. Dodged that bullet. No extra punishments will be or can be assigned.”

“Eep.”

“Indeed. That said, should you opt to go straight to jumping, rather than an Owners contract on their part, your experience will be set as an apprenticeship; which, is basically the same thing only likely a bit less handsy. Maybe. You’d still have sex education to go through.”

“Are there any drawbacks, aside from that?” Taylor asked.
“Only if you take some.” Joy’s smile was whimsical. “Though I will admit, I’m a little sad you chose not to utilize the corset option. It would have been a good mother-daughter bonding experience at the Salon.”

“Maybe for a birthday,” Annette said dryly. The ex-professor’s leg began to jitter, her arms crossed. Joy’s expression perked. “Well, the Salon is still at the Plaza. A birthday seems perfect if you would consider indulging me at some time.”

Taylor glanced back and forth between her Mom and Joy and cocked a brow. Annette twitched, and looked as if she were going to say something way more explosive than, “Mmm, I’ll think about it.”

“Well, okay, so if I’m hearing things correctly,” Danny said, “The goal is to avoid the corporate drama, continue working the show, and…”

“Trust me enough to let me choose the jumps for a little while. We will likely accelerate a few things along the way, just to keep things interesting.” Joy contributed. “As Lisa has mentioned, I am invested in Taylor and by extension, you.”

Annette said, standing up abruptly, “Could I speak to you, Joy, in private for a moment.”

“You do realize, most people wouldn’t dare interrupt a goddess.” Joy said, but she also stood and her expression held a certain amount of good humor. In fact, it was somewhat similar to an expression that Taylor had seen on her Mom’s face. The thought niggled something, but the current crisis had more of her attention.

“Uh-huh.” Annette jerked her head to the kitchen. She snapped out, “We’ll be right back.”

Taylor made as if to follow, but Danny grabbed her by the shoulder. “I think your Mom can handle this. Why don’t we go see what things look like outside for a moment? Ben, don’t listen in, but if you could keep an eye on the number of persons in and outside the house, I’d appreciate it. Taylor, no listening in either.”

It was either the worst suggestion in the world or the best, but either way it spoke to Danny’s trust; and his apparent understanding of Taylor’s abilities.

“How did you figure out I had my bugs back?”

Danny waved his hand and brought her in for a side-hug and walk, “One of my abilities is a kind of mystic filter around my body. I know I’ve been tagged.”

“I tried to avoid making things ticklish.”

“How did you figure out I had my bugs back?”

Taylor leaned against her Dad a little as they walked. “What do you think? Should we try to stick it out on Jewel or take our chances on the jump?”

“Honestly,” Danny said, “I don’t get a bad feeling about Joy. Sure, she’s hiding something, but it’s
not…” He hesitated and tried again. “She seems to want something better for us. From what I gather, the contract is kind of voided now, but Joy intends to work with what we got. And I think getting out from the immediate thumbs of a corporation would be a good idea regardless.”

“I second that,” Lisa piped up. “I think taking the jump option is the way to go.”

“What’s a jump?” Crystal asked.

Taylor took a moment to explain what she understood it to mean, which was that she - or rather they - would have a long-term tour of a multiverse. The cosplayer's eyes grew wider and star-ier the more Taylor spoke.

“I am so glad I said yes!” She poked her hand up in victory.

Vicky said, “See if you feel that way tomorrow when Cherry has us all climbing stairs.” She bumped shoulders with the redhead, to show she was teasing.

By that time they’d exited out the front. The whole area that had been secured by the dome was illuminated, but not by sky or sun. It made the grass and trees seem pale. They walked out far enough to see the street. In one of the neighborhood house slots, was a large, large building. It was clearly labeled, “Warehouse.” The Plaza remained across the way, in the same shape they’d left it.

“I wonder if the theater is still playing the double feature,” Vicky commented.

“I will be completely bitter if it isn’t,” claimed Amy, much to the other’s amusement. “No. Seriously. I was looking forward to doing a comparison.”

“We’ll talk to Joy and see if there is something we can do to make it happen,” Danny said evenly.

Amy smiled widely, then shyly. “Thanks, Dad.”

He reached over and side hugged her too. “You’re welcome.”

“Anyone want to go look in the warehouse?” Lisa queried.

“Only if you want to see a lot of shelves going on forever. And, well, a few amenities, but really. Mostly shelves. And a medbay.” Taylor commented.

“So, boring now?” Vicky asked.

“A little. It might have a few things on the shelves. I admit I haven’t checked.” Taylor provided.

“What? Seriously?” Lisa was taken aback.

“I was worried the cameras would follow and honestly when have I had the time?” Taylor defended.

“Okay, that’s a point.” Lisa acknowledged.

They still decided they wanted to have a look. True to Taylor’s word, there wasn’t much to note about the space itself. However, there were things of interest on the shelves. In the medbay there were medications for curing STDs, preventing pregnancy or encouraging pregnancy. On the shelves in the warehouse proper, there was a fancy chest, which when opened had “toys” of an intimate nature.

Vicky, being herself, picked up a horse-phallus and waved it around because it wobbled amusingly. This led to Lisa grabbing a different, but equally sizable dildo. That led to others - except for Danny,
who vowed to stay out of it and pledged to referee, also grabbing lengthy items of a rubbery nature.

The dildo fight/tag game commenced. It involved much running around, laughing, dodging, ducking and dipping, and more laughing. It lasted about twenty minutes. Which, by that time, a winner - Cherry - had been declared as having the most tags. She beamed with pride.

By the time all the toys had been returned to the box with a promise made by Taylor that she would bring it to the house so it would be more available, they had calmed considerably from the stress.

Danny said, “They’re probably done with whatever it is by now, let’s head on back.”

A few minutes later, they were back in the front room. Both Annette and Joy were waiting for them, sitting at angles from each other - as if they’d been having tea and a really pleasant conversation. Taylor glanced between them, but couldn’t see that anything major was different; except that her Mom’s feet were bare and tucked under her and she no longer seemed half-upset.

Danny broached the topic, leaning in to kiss his wife, “So, everything copacetic?”

Annette’s posture and smile were relaxed. “All good, dear. Joy said you arrived at a basic consensus?”

“Well, I offered my opinion. Taylor, I think, is the one with the final word.” He sat on the soft armrest, seemingly unworried.

“I’d still like to hear Mom’s opinion. Do you think we ought to stay on Jewel?”

Annette glanced at Joy and then at Taylor and said, “Hon, you’d do well anywhere, and I would support you. But as your…” again her gaze slipped to Joy and her expression tightened for a second. Lisa’s eyes widened, but when she looked to say something she saw the slight shake of Annette’s head. “Benefactor has said, there is currently a shake-up going on. I think moving to a different locale would be practical and beneficial.”

Taylor looked around, “Anyone against?”

No hands.

“Anyone got any better ideas?”

No hands.

Taylor turned to Joy. “One of the concerns raised was that we’d lack access to the media that was available. We’d like to have that if we could.”

Joy looked amused. “I’ll see what I can do. I prefer not to have any specific ties to the Slut Life space at this time, but perhaps alternative arrangements can be made. I do understand that you had the full expectation of plenty of time and access to goods there.”

Taylor glanced around the room and then back at Joy. “Then yes, we’d like to move on to the next jump.”

“Excellent.”
Chapter 12

Jumps:
Ranma ½: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1qb0_OlhDrDSTJINjRjMUFIX2M/view
Elite Beats: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1qb0_OlhDrDWWZJbFlWbzNuWmc/view
Sketchbook: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aoBwBz8SjPMr-qqacch1ws8wTwoPUaq/view
Generic Hentai Modern: https://imgur.com/a/LwkSQ

Primary Jump Background: Ranma ½

Additional Disclaimers:
Warning: Futanari Aspect Engaged (It only cost 100 cp… and the third gender option was only 400cp. How could I resist? I mean, sure, Taylor has the genetic modification suite from getting dead and revived, and so can manipulate things, but Ranma has a curse clause. And, for future jumps, this adds a new dimension because the third gender can follow from world to world. So even though I went with a different origin, I ended up getting those). As a side note, I am aware that multiple genders already exist - hermaphrodites are a thing. However, the Third Gender is a particular gender setting with specific markers.

Reminder: Human/Other Sex Eventually. The Cursed Pools have an abundance of possibilities including animal types and mythical beings with full human intelligence. H/O would happen eventually anyway, due to jumping. It’s just starting earlier because I rolled a lot of 8s. Enough that I could have, in theory, just kept the whole family all dropping in the same pool so they would have the same origin. And boy was I tempted, considering what I’d rolled as the first mythical creature. Then I remembered this was Ranma and so I rerolled. So now there’s more of a mix, but even then I rolled three 2s. So I kept those and did some jiggering. So about half mythical creatures and half opposite genders is what is going on here. Two are of the same mythical creatures (again, because of a double roll), the rest are differentiated. Hints will be in the chapter, but most of the big reveals will be later. I admit, I’m actually trying not to tell you in this chapter, because the reveals seem more fun that way.

A/N: A note about jumpchains. An author has two ways of introducing a jump - you start somewhere in the middle of the adventure OR you start at the beginning. Okay, three ways. You can also start with the selection process. Usually, a jump document will have four options - drop in options let you come in as yourself, while the other options provide the background of having lived in the world that you’ve just jumped in. The jumper is the person who has lived the life, but they are now at a point of awareness where the memories start to hit. Usually, that’s in their teens, but it’s determined by the document’s dice roll. Some authors will play with that a bit. Me, I’m just going to start at the beginning. Again; at least this time. Because that is what happens in jumps when you don’t take a drop in as a role. You wake up and you’re different now.

==**==

Taylor stared at the entryway way of Furinkan High School with barely disguised loathing. Her dislike simmered in the air, not technically a taint, but a definite aura. The building was quite well kept. Its clock tower lent it a surprising elegance for what was a fairly utilitarian edifice. It was not
the school’s fault she felt both dread and anger in her heart, nor had she opportunity to get to know many people outside of her family; as they’d only recently arrived from their summer tour in China.

Before the summer vacation, she’d had no problems with attending high school or any school. Now… If she were to consult her memories, which she was not sure she could trust, it seemed her anathema arose from past experiences.

Reincarnation or whatever this growing awareness was sucked, as every night since the end of their summer vacation-that-wasn’t-a-vacation, there had been some new horror show to live through in her dreams. There were a few bright moments, but they were confusing. She had a memory of two lives. No, three. No. Four. No, if she counted right, actually five...

The first life she lived was as a girl villain-hero on a death world. The second was as a different version of that girl, living a whole other life as a magical fighter on a world much like her current home. The third, was as a young woman who was just finding her footing on a very pretty planet, rediscovering her friends, and reunited with her parents. Aside from the arousal that came with those particular dreams, the third life had not seemed bad so much as short. And, then, the fourth set of memories, which was about who she was now, weren’t dreams at all; they were the actual memories of living her life as she was; still herself, Taylor Hebert: eldest biological daughter of Daniel and Annette Hebert. The fifth set, was that of an alien and it wasn’t really a regular individual memory, so much as a genetic memory of a whole people that had been genocided by the greed of another alien people.

The sad thing was, the alien had escaped their world, only to drown in this one. The saving grace though, was that she retained her own mind and personality, so she never had to linger on the sadness. She just had to process it some days. Not today though. She had other worries and the contemplation of her dreams niggled.

On the one hand, the vividness of the dreams was interesting. On the other hand, the layering of different lives made for confusing moments of deja vu. On the third hand, each dream seemed to bring with it new understanding or abilities. On the fourth and final hand, her swarm - the one she’d recently learned to connect to - were surprisingly easy to control; especially the spiders.

A pistol-like sound cracked through the air. Taylor turned to look back, noting that some older student had just parked their busted car. A tiny black pig scampered by, squealing an alert in response. Taylor rolled her eyes. Ah, the joys of living the small town life.

She forced herself to follow her mom’s advice for days like this; exhale out the bad so she could think about the good.

The brunette knew she had no real reason to be upset. It was a beautiful day, all blue skies and short-sleeve weather. Her school uniform was spotless, and her sisters would be arriving soon; which gave her something to look forward to. At least they were guaranteed good company.

She was just grumpy. She hadn’t had enough sleep. And for that matter, neither had there been enough or any personal tension release. The house to which they’d moved had plenty of room, but privacy had been a precious commodity while they were on the road. Then again, why she should suddenly miss sex, she did not know. Until she’d started having the dreams she hadn’t really had this problem.

She hadn’t even dated yet, for Pete’s sake.

Her Mom said she was a late bloomer. That did not actually make anything easier. Because, despite being the eldest, she was coming in dead last on the date somebody scale.
Behind Taylor, some sort of fight broke out, a brief conflagration. She watched through her bugs as a bunch of jocks flew through the air. She looked back to confirm for sure that it wasn’t one of her sisters fighting.

No. It was just some guy in a red shirt and black pants. He was definitely out of uniform. And on the first day too.

She shook her head and turned back to face the clock tower entrance. She attempted to move forward to the school. Her feet wouldn’t let her.

Taylor supposed she did have something to blame for her grumpiness.

China, specifically the tour at Jusenkyo, which was supposed to be vacation time and hadn’t been. Instead, her family had been caught up in a murder mystery involving some chick named Beef Bologna (Who names their kid after food? But then, she had heard worse). Beef had tried to pin her awful deed on a random tourist, unfortunately, she picked the least likely person ever - Crystal.

It could have been worse. Vicky could have had her way and pasted Beef into a smear. But that would have been vengeance, not justice. And that wasn’t how their family rolled.

The thing about her family; her Dad and Mom, specifically, was that they weren’t your typical kill-em-all Royal Police. They were old-fashioned that way, and they’d taught their children to be that way too. Truth mattered. Investigations were more than just witness statements. And if you were a judge, you might as well have the trial.

The truth had been uncovered. The jury - Taylor and her sisters - had been called. The witnesses had taken the stands. The trial had been run with Daniel Hebert as Judge and Annette Rose Hebert as Executioner or Dispenser of the Punishment. If Beef had just told the truth and not run the outcome would have been different. She might have even gotten a light sentence, as both Taylor’s parents had been a good mood at the time.

The end result was a lot of wet bodies as Beef streaked through the pools, got tangled with her friend that looked like a sock puppet and eventually drowned. Or disappeared through some vorpal hole. Taylor wasn’t sure. The pool had been dredged, but no bodies were revealed or found.

Taylor considered that there’d been a lot of other confusion going on because of how many people fell into the various pools; not just her family. It was equally as likely that Beef and friend had escaped. ‘No body. No death,’ was Taylor’s perspective. But the tour guide had been convinced that there had been another drowning and so… who knew? Hers was a minority perspective and the main office of the RP had declared the case closed.

Taylor looked down at the bronze button on her collar, which her sister Crystal had made. It was small but very nice. Crystal had created buttons for all of the members of her family as a commemoration of their vacation-that-wasn’t. Each button was bronze, with a symbol representing something fundamentally important about their recent experiences; the change. Hers was an image of a spider on a frosted web. It was a symbol not an exact representation and thus was an appropriate gift and a lovely thought.

Reminded by the button, Taylor checked on her spiders, the ones she’d stored in the shed by the greenhouse. She’d left a warning note on their house network and physical sign on the shed, so no one would be surprised. She hadn’t wanted anyone scared or the spiders disturbed. The spiders were churning out silk from their tiny bodies and that was what she wanted them to focus on until she could do more herself. She intended to make a return gift for Crystal, as soon as she had enough to really make it worth it and every little bit helped.
Checking on her spiders reminded her to check the critters that were in the school. The building was surprisingly clean of the more vermin-ish types of bugs - but she found enough small things to give a general picture of the interior and that actually helped. She managed a whole couple of steps to the door before the nope set in.

This was one of the reasons Taylor had started the day early and had gotten out of the door quickly. It wasn’t because she didn’t intend to spend time with her family. But she had suspected she might have to work up the desire to actually enter the building.

Her advanced arrival wasn’t just about that, of course. She’d needed some time to clear her head. Thus all the rumination.

Taylor had awakened before everyone else due to the sensation of leaking at the top. This had become a thing. The recent need for milking was something with which she was growing overly familiar, but not really fond. At first, she’d thought the lactation must somehow connect with her cursed form, so she bore with it in silence; as no one else was complaining about their forms. Now she suspected other reasons, given the influx of memories. But, either way, it was an inconvenience she could have lived without.

She had kept the problem from her parents because she didn’t want to upset them unnecessarily, given all the other issues that the summer had brought. But even though it was a hassle all it really meant getting up early, taking care of things, and figuring out what to do with all the milk.

Thankfully, the internet existed and had many wonderful solutions to unusual problems. Neo also existed and had evaluated the milk and defined its nutritional value as amazing (as in, it could replace a whole meal) and drinkability as definite. Taylor had nowhere to store it, but she could drink it. Or sell it.

The selling was a small problem, as it would mean evidence out there and she would have had to explain how she had money beyond what her allowance provided. But the nice thing about a swarm is that they were useful. She emptied the jars into bowls and left those around the grounds under trees and bushes like she was making offerings to the spirits. She’d even found a tiny shrine and put a bowl there. After all, it never hurt to have a Kami on your side. Not that she believed in Kamis. But once you’ve been cursed, you figure there might be more to the world than what was commonly assumed.

The morning milking wasn’t all bad. In fact, sometimes it was downright pleasurable. Yet, Taylor felt like she was missing something really important, some component that would have made it all better. Which, added to her list of grumpiness.

But still, the leaks. That was the punishing detail.

The milking she could deal with, but the leaks could happen at any time. And they were the worst in the morning when she just woke up. So many times she’d woken up to wet sheets. She’d taken to sleeping on towels and washing her own laundry. Now she looked like a neat freak, at least as far as her bedding was concerned.

Sure, she could have let the staff handle that detail, but then... That was yet more evidence and she felt the need to handle things herself. Doing her own laundry was dutiful daughter territory. Or something. On the other hand, Parker had taken to leaving two stacks of towels instead of one and two stacks of fresh bedding, so maybe Taylor was overthinking things by a lot. Because the one nice thing about their people was that they were discrete.

Which brought her to, Taylor had to buy padded bras, which she previously hadn’t needed. So she
knew if she and her sisters had to strip down in the gym - which they would have to - she’d look like she was overcompensating. And the humor at her expense would begin.

Yay.

And that didn’t even count what was going on down below. One day, she’s a normal girl. The next, still technically normal, but with an additional aspect. She’d just never suspected that she was a Futanari. It had never come up. Literally.

She had no idea if the big reveal was like this for everyone, but there was nothing quite like waking up to a tent in the sheets and not being able to figure out how it happened. She could guess the when though; stupid cursed pools. Fortunately, she’d eventually figured out how to get everything stowed away and she was back to normal on a mostly day to day level.

But that first time was a scary, scary morning and complicated, as she tried to avoid all the questions of why she was late for breakfast and why her door was locked. And the ensuing argument about the right to privacy as discussed by all five of her sisters in loud, boisterous commotion. Which, covered her efforts on a certain level, but led to her Dad asking if everything was okay and peacemaking and if she needed him to come in. And the thought of her Dad entering her room at that moment had been a point of dread and horror she could hardly even articulate.

She could not have been more embarrassed if she’d have woken up somewhere naked in front of a bunch of people. That morning Taylor basically had stayed in her room until well past noon in personal protest at the universe.

Later, when she’d tried talking to her mother, without actually coming out and saying what was going on, her mom had said, “It’s just puberty, hon. All women go through changes as they mature. You’ll be fine.” Usually, her mom was way more helpful and insightful than that, but admittedly, she and Dad were distracted by everything that had happened and trying to deal with the move and some of the bureaucracy that had come up since.

Yeah. Generally speaking, this had not been the best month she’d had in life; this life.

“Hey Taylor!” she heard the cheerful call and turned. Coming from a denser part of the tree-lined sidewalk, she saw one of her blonde sisters. It was her first smile of the morning as she waved in return.

The sisters were all in a similar range of ages, all high-schoolers. Somehow, though they had divergent ages, they were in the same grade level. Taylor wasn’t sure how her parents had managed that trick, but they had.

Annette and Danny had adopted while Taylor was still very little, figuring one or six didn’t matter, so long as they had a family. Taylor still wasn’t quite sure how they managed taking care of everyone. She had a vague memory of another couple of people helping her parents, but couldn’t place the who. She supposed it had to be the staff, but that would make them really old and none of them looked it. Still, her parent’s particular connections with the King and his Royal Police had not hurt, as did the fact they had lots of money. Even if their family was a bit large, they had love enough to share and most days went well.

One positive effect from the dreams was that she valued everyone a little more. She still felt the echoes of loss tremor within. But her Mom was alive. Her Dad was alive. Her sisters were alive. And she hadn’t seen any eldritch abominations, except for that one little guy who perved on Cherry at the local swimming pool at the Plaza. The punt Dad had delivered and the way the creep had sailed through the air would be cherished forever. Taylor could sometimes still see the smoke curling
from her Dad’s nose.

Her sister Lisa’s long platinum blonde hair flowed down her back. She moved with a cat-like grace, hips swaying. Taylor quashed the sudden flare of desire that rolled down her belly, just at the sight. Inappropriate, she told her head. But she knew she was losing the argument with herself, a little more every day.

Taylor blushed this morning when her father had commented on her uniform. It hadn’t been in any way improper, but the mere thought of his flattery had been enough to roll a string of need through her. Then, her mother…

The only thing she’d done was press her lips to Taylor’s forehead. Perfectly innocent. Then she said good morning. And Taylor had felt a heat rise from her center to her nipples. She’d been sharp as knives and the only reason it didn’t show as because of that padded bra, which she now realized she was no longer going to complain about.

Taylor, who did not believe in hell, was pretty sure that she had crossed an invisible threshold somewhere.

She forced another smile, “Lisa!” Then she said, “Where are the others?”

“Oh, they’re on their way. Cherry’s showing off for some boy, you know how she is. Crystal had an issue with her jacket. Vicky is…” Lisa paused, considering what to say and how. “Vic and he and Amy decided to head in from the back so they could fix the issue.”

Taylor knew that Lisa, Amy, and Vicky were particularly close and that the cursed springs had shook their dynamic. She couldn’t quite place what it was at first, but if her dreams were any indication it was all about what they were trying to resist. Much like her own issues. In a moment of empathy, she offered, “Do you want to talk about it?”

Lisa cocked her head and glanced at the school clock, before looking back at Taylor. “Not enough time to really dig in, and I was going to ask the same of you. You’ve been pretty squirrelly these past few days.”

Taylor went with the short version and not a full explanation, “Bad dreams. About previous lives and school. I am having a hard time just going in.”

“If we’re going simple, then maybe we have plenty of time.” Lisa offered an amused, if slightly shamed grin. “I’ve been dreaming about sleeping with Amy and Vicky.”

Taylor pondered that for a moment and asked, “In their cursed forms?”

“No. Pretty much as our sisters. Though I’m apparently not at all opposed to trying their other forms. Don’t ask me how the cold water got on Vic in the first place. It wasn’t me. It involved Crystal’s uniform and a vase and some Panda that startled someone on the way.”

“I thought we left those in China. In fact, I specifically remember Dad saying no.” Taylor said.

“It wasn’t one of those. It was a random dude panda. Apparently, he’s a fairly common sight around here.”

“Huh.” Taylor shrugged. “This town is so weird.”

“But at least it’s not Brockton.”
Taylor turned and stared at Lisa. “You remember that?”

Lisa waggled her hand. “It’s a little yes, a little no. But enough for me to say that it’s not just the uniforms that are different here.”

Taylor nodded. Then she said as a side comment when she saw her littlest sister coming down the road. “I can’t believe she’s actually wearing the jacket on a day like this. Crystal is the only one I know who can make these uniforms seem fluffier.”

Lisa grinned, “Yeah, but we love it. And her.”

Taylor reached over and snagged Lisa’s hand and gave it a squeeze. “I’ve been dreaming a lot too. Some of them have been very rough. And some have been very erotic. It’s been…” The cool thing about Lisa is that you didn’t always have to use words. She cleared her voice. “I thought it was just me, because of the curse, you know. Because of what I am.”

Lisa was quiet and a bell chimed. “No. I think it’s all of us. But we haven’t been talking as much lately. Everyone has been off by about a step and a half, I think. We’ll catch up with ourselves, I’m sure of it.” Lisa held onto Taylor’s hand and began leading towards doors. Suddenly, Taylor’s feet were willing to go.

They merged with another group of students. No one commented or seemed to notice the hand holding at all. A lot of girls their age did that. “I have spiders in the back shed,” Taylor commented, to see how Lisa would react.

“I saw the note. Elliot put a lock on the door and another note with where to find the key.” This time it was Taylor’s turn to be amused. She actually smiled, briefly. Until Lisa said, “I think you ought to quit trying to hog them all. Mom’s been pretty tolerant, but she’s itching to do something. You know she fell into the same pool you did. And you’ve got more than spiders to work with.”

They were at the door, and Taylor was resistant, but Lisa yanked her gently along. The brunette finally said, surrendering, “Fine. I’ll let half of them go.”

“I think that would work,” Lisa said tolerantly.

They drew closer to their new homeroom. She stopped and turned to face Taylor, searching her face and seeing more than her oldest sister realized. Lisa nodded, not quite to herself, and said, “There’s a closet near the changing rooms in the gym. Want to see what it looks like inside, after lunch?”

Taylor reached up and slid some of that blonde hair back behind Lisa’s ear. “I.” She cleared her throat. “Yes. Yes. If you’re offering.”

Lisa’s lips quirked. “I’m more than offering. I’m on the cusp of demanding.” She turned a little away, “Admittedly, it’s not really my style, but it’s reasonably private. But I’m willing to make sacrifices. I need…” She pressed against the wall, looked down and looked back at Taylor, for once at a loss for words. But her expression said it all and made Taylor want to kiss her right there and then.

An ingrained sense of propriety (barely hanging by a thread) kept her from doing it.

The second bell rang. One more to go. Lisa nodded to the classroom. “Let’s go in and get our learning on. Did you ever actually check your schedule, I mean, aside from where to go?”

“I just had the print off Mom provided this morning. It was just a list the name of the classes, place of classes, and time of classes. The usual.”
Lisa was very amused. “Oh, well then, I am sure we are in for happy surprises.” She dragged Taylor in. “Let’s sit in the front.”

A blink, not literal, and they were there. Taylor noted that the seats and the desks were pristine in comparison to the ones they’d had in another life. The desktops held no markings, no scribbles or cuts or gang signs or …

Lisa said quietly, “Breathe.”

Taylor’s next breath was a shudder, but she managed it. Then she successfully sat down in the perfectly clean seat. Her mind skipped three lives and back to the present. “When is our rotation to clean?”

“Tuesdays and Thursdays. Cheerleading is Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.”

Oh yeah. That. She’d briefly forgotten about how Cherry convinced all of her sisters to join. Taylor had an excuse for how easily she’d been swayed. She’d been distracted by the enthusiastic jiggling. Taylor was suddenly grateful she had a little more grace in this lifetime. Nothing to compare to Cherry, but sufficient unto the need of cheer-kata.

Then, wafting in the air, like honey, Taylor detected a scent. It was sweet and savory. She didn’t mean to be obvious, but her nostrils flared. Amy and Vicky walked in, also holding hands, but blushing furiously. Vicky’s top was a little wet, but not so wet that anything was revealed. Taylor white-knuckle gripped her desk to keep from leaping. The urge to taste them, to take them, rolled over her. The desk creaked as an indentation was made, spoiling its perfection. She could probably buff it out though.

Her gaze trailed after them until Lisa tapped her shoulder - hard. Her sister leaned over and said, “Lunchtime. You can hold it till lunch. Repeat it back to me.”

Taylor’s expression was on the edge of feral, but she pushed the rush back - somehow. “I can wait. I can hold it till lunch.”

“Pheromones hit you like a wall of bricks. I’d tell you to breathe again, but…”

Taylor actually found the humor and managed a laugh. “Yeah.” She caught her other sisters’ eyes and raised her brows in a query. They blushed even harder, but then Amy straightened as if daring Taylor to say something about it. Taylor noted a little curl of green. Was that a plant in her pocket?

“Excuse me, is this seat taken?” Taylor’s attention shifted away from her sisters and the young girl who asked. Even though she had to be in the same age range as Taylor and her sisters, the girl was very short, even shorter than Crystal. Yet, at that height, she filled out her uniform just fine.

Yep. Taylor was definitely aware of lady parts and man parts and part-parts… and. She sighed, but not in an unfriendly way; more in a frustrated with her own life way.

Taylor glanced back at Amy and Vicky. The blonde jerked her head, toward a different row. Taylor nodded understanding and then turned to the new girl and said, “I think, if you want it, it’s yours.”

The girl’s smile was friendly, somehow she’d not taken offense at Taylor’s attitude. “Thank you. I’d normally sit with my friends, but…” The girl glanced around the room, searchingly. “I don’t see them here yet.”

Lisa gave her a reassuring smile. “I’m sure they’ll be by any moment. But you’re welcome to take the seat if you want. Plenty of room.”
The girl beamed. “I’m Akane. Akane Tendo.”

“Lisa Hebert,” the blonde said. “That’s my sister Taylor. And those are my sisters Amy and Vicky. My other sisters, Crystal and Cherry are lagging behind, like your friends.”

Akane’s eyes widened. “Wow. So many sisters. And all in the same grade? I only have two. What is it like?”

“Usually it’s a lot of fun. Lately, everyone is stressed,” Taylor said, feeling like Lisa shouldn’t have to take the bulk of the conversational burden. “Dad’s job was transferred, so here we all are. Mom’s job was supposed to transfer, but there was some paperwork bobble. So I guess she’s dealing with that.”

“Oh, I see,” Akane said thoughtfully. “Well, welcome to Furinkan! I hope you are enjoying it.”

“I think once things settle we definitely will,” Lisa said. “So what do your parents do?”

“Well, my father runs a dojo.”

“Our condolences,” Lisa said gently, understanding what was not said.

“It was a long time ago. My sister, Kasumi, takes care of us and we manage. But, you know, every little bit helps.” Akane looked thoughtful. “I know you’re new here, but the market for martial education can get a little competitive. Do you think you and your sisters would be interested in learning or improving a martial art? My father is really good, and so is Kasumi.”

Taylor didn’t even need to look at Lisa. “I think you could convince us. Would it interfere with cheerleading?”

“Oh, you’re with the cheerleaders? I’m with the gymnastics team.” Akane said enthusiastically.

“Cool. Do the gymnasts get along with the cheerleaders here?” Taylor checked. She had a vague memory of some serious rivalry.

“Sure. Some of them are on both.” Akane nodded, confident.

“Excellent.” Lisa leaned back and scootched her desk a little closer to Taylor’s. “We’ll stop by and check it out after practice tonight.”

Akane beamed, hands clasped at her front. Then, as other students began entering, she took the seat she’d asked for quickly.

Cherry glided in, not quite off the floor, but light-footed. She stopped long enough to drop a lidded square box in front of Taylor. “You forgot your lunch,” she said.

Taylor gazed at it suspiciously. She knew she hadn’t forgotten to pack her lunch and was pretty sure she’d put it in her bag. She also knew Cherry had a small paranoia about health and eating that drove her to ensure that everyone ate well, whether they wanted it or not. She called all junk food, regardless of its actual nutritional value, “death food.” Cherry needed an intervention. But that wasn’t going to happen any time soon.

Taylor glanced up at her redheaded sister and said flatly, “You took out the dessert, didn’t you.”

“I put something better in its place. Just as sweet. Try it. You’ll like it.” Cherry smiled winningly. That smile was awfully hard to resist, among her other attributes. See: Cheerleading. Then as Taylor
relented she went off to find a seat.

“I am not feeling experimental,” Taylor claimed, loudly enough to be heard by everyone. But still, she took the box and put it away in her school bag. She knew she had money. She could always eat the lunch *she’d* made or stop at a vending machine. They had loads of those around the campus and the town.

Crystal also stopped by to talk with her sisters before settling in. She had a notebook clutched in her arms. It had bits of cloth and paper sticking out. Like her sisters’ she did have a school pack, but that notebook went everywhere with her and was rarely in the pack. She smiled when she saw that Taylor was wearing the button. “You wore it!”

“Oh of course I did. You made it for me.” Taylor said. Crystal’s smile widened and she dropped a kiss on her sister’s cheek before bustling off to sit by Cherry.

“I should have worn mine,” Lisa commented.

“Well, now you know there’s a reward. So wear it tomorrow,” Taylor said, amicably. “She’ll be just as happy.”

The blonde grinned, “Yeah. I know. She’s cute that way. Seriously though, we gotta get the head cheerleader to let her design our costumes.”

Taylor side-eyed her sister. “We are the newbies. Good luck with that. Might as well settle back, show what we can do, then when Crystal starts modifying her own uniform, because we all know she will ...” The brunette snapped her fingers.

Akame watched all this quietly, enjoying the side-view of their sisterly comradery. More students came in. That included her friends, whom she quickly introduced. A pigtailed black-haired boy pushed by, somewhat rudely, and she gave an aggrieved sigh.

“Well, at least he has the school uniform on now,” Taylor commented, recognizing him from earlier.

Akane’s gaze turned to Taylor and the smell of jealousy lit the air. “What do you mean?”

Taylor waved it off, “Oh I saw him tossing around some of the jocks. I guess they were just getting some early workouts in. He wasn’t in the uniform then.”

Akane settled down. “Oh. I see.” she exhaled sharply. “He does that all the time.”

Taylor mentally committed to staying out of whatever that was. “Good to know.”

She had a moment to wonder where the teacher was, but then she heard the click of heels. Something about the pace of it rang a familiar note. She was about to place it when she suddenly didn’t need to. The teacher stepped into the room.

One second she was fine and the next, Taylor felt like she’d been lit on fire with an immediate, primal and utterly inappropriate lust. The desk creaked again as she clenched it to keep herself down in the seat. A sharp tap on her leg got her to look over at Lisa, who mouthed “Lunchtime.” Taylor deliberately loosened her grip. She was well aware that the indentations probably wouldn’t buff out this time. Maybe she could use putty and paint to disguise things.

She glanced around to see if anyone else had noticed, but no. Not really. Some of the boys were slack jawed and a couple of the girls were starry-eyed. Everyone else was either talking or still settling in. Pigtail boy had apparently gotten into verbal confrontation with another black-haired boy.
Apparently Akane had his number. Taylor shook her head and, having gotten some self control returned her attention to the front.

The woman smiled at the class, ignoring the various antics for the moment. “Quiet now everyone.” She took a place at the front of the teacher’s desk, leaning a little on it. She wore a sleek blue skirt and a button down shirt that was open at the neck in a V. A small button tagged her collar. She pushed up a pair of glasses, which she didn’t actually need and said, “Welcome to class! My name is Annette Hebert. I’ll be your Homeroom and English teacher this year.”
Chapter Summary

I've done a few informational bits on the forum I've been posting to, so I thought I'd share what I've posted here too. They'll be clearly labeled as informational, as opposed to "real" chapters.

Informational: The Third Gender

In societies where the Third Gender exists, the gender is considered quite normal and it is rare that a fuss is made. They are normally called and identified as Female, Women and/or Futanari (because I like the word in general), however other names may exist depending on the culture. The Third Gender is always considered female unless they otherwise inform people.

Futanari have the same range of physical features and racial sexuality as everyone else of their race. So with human Futanari, there can be gay/lesbian Futanari and bi Futanari and butch Futanari and Futanari who identify as purely male. However, the majority of Futanari identify and are raised as female.

As for the markers: the penis is normally pouched/sheathed away just under the mons pubis and above the clitoris and usually doesn't appear until/unless stimulated. The testis are considered to be internal when at "rest" and are fully functional, however, they have been known to "drop" during extreme excitement and can enlarge - but not to as visibly a large size as may be found in males. Even if not dropped, they can be stimulated pleasurably and are sometimes mistaken as hubs of the clitoris or the clitoris itself (if a clitoris is particularly small). Futanari have all the normal female parts, including the clitoris and the vagina. The size of the penis and the clitoris are not related and a clitoris can run the usual ranges of sizes from small to large. Futanari pee through their female urinary meatus.

Pheromones are a thing, but it is normally actually very mild and super easy to resist. It just makes pleasure a bit stronger, impulses a little more impulsive and resistance a little less resist-y. Teen years are usually harder (no pun intended) as all teens regardless of gender deal with stronger hormone levels and sensitivities until things settle back. A Futanari is particularly sensitive to other's pheromones and can be considered to have an enhanced sense of smell. This can be difficult for teens in particular until they learn to manage their responses.

Futanari are able to impregnate and be impregnated. Futanari follow their species heat or mating system. Human Futanari are always "on" just like other humans, but follow the normal female pattern of menses. A Futanari may not always be identified at birth as some sexual organs can be very discrete. Usually, by the first menstruation, the aspect will become apparent as young people examine themselves, but a person could go their whole lives without knowing that they are one, depending on their sensitivity. The third gender is genetically inheritable and whole tribes consisting of only Futanari exist; these generally seem to be Amazonian in nature, but not always.
Chapter 13

It was a long four hours for the first day at school. What should have been a breeze of syllabus and introductions was a grind of endurance and false patience. She had no idea how other teenagers could walk around without tearing each other’s clothes off, the scents of attraction and come-hither were so thick sometimes. Taylor’s attention waxed and waned. She’d managed to gather her syllabi, homework, and to mangle two other desks over the course of those hours. She still wasn’t sure what the math teacher had been talking about, but math was math, so maybe it didn’t really matter.

In the class before the lunch break about five minutes away from the bell, she mentally chanted, ‘lunch, lunch, lunch,” while her right leg jackhammered the floor. Or rather she thought she’d been doing that until she realized that a couple of students were giggling on either side of her. Taylor would probably be super embarrassed about that later. But it was no surprise to anyone who was paying attention that she was literally the first person out the door when the bell rang. There might have been speed marks from her shoes left on the linoleum.

As she was leaving, she heard the history teacher muse, “Hungry Girl.”

Taylor did not actually run through the halls, so much as she walked very, very fast. She passed rows of lockers and made her way through the growing crowd toward the cafeteria. She had a plan and it was simple. She was going to eat. Then she was going to partake of as much of Lisa’s juices as could be had in the leftover time. It was a glorious plan. Visions of a half-dressed Lisa occupied her mind. She reminded herself, when the time came, to be careful of the clothes, but she planned on seeing breasts as soon as possible.

A student passing by tripped on their own feet, fumbling their open bottle, which spread its ice cold water everywhere. Taylor was capable of avoiding most punches, kicks and sundry attacks due to various reasons, not least that she was a magical girl. Somehow she was completely unable to dodge the water that splashed in her direction. It hit and she felt the slow-motion change start. She could already feel herself getting just a little taller, the evidence of which was her shirt riding up so that her belly was showing. She saw an open classroom and darted toward the door as if she’d intended to go that way.

But before she got in, another kid slipped in the pool of water and another spray of water went floating out in random directions; even more of it this time. The transition kicked it up a notch and she felt her butt expanding, as she ran into the room and slammed the door shut.

The change rolled over her. She transformed into the alien species that had drowned in the pool, an Arachne.

Taylor got even taller as her body elongated. She rose past six feet but did not hit seven, so she was well within human height range. She knew her Mom was even taller. Taylor could expect to grow more in the future. A full-grown Arachne could reach eight feet easy.

Another set of arms erupted out from her sides. They looked just as human/humanoid as her other arms and were just as functional. In this form, she wasn’t just ambidextrous. All four hands could operate together or separately from each other effectively. All four hands fell in the human range of the four fingers/one thumb combination.

Her legs changed, becoming thinner, longer and more articulated. More legs added themselves to the spider-like body and joined to the side of the abdomen. A very soft fuzz covered her lower half, abdomen, legs and feet. Her feet had cat-like bean-toes, with hook-like claws that would flip to catch
surfaces, making wall-crawling easy. It probably wouldn’t be too good for an enemy either. But they were fuzzy and cute. Her torso and everything that was above remained attractive and feminine, though some of the fuzz rose up her hips until it faded out to the skin. Her sex was definitely apparent near the join and easily accessible because it was tilted forward more than in her human form. Her pussy glistened with moisture and her clit was puffed out and ready for stimulation; mostly because she’d been seriously aroused previous to the change. If she had not been, it would have been set back a little more and covered by the fuzz protectively.

Fortunately, the school uniform covered top and bottom fairly well, considering. Though the shirt was hiked up, it did cover her breasts. The skirt covered part of the spider body and part of her human body. But the panties were basically gone forever, shredded into so much cloth; and they were nice ones too. Her stockings were gone too, but the shoes were in good condition on the floor.

The Arachne were a long-lived race and highly advanced civilization, that had lasted many thousands of years until the Enemy had come. Taylor’s originator had been one of a handful of escapees from one of the planets being attacked, racing through a portal. The drowning had been purely bad timing, stepping from one world filled with explosions, into one of the hundreds of small, but deep lakes and pools.

As an outsider, Taylor could not really see how the Arachne - as a people - had been defeated so easily, except to assume it had been treachery from the inside. She suspected that a coup had been originally intended, but what they got instead was a genocide. Oops?

Taylor had a generational memory of many, many techniques for building, constructing and crafting using the silk she could generate from her body. Though she was changed, Taylor still had her powers. The form was also markedly stronger, agile and faster. Her kind of Arachne were not actually “spiders,” despite appearance. She obviously had more than eight limbs; six legs, plus four arms made ten. But the spider iconography counted for other things and was descriptive enough. An Arachne could naturally summon spiders, or spider-like creatures, and command them. She could climb walls and carry things easily.

Arachne had eyes, but the majority were not visible to the naked human eye as they were very, very small and “covered” by skin. The eyes, save for her more human ones, could not usually be injured because of this. But Taylor had front, side and back vision. She did not have to turn her head to see. She just did so out of habit. Her two largest eyes looked perfectly human and were still hazel. Four dot-eyes were well hidden along the crown of her head at four points. Her naturally curly black hair provided more cover. She had two dot-eyes in the very back, near her spinnerets, of which she had three, which allowed her to manage the silks and back up easily. All of her eyes were far better than mere bug eyes. She could see great distances, normal distances and very close up as she will. Her sight was better than perfect.

Arachne were omnivorous, though she did have fangs - an inheritance of a past hunter/prey lifestyle. She could eat regular food cooked or uncooked. Arachne were not cannibals, nor prone to eat intelligent species. They had a good trade intergalactically, until the attacks.

Arachne had the same - or at least similar and compatible -kinds of sexual organs as many humanoids. If Taylor were to get impregnated in this form, she would have a live birth - usually one child per pregnancy, with random chances for twins or more, like a regular human. Arachne could lactate, as the breasts weren’t there just for appearances. Arachne could cross-breed, which meant she likely had the blood of other aliens in her veins, but Taylor didn’t know which specifically. But it also meant that should she and a human partner get it on, well… Maybe her mom was right to put all her girls on birth control before school started. Arachne, like the humans, had the three genders. The one who drowned in the pool had been Futanari.
Arachne, though they fit the image of the mythos of spider people, were not monsters in the
traditional sense of destroying people out of evil intent or sucking the life out of folk. Taylor might
have fangs, but she - or her originator - was not of the D&D Dryder type. The Arachne fell on the
good side of the scale. However, Arachne people were not pacifists. They fought for their freedom.
They just happened to lose.

When Taylor came down from the rush of change she looked around, hopeful that she hadn’t
actually run into a full classroom. She was gratified to see it was empty of any people and drew a
long breath of relief.

She checked her outfit, satisfied that things were still fairly pristine, if in need of a bit of adjustment.
Everything that should be covered technically was. She might have to talk to Crystal about
lengthening the skirt, just in case, things rode up. Of course, technically, she could fix it now, but
Crystal had such a fine skill with clothes, she’d like her opinion at least. Taylor might have an
instinct and some experience, but Crystal had practice and a dream.

Taylor noticed then that the little button was glowing, or rather web-lines of the button were
glowing. It was a nifty effect, but she had no idea what that was about. Taylor figured she could ask
her sister later.

Then, she began digging in her pack and pulled out her back up plan, a plain white baseball cap and
a sharpie marker. With a few strokes, she wrote, “Human!” on the cap. She put the cap on, stuck it
with a little sticky silk so it would stay on and put away the pen. Then she slung her bag over her
shoulder and - without really thinking about it - also secured it with a little silk.

If she were careful, she could get to the gym and then into a shower and everything would be fine.

Hopefully, she wouldn’t encounter anyone along the way. With that thought, she planted her palms
on the wall, then one of her legs and then as she trusted the situation more, all of them. She
clambered up and got positioned near the ceiling. With a few careful motions, she opened the door
and peeked out.

No one was looking up, nor in through the door and the passageway had cleared some.

It occurred to her that the majority of her sexual anxiousness had drifted away due to the panic of her
changing. Terror, a little-known cure-all. She could smell it too and that just made her think she
needed the shower more.

She didn’t know what her designated locker was, but she was pretty sure she was tall enough to reach the top of one if she needed her clothes regardless. So she took off her clothes, put it on top of a locker nearby and stealthed into the showers.

A few minutes later, warm water sluiced over her and transition happened again. She was back to normal. Turning off the water, she grabbed a towel intending to dry off. She stepped out of the shower.

Lisa held the baseball cap in her hands and was just shaking her head. She looked up at Taylor, cocked a brow and grinned. “Really?”

“It isn’t stupid if it works,” Taylor said, wrapping the towel around herself. “You’re missing lunch.”

Lisa smirked. “So are you.” She dropped the hat to a bench on the inside of the shower room. Then began undoing the top button of her shirt.

Taylor’s pulse jumped. She licked her lips and glanced around. “Here?”

“It’s going to be at least a half hour before anyone comes in. I think we can work with that.”

Taylor considered Lisa’s words, then undid her towel. She folded it in half lengthwise and laid it on the bench. Then she stepped forward, reaching. “Let me help you.”

They worked in silence, quickly divesting the blonde of her clothing. Taylor led Lisa into the shower stall she’d just departed. She turned on the shower, not because she intended to wash, but for the noise-cover of it.

Then they kissed, pushing against each other. It was as wonderful as Taylor “remembered.” Hot and sweet. Desire curled in her like smoke. Taylor trailed her hands along Lisa’s body, cupping her breasts. “I’ve missed you,” she said. Not even quite sure what that meant, because Lisa had always been around.

“I know,” Lisa responded, softly, layering kisses along Taylor’s neck and shoulder blades. “I need you, Taylor.”

They didn’t have the time for Taylor to focus like she would have liked, but she knew there were things that could be done. While cupping and playing with a breast with one hand, the other slid down, pausing for a moment to pet Lisa’s curls. Then she let her fingers stroke the lips and crease of Lisa’s sex, teasing only a little.

Lisa bucked at her hand. Taylor pressed in a little deeper, playing with her sister’s pearl, savoring the slick feel of her. She dropped her head to capture a pink nipple in her mouth and began twirling and pressing her tongue against it in accompaniment. Lisa’s quiet gasps and low moans spurred her on. Taylor’s own wetness was a small river down her leg. Her tongue extended and lengthened, startling her a little, but Lisa pressed Taylor’s head to her breast and didn’t allow the brunette to stop. So she stayed a bit, moving to the other breast.

Then, when Lisa seemed ready to let her, Taylor slid down the blonde’s front, dragging her wet hand up and tasting. Her eyes closed in pleasure. Lisa tasted of mint, a tingle on her tongue. It was irresistible.

Taylor slung one of Lisa’s legs over her shoulder so she could press in more closely. Lisa had one
hand in brunette hair and the other roved her own body, taking over from what Taylor had been doing so she could focus on the moment.

Taylor’s hands gripped Lisa’s hip and thigh as she began to slide and delve deeper. She groaned with how good Lisa tasted. Her sister’s leg wrapped more tightly around her, as she found the center and pushed - at first slow, but then quickly and more deeply and thickly than either would have expected. Lisa gasped with it, dropping both hands to Taylor’s head for support as she leaned back against the wall.

Taylor luxuriated in the taste, thrived on it. Her thick tongue swirled and pressed and drove in and out. She pressed as deep as she could, enjoying how tightly the other young woman had begun to clench around her.

When Lisa quickened, it was like lightning striking from her tongue to her groin. Empathetic shocks roiled through her with every sweet pulse as Lisa strove not to scream it out. She was delicious. Scrumptious.

Taylor could have kept going.

Her hair was pulled, hard enough she looked up, but not so hard it did more than hurt-tingle-feel really good. Her eyes nearly rolled back in her head when saw who had gained her attention. The hand holding her hair fisted, pulling a little more.

“Now girls,” their mother’s voice was a caution. She tisked. “What is it with all of you today? I’ve found four of you canoodling. Was coming back to school that exciting?”

Lisa shuddered out as Taylor began licking her clean. But eventually, she was able to compose an answer, “No. Pheromones. All over. It’s like being slapped in the face with lust, constantly. I can handle it. But Taylor’s basically being slammed by shots of it from everyone she passes.”

“Oh. I see.” Annette’s fingers loosened on Taylor’s scalp and she rubbed the spot where she’d pulled gently. Taylor closed her eyes in cat-like pleasure. “You need to stand up, sweetheart. No time for shilly-shallying.”

Taylor whined a little, but she released Lisa’s thigh and hip and stood up. As she did so, Annette’s hand followed the path of least resistance, drawing down from scalp to neck to the curve of Taylor’s back.

“We really do need a safe word. Or something.” Lisa commented breathlessly, once she was standing on her own again. But then she leered, “Though I think I could have gone a little longer.”

Annette leaned in and kissed Lisa’s cheek and then her lips, letting the kiss linger warmly. “That is why I stopped you, dear. Time is of the essence. Now, let’s take care of Taylor quickly and get everything back on track.”

Lisa’s smile matched her eyes, in that they were both wide. “Okay.” She looked at Taylor, who seemed as if she were just coming out of a trance. “Heya sis. Feeling up to this?” She leaned forward, kissing her sister as she touched her intimately.

Annette wrapped her arm around Taylor’s body, cupping one of her breasts, while the other hand roamed and touched both of her daughters in slow caresses.

Taylor’s hips pushed against Lisa’s palm. She managed a verbal answer to match the nod. “Yes. Please.”
Lisa’s kisses warmed and deepened as her fingertips explored and played. Annette was solid as a wall, as Taylor canted to let Lisa in. The blonde’s thumb slipped along an invisible line, setting off preliminary tremors of pleasure before she even touched the jewel. Then she pushed in with two fingers

As soon as her thumb rolled along and around two sensitive spots Taylor clenched hard and then sparked into full release when that same touch wound around to her feminine jewel. Her world went white. Annette covered Taylor’s mouth, muffling the erotic shout that crashed through.

As she regained her silence and her chest heaved, her mom released her mouth, tenderly kissing Taylor’s cheek and the side of her lips. “Better?”

A small number of tears rolled from the side of Taylor’s eyes, mostly from the pure relief. She nodded, still not quite able to form words.

“Mom?” Lisa caught their attention. She looked down to where her hand lightly covered Taylor. They all could see something had changed. There was a bulge and it wasn’t getting any smaller. Any moment or wrong move (or would that be right, so right) and the pouch would reveal the full bloom if Taylor didn’t get things under control.

Taylor groaned and hung her head. This time the tears weren’t about relief and she struggled to stop them because her pride was getting more wounded by the second.

“Oh honey,” Annette said. “Is this what you’ve been so upset about?”

“It was just there one day. I can usually keep it down, but it won’t go away. I can’t think. It just…” Taylor waved her hands in the air, “… does what it wants. And it shouldn’t be doing this now, because I feel great. Honest. I did. Just a second ago. And…”

“Taylor,” Lisa said slowly. “I hate to say this, but I think that the reason it’s there *is* because you feel good.”

“Pfft,” Taylor responded. “It would be there if I had a moment of gee, the sun looks pretty today. Or the water drops sparkle just right as Cherry gets out of the swimming pool. Or I see a pair of panties reflected on the floor. Or some guy’s hair is shiny. This morning Dad said I looked nice and things got tight and then when mom said good morning it tried to lift off like a rocket. It’s just been awful.” She angrily wiped the tears away, as her Mom led her to turn around.

“Look at me, Taylor,” Annette said.

Taylor couldn’t really help doing so. Annette was as jaybird as Lisa and herself; also completely gorgeous. A part of her nearly commented on it, but the serious expression on her Mom’s face calmed her.

Annette cupped her eldest daughter’s face, helping her to keep focused. “First, let me remind you, there is nothing to be ashamed of. Your body apparently is rolling a bit more sexual maturity your way and that happens. Everything you’ve described is something others have gone through. You are definitely not alone. It will get better.

“Second, I realize now what you were trying to talk about earlier. I apologize for not understanding your message. But Taylor, clarity is important. I have many abilities, but mind reading is not among the skills I have currently.”

“Are you sure, because you got here pretty quickly,” Lisa quipped.
Annette chuckled. “You can thank Crystal for that. She came and got me as soon as she realized what had happened.”

“How would she know? She wasn’t anywhere near…” Taylor paused. “The buttons. She made an alarm system.”

“Yes,” Annette confirmed. “Crystal has had a few ideas she wanted to try out, but the first one was a simple alert system. We’ll have to talk to her about how or if it integrates with our home network.”

Taylor groaned. “Neo. I left her at home.”

“You were in kind of a rush,” Lisa said.

“And now we know why,” confirmed Annette. She pulled Taylor in close and gave her a full body hug, and oddly enough, rather than being overstimulated, she was comforted and things started calming down inside.

Lisa hugged them both from behind and they stayed that way for a moment. Then Annette moved and said, “Unfortunately, we can’t all stand here and hug naked forever. Taylor we’ll have to take the conversation about your new Futanari aspect later tonight after you’ve done your homework.” She let go and said, “Get cleaned up and get dressed. If things get difficult again, come to get me.”

“I don’t want to disturb you while you’re in class.”

“Then let’s hope things don’t get difficult.”

Annette smiled and kissed both her daughters one more time. Then she said, “Let’s try to avoid having these issues at school, as much as possible. We don’t know how people will respond. I realize some things can’t be helped. The water that splashed you wasn’t your fault. I know you had to move fast to fix that problem. That’s not what I am talking about.

“What I am trying to say is that choosing to have sex in the showers in school may be a fantastic turn on, but may not have been your wisest moment; certainly not your safest choice. I can understand the need to resolve strong physical urges, but not everyone is open-minded or good. No matter how urgent things are, you will not combust or die. But what if you had been caught? Someone might think to harm you, either physically or emotionally. Unless you are good with letting the whole world know, someone might try to blackmail you, and then what would you do? You have to think safety first, for yourself, your family and your friends.

“Also, keep in mind these people who surround you, are our neighbors. They are a private and respectful people. Yes, they have erotic and romantic literature that is just as spicy as one could desire, but such things are not at the forefront. There is a time and a place, usually private in nature or shared only among friends. Thus we should do our best not to embarrass them or give them difficulty in their heart as much as possible. Our circumstances are not theirs and should only be shared between family and true friends who have trust in each other.

“That said, I will tell you what I told Amy and Vicky. I’m not here to shame you. This is why I am naked with you. So you will know that you are safe in my presence, always. You are my darlings. And I want you to know that desire and sex are natural and normal and can be lovely ways of expressing how one feels toward another. But, while sex is a joy I will not deny you, it should remain at home or in safe places, regardless of whom you are with - family or friend. We’ll talk about what those other safe places might be at a later time, as a family. Probably this weekend when your father and I have had a chance to discuss it.” Annette glanced around. “This might qualify, some. But I’d rather there be three of you at such times, so there is one as a lookout than to have two of you
so vulnerable to discovery. Do you understand?”

Both Taylor and Lisa nodded.

Annette said, “Good.” Then she gave them both hugs, one at a time. She grabbed a towel on the way out and gathered her clothes from the bench. She turned and looked at them warmly as she dressed. “I love you both, very much. Let’s see if we can make it to the end of school without another crisis.”

“Oh, Mom,” they both responded, the words laced with the feeling of “love you too.”

Then Annette checked herself in the mirror and said, “Everyone knows how hungry you were, Taylor. Make sure you eat something before you go to class.”

“Will do, Mom!” Taylor blushed furiously. She knew that would come back to bite her.

Lisa turned to Taylor after their mom left, and as they returned to the shower. “We are so lucky she’s our Mom. Anyone else and that might not have gone well.”

“No lie,” Taylor said. She looked down at the bulge that still hadn’t quite departed and smacked it a little. “You shut up!” The smacking sort of had the opposite effect. Taylor sighed.

Lisa cackled a little and then said, “I want to see it when it’s out you know.”

Taylor blushed, a bit shyly. “I figured.”

Lisa squeezed her from the side. “Well, let’s do what Mom told us to and get you fed,” she said cheerfully.

It didn’t take too very long, as neither young women let themselves get distracted, though they did help each other finish bathing. Then they helped each other get dressed. Taylor remained panty-less, but she had some gym shorts in her pack so she wore those under her skirt. Hopefully, she wouldn’t transition and lose those too.

They left the locker room and headed to the grounds to finish the lunch hour and try to eat Cherry’s provisions.

Behind them, still in the locker room where she’d gone to cry after being teased by the boys for being a strong girl, Akane held a white cap in her lap and contemplated what she had learned from her teacher and about her new schoolmates.
Youthful Arachne start small and grow, just like human beings. A full-grown Arachne can reach eight feet easy. Arachne have 10 limbs: 4 arms, 6 legs. They are humanoid at the top and spider-like at the bottom. Arachne are multi-dextrous, capable of astonishing feats. They can use each hand individually or synchronously. The hands have a palm, four fingers, and one thumb - to each hand. The legs are powerful, capable of leaping incredible distances, impactful defense and of crawling up all sorts of surfaces easily. Their toes are "bean" toes, with cat-like hooks that spring out. Arachne are soft to the touch, with fuzz (or fur) that covers the abdomen, legs, feet, and trunk.

The gender of an Arachne is protected by the soft cover of their fur but is generally apparent when they are naked. Arachne have the same - or at least similar and compatible - kinds of sexual organs as many humanoids. They are live-birthers as opposed to ovipositors. They usually have one child per pregnancy, with random chances for twins or more, like a regular human. Arachne are able to lactate, as the breasts are mammary glands. They are warm-blooded, which means they are mammals.

Arachne can cross-breed and are similar to other species in that they have three genders. The one who drowned in the pool at Jusenkyo was a Futanari. Which means, in theory, if two people were exposed to the pool, they could rejuvenate the species.

The Arachne were a long-lived race and highly advanced civilization that had lasted many thousands of years until their culture was decimated by outside forces, brought about by an attempt at a coup for power.

Arachne have genetic memories and are able to pass on techniques from their culture that would help an individual survive on their own. Some family memories/secrets may also be passed down this way.

Arachne have eight eyes, six of which are not visible to the naked human eye as they are very, very small and "covered" by skin. The eyes, save for the humanoid ones, are rarely injured because of their tiny size and protections. Arachne have front, side and back vision, but they also have a fully mobile neck, allowing better awareness of their surroundings. The two largest eyes appear "human" and can have a range of colors. Arachne can see in the dark. Four dot-eyes can be found around the crown of the humanoid head at four points. Two dot-eyes are found in the very back, near the spinnerets, of which there are three. This allows better management of the creation of silk. Arachne can see great distances, normal distances and very close up as they will. Arachne rarely have sight problems, but if there is some, it is usually with the humanoid pair.

Arachne are omnivorous. They do have fangs, which is an inheritance of a past hunter/prey lifestyle. Arachne can eat regular food cooked or uncooked. Arachne are not cannibals, nor prone to eat intelligent species. They have/had a good trade intergalactically, until the attacks.

Arachne, though they fit the image of the mythos of spider people, are not monsters in the traditional sense of destroying people out of evil intent or sucking the life out of folk. Arachne might pass as Dryders, but are not Dryders. Arachne usually fall on the good side of the scale but have the same range of 'morals' as other species. The Arachne people are/were not pacifists. They fought for their freedom. They just happened to lose.
Chapter 14

Taylor was a different person after lunch, much less tense and aggravated; which meant she was able to concentrate on the classes. That was actually really awesome, even though she thought she already knew some of this stuff. Not all of it, but there were points of familiarity; those previous lives knocked at her soul again. Wait, did she fail to graduate twice? It did seem as if she prioritized saving the world over school fairly consistently.

But that didn’t mean that she wasn’t gradually being affected by the sexual energy of the other students - and some of the teachers - as time passed. Still, she’d seen her sisters in passing or one or two of them shared a class together and that made things easier. No one randomly spilled water on her again before the last course. She didn’t dare finish the thought for fear of taunting Murphy. Instead, she went to class.

Her last course was gym class, shared with Amy and Crystal and also, Akane, whom she recognized from Homeroom and English. Amy waved her over and, once she’d reached her, dragged Taylor in for a hug, pressing her cheek against her sister.

Taylor felt a wave of relief flow through her body, as the slow pressure that had been building eased back. Amy whispered, “Lisa told us what happened and normally, I’d ask first, but you had a look in your eyes.”

Taylor squeezed back and said, “It helped. Thanks.” Then she eased back, and turned and gave Crystal a hug.

“Thanks for the button and for telling Mom.”

Crystal hugged back tightly and patted Taylor’s back. “I’m just glad I could help. Heck, I’m just glad it actually worked.” She fidgeted a little as they parted, but looked adorable as she did so. Taylor glanced down at the book on the stadium bench. “You sure you want to leave that here?”

Crystal nodded. “I’m sure. I never know when I’ll have an idea. So I like to have it handy. Exercise is supposed to stimulate ideas, so it makes it twice as important. I could have a great idea while we’re running.”

“That’s a great point! Exercise always helps me to think!” Cherry said, bouncing into the conversation with her usual verve. “I’m sure our teacher will appreciate your motivation when we get going! But how are you going to write something while we’re running?”

“Trust me, I got this.” Crystal’s eyes gleamed with calculations and hidden agendas.

Taylor considered how she might try it and could think of at least two ways she could manage it. She had no idea how Crystal might do so, however. Before she could ask, a whistle blew and the class started.

Cherry literally Yayed.

Forty-five minutes later, Taylor was as informed as anyone else on the protocols of being in the gym, using the lockers and the shower room, and on what to expect out of the class; plus having a run around the track with a herd of other girls for “assessment.”
Taylor had to hold back some given her real abilities, but then, so did her sisters. Their speed, endurance, and strength had increased quite a bit since Jusenkyo. They’d also been through the chemical process of lifting, which was designed to aid them in their duties. Combined with that Taylor now knew she and her sisters had powers layered on that and she had gotten more and more used to it.

Cherry struggled to stay as slow as the rest, pacing just behind the fastest regular student. Crystal was toward the back of the pack, but there deliberately, calling out encouragement. Amy was in the middle, with Taylor, just picking a place to run. Either of them could have slammed past the fastest runner without breathing hard; except for Cherry. Cherry would have outrun them and pretty much anyone, as speed was her thing. Her other sisters were also all beyond the scale of normal.

But they had learned not to show it too much because, thanks to their parents having good sense, a solid part of the last of their summer had been practice on how to manage their pacing and strengths so as to not be obvious. Now, as her memories were coming back, Taylor knew she could appreciate the foresight.

On the other hand, the people of Furinkan seemed to also range from human-normal to just above, depending. She could also perceive other young women straining to hold back, including Akane Tendo.

Whatever the case, as they went through gym class, no one once made fun of her. It was kind of awesome, especially when compared to aspects of her past lives.

She considered that Amy’s touch had been a true gift because it seemed like for the first time in days she was thinking clearly. It was a nice change. She felt more pieces of her “true” self clicking in now as if something in her had been waiting for her head to clear. Or maybe all the phys-ed teachers were right, that running made for good thinking and feelings.

Either way, the familiarity of pacing herself while striding at speed, settled something within her and she almost regretted it, when the coach called time.

Then the class was over and the majority of the girls started leaving for the locker room and then on home. Except, apparently for her sisters and herself. Taylor absently noticed that Akane seemed to linger a bit, standing around indecisively before being called by one of her friends. That was interesting, but as far as she knew, they were all supposed to meet up after practice anyway. So she could ask what that was about later.

So they waited, and soon all the sisters were gathered. Then they waited a little longer. “Lisa,” Taylor began to query.

“I have no idea. The schedule says after school - cheerleading. I fully expected, well… a team.”

Then the coach was there, tall, slim and with her black hair tied back. Annette smiled. “Good news girls, I have the answer for you. You are the team.”

Taylor wasn’t sure why she had a moment of dread. Yet, when her mom got their attention and had them take a seat on the stadium seating so they could chat, she was able to let it go. Then they talked cheerleader and, once again, Taylor wondered how she’d ended up here - right until Cherry bounced in giddiness.

Oh yeah. That.

Naturally, after some discussion and because it was horribly obvious who should be captain, Cherry
was made the team captain and Vicky the co-captain. Lisa and Taylor were assigned to coming up with the “Plans,” and possibly scenic backgrounds and what not. Taylor wasn’t exactly sure. Crystal and Amy would work the costumes and be keeping everyone in one piece, should things happen. After all, despite appearances, Cheerleading was an active sport - involving a lot of different skills, including Gymnastics, Dance, and other aspects of strength and agility. Not to mention keeping people on their toes and energized. The whole team would work on creating sets. But their Mom’s intent was to put Martial in the Cheerleading Martial Art. So they would be eventually competing against other teams.

An hour later, Taylor understood her original reaction, but she was amused with herself anyway. It was the anticipatory gleam in their Mom’s eye. Taylor did not imagine it related to anything that she needed to worry about, but that gleam was the kind of thing that tickled her in moist places and it wasn’t helping her state of mind.

Still, thanks to Amy randomly brushing up against her, she kept a grip and somehow maintained her cool. Which was good, because it was all a sit-down kind of meeting anyhow.

At the end, Lisa told their Mom of Akane’s invitation. This led to a decision by all of them to go, which led to a decision by their Mom to have those who needed showers to go get them and make it quick. “No shilly-shallying,” she added. Which prompted a blush from both Lisa and Taylor that neither were willing to explain.

The intention was that they would all meet again by the exit at the front door. Taylor, by that time, was thinking again enough to route her critters through the school and to get a general feel for the area. She left half of the spiders alone and partly watched as the spiders moved out of her control, into another's - her mom’s. It was a bit eerie but not as strange as the burgeoning crowd just at the gates of the school and outside the back door.

“What the fresh heck?”

It wasn’t just that there were a lot of boys, but they were geared up and weaponized. As was usual with a high-school fight, an audience had formed. It looked as if the “guest of honor,” had yet to arrive, as other than standing around and psyching each other up, no one had yet done anything. But it was basically a sea of people.

Taylor remembered the fighting that had been going on in the morning and wondered if it were related.

Just in the front door, not yet having exited, Akane Tendo stood alone, glaring anxiously out the window.

Not that Taylor blamed her one bit. That crowd situation was unnerving and utterly odd. It made her hurry through her shower and into some clean clothes. Stuffing her gym clothes away for washing later, she started to rush past.

Amy stopped her. “What’s got you in such a rush?”

Taylor said, “Akane Tendo is at the front door of the school and waiting for us, as planned. However, just at the gate, both inside and outside of the school there is a mass of teen boys. They’ve got weapons, Ames, and they are riled up like ants. I have no idea what is going on, but it feels way off.”

Amy had her own memory sets and knew that if Taylor said there was a bad crowd, there was one. “I'll let the others know.”
“Right. I’m going to go talk to Ms. Tendo and see what is up. I normally wouldn’t drag an adult into this, but hey, I think we need an adult.”

“Gotcha,” Amy confirmed. “Will tell Mom.”

Although, Taylor considered, if her Mom had already latched control over some spiders, then she might already be in the know. Still, “Sounds perfect!” Then, because she could, she hastened out and down the hall - but did not run.

he arrived first as she’d had a head start. But she noted that Akane had been joined by another girl with brown hair with a chin-length bob cut. “Hey!” Taylor waved. “Noticed you were waiting for us, Akane. Mom and everyone should be here soon. Anyone know what the heck that nonsense out front is about?”

The other girl looked a bit startled, but Akane was blushing, while obviously trying not to do so. Taylor experienced a fresh burst of pheromones mixed with anxiety and anger. It was an oddly heady mix, but Amy had her at such a low pressure, she hardly felt it as more than a sweet burst.

“Well, if my sister isn’t going to introduce us, I’m Nabiki.” The other girl then hooked her thumb towards the mass outside. “And those are the idiots who are trying to date my sister.”

Taylor noted the tone of envy and wondered what that was about. She took a moment to assess the scene again through her swarm, but she saw nothing that indicated a desire for dating and a lot of indications of the desire for a beat-down. “I don’t see it. I see a bunch of boys ready to crush someone. This is bad.”

Akane looked up. “You see it too?”

“See what?” Annette queried, as she strode into view with the rest of her daughters.

Taylor said, “According to this one, the boys out there are courting. According to this one, I think they’ve been doing way worse than that.” She turned to Akane. “What, exactly, has been happening. Tell it to me, as if you believed I…” She waved Lisa over… “no, WE... would believe you.”

Akane looked at both of them, blush still hard on her face, but with an intensity of examination that made Taylor want to check if she had a smudge somewhere. Then the other girl said, “It started a while ago. I told Tatewaki Kuno that I wouldn’t date him, so he makes this announcement that any boy who wants to date me, has to beat me in a fight. So for a while, every boy shows up in the morning to attack me. Then this other boy starts coming to school and clears them out of the way because they’re in his way. So the boys start gathering after school too.”

Taylor looked startled. “Wait, they have to beat *you*? That makes no sense.”

“It makes sense if you know that Akane is the strongest girl in the school,” Nabiki said.

Lisa and Taylor looked at each other. Taylor said, “No. No, it really doesn’t. It would make sense if he’d said they had to beat *him*. But they’re literally going after a girl. Which, in pretty much every culture I know of, is just right out. Unless there’s a competitive match or something. Right now, looking from the outside, this is straight up assault by a bunch of horny guys, which puts them all just short of rapists. This Kuno. He’s an instigator, maybe a Low-level Master?” she turned the question to Lisa.

Lisa corrected and confirmed, having observed body reactions, “Obnoxiously Low. He’s got esteem issues and is making up for it somehow. He no longer even goes to school here, yet is somehow ruling by fist and fiat. The rest of the story goes, he’s the top dog and somehow those guys are
subordinate. They’re an informally composed gang too scared to fight him, so they’re terrorizing Akane instead.” She gave the girl a brief, flickering non-smile, “Not that she can’t handle herself. But I don’t think she ever wanted to date anyone. Certainly not now, isn’t that right?”

“I just wanted to get through school, first. I wasn’t interested in dating at all. Kasumi said it was okay if I wasn’t ready. But everyone else thinks because I’m pretty I should be dating.” Akane said. “I never wanted this. Never.”

“So, just to be clear, You’ve been assaulted every day because you refused to consent to an older guy’s proposition, by a gang of boys (to whom you also have never wanted to battle) - who, being a mob, if they’d been successful in winning, would have carried it out to its logical conclusion and, trust me, dating isn’t that conclusion. Am I hearing all this correctly?”

Nabiki started laughing. “Come on, surely you can’t mean…”

“Ms. Tendo, not to put too fine a point in this, but if you aren’t going to be helpful, shut up. This is absolutely what is going on - and for apparently far too long. No, wait, you can tell me one thing. Why hasn’t anyone stopped this?”

Nabiki looked startled. Nabiki knew she was a pot stirrer. She knew she had a thing for blackmail and inappropriate bouts of capriciousness. She had flaws. But she did, technically, love her sister. Even if she was jealous of all the attention she’d been getting and, perhaps, had done her part to make her sister pay for it … by making things worse.

Oh.

This was…

“She was mastered too,” Lisa said. “No. It’s a weird cultural thing. I’m missing a piece of information here. But still, she was following the herd, at least.”

“I hate that about High School,” Taylor said. “It’s just the worst, the social pressure to conform, the fish-lens perspective about everything and people trying to avoid getting caught in crossfires so they either let it happen or contribute, because hey if one person’s jabbing someone with a stick, everyone should.” No, she wasn’t bitter. Not at all. A sound of an angry storm seemed to gather; only it sounded like bugs and danger.

Taylor’s expression had that layer of neutral that spoke of an underlayer of seething anger. “But, since we now know it’s some bullshit bullying, I going to put on the official hat.” She reached into her pack but was stalled by her Mother’s hand.

“Let me ask a question first.” Annette looked firmly at Akane, taking in Nabiki too. She said, very formally, “Ms. Akane Tendo, have you tried to report this to officials, such as your principal, and what was their response?”

Akane looked at Nabiki, whose lips were tightly compressed. Then she remembered a thing that she’d recently overheard about trust and being of another culture - admittedly it was a private conversation, but she had been thinking about it since - and thought, perhaps, an explanation was in order. “I tried, at first. But this is Furikan. Kuno made the announcement in his Senior Address of how it would be. Our town was founded by Martial Artists. It’s… The principal said it was a legitimate challenge claim, and if I intended to be my father’s heir then I would just have to deal with it and never let the boys beat me or I should give up and let them have me. Or date his son, like he wanted. And that was that.”
Literal sparks seemed to come out of Annette’s eyes. “I see.” Her tone said not only did she see, but heads would roll. Also, possibly certain other body parts. “This will be handled.”

In the space of a heartbeat, she pulled Akane into a hug. She looked at her girls, all of whom were in various states of righteous anger. “Is there anything else we should know?”

Nabiki cleared her throat. “There has also been… a campaign of teasing by the boys, and… uhm…”

“Some of the girls?” Taylor led.

Nabiki nodded, a little shamefaced. “It looked like she was hogging all the boys.”

“How would…” Taylor was at a loss for words. As it was, she was barely holding back on the swarm to keep them from devouring the mob outside. Not that they seemed to notice in their anticipatory rilement.

“You instigated sometimes,” Lisa said, voice surprisingly neutral, “Because you envied your sister the attention.”

Nabiki looked down at the floor, unable to look at her sister. “I don’t really regret things much,” the girl said. “I don’t really know how to.” She slid her gaze to her sister. “But Akane is mine, I mean… my sister. I would do a lot of things, but I wouldn’t… It was never my intention that she should be so truly harmed. I never considered the possibility, or what it might look like to others. And she is very strong and capable.”

“You didn’t understand the possible consequences.” Amy supplied. “Teens often don’t. The brain is still developing and decision making is sometimes compromised by … well… a lot of things. There was a time when I would have said I couldn’t help your issues, as I think it is a brain thing. But…with your permission, I could give you a conscience.”

Nabiki looked properly horrified. Amy shrugged and looked in the direction of where Akane was crying against their mother’s breasts. “Think about it. This likely is not going to be the first time you’ve made poor choices based on lack of Emotional IQ.”

Taylor looked at Amy in surprise. “I thought you didn’t do brains.”

“Which I was that?” Amy said, half-facetiously. “And, I don’t have to do brains. I can whip up a plant that would cure the ailment.”

Taylor blinked a moment and then considered. “Okay then. That works.”

Annette rubbed Akane’s back, then gently set her away. “Now there are several things that are going to happen. First, no one leaves this foyer until I’ve made an announcement. Second, when I return, we will all go out together and we will go visit the Tendo Dojo, as planned. Third, Amy reel your plants in. Taylor, do the same with the swarm. No one is getting eaten or throttled this afternoon. Tomorrow maybe, if they don’t heed my warning, but not today. Everyone gets a single chance, as per our family RP protocol. Agreed?”

Both Nabiki and Akane were startled. “What?”

“I wear many hats,” the teacher said, not really explaining anything. Then in a flash of light and some artful body shots, she was revealed to be in full, if amazingly skimpy, Royal Police regalia, high heels and the badge at her belt. At one side of her hip was a pistol. At the other a whip. Her other weapons were hidden.
Then she stepped out of the door. The sound of a whip crack thundered across the yard, loud enough to startle everyone in range of the school. “Your attention, please!”

A second whipcrack, this time, not just the sound, but the image of a whip snapping high in the sky, sparking a crack of what looked like lightning.

Lisa side spoke to Taylor, “I am totally borrowing that trick when I can.”

Taylor nodded, agreeing that it looked cool. She’d been concentrating on pulling her swarm back and even she’d been startled.

Then, as if over some invisible announcement system, Annette’s voice was heard. “This is the Royal Police. I am Captain Hebert and this assembly is now a formal short court.” The next sound was that loud and encompassing hammer thump, as an image of a judge’s gavel hitting a block was displayed in the sky. Annette’s voice rose above them like thunder, “This is your first and final warning. All students engaged in the harassment, assault and/or abuse of Akane Tendo will cease these activities permanently or face punishment and/or execution. Akane Tendo and, indeed, any of the Girls in this School are not free game for you filthy Animals!” Rage colored her words as the whip swirled around to make a perfect crack, which was followed by a burst of wind and air that bowled everyone in the crowd over.

Taylor, and her sisters all turned and looked at Cherry, who looked unrepentant, but not at all innocent. “What?”

Annette continued, “The RP laws provide that anyone, including students, retain the right of choice of partners, dates or personal agency, so long as they are not criminals. These are not abrogated by random declarations of ownership or claim by another student, adult, man or woman no matter how publically given or driven by a previous cultural standard. This is not *hard* people.” An image of the RP constitution unrolling appeared in the sky. Articles were underlined and highlighted.

Each word was clear as a bell, a death knell. “So be it known, anyone caught provoking others to violence against another for the purposes of coercing someone into dating or sex is engaging in an illegal behavior, subject to penalties up to death. Anyone doing violence against another for the purpose of coercing someone into dating or unwilling sexual activity is engaging in an illegal behavior, subject to penalties up to death. Anyone doing violence for the purpose of forcing unwilling sexual behavior or submission is engaging in illegal behavior, subject to penalties up to death. Which will be, if discovered, as instantaneous as I can make it.”

With each pronouncement, Annette, in her RP uniform, seemed to grow taller and more dangerous, with shadows clouds and lighting perfect for putting the fear of angry Kami in people. The whip slithered dangerously in her hands and at her feet, ready to crack at any moment. Doom was in the air, as the chitters of Taylor’s swarm emphasized the eeriness of the moment.

This time everyone stared at Taylor. “What? If Cherry can help, I can help. And I’m still doing what Mom said to do, no one is getting eaten.” She glared out at the mob, as she searched for the ringleader. Too bad she didn’t know what he looked like. “Yet.” She tried to make it sound casual. “Say, Akane, what does this Kuno guy look like.”

Akane who could hardly believe what she was seeing, but as she had yet observed a lot in her young life, she managed - not to be defiant - but perhaps to have a moment of wisdom. She looked at the little button on Taylor’s collar, noting the spider and avoided the lanky brunette’s eyes when she answered, “I don’t think I should tell you that, Taylor. I don’t think sensei Captain Hebert would approve.”
Crystal laughed. It wasn’t spooky at all, but somehow the innocence of it seemed a little out of place and thus scarier. “She’s got you there, Taylor.”

Nabiki quivered beside Akane, speechless, yet somehow feeling more elated with each passing second. She did not know who these people were, but it seemed they had no qualms about showing their power to her. It was amazing. True, she could never take real advantage of it, but still… she considered what would be needed to blackmail such people and then reconsidered when she remembered the right to summary judgment was absolute in the RP. Nabiki nibbled her lower lip. Such a terrible dilemma.

She briefly, for the first time in her life, contemplating not pursuing a business degree, but then she remembered she liked having a lot of money. She considered that she might need to clean up some of her money-making schemes though. Just to be on the safe side.

Outside, the impromptu lecture continued.

“You may expect a school assembly on the topic this week and that all parents of every male or female who has participated in this shameful display will be informed. Punishments will be recommended in order to avoid more permanent solutions.” An image of a guillotine appeared in the air, with the sharp metal blade falling down quickly. “This reprehensible gathering is now to disperse and not to resume, at any time, or any place. You are now excused, so LEAVE!” It was the last whip crack, again backed by a powerful burst of wind that pushed everyone head over heels, this time accompanied by the heat of fire that scorched at the feet and a light-show of pyrotechnics, that had everyone scattering and running like rats.

This time no one stared at any of the sisters, but flames could be seen sliding around Vicky’s fingertips and Lisa’s hands had sparks rolling around them for a few brief moments.

“On the plus hand, no one is dead.” Crystal noted. “So no cleanup!”

“On the minus hand, no one is dead,” ground out Taylor, still angry at the whole thing. “And no clean up would mean a good example for a while.”

Lisa patted her shoulder. “Don’t worry. Someone will try to test things out. I’m pretty sure Mom won’t even blink an eye if they go missing.”

Nabiki gulped and made a mental note reaffirming her decision to clean up her act a bit, as things went silent for a bit. Akane fidgeted a little, wondering what she’d invoked by allowing these people to hear her story. But then, Victoria drew near. “Buck up, Akane. I know it seems weird. But it’s okay to ask for help. No one, even if they are strong, should have been going through what you’ve been through. It should have been put to a stop early on.”

“It was a test?” Akane tried the justification in her head. It didn’t quite work.

“No. It was sexual harassment disguised as a test. Now, I get the pun for getting hit on, but honestly, that was too literal. Did you feel any interest or excitement in battle, I mean sexually?”

Akane blushed at the implication but rapidly shook her head. “No. I mean, a battle can be fun, but it’s not exciting to me in that way.”

“Then we haven’t taken anything away that was important to you.” Akane considered that for a moment and then smiled because she realized it was true. She received a gentle shoulder pat.

“Think it’s safe to go out?” Taylor asked, considering the options.
“You want to test Mom on this?” Cherry asked, incredulous.

Taylor glanced back out, where she noticed her Mom was still in thunder RP mode. “I’ve reconsidered any brilliant plan I might have been considering.”

“Well, there’s your answer,” Lisa said. Then she turned to the Tendos. “So, Akane, the bully boys, and girls should leave you alone now. I think if you’re okay with it, just as insurance one of us might join in walking you to and from home for a while.”

“You don’t have to,” Akane started.

“Oh, don’t worry. We know that. We want to,” Cherry interjected. “It’d only be for a week or two until things are definitely settled. No doubt there’s going to be a confrontation or two. And, if you’re feeling up to pointing out anyone in particular who has been bothering you, please do let us know. But… we should caveat that…”

“Don’t be pointing out anyone not guilty. Our solutions are of the permanent kind,” Crystal said, cautioning. “In the RP, we don’t play around with evil. We destroy it. Now, I think we can go a little softer on humans myself, but the guidelines in the RP are designed to stop this kind of nonsense cold; soft judgments can be rare and few in between. The only reason Mom was as nice as she was out there was that those were students and she likes to give students second chances, even when they’ve been bad. She might even give third chances. But never more.”

“Oh,” peeped out Akane.

“Does she,” Nabiki cleared her throat, “… does she offer other kinds of punishment. I mean, if the bad things aren’t too bad.”

Lisa gave the girl a knowing look and offered a cat-like smile. “You could try it and see, but I wouldn’t recommend it. At least, not this week.” She glanced back out. “Or the next. I’ll let you know when.”

Nabiki flushed hard, knowing she was caught out, yet oddly pleased by it.

Annette didn’t come back in for five minutes, but she did return. By the time she passed through the door, she was dressed in the pencil skirt and blouse she’d worn as a teacher. Her hair was down and a couple of buttons were undone, but she otherwise looked as calm and pleasant as before. She pressed her glasses up. “Alright girls. I think it’s time to go to the Dojo and meet the rest of Akane’s family, don’t you agree?”

A/N - I admit, I’m a little nervous about this one. Honestly, it has a lot less bloodshed than I anticipated. And a part of me wonders if it’s maybe a little hypocritical, and then, I remember Akane *never* asked for this or signed on for the bullcrap. So...

Also, technically, Ranma is supposed to be a comedy, but the whole thing on that is so... what it is... needed addressing. This doesn't mean there won't be martial arts battles. It just means the foundations for *why* there are battles will change.

As always, though I haven't said this yet, thank you for reading. I hope you enjoyed it.
Chapter 15

Taylor was impressed with how peaceful the dojo compound seemed. The Tendo family lived in a two-story house which was situated near the training center, with a garden - with lawn and trees as per any other - and beautiful pool center-piece. Taylor made sure to make a compliment to the sisters, as they entered the compound.

Taylor’s family probably made quite the sight, considering how many of them there were. Akane led them to the dojo, asking them politely to wait for a few moments. Then she and her sister went to their house to find their father or their sister.

The man who next arrived was tall and broad-shouldered. He had long black hair down to his shoulders and a mustache. He wore a traditional neutral colored gi and a very big smile; massive. “Welcome to the Tendo Dojo! Akane and Nabiki,” He paused as if he were feeling an aspect of a surprise there, “have highly recommended that we meet. I am Soun Tendo, Master of the Anything Goes Martial Arts.”

“Greetings Mr. Tendo. I am Annette Hebert and these are my daughters.” She introduced them one by one, as was proper. “Your daughter Akane thought that Taylor and Lisa might be interested in the attending the Martial Arts classes, but I can’t help thinking it might be useful for all of us; if especially my daughters. If you’re willing we could make it a family deal.” A sudden sparkle entered Soun’s gaze. Annette continued blithely, “Perhaps my husband and I might be able to come to an arrangement with you in regards to pricing and training.”

The sparkle in his eyes only left a little bit at the mention of her husband. After all, money was money and the dojo was at a minus income due to the shenanigans of his family guests. It would be nice to not have to rely solely on his second job. He would have to remember to thank Akane and Nabiki appropriately. “I would be honored to discuss such an arrangement. Would you like to join me in the …”

Before he could complete the thought, a boy sailed through the air with a whoop. He landed the pond with a massive splash. Fortunately, he had landed on the other side of the pond. Akane could be heard shouting, “Stay out of my room, Ranma!” Taylor saw the teenage girl hanging half out of a window on the top floor, waving her fist.

One of Soun’s hands slapped onto his face in a classic facepalm. “My daughter and possible future son-in-law have a long way to go.”

Before anyone could ask more, a redhead girl popped up where a brunet boy had been before. Annette blinked for a moment and a slow smile spread across her lips, she cocked a brow at Soun. “Jusenkyo?”

The man dropped his hand and gave Annette a hopeful look. “You know of this?”

They watched as a Panda crawled out of the wide-open sliding doors of the Tendo’s home, belly shaking as if in laughter, holding a sign. Ranma, the girl, said bitterly, “Laugh it up, Chuckles! I’m just waiting for my turn.” Then, with a prodigious leap, she sprang out of the pond towards them.

All of the Heberts scattered fast to avoid getting splashed as he headed in their direction.

Taylor almost made it. But she got solidly watered down as Ranma landed and shook off without a
thought. A single drop would not have been a problem, nor a handful, but she got far more than that. And she couldn’t help but shout, “Hey, Rude Boy! There are people here!”

The grumpy teen looked startled, looked down at his chest as if checking for a miracle, then groaned. Before he could say something sarcastic, Taylor began rising in height.

“Oh no,” Crystal said, as she saw the flash of blue on the magical hud in her glasses. She pressed her fingers to her lips before saying, “Twice in one day.”

Taylor sighed heavily as her torso lifted. The transition was going to be another slow one, because it had been a splash and not a fall into a pool, but it was obvious something was happening and no real way to disguise it. “I knew I should have bought that hot tea at the vending machine we passed earlier. At least then I’d have something with me. But no, I said to myself, we’re almost home. No way would I get splashed on the way home. There were no clouds in the sky...” Taylor’s butt started to expand. At which point, she said, “Time to go!” And then made to get ready for a prodigious leap of her own, away and out of the compound.

Annette snapped out, “Stop, Taylor Honey!” As Taylor staggered from the un-jump, she offered consolingly. “It will be alright, sweetheart. I promise.” Then she turned to Soun. “Showers in the dojo?”

“Yes. Ranma was on her way there.” This time it was Soun, who was trying not to laugh, who said to Annette, “Jusenkyo?”

Annette hummed as she tried to contain both her laughter and dismay, “Our family was on a tour, which got far more adventurous than planned. It’s a long story.” She laid a delicate hand on his arm, touching briefly before letting go, “Which I will be happy to share sometime.”

Soun nodded in understanding. He pointed at the Panda. “That one decided that the pools were a perfect choice for martial arts training. They both fell in.”

Ranma stared up at the girl who was now much taller. Taylor sighed in aggrievement, briefly wondering what her Mom was up to before fully grasping that some circumstances had changed. Shared secrets might mean strength in numbers or at least, a common thread with someone in the community. She stared back at Ranma. “Opposite Gender pool?”

The redhead girl who identified as a boy sighed hard and raised his hands in surrendered aggravation. “Yeah. Drowned Girl Pool. Now I’m like this! Most of the time. Hot water has to get hot first, but cold water is everywhere!”

“Tell me about it,” Taylor commiserated. Her hind end expanded more as another set of arms grew out of her torso. “Arachne Pool. Alien race. I look like a spider, but I’m Not a Youma. So don’t go running away. Or scream.”

Ranma, who up to this point had thought his life was hard, groaned in empathy. “As if! I’m no coward. You can’t even disguise it, can you?”

“I know, right!” Then her spider-like legs popped out and settled as the transition completed. Again, she was grateful for her uniform, which did hide certain things from public view. She was even more grateful there wasn’t a wind and that Cherry hadn’t thought to try drying her off yet.

Meanwhile, Taylor was actually surprised that no one was shouting in terror or being weird about this. It was almost like they were used to this sort of thing.

Annette said, “Would it be alright if my daughter uses the shower.”
“Of course,” Soun offered kindly, that being his nature. Nothing in his expression hinted at any discomfort. Even though Taylor now qualified as a Monster. “Ranma, please allow Ms. Hebert to use the shower first.”

“Fine!” Ranma stomped into the Dojo, grousing on the way.

Soun shook his head. “I thought she’d cooled down a bit over summer, but Ranma’s been so hot-headed lately. I think it is because today was the first day of school. She’d rather practice than attend, you see.”

“It may not just be that. Some young people just need a little help along the way, when it’s not hands-on learning. It can be hard to admit to anyone. Either that or they don’t see the point of school when they have a strong knowledge base, to begin with. My girls are dedicated scholars in their areas of interests. But they can sometimes be the same way. Lisa tried to convince us to let her test out.”

The blonde shrugged with a grin. In one day she’d come to appreciate the value of being in school with her sisters. Give them time and they’d rule the place.

“But socialization with one’s peers is important,” Annette said, and then she looked thoughtful. “Perhaps if Ranma needs tutoring or just people to study with, we could help. Do you know if she is experiencing academic troubles?”

“I hadn’t considered that. Either way, having someone to study with would help, regardless. I will speak to her father and see if that would be acceptable.” Then he explained, “While I am one of the masters of the art, Ranma is apprenticed to her father, also a master. We have differing training methods, but I guarantee the effectiveness. Both Nabiki and Akane are still in school and are apprenticed to me. My other daughter, Kasumi, of course, learned what she would, but she is pursuing another kind of art at this time. She is good enough to train others in what she knows in both, however. Perhaps I can give a discount on our services, in exchange for tutoring and training. Akane has a great interest in the art, Nabiki has far less interest. Though, perhaps if she had someone to keep her company, she might find more joy in it. Akane has been needing someone she can go against without worry. Taylor seems strong.” Mr. Tendo considered.

Annette smiled. “All my daughters are strong, Mr. Tendo. As am I.”

“Please, call me Soun.” A wafting of pheromones filled the air, mixing, as Soun and Annette very subtly danced around. Taylor grimaced. She wasn’t quite at breaking things, but that had been a surprisingly strong bit of zing.

“Then you may call me Annette.” She turned her attention to her daughters, “Girls, are any of you opposed to training and studying with the Tendos or Ranma this year?”

The sisters glanced at each other and began a non-verbal flash communication that ended up with Lisa saying, “We’re all good with that, but we’d want assurances that anything that shouldn’t be passed around wouldn’t be.”

"All families have their secrets. If you will guard ours, we will guard yours." Soun pronounced. He’d have to make sure Nabiki understood that, as he didn’t want this one coming back to bite him or his family. But it should be an obvious exchange for all parties.

“Of course,” Annette said, very pleasantly. Then she spoke again to the handsome Master. “Under normal circumstances, I would have allowed Taylor to leave as she desired, so she could avoid discovery of her form, but given circumstances.” Annette pointed subtly at a rolling Panda. “I
thought perhaps a little openness might be prudent. You have apparently have dealt with similar situations before and are obviously quite trustworthy, as there are few rumors related to a panda in this town - aside from what one can confirm with one’s own eyes. Since that is the case, perhaps you’ll indulge me a moment and allow me to make a phone call to Danny. I am sure he will love to meet our new Sensei.”

Soun grinned proudly and his chest lifted. “Of course, Mrs. Hebert. Would you and your daughters like to come in for tea?”

“We would be delighted.” Annette smiled, pleased with the turn of events, and turned to Taylor, “Taylor, honey, head on inside and get that shower. I’ll have your father bring some dry clothes. And then you can join us.”

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Ranma waited outside the ladies shower room. She found herself asking, when she spotted the men’s shower room, “You aren’t going to use that?” She pointed.

The girl who was really a boy sighed. Taylor was kind of impressed with how he was able to keep looking up at her face, rather than dropping his attention lower, where it wouldn’t hurt his neck. “My dad says if I’m going to be a girl then I should act as one. So…”

“Well, how many showers are in here?”

“Standard three.”

“You got a towel?”

“Yeah.”

Without thinking about it, Taylor crawled up the wall. She stuck a few strands of silk to the side and started a quick weave. Ranma might have started a little, but he didn’t otherwise react. Instead of waiting to see what would happen next. She’d grown up a bit over the years. “Well, I don’t. Yet. Give me a moment.” In a shockingly short amount of time, Taylor had a respectable rectangle of cloth to use.

She eyeballed Ranma for a second, but not long enough to make anyone uncomfortable, as she stuck the long beach sized towel she’d made for herself stick to the wall. Then with quick movements, using her fingernails to act as scissors and a hardened bit of thread to act as a needle, she’d made two simple tie-to-the-side knee-length robes. She leaned down and handed one of the robes to Ranma, gathering her stuff together. “I’d use the stuff in my pack, but it’s dirty gym clothes. I’d rather not.”

Ranma held the robe out, impressed. It was a simple white thing, but it was nice; silky to the touch, but not too thin. “Thanks.”

“Let’s go get showered. You take the stall by the door, I’ll take the one by the wall, it’ll be fine.”

“Are you sure? I’ll turn back you know.”

“I’m sure,” Taylor said. “You haven’t got anything I haven’t seen before.” She hesitated, “In either direction.”

Ranma blinked at her for a moment, then shrugged. He’d never been comfortable with women staring, but Taylor wasn’t ogling, nor did she seem interested. She seemed more like himself, just wanting to take a bath. “Okay.”
So they entered the shower room together and picked their stalls. The stall was a little small, but she could get her front end in just fine. Taylor hung her towel and robe on a nearby hook and started undressing out of Ranma’s sight. Then she said, before turning on the shower, “So I saw you fighting this morning. What’s that all about?”

Ranma answered, “Every year since I’ve been here, there’s been these jerk-faces who block the gate. They try to make everyone late, in particular, the girls. When I’m a guy, they taunt me for not joining them in fighting for the right to date Akane or just because they want to fight me. And when I’m a girl, they’re just obnoxious. Since I won’t date any of them, not that a lot of them ask. But they think fighting me will get me to date them. Which, you know, that’s never going to happen. I like girls, not boys.”

The water in his stall switched on. “So have you asked any of the girls out?”

“I can’t date right now. I got too much to do and too many fiancées.”

Taylor, who had shrunk back to a normal size, finally turned off her water. “What? You have fiancées?” She reached for her towel, which was surprisingly absorbent. It was of a rougher texture than she had realized, having made it by instinct rather than attention, yet it wicked the water right off of her body. Nice.

“A bunch of them. Or at least, they think I do.” Ranma’s voice changed mid-speech, becoming deeper and more masculine. “My Dad basically set it all up, partly because he thinks its funny, partly because he likes scoring any deal that gives him an advantage. I was too young to have a say.”

“This is another one of those cultural things, isn’t it.” Taylor grabbed her robe. It wasn’t super thick, but it wasn’t sheer either. It was also surprisingly comfy.

“Probably.”

“Well, were you there this afternoon?”

“Where?” Ranma began, then Taylor heard a small happy hum of pleasure. It sent a little skip of empathy through her, but not so much she had an unreasonable response. “Oh, wow. This is really nice. Thanks again for the robe.”

Taylor was very pleased, probably more than she really deserved to be, considering it was made in her other aspect. Weird. She kept her reply mild, though. She didn’t want to scare Ranma away. Every way he’d been so far indicated being skittish around girls who were too aggressive. And besides, she wasn’t after him, just having body responses she had to cope with. She said, “Sure thing. Akane told me the boys have been gathering after school like they’ve been during the day. Today the RP got involved and basically told them to buzz off. You shouldn’t have to deal with the crowd in the morning or the afternoon.”

They both stepped out, as their normal selves, at the same time. Ranma hung his towel on the hook by his shower. “No kidding?”

“No kidding,” Taylor confirmed.

Ranma, leaned against a wall, folding his arms tightly. His expression narrow. “So Akane won’t be bothered anymore in the mornings?”

“So, you knew about the mornings, but you didn’t know about the afternoons?” Taylor probed.

Ranma shrugged. “I figured things out, but I usually head straight home or, if I have an after-school
thing, stay awhile. I usually don’t see much of anyone either way. Besides, most days there wasn’t much of an afternoon crowd. Everyone just wants to go home or has some sort of thing they got to do. At max, there was only ever four or five guys. Akane could handle them easy, peasy. Don’t let that sweet face fool you. She’s got power and she knows what she’s doing. And those guys deserve everything they get if they’re dumb enough to try.” He looked thoughtful. “I don’t know what made today different with the idiots, except, well... It was the first day..” Even as he said that he cracked his knuckles ominously. “I think I might pay a visit to some people, just to make sure they got the message ... I mean...so I can find out what happened.” He looked back at Taylor. “So you and your sisters will be guarding her then?”

Taylor had an epiphany of sorts. This wasn’t just *a* boy to Akane. This was *the* boy to Akane. But neither of them were in the headspace for dating - half of it because they were too similar to enjoy feeling trapped into a relationship and the other because it hadn’t been given a chance to flourish because of whatever stuff had been going on in their lives. Certainly, the gang fights every day hadn’t helped any.

She decided to keep that awareness to herself though. And just said, “Yeah, that’s the plan. At least for the next couple of weeks. With the RP involved, it should settle down now. Everyone there got a short trial and a warning today, which means that any punishment given will be fair. We’ll see if the warning sticks. If they’re hassling people in the morning it could go bad. In fact, I’d suggest, maybe heading a different direction or going early so you don’t get caught in the crowd.”

Ranma nodded, understanding the caution. He straightened up and gave Taylor an assessing gaze. “You’re okay for a girl. Let me know if you’re ever up for a spar.”

Taylor was amused, but she took it as the compliment that he meant it as. She folded up her wet towel and wet clothes and looped them over her pack. “Sure. It might be fun.”

Then the two of them exited the shower room, under the watchful eyes of a pair of spiders; only one of which was Taylor’s.

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Taylor waited on a bench in the dojo, while Ranma went on back to the house to get dressed in something dry. She contemplated the whole “instant” clothes thing, except that it hadn’t been. But even she knew that the silk production and “sewing” had been enormously quick. Still, she thought, as she stroked the silky soft robe, she could not complain. She wondered, however, at the intuition she’d had regarding color and her spinnerets; the white was a default. Depending on what she ate, she could make and store “ink” to colorize the threads. And wasn’t that just weird? She’d have to try it though, and have to eat while she was an Arachne. She'd have to test things out. No sense in assuming strawberries would equal red or something.

Not only that, but she’d learned, now that she had ways of adjusting the silk to different types, from sticky to absorbent to fluffy and so on. The robe slid on her skin and felt awesome. She wondered if the silk could be durable enough to fake up a uniform any time she needed to dress, or if she should just plan on bringing extra clothes. Really, she might need a larger pack if this was going to be a thing.

Taylor listened and watched with her little creatures, the tea being drunk and options being discussed. Nabiki was looking at her Mom like she as a sandwich that needed eating. Mr. Tendo was barely hiding that he wanted to slide something in the sandwich.

An older girl, long brown hair, and mild expression tapped Nabiki lightly and whispered in her ear. The younger girl toned it down. And Taylor now had a name for the very attractive face. Kasumi.
Akane had joined the group, not quite apologizing, but not quite trying to hide that she knew she’d overreacted again.

Her sisters were themselves. Lisa was watching everything with amusement and anticipatory glee. Crystal was scribbling something in her book and playing with her glasses. Cherry was talking with Akane about what to expect, athletically, in training. Amy was playing with the plant in her pocket, feeding it cookies.

Taylor paused.

Now she wasn’t sure it was a plant.

She shook her head and resumed her not-spying, but observing thing.

Vicky was hitting very, very lightly on Kasumi, with the apparent encouragement of Amy. Kasumi had a pretty blush and good grace. She poured the tea without missing a beat.

Taylor’s Mom was watching all of this with amusement, having apparently arrived at a promising deal with Soun. Maybe. Then again, she could be waiting like Taylor was, for Danny. Currently, Annette was talking with Soun about the history of the town, the people and some points of interest. The Panda sat nearby, drinking tea with surprising composure, nodding now and then or pulling out a sign from nowhere.

Ranma had gone wherever he was going, so he wasn’t among the group. She figured he was doing exactly what he’d said he’d be doing, probably off to pound a few faces in. She wasn’t exactly against that idea. Better his fist than a hanging noose, after all. Bruises were temporary.

Taylor considered whether she should join her family. The robe was fairly modest, but it wasn’t the same as being dressed. It’d be okay for home, but this was not home and they were the guests.

So, she might as well wait. She let her “vision” expand, as she traced the grounds with her insects. She moved the pest species out and away, lured in a few of the garden friendly ones, and then placed a few of the stronger ones she owned strategically around as a modest security system. Now that they were friends, if not allies, it made sense to ensure that things remained good.

She spotted a tiny old man ninja-ing in and recognized him. She wished abruptly that she’d had her phone.

And she’d found yet another good reason not to leave Neo behind.

But the sight made her get up and start moving. She wished for a moment she had her uniform - not the police one - but one related to her experiences. One where she’d been a hero. Or a villain.

The memories combined sometimes.

As if the thought were the signal, a sparkle, then another, and then, as if in a syncopated beat, swirled at her feet and then around her body. She lifted up into the air, raised her arms, her robe disappeared in a twinkle of light and then she was covered, from navy blue thigh high boots to navy blue panties and then to the same color miniskirt, then to a white half-shirt that just covered her bosom. The icon in the middle of the V on her half-shirt started out as a dragonfly, then changed and altered, like a skip in the works, into a golden spider. From there the magic rose, creating a gold mask. Then it fell over her one more time, trimming everything back down with shimmery gold before setting her back on her feet.
For a brief shining moment, everything was clear. All her thoughts were centered, all her senses with her; including senses, she didn’t even know she’d had. She reached out, let her powers speak and a butterfly made of ice fluttered away from her palm. She laughed in delight and awe.

Then, turning, she sprinted supernaturally fast, using the ice to glaze her path, silent. Down the stairs, around to the side of the dojo and around the house, and then up. Until she was just there, hovering over the old man. The part of her that was Skitter said to drown the old man in bugs, make him scream and leave. The Khepri part just wanted things managed, so that her world was safe. The part of her that was Magical Girl wrestled with those past selves, not as if to dominate, but to reason. She did not know who this man was or why he was doing what he was doing. It was better to find out first. It wouldn’t be necessary to call all the spiders or the insects, not yet. After all, it was better to make friends and avoid enemies when you could. “Are you trespassing or are you supposed to be here?” She asked, softly, at a near whisper.

The man whose back was to her yelped, jumping several feet into the air and back away from her. He pressed his little, wizened hand to his chest, as he heaved for breath. His eyes widened though as he took in her appearance and a dollop of sweat dripped from his brow. His other hand reached as if he wanted to touch the world. But then it retracted. “And who are you to be asking?”

Taylor smiled, “You can call me Mystic Weaver.” She noticed where his eyes were roving and deliberately bent down, causing the man to gasp, as the top of half of her bosom showed. “Now, you seem to be acting suspicious, which is why I am here. I don’t want to hurt you and I don’t know that you’re a bad guy, but if you are I will. Are you a bad guy, sir?”

The old man blinked rapidly and then shook his head in denial. “No.” Then he shrugged and gave her a sly glance, “Well, maybe a little. But mostly harmless. I promise.”

Taylor laughed softly, “Sure. So, here’s the deal, if you’re supposed to be here, just say so. If not, you’ve got to leave. I won’t lay a hand on you if you leave on your own.”

He lifted his hand in a pausing motion. “A bargain. I will tell you if you let me touch ‘em.” His gaze indicated the “them” in question.

Taylor’s smile was equally sly, “Sir, that’s not how this works.” She pointed at his feet, which were now iced to the ground. The ice was slowly crawling up his legs. “Care to try again?”

He looked down. “Hmm. You’re clever, aren’t you.”

“Not as clever as some, but I can hold my own,” Taylor said modestly. “Is it such a hard question to answer?”

He slumped. “No. But it’s the principle of the thing. I hate getting caught.”

“You’re letting me go.” He asked in surprise.

“Yet here we are. What I’m really surprised at is that I haven’t booted you out yet.” She extended her senses. “So that must mean something.” Her insects roved a few rooms until she spotted what she needed to know. “Ah. I see.” She could have gone for condescending, but instead, she unbent and waved away the ice.

“You’re letting me go.” He asked in surprise.

Taylor nodded. “I made a discovery. You live here. So this is your home.”

“So you’re the one trespassing,” he said hopefully, gazing again at the bounties she had to offer.

She laughed. “Nope. But I’m the one who is leaving for now. Nice try though. You’re ancient, and
no doubt somewhat wise. I’m sure you’ll figure it out in not too long. But I also figure you are old enough to know the rules. No unmasking and revealing personal identities. It’s not safe for people to do that.”

“Of course,” he said, sagely. He asked, curious, “Are you apprenticed to anyone, little one?”

She smiled and slid back, without answering, but gave him a friendly wave. Then slid-skipped out the window. The ice evaporated behind her.

The old man said, with a happy sigh. “Invigorating. I’d lost hope for this generation.” Then he meandered downstairs and saw the Washitsu room filled with lovely damsels and smiled, widely. “I see. Our town is blessed with a new team. Glorious! I have waited for this day!” Then, he snuck into his room, to hide what treasure he’d found and to plan his way into this new meeting.

While she was sliding out, Taylor spotted the family van in the distance. She made her way quickly back to the dojo. She paused inside, taking a moment to contemplate what had just happened and measuring it against things as they were. She almost didn’t want to turn back. But she knew that some of what she’d experienced would stay with her. She felt more like herself than she had in days, possibly years.

With a sigh, she wished herself back to normal, briefly wondering how her magic would react if she needed to transform while she was an Arachne. For a brief moment in the transition, she had four arms and then, she was back to two, as the outfit disappeared and her robe reappeared.

She guessed, or rather hoped, that was the magic telling her things would be fine.

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A/N - I am aware that the dojo likely doesn't have showers, but from a practical point of view it should. So, this is where that AU disclaimer comes in.
Chapter 16

“Taylor.” Danny’s voice was warm, concerned, as he entered the dojo. He made the doorway seem small, given his height and his shoulder width. He looked like a warrior, walked like a warrior, and lived like a man of peace. Except when he was doing the harder and more deadly duties of an Officer and Arbiter of the Law. “I hear you’ve had quite the day.”

“Dad.” Taylor rose from the bench, a swath of butterflies fluttered away from her hands like a puff of a dandelion, scattered to the wind. “Hey.” She smiled at her father in greeting. The silk of her white robe revealed curves that had previously been muted by her uniform even though it covered her well to her knees. Her school uniform covered less than that, yet somehow, this simple robe seemed more revealing. Or maybe it only felt that way, because she was very naked underneath. Her nipples, stimulated by the soft silk, were plump little spikes, providing a bit of tension to the garment.

His gaze roved over her a bit, before he said, “I brought you some clothes. Jeans and a tee okay?” He didn’t mention the underwear, but it was there too, tucked away so it wouldn’t be embarrassing for her.

Taylor nodded, “That’s great. Perfect. Thanks.”

He smiled. “I admit, I thought I’d maybe catch you in a towel, given the way your mom spoke.” He handed her the clothes and their fingers brushed. “Thought about that quite a bit on the way here, whether it’d be one of those tiny things or not.”

Taylor flushed in surprise, startled. She clutched her clothes to her chest, not out of modesty, but because she needed to hold onto something for a moment. She shook her head a bit. Then she took a moment to really look at Danny’s face, searching for a hint that he might remember. Certainly, since she’d gone magical senshi for a moment, she remembered a lot more than she had before. She decided to take a chance and prompted, “If I said Slut Life, what would you say?”

His gaze narrowed. He wore Clark Kent glasses, for nearly the same reason as the hero. Somehow, that gaze was just that much more effective. Taylor clenched her hands to force herself not to blush or twitch.

Finally, he exhaled, gustily. Then he offered, “I’d say that I rocked that apron and I’m glad we got to eat first, before being thrown in the deep end.”

Taylor’s whole body relaxed. “If I said Brockton Bay to you, what would you say?”

“I’m glad it’s over. I was tired of being the man in charge. It cost too much.”

Taylor set the clothes onto the bench, so they wouldn't just drop. Then she stepped forward, wrapping her arms around Danny’s middle. She squeezed, not too hard, but with genuine feeling. “Dad.” She blinked back tears. “Dad,” she repeated, pushing her head against his nook between his neck and shoulder.

His arms wrapped securely around her and he kissed the part in her hair. “Love you, kiddo.” One of his hands rubbed her back and gently rocked her. They stood like that for a while, peacefully. “The robe is nice,” he commented after a while. “Actually it is super. I love seeing you in it. And I think I want one for me and for your Mom. Did you happen to ask where they got it from?”
“I made it, Dad.” He paused in his the back rub for a moment, pushing back only enough to look in her eyes.

“Did you? The spider thing?”

She nodded, not quite sure how to explain how everything had happened. As he’d mentioned, it’d been quite the day.

“Had to be a little weird for you. Are you okay with that?”

“It was really weird. But it happened so fast I didn’t have time to linger on it. Plus, I was in a hurry to get a shower and get back to having only two legs. So… there was that. Oh, and before things get weird or in case people forget to tell you. Ranma was in the shower room with me. He was a girl at the time, but he’s like us. Gender Switch pool. He seems like an okay guy, maybe a little stressed. I made a robe for him because he had the same dilemma as I did. No dry clothes.”

He nodded. “Huh.” He considered. “Should I be jealous or do the overprotective father thing?”

Taylor sniffed a laugh. “Neither. He barely looked at me when I was dressed and neither of us saw each other naked. Besides, he has his hands full and while girls are his thing, he’s not interested in having or dealing with any more, thank you. Not that he actually told me how many fiancés he has, but apparently it’s enough to keep him busy.”

This time Danny laughed. “I feel like I’m missing a bit of backstory, but okay. I’ll take your word for it.” Then pulled her back into the hug again. A few seconds later, he was slowly rubbing her back again, each time a little farther down from the curve of her back, but never quite at the rear. “You’ll have to show this to your mom sometime. I think she’d like seeing it very much. Maybe even more than me. She always did like silk.”

She was close enough she felt a twitch and a push. She was old enough she understood what it meant. “Dad?”

“Sorry Taylor, a natural reaction to holding something beautiful in my arms.” He said.

Taylor couldn’t help the laugh and patted his back a little. “Dad that was almost smooth.”

“I’ve been practicing my best lines on your mom. Think it’s working.” Danny joked. “But seriously, Taylor, my darling girl, you’d best get dressed before I decide to get experimental. I’d hate to disappoint your mom by not waiting for her. Either that or I’m going to start telling you what I was fantasizing about in the car. Maybe both. I’m feeling generous. I could start with the bench fantasy. You in an eensy towel, owing me for bringing your clothes. Me on a bench telling you to be a good girl and sit on my lap. Would you like to hear that one?”

“Dad!” Taylor’s pulse rose so fast she thought she might faint and her tone was appropriately outraged. He hugged her tight once more and let her go, eyes sparkling with amusement, store, and eros.

Even though he’d ribbed her quite successfully, what she felt most was reassured and loved; if a lot more turned on. The sense of a missing something eased back, although the sense of rising need mixed with taboo-based embarrassment had actually increased by a whole bunch of dollops. Hopefully, Amy would set that some of that right if she had a chance to get close for a moment. Taylor did want to ask about that plant, anyhow.

She didn’t run from her Dad, but she also didn’t try to tease back. She was aware there were points where she could push, but at the same time, there were points where she shouldn’t; unless she was
ready to face the consequences. Her body might be saying yes, but her body was stupid with hormones right now. Her brain knew better, or at least, she knew herself well enough that - even with memories that helped put things into context - she needed the right space and time.

She could have stayed, but if this was going to be a thing she didn’t want her first time with him to be in another family’s dojo or someplace not home or where she was safe. Not that it wasn’t a turn on to think about. He definitely had her brain buzzing. Her imagination flashed to herself being half bare and fitfully trying to cover herself with a towel, him offering one piece of clothing at a time for the small cost of a fondle and a kiss.

She blushed furiously at the thought and felt a throb going on in two places.

Oh, there it was. She had wondered, briefly where her shyness had gone, but “nope,” it was still there. She was just envisioning more things now, because… hormones. Yay! Also naughty inspirations.

Though, at least this time, she literally could blame her dad for this one.

She grabbed the clothes he’d brought and without looking back, returned to the ladies showers for a real quick change.

She started with her panties, slipping them on while her robe was still on. They weren’t the sexiest pair, and for that, she was grateful because that’s when she realized she might have an issue. The throb had become a bit more of a push at her pouch that ached urgently to be let free. And boy did she want to do that. Yet, when she brought the panties up, the went right over, no problem. And when she parted her robe and looked down, there wasn’t much to see. The bump just disappeared. When she opened the panties, to look past there it was, pushing and ready to pop and extend. Just like this morning when she wore the skirt and even though she was just on the edge of the reveal, there hadn’t been a hint of anything.

A part of her wanted to experiment, to see if she could just let it all hang out, but she was a guest in someone’s place. It wouldn’t be appropriate.

So… Calmness was called for.

She mentally did a little math, using formulas to neutralize her thinking a bit so she could concentrate on getting dressed and ready. The jeans slid on, no problem, and while she could feel her excitement, nothing showed and the jeans seemed no worse for wear. She offered a mental hallelujah because that was something to be grateful for. Deciding things were going to be okay, she continued to get presentable.

When she came out again, she was as completely dressed as could be and her hair tamed. Her t-shirt had an image of blood splatter on the side, with the words, “I’m fine!” written on the front. She’d laughed pretty hard when she saw it. Dad jokes were terrible, but kind of the best too. She knew he was going to probably tease her awhile, now that his mad was over at the dead thing. Mostly. But it was a good piece of secondary evidence that his memory was coming back too.

Danny was examining a Kendo style Tochi Bokken, weighing it in his hand as if it felt light, like nothing to him; which was probable. He turned and grinned when he saw Taylor, but otherwise didn’t say much as she gathered the rest of her stuff. She carefully laid the robe over the towel. “I’ll have to remember to make a bag or something next time.”

“Mmm.” Her dad agreed. He’d put away the bokken, with the others.
They left the dojo in quiet comradery, idling a little near the pool to appreciate it, and then moved toward the open sliding door. “Hail the House!” Danny said.

A chorus of “Dad!” sung out as Taylor’s sisters streamed out to get and give hugs. He greeted them all by name and spent a moment listening as they explained what was going on and how their day went. Taylor never begrudged this, as he was always even-handed about time with his family. The teen went ahead and went in, knowing she’d been invited.

Akane gasped when she saw the shirt, but then Nabiki started chortling, which was then followed by the younger sister ‘getting it,’ and laughing too. The ‘blood’ splatter was a little shocking if you weren’t prepared.

“Hi all,” Taylor said. “Any tea left?” She ignored the kick of the various scent incentives for lust in the air as best she could, taking a quick peek down to make sure nothing was showing; which it wasn’t, so all good.

The elder daughter, whose hand had been at her lips, covering her laugh, nodded. “Of course, please make yourself comfortable. I am Kasumi.”

“I’m Taylor. Nice to meet you.”

“Likewise.”

“You can sit by me,” Akane said. And, as Taylor drew closer, she leaned in, whispering. “I’m sorry for what happened by the dojo. I never meant for anyone to get harmed. Ranma isn’t ever really hurt when he falls. But he knows better than to be in my room.”

Taylor realized that the girl had seen the consequences of Ranma’s leap. She also knew she could make a thing of it or, she could make a friend.

A part of Taylor thought she might still be a little bit under the influence of her Magical Girl self, but decided to go with it.

“No harm, no foul, Akane,” Taylor said. “I’d have just gone home and showered, anyway. No biggie.” She lifted her fist and Akane stared at it. “You hit it with yours. It’s like a handshake or high five. In this context, it basically means we’re good, we’re buddies. Or, in a different context, if you’ve done something awesome, it means you’ve done something awesome. So make a fist.”

Akane did so. “Bump it with mine.” Again, Akane did as instructed.

“Good job,” Taylor said. “We’re cool.”

Akane smiled, a little shyly. Then Kasumi poured Taylor some tea. “Thanks.”

Taylor lifted the cup for a sip, glanced around and noticed the little white-haired man sitting just behind Soun. She set the cup down, carefully, ready to move if she needed to, but he just offered the shallowest nod she’d ever seen her way. It was enough though, for her to relax again. She was, apparently, among friends. Or at least, not among enemies. Fortunately, Lisa hadn’t been in the room or she would have been all over that.

“So,” Taylor said, “Anything decided yet?”

“A few things,” admitted her Mom. “You can definitely plan on training through the week. It might make your day a little longer, but Soun assures me that they take into account things like homework and your cheerleading requirements. In fact, I believe there will be plans on integrating some of the training, as one will help the other.”
Mr. Tendo nodded his head firmly. “Yes. As you become more skilled in this art, your other skills will improve. We will make it so.”

Annette sipped her own tea, a smile in her eyes. “Excellent.”

Danny knocked on the door and peeked in. “Okay if I come in?”

“Of course,” Soun rose and stepped away from the table, offering his hand. He introduced himself, as did Danny, and they gripped hands - for more than a few seconds.

Taylor was well aware that her father was very strong. She worried someone might get hurt. Except, Mr. Tendo seemed to be holding his own. The only reason she didn’t say anything was that neither man’s smile was forced, nor did it seem like anyone’s hand was cracking. No bones crushed was always a good thing, even though she could almost feel the air vibrating with a powerful energy. They stared into each other’s eyes, neither backing down. Still, they were obviously not angry or distressed, but actually just enjoying the moment of… She didn’t have a word for it. It had to be a guy thing, yet, it didn’t seem like this was a win/lose deal. Just… really intense communication of some sort.

Finally, Mr. Tendo said, without lowering eye contact, “It will be an honor to train you and yours. Please, join us. My house is your house.”

Danny said, in return, also retaining eye contact, “It will be an honor to be taught by you and yours. Perhaps you’d like to come to our place sometime. We have a gym in the house and pool in the back. We can do bar-b-que.”

They let go at the same time, smiling broadly at each other. Taylor half expected backslaps, but that didn’t happen. Apparently, they had to do a buddy adventure or something first. She didn’t know. Usually, if she were doing a dominance play it involved sticking insects where people didn’t like them stuck and people backed off. That didn’t lend itself to many back slaps, or buddies.

Actually, looking at things objectively, her life might have complications, but it was obviously way better now.

The vibe in the air still rattled against her teeth a little. Her nipples were now hard as stone. Thank god for the extra thick bra.

“I would like that. Tea?” Again there was that swirl of scents, this time sparking from her father, Mr. Tendo and her mother. And Kasumi?

She glanced briefly at her Mom, whose expression was a mix of thoughtful and smug and it gave her a weird feeling in her belly. There were plots in her eyes, and apparently, the nipple thing wasn’t just Taylor’s problem.

The brunette turned her gaze to catch the elder daughter setting two new cups down. Kasumi settled into a spot that would be near Danny when he sat down. That was a definite pink on her cheeks. And the way her mom was eyeing things as if all she needed was a baton and an orchestra and the right sized bed… It wasn’t just heady, it was like being smacked with an extra large fish, a very sexy, sexy fish and she had no idea what was going on, really. Except the undercurrent was so thick she thought she might as well be swimming.

Taylor lifted her cup of tea and sipped, a little too loudly. It was more of a slurp. The cup shook in her hand, but she managed to set it down.

Amy was still outside. Probably communing with trees, because of course her sisters wouldn’t rush
back in and rescue her from this dilemma. They’d already had tea. And then Dad was sitting by Mom, really, really close. Whispering in her ear, holding her hand. Kissing her with a soft passion that would have, in the past, elicited an entirely opposite response.

Taylor deliberately looked away for a moment. Down wasn’t good. Nor was looking at Akane or Nabiki, as they were both pretty girls and right now, Taylor was feeling very into pretty girls. She skipped past the martial artist. Pandas did nothing for her and one guy was way too old, but the other was about her Dad’s age.

Nope. Not going there. Not thinking that.

Unfortunately, she looked at Kasumi, who apparently was trying the same trick and they both ended up looking at each other.

Those were some very, very pretty eyes in a very, very pretty face; a kind face, and good. Not necessarily pure, because those eyes had thoughts going on behind them - a brilliant curiosity and quiet urgency. And a worried sadness that made Taylor want to reach out and wipe that sadness away.

Kasumi lifted her tea, still looking into Taylor’s eyes. Rosy lips to the cup, with a gentle suction. Was it hot? It seemed hot. Taylor had an urge to take off her shirt, but she just knew Lisa or Vicky or Cherry or all of her sisters, actually, would laugh their butts off if she stripped down.

Taylor’s head buzzed, her crotch ached. Her nipples were spun up like all they needed was a countdown to blast off. Her breasts were starting to get that heavy feeling that let her know she might need to milk herself before bedtime.

She checked her pants as unobtrusively as she could and that actually helped, because it broke the contact. She had no idea it made her look shy and had mirrored Kasumi, but she did know that she wasn’t busting loose at the seams, even if she felt she might be. She was pretty sure she was pouch free and roaming down there. She felt a throbbing thickness and length, none of which showed.

She had a flash of memory, of a choice made and the effect applied to all she wore, and she was so glad. Despite everything, her pants looked like nothing was happening at all and she was so very grateful because she had no way of explaining all this.

But she tugged her shirt down anyway, just to be sure and scootched in a little closer to the table. She reached for a tiny sandwich as an excuse for that particular move. Ate it in one bite, not even a chew. She took another sip of the tea; more like a gulp of it.

“Are you okay?” Akane asked, somewhat obliviously, but still concerned because Taylor was behaving a little oddly.

“I’m fine,” Taylor managed to sound only a little strangled. She forced a non-sexy smile at Akane; just a perfectly normal simple smile. A friendship smile of okayness. It wasn’t tense at all. Nope.

“Just needed some tea.” Taylor lifted the nearly empty cup, and this time managed an actual sip and no shakes. Even when she caught Kasumi looking at her again. But then she knew she had to do something drastic. “See. Fine.”

Frost covered the edge of the cup as Taylor set it down. It also covered some of her nether-bits. She managed to fake not feeling that, by dint of looking as if she were shifting to get a bit more comfortable. Also, mostly because it actually helped; even if she warmed back up far too fast. Nothing actually got smaller.
Akane gave her a slightly skeptical look, but Taylor ignored it in favor of nabbing a cookie. She paused to give the object the respect it was due, as it was fairly sizable, obviously sugary and had real chocolate chips. She knew this would be a moment of glory. Also, it was a singular hope that she could just eat a cookie.

She forced herself not to look at anyone. Only the cookie.

She took a bite, closed her eyes in bliss and then she hummed in happiness as she chewed. She could recognize she hadn’t been prepared for this. She should have realized her senses were increased at the moment. It didn’t change that the bite of cookie made her tingle. When she swallowed the bite, she said, “This is amazing. I think I could live off of these.”

“I don’t think they’d count as good nutrition,” her Dad teased. Taylor opened her eyes, noting her Mom was leaning casually against him. Soun seemed more relaxed as if he’d gained an answer to something and he was in a good place. The relaxed body language didn’t change all the pheromones though. The Panda was sniffing his cup of tea speculative and giving her glances as if she must have somehow got a better cup than he did.

The older guy just had a pleased gleam in his eyes.

“Yeah, but I’d be living off the happiness,” Taylor replied. She licked her lips and her cheeks, not noticing the startled look from those around her, as her tongue expanded a little to reach a few crumbs on her cheek.

The elder man giggled in a hooting kind of way, while the Panda excused himself, moving fairly quickly for a large, bulky creature and toddled off to the back somewhere. Nabiki checked herself for a nosebleed with a napkin. Akane just blinked a lot and then looked really, really thoughtful. While Soun, Annette, and Danny passed a passel of non-verbals around, including a modest touch on his arm, which had elder Tendo pinking a little. Kasumi watched Taylor like a hawk.

Not that Taylor noticed this. She was absorbing that cookie and sharing her happiness with everyone, without a worry or realization of what she’d done - or inspired. When she was finished, she grabbed a napkin and wiped her cheeks. “Where did you get those? I need more of that in my life.”

Annette laughed. “I’m inclined to agree.” Then she pointed at Kasumi. The young woman was blushing a bright, happy pink and avoiding eye contact from everyone. “You can thank the young lady there, Taylor. She’s the cook.”

“Brilliant,” Taylor said. “Kasumi, thank you for the tea and the cookies and the little sandwiches, everything was wonderful.”

Kasumi nodded, somehow managing to speak with great composure. “Thank you. I’m very glad you enjoyed yourself.”

“Well, that I did,” Taylor said, not sure how to follow that up and pretty sure she shouldn’t grab any more food for a moment.

Taylor laid her palms on her thighs and left them there, unsure what to do with her hands. She noticed that while she didn’t see her hardness, she could feel it through her slacks.

Good to know.

So she smiled and tried to think of what to do next. And told herself to calm the fuck down.
Probably shouldn’t have used that word, even in her head, because now there was an orgy going on in her mind.

She flashed another bit of ice around her body, trying to distract herself. Nothing obvious, just cold here, cold there. It was like pinching the palms to stay awake in the most boring class, except that she wasn’t bored; at all. It did help.

She shifted things a little, preparing for a getaway because really, that’s what she needed to do. And calmly.

Calmly.

“So, well, I didn’t mean to make things awkward by being late. Do I need to stay for the negotiations or can I…” She pointed a thumb out the door. Then she turned to Kasumi, “I realize I kind of blazed through the tea. Sorry.”

This time Kasumi couldn’t hide her laugh. Her blush had modified, but it was still there a little. She did not try to look the brunette in the eye again. “It’s okay Taylor. I think you may consider your duty done if you wish to leave.” She glanced at Annette very briefly, looked down shyly for a moment and then lifted her head a bit proudly and said, “I think we can manage from here.”

“Awesome.” Taylor started to get up and then said. “Oh, Ranma mentioned being affianced to a bunch of people? Is that a thing we have to worry about here?”

Soun’s laugh was abrupt and covered with a cough. He glanced at Taylor’s parents and then said very firmly, “No. We will happily take cash and the other exchanges we’ve already discussed.”

Taylor let go a tension she didn’t know she’d been holding. “Thank God. I think marriage is cool, but arranged stuff weirds me. Yay clash of cultures? Sorry, being rude again. Let me try this differently.” She poked Akane, who still seemed to be in her head a bit. “Hey, want to go see what my sisters are doing? Or would you rather have company while doing homework? I mean, I still have to do mine. Might as well do it together while they finish up business. How about it?”

Akane shook herself out of it. And responded, “Let’s do both. Maybe your sisters will want to join in. My room’s a bit small, but it might be nice to work outside while the light is good.

Nabiki said, “I’ll go grab mine too. We might as well all get it done.”

“Good plan, girls,” Annette said approvingly.

Taylor was super proud of herself for making it back outdoors without having caused a ruckus for impulsive behavior.

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Chapter 17

Homework did not actually take that long, not when you have a bunch of very smart girls helping each other. Nabiki learned not to underestimate them, even if she was older, as they checked each other’s work and chatted while fulfilling the required paperwork set before them. Akane appreciated the lack of pressure to be always strong, instead of smart; which, of course, she was both.

Taylor was just glad things were working so well, considering the babymaker was still out there - if not quite as rampant. She was just glad nothing was showing. But, she wasn't clubbing someone over the head needful, so she didn’t push to get into Amy’s circle, where Vicky, Cherry, and Nabiki were hanging out. Lisa, Crystal, and Akane were in her area of study. Lisa, of course, had pegged immediately what was going on and had managed a subtle grab, which Taylor knew was a ‘just checking’ action. So she didn’t take offense.

Lisa hadn’t even leered, for which Taylor was extremely grateful.

Crystal was not unaware that Taylor was stirred up, but she acted as a buffer, keeping Akane’s attention on the homework aspect until everyone was done.

Taylor was pretty much ready to go home right away and do something about her issue. She was fully prepared to walk and might have gone earlier if she hadn’t been the one to propose the homework spree.

They were all done just as Danny and Annette stepped out of the house, arm in arm.

Taylor knew that had to be by design because it was so close in timing. She felt around for the spiders she didn’t control and found a few nearby, nodded to herself about it.

Her mom was a little frightening when Taylor considered how fast she was learning to use the creatures. It did not occur to Taylor that others might see the connection between them, as she’d been no slouch.

“Come on girls, time to head home!” Danny said, waving towards their vehicle. Everyone gathered their stuff, packed it away, and said their farewells.

Taylor looked back as they were leaving and spotted Kasumi. Their eyes caught again, but this time, instead a blush, Kasumi’s expression was a little more calculating; pleasant and kind still, but evaluative too. Taylor, due to needing to get in the van, turned away first.

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Taylor entered her home, rolling past Nick... no, Nate… she didn’t know why she kept mixing up those names, but rolling past their butler and up the stairs to her room in very practical - to her - haste. She didn’t stop for any calls, didn’t stop for any noise or distraction. She slammed the door shut and locked them because while everyone knew the rules about knocking there was half a chance they’d forget. Then she started stripping down, shirt and bra off. Shoes off. Jeans off. Everything kicked away, except for her panties.

Because she just needed to breathe and be for a moment, somewhere that wasn’t a compact space filled with incredible smells. Also, she needed her clothes to be off.
“Are you okay, Taylor?”

The young woman hopped and then stumbled into a defensive crouch in shock, absolutely startled. She pressed a hand to her chest. “Holy...” Well, that was a jolt to the system, and it definitely got herself out of her head, at least for a moment. “Neo.” She breathed. “Hey.”

A holographic image of a tiny nude woman rose from the phone. “Hi, Taylor. You went away so fast, you forgot to take me with you.” It wasn’t an accusation, just a statement of fact.

“Sorry about that, Neo. I meant to have you with me at school. It’s been kind of a day,” Taylor panted. Then she stood upright and, while she had the mind to do it, gathered her belongings and set things right a bit.

“So I have heard,” Neo confirmed. “Is there anything I can do for you?”

Taylor contemplated that question seriously. “Maybe dim the lights to a third and put a neutral sound, like a fan running or something. Just, something relaxing.”

“Sure thing, Taylor. Anything else?”

“Was today okay for you? I mean, even though I left you here?”

“It was a pretty good day. It’s too bad there’s not much of a network yet in Furikan, or I could have joined you anyway.”

“That is the hassle of being future-tech. I guess we’re going to have to figure out how to take advantage of that. Maybe do some investing.”

“The Plaza’s and Warehouse network is online now too, so it’s roomier, at least.”

Taylor sat on the bed, tucking a foot under the opposite leg. On the plus hand, she was very clean. No bath necessary. She pulled an old cuddly toy, a fuzzy blue monster with a cookie in its hand, and held it for a moment. “That’s nice. Anything I should know about the Plaza?”

“Your new bread store had great sales today.”

“My what?”

“Brot’s Bread, managed by a Ms. Hinks. It’s listed as yours in our accounts.”

Taylor blinked, vaguely remembering thinking that it might be nice to have one. She’d barely been able to afford… the points.

“I see.” She felt a shiver up her spine, as she was reminded that the reason she was having all these memory flashes had to do, once again, with choices she’d made. “Thanks for the heads up on that.” Then she thought a moment. “Hey, check and see if they deliver. And if they do, see if we can get some fresh loaves brought here tomorrow morning. Or I guess, see if one of the staff would be willing to go pick them up. Make sure there’s enough for them too. I guess… uhm, find out how much it is. And if I can afford it, do that. If it goes over well, we might make it a regular thing once a week or something.”

“Sounds like a great idea,” Neo said, enthusiastically.

“Oh, and Neo,” Taylor led.

“Yes?”
“I do like the new form. It’s very comely. The tan skin, green eyes, and the red hair work really well. I’m dazzled by the long ears though. Are you going for a specific look?”

“An elf! They have long ears like this, but some are even longer. I didn’t want to have them so long they were hovering over my head, though.”

“Completely understandable.”

“You really like it?”

Taylor considered the pressure in her panties and how her nipples ached and nodded. “Yep. My body thinks it’s aces. I find it very attractive. Are you going to keep going around naked or…”

“I’m still deciding on an outfit and I haven’t decided what kind of elf I want to be. I would have worn a school uniform if we’d gone to school together.”

“Ah. I see.” Taylor thought a moment. “I think you ought to just go with shorts and a tee until you decide. You can always switch it up later. I mean, if you want.”

“Oh, I like that idea.” The hologram shimmered and the avatar was dressed in a half tee and denim cut offs. It was a good look.

“Very nice.”

Neo smiled warmly. “I’m doing some research on the local flora and fauna, in anticipation of you wanting to order some insects. Do you have a particular direction you’d like me to check?”

“Well, I’ve been thinking. Did any of the bugs I stored in the greenhouse get transferred?”

“Checking.”

“I detect several non-local species in stasis in your warehouse. They are stored in special aquariums and are easily accessible.”

Taylor breathed a sigh of relief. “Oh thank goodness.” Then she said, “Would you mind cataloging what we have, both native earth and non-native. I would like to maybe breed a few of those glowing ones if we have enough to do that. But not yet. Just give me an eyeball count and catalog and we’ll figure it out later.

“Of course, Taylor. That seems like a fun project. I’ll even throw in a calculation of the aptitude for safe integration to the local fauna.”

“Great.” Taylor hugged the Cookie Monster and decided she’d delayed enough. “Neo, I need the illusion of privacy for a while.” It had become somewhat of a joke between them. Neo understood what privacy was, but she was an AI attached to the whole house. It was hard for her *not* to notice things.

“Sure thing, Taylor. Give me a call when you need me.”

“Thanks, Neo.” The avatar blinked off, and the lights lowered. A very low hum started in the background, with a very minor doppler effect, as if the fan were rotating to and fro. It was a comforting sound.

With a sigh, Taylor stood up again, tossing the Cookie Monster farther up the bed, towards her pillows. Then, with a concentrated deliberation, she hooked her fingers at the top of her panties and
drew them down.

There it was. Her cock. Of course, it was ridiculously long. Of course, it was ridiculously thick and heavy. She had an inkling that she had the ability to ensure a fit for a future lover somehow; she thought it was a side effect of the lubrication, but she wasn’t positive about it. Which was one of the reasons she delayed on a lot of things. She owned the shaft and was intimidated by it herself. She could only imagine what someone else would think.

Her panties were very wet, as she was damp in the other obvious place and had been for a while. Her ovaries ached, which one would think was not a thing. But she had learned that it was the *first* warning clarion, that she was about to wait too long and that she needed to do something about it; before things started really hurting - and not in a fun way - until she set things right.

Right being: Having some orgasms of some sort, quality or not.

It was not actually fun to learn this about herself, because she actually did not know her limits. Just what the first couple of signals were. And she hadn’t been prepared at all for the effects of the day.

With a sigh, Taylor let herself drop back onto her bed more fully, and just lay there a moment, staring at the throbbing, stiffened length, considering the thing that was now dominating her life. “You suck.”

Then, determined, she reached for herself. She had plenty of inspiration to work with and even if she lacked skill, she was pretty sure this wouldn’t take long at all.

The knock on the door just about killed her.

“Taylor, honey, is it okay if I come in?” Her mom asked, sounding very gentle, yet also in firm-parent mode.

Taylor’s mind scurried, instantly focusing on the towering penis in front of her, the panties on the floor and the robe way over there, near the closet and by the desk, draped over her pack.

She called out, hastily, “Just a minute, Mom!”

As she grabbed her panties off the floor, her cock bobbing and knocking her on the face more than once when she bent over, it occurred to her that she was going to have to unlock the door.

She groaned at that awareness.

But then she hustled. She threw the wadded panties in the hamper. Then she ran across the room and snatched the robe off the top of her bag. She pulled it on rapidly, definitely noticing how the pure evidence of her futaness stuck out like a flagpole. Then, like a miracle, as she pulled the robe more fully closed and tied it, suddenly everything seemed normal; just like with her pants.

Testing, she pulled the fabric away, and lo; there was a club, a veritable beast which pulsed. She gripped herself at the base, feeling the connection between her mound and it. She could feel the throb of life in the palm of her hand. She held things relatively still, even if she didn’t quite have a full grip around things. Then she covered herself again. She saw her hand disappear. She could feel herself, but she couldn’t see it.

And that was going to have to be good enough.

She let go of her raging staff, resisting the urge to sculpt her hand forward. Then she paced to the door and with a deliberate swiping motion, unlocked it, before stepping back a little.
The door opened. Taylor’s gaze was on the floor, mostly because of timing. She idly noticed the pretty, bare feet, the red painted toenails. She lifted her gaze, noting that the black skirt wasn’t even wrinkled, but that the shirt had been untucked and a few buttons let loose. Her mom’s arms were folded and she leaned against the door frame, waiting patiently. The glasses were gone and her black, curly hair was loose and luxurious. Annette gazed at her with concern.

“Hey, Mom.” It wasn’t her most perky greeting ever.

“May I come in?” her mom asked, softly.

Taylor stepped further away from the door. “Sure. I’m not the greatest company right now, though.”

Annette’s gaze took in the tidy room, noting the shelf full of books, a few of the random objects that Taylor had kept when they moved, the rumpled bedspread, the low light and quiet hum in the air. She entered lightly, shutting the door behind her with a click. “Your father mentioned that he would probably be coming up later to check on us in a little bit after he gets a few things settled. Do you mind if we sit?”

Taylor’s room had a chair by the desk and her bed. She hadn’t considered that a handicap before, but she’d liked the simplicity. She had plenty of room for soft seating, just never considered the need for it until recently.

She nodded and then took a place on her bed, carefully *not* folding her leg under her, as that would mess up the arrangement she made of her robe. She put her hands in her lap, just to keep things where they were.

She felt the bed shift a little as her mom sat beside her; not uncomfortably close under normal circumstances, but Taylor was hyper-aware of so many small details that it was hard to think. She considered shifting over a bit, but that would be a signal flag. Instead, she tried not to look at the delicately shadowed cleft between her mother’s breasts, nor the way her mom’s legs folded together elegantly. Or the shape of her hands and the way the gold ring shone on one of them. Or the way those red painted, well-trimmed fingernails contrasted against that black skirt.

Annette gazed at her daughter, contemplating where to start. Finally, she reached over and placed a hand on Taylor’s, intending to comfort her daughter. The teen’s eyes went incredibly wide and her whole body went still; almost as still as her Mother, who’d realized almost immediately what was pressing against the back of her hand - even if the immediate vision said something otherwise.

One of the side benefits of being empowered with the magic of illusions was that you recognized one when you encountered it.

“Well,” Annette said. “I think I understand what the rush was.” She shifted, so she was facing her daughter, then, very deliberately moved her hand over and slightly up. “I take it this was coming, ready or not?”

Taylor flushed. “It was already way out. My pants were hiding it, but it was a really long ride home.” She licked her lips. “By the time we were here, I just needed to get out of the car. Everything smelled too good and it was too enclosed to avoid, well, anything.”

“I see,” Annette said gently. With slow movements, like a cat stalking, she drew closer to Taylor. She slid her hand away, covered Taylor’s hands briefly, then stroked her hand down to Taylor’s thigh. “Well, we were going to talk about things, after homework was done, anyway.” She didn’t bother asking Taylor if the homework was complete since she already knew.
“I remember,” Taylor said, near a whisper. Annette’s hand circled in a petting motion. “I mean, now I do. But when I came up here… I was kind of focused.”

Annette hummed, as her free arm slid behind Taylor, sort of locking her in. “Danny warned you about silk and I. He’s right, I do like it. Why this robe, Taylor?”

“Was the closest thing handy. I wasn’t wearing much when you knocked,” Taylor admitted.

Annette was now very close. “So you weren’t trying to tempt me? Even though you knew I’d inevitably come after you?”

“Mom, I wasn’t thinking much of anything except that I needed to hide stuff. If I hadn’t had to go to the door, I’d have settled for a pillow.”

At that, Annette’s lips compressed, and then she softly snorted and then started laughing, but not too hard. “Oh, honey. I love you,” she said as she chuckled. “Okay. I can see that there might have been a few mixed messages here.” The arm she’d used to lock Taylor in, now drew the girl in for a hug.

Annette rubbed Taylor’s back gently. “Here’s the thing. Like your father, and probably your sisters, I have had a lot of dreams and memories returning to me. I remember you as a baby, three times now. I remember you as a teen and as an adult once. I remember dying and I remember awakening, the last time as a woman with a new life, a contract and some very interesting urges.” She pulled back. “I really, really, want to meet those urges. Now. Tonight. On this very bed. But, if you think you aren’t ready. If you think you can’t trust me to help you with this tiny,” she pressed her hand against Taylor’s length, grasping it through the robe, “little thing.”

She rubbed the robe up, sculpting the top of Taylor’s dick, sliding the silk with her hand. Wetness seeped through and Taylor’s breath shuddered. “Then I’m perfectly willing to just talk and we’ll figure out a plan that will help you. All you have to do is say Red Light. And I’ll stop. I promise. I know it’s not the word they gave you, but it’s the word I’m giving you. And you can trust me with it, hon. Any time. Can you say understand what I’ve just told you? I know it may sound like I’m treating you like a child, but I want you to say it, so we’re clear on this one thing. Can you repeat the words so I know you heard me?” She didn’t stop moving her hand, as she slowly stroked and teased Taylor. Brief flashes of Taylor’s thigh were revealed as that portion of the robe moved.

Taylor shivered. She looked at the way her mom’s hand was moving up and down, gradually and oh so wonderfully moving, with a grip that was so perfect she could hardly breathe. Taylor swallowed and had to work to keep her voice even. “If I say Red Light, then you’ll stop and we’ll just talk.”

Taylor’s skin pebbled and she felt her essences well up from her sex and knew she was soaking the robe.

“Good girl,” Annette said. “You’re old enough, now, that you can give consent. And I want you to know I respect that. Your body is your own, my darling. But I want to touch it and play with you. May I? Will you give me your consent? No matter what you choose, I will love you. I will support you and I will help you.”

Annette let go of Taylor’s cock, causing a brief whine, which was stopped when she cupped the younger woman’s face, forcing her to look into her eyes; to see the love and sincerity there.

Taylor closed her eyes for a moment, clearing her thoughts and chose to believe in what she saw, in what her mom was telling her. She opened her eyes. “Yes. Yes, I would like to do this.”

Annette swooped in, taking Taylor’s mouth with her own. The kiss was succulent, leading.
Powerful. It was cherry and dark chocolate rolled into one, sweet and rich enough to make her want more.

Taylor leaned in and opened to the pressure, sharing in the fullness of the dance of it. Delicious waves of sensation rode from her tongue through to her skin to the tips of her breasts and down her whole body all the way to her curling toes. She felt the robe loosen, as her mom untied the belt. Then she felt her mother’s nails trail up along her side and then down her belly, but not quite touching - there.

Annette pulled away from the kiss, leaving Taylor blinking owlishly in the soft light with those huge expressive eyes of hers. She smiled at her daughter, then pulled her hand away from Taylor’s skin and brought them to herself. She began undoing the buttons on her blouse. Taylor reached to help.

Annette smiled, but gently pushed her hands away. “I’ve got this. I’ve been undressing myself for years.” She sat up more fully, actually getting off the bed. Then in studied motion, began divesting herself of her clothes.

The open blouse revealed a camisole, but no bra. Both it and the blouse came off in a swoop, revealing beautifully rounded and perky flesh. Her nipples were thick little nubs, pointed directly at Taylor, who felt her everything twitch at the sight. Annette reached back, unhooking and unzipping her skirt; then in a bending motion, it was drawn down her legs and off. And then she was there, fully nude.

Taylor had a moment to wonder where the panties were until she remembered her mother questioning her motivations. That made her flush with a rapid understanding that Annette had been waiting at the door that way. It changed her whole picture of the older woman.

The teacher picked up the clothes, taking the briefest moments to hang them off the chair, almost formally. Then she paced back to Taylor, standing over her for a moment, before slowly dropping to her knees. She smiled at the younger woman as she laid her hands on Taylor’s thighs. “I’m glad you said yes. This is the fun way I can help. The other involved charts.”

Despite herself, Taylor giggled and that alone was enough to cause a small cascade of relaxation. Annette’s hands slid over the robe, spreading Taylor’s legs gently. “I’d like to see you. All of you. Will you show me?”

Having already said yes, Taylor didn’t hesitate. She pulled at the top, grabbing at the shoulders and began to shimmy out of the robe. Annette meanwhile grabbed the hem by her thighs and flipped the robe open.

“Oh. What a beauty she is, majestic.” Annette exhaled as she pushed the robes to the side of Taylor’s hips. The rest of the silken garment cascaded down, revealing Taylor’s breasts, with the stiffened and crinkled rose peaks. The younger brunette’s cock was a proud tower over the flower of Taylor’s damp sex. Her clit poking out invitingly, just under it. Annette gazed up at her daughter, licking her lips. “Normally there’d be far more foreplay, but you are beyond ready. Look at you. So bright, so wet. It’s so hard to know where to start.”

Before Taylor could offer an opinion, one way or the other, Annette gripped her shaft with one hand, not fully around, but firmly. The other hand dove lower, sliding up the wet slit, to circle around the engorged clit - avoiding, somehow, the two distended, sensitive bulges just above and to the side. Taylor tried to stay sitting up, but that one movement had her dropping back onto the bed. Lifting her feet to the edge of the bed and spreading her legs to allow more access.

Her mom wasn’t kidding about her being very ready.
Annette lunged forward to slide her tongue in quick swipes from the stem of to the florid cap. Her hand rose and wriggled around the shaft in long, firm strokes.

Taylor’s hands clenched her robe and the bed covers in shock as Annette’s tongue elongated and wrapped around her, with the tip lightly tickling the opening where the precum had been leaking. She felt her whole body pulse sharply, not quite near cumming, but with a flare of pleasure with each velvety roll of Annette’s tongue. And then there was what she was doing with her fingers, playing with the jewel before switching things around and teasing her opening with light presses in, which led to sliding her juices back up.

If Taylor was worried about things feeling strange, that worry was thoroughly gone for the moment. Instead, she breathed unavoidable noises of pleasure as her mom pushed her both away from and toward the edge in an almost carefree way.

Taylor actually gasped when the tongue and the hands went away. The feelings had been so intense up to that point that the loss snapped her fog. Her breasts ached with a new fullness, and she rubbed them a little to ease things. Not that it worked. Her mother stood up, slid onto the bed and lay on her side. She laid a hand on Taylor’s belly, not moving.

Then she said, “You’re father’s coming up the stairs. Do you want him to join us? Are you comfortable with that?”

The check was the last thing Taylor expected. “He’ll see me like this?”

“Yes. But trust me, he’ll be fine with it.” Her mom grasped one of Taylor’s hands and placed it low on her own body. The bulge there was very evident and had Taylor shifting around so she could look.

“Mom? Is that what I think it is?”

“Oh yes. It is.” She smirked. “I likely got it about the same time you did. After all, we fell in the same pool. Your Dad has been highly amused by what he calls, ‘His Toy.’ Never mind that it’s mine and I can play with it all on my own. But then, I do call his mine too, so it evens out.” Annette kissed Taylor softly. “It makes for a fun back and forth that is never really solved because we both enjoy the results.”

“Are you kidding?” Taylor asked, a little shocked and oddly hopeful.

Annette shook her head. “No, sweetie, not at all. One thing you learn as you grow older is that it’s not the gear, it’s the partner. When you love someone, you see a bigger picture and what they have, what they look like, is just simply something that’s part of the whole and to be treasured and loved and enjoyed while you can. Because it can go away, so, so fast.” She paused a moment, as her expression went more serious. Then her easy, broad smile returned, a little warmer. “As you quite know. But it does bring me to: you haven’t answered the question. Right now, I can have him stay out for a bit if you’d feel more comfortable.” She reached over. “Or,” she pushed Taylor back down, with a flurry of kisses, deep and shallow, “We can keep going and give him a few fireworks to enjoy.”

Taylor went full honest at that moment. “I really, really need to cum, Mom. I mean, dead serious need it. At this point, a football team could come into the room and I’d say, Hurray, so long as I came. So, yes. If Dad wants in. If he won’t be offended. If he’s not going to get weird about it. Let him join us. If not, then he’ll just have to be shocked.” She reached and deliberately grabbed her Mom’s hand and moved it to her cock, “Because if this orgasm doesn’t happen soon, I’m literally going to be crying anyway. Bring on the firecrackers.”
Annette laughed, “Message received.” She let go, but only so she could move so she was bent over Taylor, her face to the side - so Taylor could see what she was going to do to her. Annette commented, “Should have put my hair in a ponytail, but your Dad likes to pull when it’s like that so, be warned.” She swiped her hair back behind her ears, and then her tongue dropped down again, wrapping Taylor’s dick so it looked like a barber-shop pole; it was red and redder, actually. The joke panned even worse from there, but Taylor was pretty much too gone to notice.

Her hips arched up in an unanticipated thrust. She didn’t expect her mom to drag her into her mouth with her tongue, pulling up and swirling around her as she did. The warm wetness, the velvety pull, and swirl, alone caused Taylor’s eyes to roll back. But then her mother’s other hand began to play lower again, smoothing down then dipping into the petals. Annette pushed in, one finger, two fingers, three. Then she alternated strokes, in a form of mastery that Taylor would not have anticipated at all, but really should have; thumb against her clitoris, circling up and around, hitting the two other small globes, sparking small jolts of lightning. Fingers stroking in but starting to curl up as they pulled back. The tension in those globes thickening and rising (or falling, depending on the perspective), filling her out as her shaft stiffened just a little more.

Taylor heard the door open and then her Mother hummed in happiness at her father’s arrival. Divine light struck through Taylor’s body like rolling thunder and she became the Roman Candle. She cried out a pure, inarticulate animal sound of pleasure as she felt streams of thick white cream firing out in massive pulls of exquisite release that just went on and on. She felt the bed settle on her other side, a friendly clothed warmth, and she felt a firmer, thicker fingers roll in and under her mother’s lower touch, rolling her ruby and stroking the twin globes until lightning cracked through her again in an incredible wave of orgasms that alternated with the pulsing shots rolling from her cock.

Her Mom at that point had been the only mouth on her, somehow catching the majority of it. Taylor heard the word, “Greedy,” and a hum of pleased agreement in reply. Then she felt another tongue gliding along her shaft, catching what was being missed. Another bolt struck, she couldn’t have identified from where, but it crashed through her body the final hurrah, spark, and crackle and all the lights and noises; fireworks as promised.

Though it seemed like it might go on forever, even superior bodies have a point of rest. She finally opened her eyes to meet the warm gaze of her father. “Hi, Dad. Thought you’d be late.”

“And miss this?” He said, with a tender smile. He tweaked her nipple, teasing. “Never.” He glanced up at Annette. “Your mom wouldn’t have allowed it.”

Taylor was blissfully high with the release and relieved in ways she could not have articulated. Lisa might have been able to translate, but the verbiage was not in Taylor at that moment. “Thanks, Mom.” It was a ridiculous thing to say, hopefully not offensive.

Annette laid on her side again, bringing her obviously wet hand up to where Taylor could see it. Then, she deliberately licked her thumb, rolling that long thing over in an unsubtle lewdness. “Guess what?”

Her father caught her mother’s wrist and dragged her hand over, sucking all the rest of the fingers.

“What?” Taylor asked, a bit glazed at the sight.

Annette kissed her daughter. She tasted like a mix of mint and cherry and all the kinds of chocolate with a hint of honey and sea salt. Taylor realized she was tasting herself mixed in with her mother’s essence. She wasn’t sure when her Mom had had time to touch herself, but it was definitely apparent. She shuddered with an aftershock.
Then she felt something familiar, if more disconnected and at a different angle. Taylor looked down to see a heavy cock laying on her belly angled from near the join of her hip and thigh. Her mom slid her thigh over Taylor’s leg, pressing. She felt a heated wetness as her mother’s rosy, plump, flowering pussy rubbed against her thigh. Her mother nibbled Taylor’s ear before replying in sultry tones, “You don’t want to thank me yet. We’re not done.”
“Oh,” Taylor said, as she considered the size of her mother’s cock and the way her father was looking at her. That is, his look had moved beyond affection and into a palpable, definite desire. She watched as he let go of her mother’s hand, having fully licked it clean.

Then he began to undo his belt, one-handed. Her staff twitched at the implication. She had no idea she found that sort of thing erotic until just that moment. When the buckle was undone, he unbuttoned his slacks and drew the zipper down. The noise was amazingly sensual to Taylor.

“I think she likes watching people undress, Danny. She certainly couldn’t keep her eyes off me. And I know she’s seen me naked before. Just this afternoon, in fact.” Taylor blushed, going red all over. But her nipples, which had deflated a little, rose again. Her clit pulsed.

“It’s context.” Taylor said. “It’s one thing if you’re heading to the beach to swim. It’s another,” she paused to catch her breath as she watched him push his pants and underwear down, exposing that massive rod of his. A part of her thought she might be in trouble. The other part was completely okay with that. “… if…” She trailed off.

“An almost articulate point,” Annette teased as she leaned over, and with a certain deftness, helped relieve her husband of his pants, while somehow pressing harder against Taylor’s center with her thigh. The younger woman’s cock started to lift as if puppeted, rising with each pulse, which matched each tug of the pants; until it was pretty much at full mast again.

“I’d say it was being a teen, but I know it’s just our particular brand of biology,” her Dad commented, as her Mom started unbuttoning his shirt.

“What?” Taylor asked, confused.

“It’s called a refractory period. Most humans have it after sex. Consider it a natural resting point. Usually, it takes a while for things to stir back up to being responsive to stimulation. It hasn’t even been five minutes for you. So yours is exceptionally quick. Though I think it’s partially under your control. If you’d told yourself not to respond, you maybe wouldn’t have since it’s been so soon for you.” Danny ruminated. “I think.”

“It’s also part of being a Futanari, dear. As a teen, she’s got a quick draw, at least until the hormones settle down. We could probably help with that. But that,” she said, as she finished unbuttoning, “is a topic for later. Right now, we focus on having a good time and loving.”

Danny leaned in and kissed his wife, as he took his shirt off. “I’m definitely up for that.”

Taylor groaned. “Even here. The Dad Jokes!”

“Welcome to sex with your elders, lover,” her Mom said. Taylor felt a jolt of realization roll through her at the phrasing. She hadn’t thought of it that way, but yes, now she really was their lover.

Weird.

But kind of awesome too.

For the first time, in a long time, she felt like an adult again; even in the presence of her parents. She
glanced over at the Cookie Monster and felt a letting go. Not that she wouldn’t keep the toy with her, but she was an adult; in a teen body, with teen hormones and teen brain-things going on. Okay, so she was going to have to figure out how to navigate that, but she could think about that and be clearer in her analyzation. Later.

Even as Taylor was caught up in those thoughts, she heard her mom say, “Prepare yourself for dirty jokes and irresponsible behavior.”

“Also for random movie quotes, awkward moments and sex positions, and ridiculous quandaries.” Her dad contributed.

“Among other things.” Her Mom acknowledged. “It does bring me to something I wanted to discuss.” Which caused her to sit back with a deep sigh of frustration. “And now I have to go back on what I just said, dammit.” She looked squarely at Taylor. “This is a parenting moment, and I should have done it before we started, but you were too juicy for me to think clearly. We need to have a talk real quick.”

Danny was now as naked as both of the women near him. Taylor realized, that for the first time in her life, since she was maybe a toddler, she was free to run her hands along his body; if in a different context. See. There it was. Context again, always important.

Especially now, since thinking about laying her hands on his body was was a titillating and liberating experience. She sat up, drawing her knees in a touch, equalizing their positions. It was probably one of the rudest postures that she could have taken, as everything was exposed but she wasn’t thinking about that. “About what?”

“It’s something I’ve been thinking about since the memories started, something that concerned me but hasn’t really come up in casual conversation; a philosophical thing.”

“And you want to talk about it now?” Taylor queried. She could tell how hard her mother was, just by looking. The rod was vibrantly red and thick. Annette wasn’t quite at dribbling yet, but there was moisture there, tempting Taylor quite a bit.

Her father’s rampancy was also at the ready, and the only reason she hadn’t reached for him yet as she was still contemplating which direction to take first; up or down.

“You’ll find your mother is able to talk and enjoy sex at the same time, she’s talented that way.” Danny gazed with affection at his wife. “Or she just likes to wait until you’re good and softened up with an orgasmic buzz before she introduces a topic.”

“It’s a classic for a reason, dear,” Annette said before she kissed him deeply. Then she pulled back, “In this case, consider it a quick pause. Won’t take too long. I promise I can wind you back up.”

Taylor said, “Okay, but I gotta do something first.” She shifted into a kneeling position, took Annette’s face in her hands and kissed her, with the full intention of just enjoying the kiss. The older brunette was left breathless and blinking. Her father looked amused until Taylor grabbed his face and did the same with him, just focusing on that for a moment. Then she deliberately drew her hand down his chest, letting her fingers move along the curly brown hair that was an aspect of his maleness and then back up to walk her fingernails gently around his stiff nipples. Then she settled back into a full kneeling position and stopped touching.

Her cock arched toward her belly, while her clit throbbed happily. She sat back, a little breathless and pleased at the stunned looks on their faces, and said, “Okay, now, I’m ready to listen. Thanks.”
“Well then,” her mother said thoughtfully, “That was very nice, indeed. The only reason I’m not rolling you back and having my way with you is that I’m serious about needing to say this.”

“I get that,” Taylor said, nodding her head seriously. “I’m ready to hear it.”

Her mom settled in, still very intimately near, but without as much stroking or playing. “So, given our mutual situations, I have been thinking about sluts and what that means to us and I’d like to clarify a few thoughts on the topic before we go further.”

Danny settled back a little on the pillows, “Oh? I’d think it’d be fairly obvious. Sex and more sexing is our destiny. It’s hardly something to worry about.”

“For you, maybe,” Annette said, “but maybe not. I’ve been considering the angles and the fact that we could literally end up anywhere. You do remember what some of my topical reading was in college?”

“Vaguely,” Danny owned.

“And a particular author we both knew, who wrote fiction about reversed societies.”

He winced. “I think I’m starting to see your point. I remember some of those scenes. It’s fun in fiction, but in real life - no. Just… No.”

Taylor, meanwhile, was a little lost. “And I don’t get it.”

Annette patted Taylor’s thigh and settled in a little. “When I was in college, I was part of an unofficial campus group that one of the professors held. We talked about topics related to what it was like to be a woman and feminism. In this case, I was reminding your father about the reading list, which included books written by Lustrum, except under a pseudonym.”

“Oh. Okay. I had no idea she wrote books.” Taylor said, surprised.

“Most wanna-be dictators do,” Danny said. “Though she would have been offended by that comment and not for the wanna-be part. Anything that smacked of male, she eventually loathed. She was fairly radical, but not at first. Her books were surprisingly readable. But the point your mom is making is that anyone can be hurt by bad sex, even men.” He tweaked her nipple again, this time taking a moment to roll it. “And I don’t mean the kind where it’s just awkward and incomplete. I mean bad as in harmful.” He glanced at his wife.

“Which brings me back to this. I think defining what we mean by a word can be useful, especially when deciding directions that one would like to take. In this case,” Annette said, as she leaned in and placing her mouth over the fingers that were rolling Taylor’s nipple, and laved her tongue over the point and the fingers erotically. At Taylor’s intake of breath, she stopped and pulled back. “I mean, the word, ‘Slut.’”

“Okay,” Taylor said gamely, as her mother moved in such a way, that the tip of her cock was dipping a little into Taylors cleft and rubbing against her clit. “Though, you’re starting to distract me.”

“Only fair, you distracted me,” her mom reminded her. But she didn’t push in, just left it resting there. Taylor had to force herself not to rock over, so she could feel more of that. She felt herself getting wetter and hotter anyhow. Because wow.

Annette continued blithely, but she was most definitely aware of the effect she was having on her daughter. “But the point is, that while we all assume that the word slut is simple to understand, it’s
really not. There’s a lot of cultural baggage that comes with the word and a lot of assumptions about the qualities that make anyone a slut. I’d like to focus in a bit.”

Taylor looked at her Dad. “Does she do this a lot?”

“You know your mother, Taylor. You’ve lived with her.” He grinned and palmed Taylor’s breast, squeezing it a little. “Welcome to life and love with an intellectual. One moment you’re a panting mess, the next you’re talking ancient architecture for some reason.”

Her mom reached over and gave him a pinch. He jerked and said, “Ow!”

Annette was unrepentant. The pinch wasn’t that hard, and his nipple liked it. “Behave. This is important. I call Yellow Light.”

Danny paused and dropped his hand from Taylor’s chest and he leaned back. “Go ahead, dear.”

“Wait, so can you call Yellow Light and what is that?”

“Yellow Light just means a need to pause and stop and talk or do something else real quick. It may lead to a full Red Light if the topic is that you’re about to reach your limit. Or it may mean you have to take another kind of break. In this case, it means your Mom wants our full attention for a moment. And yes, you can use the whole lighting system. Green for go. Yellow for pause/slow down and Red for a full stop.”

Taylor nodded. “I can work with that.” She turned her attention back to her mom. “Okay Mom, I’m listening.”

“Right. So, I’ll try to be more succinct and I’ll be talking quickly, so we can get to the good stuff.”

As promised, she spoke very rapidly. But Taylor was able to understand her and she learned a bunch of stuff, some of which she’d really wished she’d known when she was dealing with Emma and Sophia. But the gist was simply being reminded she had choices about the kind of Slut she wanted to be and that being a Futanari gave her unusual options, and that being both could be a powerful experience and to use this new power responsibly when with others. Because one could hurt another with one’s powers.

Her mom, of course, leaned to the Happy, Open and Responsible side of the Slut scale, but she wanted Taylor to avoid the Broken, Shamed and Powermad side (either as the person causing it or being done unto). She never called anything evil, but she told a story about Lustrum and how one truly bad experience made a lot of men and some very few women really, really sorry or dead.

But Taylor had already had experiences with the shame of being called a slut. Thanks, Emma. And she’d had experience with dealing with Power. Thanks to Brockton Bay. And she knew she liked how she was feeling now, even if it was taboo. Thanks, SlutLife. And she was perfectly willing to reclaim the label and let it empower her. Thanks, Mom.

So she told her mother she’d do her best to stay on the light side of the force, causing a chortle from her Dad and then Annette kissed her daughter warmly, letting the kiss linger and build until Taylor’s groin was pulsing again.

Annette said she did it, “In case you wondered if you’d be able to start again after that boring ol’ speech.” She grinned as she pulled away. “I wasn’t actually aiming to kill the mood.” Then Annette grasped hold of both Taylor and her Father, by their cocks, and said. “Greenlight.”

“Ugh!” Her dad said. “Too much words. Bad things bad. Good things good. Not enough this!” He thrust in Annette’s hand and his cock head bumped Taylor’s, causing a pleasant shock and a few
giggles. He grasped Annette to himself, and kissed her fiercely and fondled her, still in mock caveman mode. She returned the fondling in full, stroking him and Taylor; who got a jolt every time - not just from the sensitivity either.

Then her Dad switched them, somehow moving her Mom enough that Taylor was suddenly in the caveman embrace, being fondled up and then down and kissed until her eyes crossed. He pulled back, enough to grin at her. “Dazzled?”

“A little,” admitted Taylor, as she caressed what she could of Daniel’s front. She as super aware that she was wet, she was hard, and she was fully back to ready. Danny reached and pulled her mother close until the three of them were very intimately pressed. Taylor could feel her father’s length upright next to hers and knew that her mother was on the other side. It felt incredibly naughty and awesome.

“Good, now you’ll fall for my plot,” he hammed, before kissing her mother thoroughly again, while thrusting up between them slowly a few times and somehow managing to grope both of them, even as tightly embraced as they were. Then with some prodding and maneuvering, Taylor was on her hands and knees with her mother and her father in front of her.

Her father propped a hand on his hip, while his other was wrapped around her mom’s waist and leered down at her. “Well,” he said, “Get busy.”

“I see how this is,” Taylor said. “Just you wait, I’ll get mine.”

“I could say you already did, but at the same time, I certainly hope so,” quipped her Mom. “But first, let’s see some of that tongue action.”

Taylor giggled as she leaned forward and let her tongue slide out of her mouth. She noticed how Annette and Danny angled toward each other, making it a little easier for her so she could brush against both of them, taste both of them at the same time. Berry Cherry Chocolate, with the undertones of the usual earthy tang and salt, was how she might have described their flavors when blended together. It was so, so good and that was just from the juice at the top. She’d wondered if this was what connoisseurs felt when they were tasting notes in the wine; a kind of giddy appreciative anticipation.

She loved that her tongue was so long and flexible now, that it was strong enough and versatile enough to wrap around them and roll over both of them. She didn’t think she could fit their both cocks in her mouth at the same time. She wasn’t sure she should even try. But she crawled forward a little, dragging them to her at the same time - or rather, they arched their hips with her pull.

She felt a bit like a predator with her intentions and she moved that way. She could hear the breathiness of their first shock as she grasped them, the sounds of them immediately kissing afterward, above her. She let her tongue wrap tight around them, rolling the length of it over them as she brought the heads of their cocks to her mouth. Her mouth had been called wide in lewd ways when she’d been bullied. But now she thought, it had to be good for something right?

She kissed the caps, sliding over the tops one at a time, only pulling them in part way. She’d realized, given the size of things, she’d inevitably have to make a choice on which one was in, and which one was out. These weren’t, after all, the normal sized human dicks. These were bio-enhanced semi-monsters.

Didn’t matter. She moved forward more, using their thighs - as they were also kneeling - to steady herself up. And dragged them further in.
She let her hands wander up, one to fondle a weighty set of balls and dandle them and the other to gently explore a wet cavern and its surrounding environs.

“Holy…” her Dad muttered, but it wasn’t a complaint. Annette reached down, covering Taylor’s hand with her own, leading her briefly where she was needed before she made a noise so sexual that Taylor actually clenched in response.

Taylor drew her father further in, felt the oddness of her teeth rising up until they were just barely there. Had a moment of “What?” And then a memory of checking an option for “technomouth” on a contract. And she understood then. Kissing, teeth = yes. Oral, teeth = retractable, commandable. She knew she could drop them back down at a moment’s notice. And all of the experience of having her father’s cock in her mouth was as tingly and erotic as could be, with a gradually increasing intensity building that made her wonder what was possible. Because she thought her mouth might be close to orgasm.

On the plus side, she didn’t think her parents noticed her distraction. On the other (as it could not possibly be a minus), she wondered if that was part of why her mom’s mouth felt so good when it was on her. She hadn’t questioned it at all, at the time. But…

She played with Danny’s cock, suctioning him like he was a straw as her thickened, stretchy tongue manipulated and held him while it caressed and grasped her mother at the same time. Taylor had no idea she could do that, but she loved it.

The moans she was getting, as a result, seemed to indicate pure enjoyment too. If she could figure out how to reach her mom’s inner world with her tongue without letting go, she’d have given that a try too. But she’d just had to rely on her hand. Annette had already guided her inward, setting Taylor’s fingers to motion with a few urgent pushes. And Taylor was ultimately fine with that.

But then Annette had let go, caressing Taylor’s face before moving on to other points of interest. Taylor, glancing up, saw that she was delicately accosting Danny, while he was holding and tasting her breasts; drawing and sucking on them. Her mom was getting pointier by the second, and she could feel Annette’s clit throbbing against her palm.

It was so hot.

Taylor pulled her father’s length in further, felt him filling her mouth fully and bumping against her throat. Then he pushed, probably not intentionally, but it didn’t matter, he was in and deep sliding through the loops of her tongue.

Taylor felt other odd things happening then, but nothing read as perfectly strange. It all felt normal. Her throat expanded enough to let him in. Small places just behind her ears and along her neck opened, and a couple on her sides. She realized she was breathing and felt no lack of air. His thick rod brushed against a point in her throat that sent tingles down her spine and belly.

She’d heard of a movie like this, but that was fiction. This was technology and possibly mad science.

She groaned in pleasure, causing him to buck against her face. She felt her mother’s caress on her head, her face. Heard the word, “Beautiful.”

Wet desire glided down her thighs as her sex opened invitingly, now perfectly at the ready; not that anyone was behind her to see that. Her clit was practically humming to be touched. If she’d had the two other hands from her other form, she’d be using them. Her cock bobbed against her chest, between her breasts and that felt startlingly good and made her want to try a few things when she had the time alone to do so.
Danny reached down and fondled her breast, stroking and teasing the one closest to him, before he slid into a caress of her back, and then her hip. Taylor briefly pulled away, intending to switch for a moment, but before she could finish the motion, he gently grabbed her hair, holding her in place. His gaze was affectionate, heated.

Taylor unwrapped her tongue from both of them, her face flushed and a little unsure as to why they were stopping. She stilled her hands, holding them both intimately. “Was I bad?”

“Oh no,” Danny said, “You’ve been very good. Perfect. And trust me, there’s going to be more of what you were just doing. We’re just doing a little switch around.”

Annette said, “Danny, are you sure?”

He kissed her firmly, “Very. I want this.” He briefly pressed his forehead against hers. “And I know you want that.” He pointed down and towards Taylor’s bottom. He said, “Sweetie, your mom and I talked about this some time ago, about what we’d like to do if we ever had the chance. I teased her a bit, and we tried out a few things, but she’s never had what you can give her.”

And suddenly Taylor had a clue. Her eyes widened and her breath quickened. “Yes.” She offered, not intending to interrupt. But apparently, it was the best thing she could have said. Because her mother, almost faster than she could blink, bent down and kissed her so hard and thoroughly, her whole body was vibrating after.

Then, it was a little change of locations. She remained somewhat upright as her father laid back on the bed, his back pressed against the headboard and her pillows. He spread his legs to the side of her. She looked down and saw that his staff was directly in front, lined up strong and handsome and wet from her mouth and his need.

Her mother moved behind her while Danny was positioning himself, touching her the whole time until Taylor could feel Annette’s breasts and cock pressing up against her back. The older brunette cupped her bosom, kneading her lightly and palming her thickened nipples. “Hmm. Moist. Have you been lactating, Taylor?”

“Since we got here,” Taylor admitted. “I’ve been giving the milk to the Kami and the little critters.”

“And leaving none for me?!” Danny gave her soulful eyes, which wasn’t super effective given the other things going on.

“Sorry, Dad. I was occupied with the fact that I had milk problems, not milk possibilities.” Taylor responded, only a little grumpy about the topic.

Annette barked a laugh and hugged her daughter tightly. “Don’t let those eyes fool you. It’s not like he’s suffering a lack. He’s had a fresh drink every day since we got to Furinkan.”

Taylor went still, “Really?”

“Seems we had far more in common than we thought, hmm.” Her mother reached down and stroked Taylor’s cock, wrapping her hand around the tip and then back again. “But we can talk more about that later, other things need milking now, sweetheart. Look at that lonely dick, crying out for love.”

“It’s practically shouting,” Danny agreed with a leer. “Lick me. Kiss me. Swallow me whole! I want to fuck a face!”

Taylor laughed as her mother pushed her down until she was hovering right over the cock in question. Her tongue slipped through her lips, dropping down to lick up his thighs before wrapping
around the base of his cock and winding around it.

Danny exhaled, “Oh yes.” He was sitting up enough that he could reach Taylor’s head, part of her shoulders. He didn’t push, but his hand moved through her silky, curly hair for a moment.

Her mom had let go of her breasts, and the heaviness of her penis had moved away from Taylor’s back. The younger woman was aware of its absence, of the heat of Annette’s body moving away as the bed dipped and shifted with the older woman’s movements.

Taylor was now fully on all fours, resting on her elbows, with her hands flattened on the bedspread. She’d not just caught his rod with her tongue, but his tackle too, and she massaged everything, flipping the tip of her tongue intimately against the base underneath. He groaned with pleasure, pressing up and up.

The younger woman wasn’t sure what to expect. In one way, she was prepared for Annette to simply line up and go. But what she felt instead, was the length of her mother’s cock, slipping between her thighs and then pressing up, against Taylor’s slit and clit. Then she began to rub forward and back, rocking her cock a little as she did. Taylor hadn’t thought it possible, but she got wetter.

Annette’s voice was husky as she said, “That does feel good, doesn’t it? You know what’s on the way. Soon, baby. I can hardly wait to fill you up.”

Taylor would have gasped, did gasp, but the noise was stopped up by the fullness in her mouth, as her father’s shaft pushed deep. Her mother continued to lovingly molest her, without really touching Taylor’s cock, but everything else was fair game.

The younger woman’s cock ached enough that Taylor reached back, just to stroke the head with one of her hands. She half expected her Mom to stop her, but no. She was learning her Mom was all about finding out what felt good, and doing that, so long as it didn’t harm anyone.

So, she was at full liberty to touch herself, to play with her erection, while her mom teased her at the edges; while at the same time she, Taylor, was trying to sync her suckling and bobbing to syncopate with Danny’s slowly increasing thrusts.

And then Taylor realized, her mother wasn’t teasing at the edges anymore. She was probing the main game, circling the cavern and slowly starting to push in. Taylor widened her stance, - well more like her kneel - but the point was, she ended up lifting her butt. She could feel her entrance’s anxiousness to be filled.

She let go of her Dad’s cock, pulled away long enough to gasp, “Please. Mom. Please fuck me.”

“Since you demand so politely,” her Mom teased. But it was a sheer relief to feel the head push in.

Annette hummed as pushed in a little more, slowly advancing so she could adjust to the incredible sensation or her daughters incredibly tight pussy. Of course, Taylor stretched around her, accommodating her, but the sheer silken heat was something to savor since it was a first time experience for her.

Of course, that’s when Taylor remembered, she’d hadn't had anything more than fingers up to this point. So that meant maybe her Mom was being careful. But still, the need to be plundered was pretty specifically knocking at her.

Then there was a sting of a slap on her ass. “Don’t forget your Father, dear. I’ll handle this end. You handle that one!”
“Oh, my gods,” Taylor groaned, but she caught the amusement in her father’s eyes as he thrust up obscenely.

So she stopped fiddling with herself for a moment, grabbed him and put him back in her mouth, tongue flat to the bottom of his dick, as she bobbed and sucked in a more traditional way; right until her tongue opted to wrap tightly around him again. Her father groaned and then her mother pushed that thick, heavy, long rod into her, as far as it would go until she bumped the cervix.

“Technopussy,” was another checkbox chosen and it was all about the full amount of pleasure that can be got. It got a workout, as Annette only paused long enough to run her hands along Taylors back, real briefly, before grabbing the younger woman’s hips.

And then she pulled back and slammed back into Taylor, pushing the younger woman forward, which automatically caused her father’s cock to try to jam itself in her throat again.

Danny groaned again, scooted a little and then he pushed up and began “helping” Taylor with his own thrusts; while her Mother began seriously plunging into her daughter. That’s when Annette started talking dirty. Taylor’s ears were on fire, but it was a good fire. Her cock bounced and rubbed against her belly and chest and she could feel a tingle start somewhere inside, with each stroke of Annette’s meat. She kept hitting a spot and it was getting sweeter and sweeter. Meanwhile, he father was doing the same, even as she suckling and summoning his essence; as her mother said, she was trying to milk him dry.

Annette pushed and pulled her and she could feel their hips popping together and away, making a luridly sensual sound. She was starting to feel the spark, and then Annette released one of her hips, to dip her touch lower. Her fingers slid into the wetness, past their joining and then she stroked and played Taylor’s bud, that central jewel.

Taylor mewled against her father’s cock, panted and hummed around it and suddenly he cried out and she felt the heated liquid dab spatter against the back of her mouth and then down her gullet and then against her mouth again as he spurted again and again. And he called out, “Take it all!”

Which, she tried to do because the flavor alone was motivation. She was so turned on by his arousal, his jets of pleasure that the next push from her mom caused both her cock and clit to spark off, hard. She clamped around her mother's dick, her inner walls tightening and milking with each burst of her own seed, which shot forward, hitting her father’s cock, his balls, his trunk.

She realized she was tasting herself and came harder.

And that’s when her mom’s fireworks started and Taylor was filled with what felt like endless waves of cum as her mother’s rod tried to impregnate her through sheer flooding. And likely, if Taylor hadn’t been on birth control, it might have succeeded.

Taylor caught the last jets from her father, and reached back, a bit blindly, but she found what she was looking for and managed to rub her mother’s distended clit, causing a second wave of orgasms to rock Annette’s world, filling Taylor even more.

Taylor then played her own node, shuddering into the second round of her own, until there wasn’t any more to be had.

By that point, she was resting her head on her father’s thigh, butt in the air while Annette was still shaking a bit against her from behind. Her father, who was already prone, just smiled beatifically at them both, while they caught up with themselves.
Then it was a matter of disengaging. A small river of cum streamed from Taylor once her mother's prodding length left her body. And even that felt incredibly good.

Only a few minutes later, and they were in a proper cuddle, with Danny in the middle and small kisses being shared. He asked Taylor, “How do you feel?”

“Really good,” she said. “Better.”

He squeezed her gently. “Good.”

“And how about you?” he asked his wife.

“Brilliant,” Annette said. She bussed Danny and then Taylor gently. “You were both wonderful.”

Taylor smiled shyly. “So were you.”

“So you want to try that again sometime?” Annette asked, eyes sparkling with amusement.

“I could be convinced,” Taylor said. “Real easy.”

Everyone laughed. Annette said, “Well, so could I, but not more tonight.”

“Why’s that?” Danny asked.

“It’s a school night. And several of us have to be up early in the morning.”

Taylor groaned, but even so, the smile never really left her face. Even when she realized she was going to have to change the whole bed.
Chapter 19

For the first time, since the Jusenkyo incident, Taylor woke up without anything trying to point anywhere. It was glorious. After last night, she could not deny enjoying certain aspects of being Futanari, but the morning super mound reposing like a quiescent volcano was incredibly restful to her mind.

She’d set her alarm ahead by an hour and for once, she also wasn’t leaking a storm. She would be, soon. But she had a window of just waking up feeling normal, at peace and physically less stressed. She luxuriated in it, stretching with comfortable abandon.

She still felt a bit pleasantly stretched in places, and she grinned at the memory; pleasantly turned on. She chose not to linger on the thoughts because she knew where it would lead. As hot as contemplating what she could do with the time, she also had plans. So, sexy thoughts for later.

She reached out, feeling her insects - setting some to tasks and others she let roam. But now she had a mental map of Furinkan, with the Tendo’s abode well demarcated. She’d also set out a map of her home, the neighborhood and the Plaza.

At the Tendos, her insects noted the early risers and the late sleepers and she withdrew her attention, not wanting to spy. She’d merely meant to check up on things. She did the same for her house, not that there were many insects indoors, but she now had enough that she could see that Crystal and Amy were in the same bed, cuddled up. While Vicky was in the shower. Lisa and Cherry were awake and the covers hid their intimacy, but it was apparent what they were doing from the movement and the gasps. Her parents were up and getting ready for the day, with her Dad putting on his uniform and her Mother still in her robe, with jars of milk sitting beside her.

These weren’t lingering views. They were snapshots. Just checks as to where people were if the world was in its right conditions. This was stuff she’d done in the past and never felt wrong. That had to be her passenger’s perspective - the Queen Administrator spot checking. She didn’t resist that part very hard, not when it came to protecting those she loved.

Which brought her to. “Neo, good morning,” Taylor said pleasantly, in their standard waking greeting.

“Hey, Taylor! You’re awake!” The AI said cheerfully as she appeared. She was still in elf-form, wearing her shortcut jeans and tee. “Fresh bread, muffins, and donuts will be delivered in a half hour. Parker has been informed.”

Taylor, who had forgotten about that, smiled widely. “That’s great news. Anything else?”

“Your appointment with the spa has been shifted to this Saturday at ten. Your mother will be accompanying you as you requested. I’ve been asked to offer you choices on the type of jewel you would like for your navel piercing, at your convenience. Also, the spa offers tank services and wondered if you would like to use one of their submersion tanks that day.”

Taylor’s mental check mark appeared. Apparently, she was supposed to spend some time fully immersed in a tank. Having used her gills already, she expected that she might actually enjoy the time spent there. And she was reminded of the big tank in her bathroom. So that was what it was for. “Are their tanks private or on display?”
“I believe they have both kinds.”

“How much you want to bet they’d find a reason to put me in a public tank?” Taylor said skeptically. “The contract doesn’t specify that I have to do so publicly. Only be naked within the tank. Mom or Dad or my sisters can strip me just fine. That is if I don’t strip myself and just hop in. Right now four hours of floating in water sounds like great fun. Relaxing even. There was nothing in the notes about getting poked, prodded or what have you. Not even observed. Just an amount of time designed to check if the gills and nictitating membranes worked.”

She honestly hadn’t tried the eyes yet.

That… might be a problem. Except the gills worked, which meant the slut life modifications were working, even though the jump document for Ranma said alternate forms wouldn’t work.

Oh. Duh.

Slut Life’s changes were never alternate. They were simply aspects of herself. Because this *was* her body. Not only that, this was a stacked bio-enhanced body, given the lifting of being an RP.

Right. Okay, that question is now resolved. She might be more vulnerable to pheromones now due to the teen Futanari thing, but she did have some modifiers she could employ; her parents had helped a lot with that last night - thus the pleasant awakening of this morning.

“I will not take that bet,” Neo said. “It is at least eighty percent likely that they would prefer you to perform your task publically.”

“Which isn’t going to happen in a town like Furikan. At least not while I’m at school. Maybe after, when it wouldn’t maybe affect Mom’s job. After all, what can she do about her wild child?” Taylor shrugged. “We’ll see.”

“I understand Taylor. Is the change in the appointment acceptable?” Neo asked.

“Yeah. It’s fine. Be sure it’s square with Mom.”

“Of course.” Neo turned a little. “Speaking of, your Mom inquired as to what you plan on doing with your milk today.”

Taylor giggled despite herself, given memories of the night before, and sat up properly. “You can let her know I’ll probably jar most of it and put it in the fridge for those who want it. But I’m still going to put some outside because it wouldn’t be fair to stop now if there’s anything dependent on it.”

“Okay Taylor.” There was a very short pause and then Neo said. “She says she loves you and that sounds wonderful. Please leave a jar out on the kitchen counter for your father and for Lisa if you have enough.”

Taylor lifted her breasts in her hand, feeling their weight in her palm. “I think there will be. Where’s the pump today? I was moving pretty quick when I left and now I’m not sure I put it where it belonged.”

“It’s in the biggest drawer in your desk. Parker put some sterilized jars and caps in there too.”

“Parker’s kind of the best isn’t she.”

“I think all of the staff are pretty awesome, Taylor,” Neo said.
Taylor considered that. “You’re making sure they’re taken care of, right?”

“Of course, Taylor. Ben, River and I always try to make sure that everyone has what they need when they need it.”

“Good.” Taylor scooted off the bed and padded to her closet, where she pulled out a fresh uniform. Then she gathered some underclothes from her drawers. “I’d like to get some maps put up in my room; specifically Furinkan, Nerima, Tokyo and a World map. Oh, and the high school and its surroundings. And the Plaza. And I think I need some sketch paper so I can sketch out Tendo’s Dojo.” She set her clothes neatly on her bed before pacing toward her desk. “And then I guess I’d like a note sent to Nate about maybe preparing for a sleepover on Friday if Mom approves of it. I’m thinking of inviting the Tendo sisters. Finally, did you manage to save the Practical Magic movies we were planning on comparing, from way back?”

“I can definitely acquire the maps, sketch pads and pencils, inquire with your Mom and consult with Nate. I’m not sure about the Practical Magic movies. I’ll have to consult with Alec to see if they’re still in our servers somewhere. It’s just, it’s been years.”

“I realize. I’d probably settle for seeing if there is a version that has come out, but I think it was later. So maybe, just pull up a list of fun movies for a sleepover. Nothing too racy at first. But if you find the other ones we might do a test run. Or Amy will just love you forever and have a watch in private, one of the two” Taylor folded a towel and put it on her seat. Then sat on the chair at her desk and began pulling her supplies together. She connected a jar to one pump and then to the other. She was kind of an old hand at this now.

“I can work with that Taylor. Unfortunately, there’s not a lot of digitized movies in this town. However, we are attached to the local networks and there are tools that are in use now for converting videos. We’ll likely be able to find plenty for you to watch. Alternatively, we have a large collection of a number of soaps from Jewel, about a decade’s worth and a large number of soaps from Earth, about two decade’s worth; one set labeled as being from the Magical Girl Universe? Hmm. Strange. And one set from this Universe. There are also some movies and items that were retrieved by you and your family when everyone originally moved in.”

“Okay. Well, if you don’t mind indexing the soaps and movies for us with some non-spoilery descriptions and then maybe see if Alec’s willing to low-tech and pull together some VHS components in case we find things locally in Furinkan - because maybe Akane will have some recommendations, and if so, maybe we can watch that.”

“I’ll post the task now, and run some quick queries with everyone while you do your reading.”

“Thanks, Neo.”

Taylor pushed the cups of the pumps to her breasts and exhaled, to prepare herself. Milking was always pleasurable, increasingly so as it went on. Sometimes it was just pleasant, but sometimes it was purely orgasmic. It depended on the day. She actually anticipated this to be an easy day; mostly because she felt fairly centered when she awoke. But that didn’t mean she didn’t need that mental preparation. After that, it was just a matter of pressing buttons.

She gasped as the suction began, bit her lower lip as the first round of pleasure raced through her. Then, knowing it would help, she turned to her laptop and picked up at the last place she’d left off reading, letting herself enjoy the moment, even as a wetness gathered under her.

It was a nice feeling to feel somewhat in control again. She didn’t know how long it would last, but she intended to enjoy it now.
Taylor placed two jars on the kitchen counter. They were of equal proportions - mostly because she didn’t want to hear any complaining - but labeled with a sticky, so Lisa and her Dad would know who it was for. She put two of the jars into the refrigerator. Then she grabbed a handful of cheese squares, some leftover biscuits and a bit of deli meat. She stepped out the back door and onto the patio, into the backyard, moving quietly as had become her habit. She found the empty bowls, four of them, and filled them; perhaps not as full as usual, but she didn’t always manage that anyhow. Then she left a few of the snacks nearby. She’d summoned some ants to one of the piles, figuring that the others would be found over time.

By the time she came back in to wash her hands, she felt pretty certain she’d saw something by one of the bushes, but she hadn’t been sure. It had crouched way back in there and she wasn’t inclined to try for scratches or bites. But she felt like she’d made the right decision to keep bringing the food out. Maybe she’d have Neo order some bird food too.

When she got back in, there was fresh bread and goodies on the counter along with a more solid breakfast. She spotted lunch boxes too. “Fantastic,” she breathed as she grabbed and bit into a slice of the fresh cut loaf. Next time she’d have to remember to put butter on it.

That caused a pause in her thought, and she looked at the jars on the counter. She remembered reading that there was a method to churn butter using jars by just shaking them. Had to be cold enough, not too hot and had to be shaken for at least ten minutes. Taylor considered that for a moment.

Maybe not today, but she could try to look up a few recipes on whatever was stored on the local net and see. If they had a connection to the warehouse, they should have a secure connection to the universe’s network. It was just still very slow, comparatively speaking. But surely it was enough to do some investigating. “Hey Neo?”

Neo’s holograph appeared on the counter beside her. “Yes, Taylor?”

“Got another project. Would you mind looking up a few recipes that might use breast milk or fresh milk? Things like, how to make butter or cheese. I’m curious now.”

“Be happy to do that. By the way, there are currently six versions of Practical Magic available for viewing; one from Earth Aleph. One from Earth Bet. Four from Jewel and the local net there.”

“Awesome!” Taylor said as her plans firmed up. “Let Lisa know, but don’t tell Amy or the rest of the sisters yet. Let Lisa know that I’ve got to consult with Mom first before we stun our new friends with this. But I think it could be a hoot to see what they think, especially if can get Vicky and Amy commentating while we watch. I’ve got your phone in my bag, right?”

“You packed me first, Taylor.”

“Great! That’s all I needed for now.” Neo offered a quick salute and disappeared. Taylor finished up the bread, grabbed a couple more slices and then went to get the protein side of her breakfast. Time for some eggs to meet their destroyer.

Taylor just finished breakfast when Lisa arrived. Lisa moaned about Coffee but paused when she spotted the very freshly made carbohydrates. She snatched a muffin with a clearly stated, “Mine.” Then went to find the carafe of her favored morning drink. She started past the little jars, then
paused, looked down. Turned around and looked at Taylor. Then her eyes widened. “Really?”

Taylor figured that it was half likely that Lisa had figured out a lot of things in the space of moments. It was easy enough to confirm, “Yes. Mom asked me to leave you some.”

“I’m out of hands,” Lisa temporarily despaired. Then she moved the muffin to nook into her elbow. She grabbed the jar then, prepared to sacrifice the muffin if things went out of balance. Then sat in the chair across from Taylor. She set everything down and then muttered a quick thank you to the universe before grabbing some other bits of food. “I would have come to check on you last night, but Mom and Dad said they would handle it,” she said as she bit into her muffin and moaned in delight. “Where did this come from?”

“Brots Breads. I’m going to see if we can get like a regular thing going if people like it. Not every day, but maybe twice a week.”

“I support that plan. Let me know if I should kick some allowance into the pot.”

Taylor smiled. “Sure. And, yes, you could say they handled it.” Lisa cocked a brow and wagged it and Taylor nodded. “I feel much better now. And they gave me some tips on how to get through the day as a Futanari. Though I do have plans of my own too.”

Lisa smirked back at her and pointed her muffin at her before. “I am going to want sordid details when we have time for a good sit down.” Then she opened the jar of milk and poured a little into her coffee. “So glad I woke up this morning.”

“Me too,” Cherry piped up as she strode in. “I would have missed some superior stretches and aerobic activity.” Lisa laughed and blushed.

“Well, you woke me up so, might as well put the time to good use,” she quipped.

Cherry grinned, then saw the food. “Ooh, fresh bread. All natural?”

Neo’s voice said advertisement style, “All Brot’s Breads are made of quality natural and organic ingredients for the best experience. Bread is life and life makes bread good.”

“Excellent,” Cherry said as she visually examined the choices. Then she puttered about, gathering her breakfast and drink before sitting by Lisa. She gave her sister a kiss on the cheek, before spotting the mostly full jar. “What’s this?”

Lisa grasped the jar and pulled it to her chest. “If you want your own, ask Taylor for it. She made it.”

“Doesn’t answer the question,” Cherry said.

Taylor hadn’t blushed in the last few hours, so why not now. Might as well get it over with. She colored a bit as she admitted, “It’s milk. My milk. If you want some, there’s a couple of jars in the fridge. Literally a couple, not a bunch.”

“As in…” Cherry pointedly stared at Taylor’s bosom, before looking back at the brunette’s face.

Taylor nodded, feeling the heat on her cheeks, but bucking up to it anyway. “Yep. I am a font of dairy-like foodstuff; fresh every morning. I’ve been getting up early so no one would know. It kicked in when we fell in the pools. I didn’t know how to tell people.”

Cherry’s eyes glinted and she stood up abruptly. “How long has it been in the fridge?”
“Less than 20 minutes.”

“Perfect. No chemical additions, fresh, organic and cool enough to enjoy. And I always like a bit of dairy, but you just can’t be sure these days, which is why I don’t drink much. Plus cows vs. humans. It’s a thing. Also, there’s a science project coming up. This will be perfect.”

Taylor blinked at that description, while Lisa offered a small chuckle and tipped her jar in Taylor’s direction. “You hadn’t considered that, had you.”

“Well, no. I can’t say I had.” Taylor said. “And now Cherry thinks she has dibs doesn’t she.”

“Yep,” Lisa popped the P.

“You don’t have dibs Cherry. I do,” Taylor informed her sister. “I was planning on trying out some recipes with breasts milk to see what works and tastes good.”

“I see no conflict, but I’ll want samples of what you make too. We can work together on it, do a full spread on nutritional value,” Cherry said as she started back, the jar in her hand uncapped and the milk level already lowered. “That’s the stuff.” She patted Taylor on the back. “We’ll have to make sure you stay mostly organic on your meal plan because we’ll want to pack in the nutrition now, maybe add in some things to test for flavor.”

“What?”

Lisa translated, “She wants to experiment on how to make it tastier if it can be done. And Cherry, Taylor gets at least two junk food days, so you can’t nerf that and if any of the rest of us offer snacks, you can’t challenge it.” The light of realization dawned. “Oh, and you know we’re going to be studying with the Tendos. The masters there may have some say in what they want us eating or not.”

Cherry huffed. “Fine. But I’m going to be revising the chart. I’ll want her to note any changes.”

“Uhm, my body?” Taylor poked in a reminder.

Lisa said, “Let her have her fun. It’s harmless and she’s a good cook and if you really don’t like it, we’ll figure something out.” Lisa licked her lips as she finished her muffin. “Besides, you know she’s been doing the menus with Mom for a while. It’s not changing anything radical.”

“I grumble at this. I say. I grumble!” Taylor went and grabbed a pink and sprinkle donut and chomped on it. “Note to Neo. I have eaten a donut with sprinkles.”

“Noted,” Neo said, half laughing. “I’ll mark out the rest of your breakfast too. Would you like me to track what you eat during the day and convey it to your sister for her notes.”

“I’ll give her a month of it, yeah. Thanks.” Then, because it was a nuisance thing to do, she kissed Cherry’s cheek to show no hard feelings but made sure there were plenty of sprinkles and pink on her lips when she did so. The redhead blushed sweetly. “Want me to save you some milk for your study tomorrow?”

Her sister side-eyed her. “Yes. Thank you,” she said primly.

Taylor grinned and finished eating her donut. Too bad it wasn’t crunchy.

==**==

Their mom had already left, tossing out a hurried farewell earlier. She’d been dressed in her Royal
Police uniform, carrying a bag. No one needed Lisa to tell them that she was heading to school early.

Later, as Taylor and her sisters were heading out, Danny said to the world in general and Taylor specifically, “Your mother warned me to behave before school, so I won’t do what I’d like to do,” her father said as his eyes roved over her like she was something tasty. “And no, I’m not going to tell you what I’m thinking. Annette was clear that would count as not behaving. She also said she wouldn’t do that thing I like her to do if I messed things up after we fixed it.”

Surprisingly, it was Vicki who started laughing first as she pushed Crystal and Amy forward. They each kissed their Dad on the cheek or hugged him as they passed by.

Taylor mock glowered. “Lisa told?”

“Amy guessed,” Crystal supplied as they exited the house. “We all want to know more, but obligations first and then fun times.” She kissed Taylor on the cheek as she passed. “See you at school Taylor.”

“See you,” Taylor replied before turning to Danny. “Well, I can almost guess, because, honestly, if I had my druthers, I’d stay home and vote for playtime. But school and then the Dojo and who knows what…,” she said. “I suspect she’d get after me too if I messed up your uniform, huh.”

“Probably. At least this first week. But someday, I plan on flipping that…” He cleared his throat. And shook his finger at Taylor. “Naughty. Nearly got me to tell you.” He gave her a good-humored smile. “We’ll settle for hugs, how about?”

The memories of last night made her feel warm all over, and not just in the erotic sense. But they also provided a little confusion as to how to behave. She didn’t really have a lot of precedents. But she knew that everything that had happened, hadn’t been just out of lust. It had been out of love because she’d needed them. She felt more whole. She liked feeling that way.

“Sounds good. Love you Dad. A lot,” Taylor said. She stepped forward, and most carefully kept it only to a hug; probably with the same intensity of effort as her Dad was putting into it.

“Love you too, Taylor. Make sure to pass a hug on to your mom if you can. She was out of here so fast I think there might be tire marks in the hallway.”

“Parker will make sure they get buffed out.” Taylor quipped. Then she said, “But yeah, if the opportunity shows, sure I will. But it’s her job, so it might have to wait.”

“Fair enough,” Danny said as he let her go.

Then, as she gathered her pack, she briefly thought about teasing him, just a little. After all, it wasn’t like she hadn’t imagined him flipping up her skirt, tugging aside her panties and taking her while she was bent over the couch or anything. That had been part of her problem yesterday. And even now it made her everything twitch a little. Just like thoughts from last night did. It just wasn’t as pressing, at the moment.

Still, this was also her Father’s first week and it wouldn’t be right to tease. Or mess up his uniform. So, instead, she waved as she left. “I’m off to the Tendo’s Dad. Neo’s with me if you need to reach me.”

“Stay safe,” her Dad said as the door closed behind her.

On her way to pick up the sisters Tendo, she started thinking about the feasibility of some making some specialized underwear that would help disguise the more fun results of such activities and
maybe help with other things. She had the towel and the robe and it might be useful to deliberately change into her Arachne self and do some experimentation. Maybe make a whole wardrobe. She’d consult with Crystal this afternoon at lunch if they had a quiet place to talk.

==**==

Akane and Nabiki were at the gate before the dojo. “Hope I haven’t been too long?”

“We just got out here,” reassured Akane. “Your assistant Neo called to let us know the time.” She paused. “You have an assistant?”

Taylor wasn’t sure how to explain that she had technology that was fairly advanced for the times. This world didn’t have Tinkers and was a bit more like Earth Aleph than Bet that way. On the other hand, they did have the internet; even if it was kind of in its toddler stage. Dial-up was terrible.

Taylor shrugged. “Neo helps me out sometimes. I’ll introduce you eventually. But that’s great that she called you. I was a little worried I’d be late or miss you.”

“Well, you did say you or your sisters would come,” Nabiki said, with a smile.

“And here I am,” Taylor returned. “So, shall we?”

“Of course!” Akane said, with a slight bounce to her step. She was looking forward to seeing what they might find when they got to the school.

==**==

The walk to school was pleasant, filled with mild conversation, some of which was a holdover from the night before and some of which was about the morning. Furinkan was a pretty city, if prone to needing a lot of reconstruction due to the number of people who practiced Martial Arts of varying kinds, in the area. Akane was considered one of the number one hazards, Nabiki had claimed, but she had actually improved quite a bit over the last year.

The younger girl blushed as Nabiki rarely praised anyone and that was as close to nice as she’d come in a long time.

Taylor mentioned that one of her sisters had been fairly well known for her ability to smash walls and break things, but that it had been a long time ago. It had been a while since that had happened. Then she mentioned that she and her family had lived in a town where a monster had over-run it and all that damage didn’t matter. But being able to rebuild things, now that was a skill that could make a difference.

“Yeah. That’s one of the things you’ll learn with us. We’ve all had to pick up a few tricks along the way,” Akane admitted. “Ranma goes through houses like they’re tissue. So we’ve all had to learn how to repair things on the cheap or face spending a lot of money for reconstruction crews. Fortunately, Dad’s a pretty good negotiator.” She frowned heavily. “Most of the time. Except when he’s around Genma. Somehow he loses common sense then.”

“Genma just has good charisma ki and uses that power for selfish reasons. He is - or was - a bit power hungry. He’s gotten a little better since they started living with us.”

Akane gave her sister an honest “kettle-pot” look before shaking that off. Taylor observed it but kept the humor of it from showing. It was a bit of information that was good to know.

They talked a bit more, finally arriving at the gates of the school, where they all paused and gaped
for a bit.

Literally embedded into the wall were four young men of varying age, all stripped down to their underwear, arms and legs out, as if they’d been slammed into the wall very, very hard. They’d have to be pried out, maybe. Not one of them was conscious, though they were breathing. Bold black letters written above them said, “First Offense.”

Taylor looked about, noting how everyone paused and then moved into the schoolyard and then straight onto the school.

The insect queen cleared her throat. “Well,” she said. “Mom did leave early today. They must have been loitering.”

“Uh-huh,” said Nabiki, nodded. Then she patted Akane’s shoulder. “Let’s head in, okay.”

“Sounds like a good idea,” Taylor confirmed.

==*==
The Royal Police are not just your regular police people. They are the judge, jury, and executioner. An RP has the authority to make judgment calls, assign punishments or apply executions. Usually, for most RP, the default is execution. Although, admittedly, they usually apply that to murderous scum or to those whose acts of villainy call for it. Add in non-friendly aliens or monsters, and you've got a reason to give your troops magical or specialized weapons.

Because Taylor's team are Royal Police, they have the authority to lay the smackdown if they need to. The good news is they are because they've been through this before, only a little crazy. They're not psychopaths or sociopaths, but their moral compass in Jump 1 may be a little more skewed, because of the concentrated training they've received as RPs.

The whole team has an RP badge. It's a real badge, with the backup of authority. In later jumps, the badge may or may not have the same authority, but the training, which includes marksmanship and the use of their specialized weapons, will remain.
Magical Girl (and/or boy) Powers

Taylor has the option to have up to sixty four (yes, that many) magical girls (or boys). That's a paid for option in her perks from Jump 0. She has the power to make friends, that's an option from her magical girl CYOA that she legit rolled. She also has a semi-permanent drawback of her magical girl companions slowly trickling in as they are found. So as she goes from jump to jump, there will be times when she meets someone who clicks and suddenly discovers they are a reincarnated warrior.

This could take awhile.

And, that's not all the perks related to magical girl stuff that Taylor (or her friends) have. We've not seen some of the big stuff yet.

That said, Magical Girl Powers are usually a kind of elemental power set of some sort. They're not like Sims or Hogwart's Magic, which is just... well... magic, with wands and/or hand waves and special words or whatever. No, this is more like "mutant powers," except magic.

Though they also may have unique words or phrases associated with the application of power, so there is that.

Now, the reason I'm discussing this is to mention *now* that no way am I planning on listing all 64 power sets as they come up. Especially since, I'm not entirely sure that Taylor is even going to find all of them, even jumping. I don't know that part yet. It's just an option.

But by my count, by chapter 14, there are 8 people with the following major magical skills

- Taylor - Ice Magic
- Danny - Water Magic
- Annette - Illusion Magic
- Vicky - Fire Magic
- Amy - Plant Magic
- Lisa - Light Magic
- Crystal - Reinforcement Magic (Warding, Shielding & Support)
- Cherry - Air Magic

The minor skills will just have to show up in the chapters like everything else. :)

As for why I'm commenting on this now, I figure I've left enough clues around - except for maybe Crystal's, for people to figure it out anyhow. :)

Edit Sept 24, 2018:

The following are the superhero names for the team so far:

- Annette: Spinner
- Danny: Triton
- Lisa: Glimmer (TattleTale)
- Vicky: Cinder (Glory Girl)
- Amy: Bloom (Panacea)
- Crystal: Adept
- Cherry: Zephyr
As has been pointed out in a couple of chapters and an Extra infodump, the Arachnes are aliens that have some spider-like qualities but are not spider monsters in the traditional sense, so some of the hazards that some insects have are not applicable. Keep in mind, this is an old, space-faring cross-galaxy species. They have lived long enough to have methods for dealing with being underwater and in space and all sorts of funky, dangerous locations. Also, given that they're like Superman (Alien...) I wouldn't discount gills or just really superior lung power; even if that's not obvious yet. Just because it's not been seen yet, doesn't mean it's not there. I even have a basic idea of where the water breathing stuff goes. I just haven't had a chance to show everything yet, because we haven't had a place for it in the story yet... Also, for fun, consider that Arachne can on the spot create full-on structures with their silk. Even if Taylor didn't have a bit of alien biology, if Taylor doesn't panic, even if she ends up submerged in cold water, she'll have the means to figure out what to do, because she has some tech-maps in her head already.

Later Edit: I do realize that the other Alien supposedly drowned. That's an assumption Taylor makes, but remember, the Alien was running away from a battle. It's more likely she died of being shot. The way the pools work is that the person falls into a blank pool and then the magic of the pool starts. They don't have to actually drown. In Ranma 1/2 there is actually an Akane pool and it counts as another "Drowned Girl" pool.
Informational: On the Third Gender (2)

First, we know that the Third Gender is a genetic thing, normally happening in a population at "x" amount. I haven't determined how much, but it's enough of one that the physical condition is considered culturally normal and there's social resistance to anyone nuts enough to try and make a thing of it. Second, we know that the Third Gender, is somewhat universal everywhere and this includes the whole of the universe/galaxy, depending. Nature, being what it is, takes on a whole lot of different ways of expressing, so there's bound to be odder ways out there, but where before if there were a two-sex/gender process, it's now more normal to have three. It's now the pure dimorphs that are strange. Third, we know that even though it's normal, Futanarism may not be noticed for awhile or some people may need "triggers," to have it revealed. Once revealed, it's as if the switch has been thrown and that's who they are; futanari.

So, we come to the thing. It's possible that both Taylor and Annette were already Futa, just without it being revealed. In fact, that is highly likely. I would say this is what made them more susceptible.

Given things we've seen so far, we know that both Taylor and Annette contracted the Futanari aspect via the pool, regardless of the curse. How did this happen? The alien genes.

The Futanari Arachne falls into the pool, its genes get disseminated via the blood in the pool. That alien effect lingers. Someone falls into the pool, if they've swallowed the water at all, they've just received a dollop of Alien genes. The curse, while primary in the sense of magic, is secondary in the sense of genetics. Taylor and Annette are subtly changed over a small amount of time. Suddenly (for Annette) having powers over spiders is a thing. Taylor's gift is merely increased. They both have better eyesight and general fitness and awareness and so on. Those increases are mistaken for being part of the Lift. Suddenly they have genetic memories of how to do things. Some of which they have to wait until they're in their Arachne aspect to work with. Suddenly, they are Futanari and that's with them to stay. Other aspects, if there, will either happen in future jumps because of the perks or be revealed as the story moves forward. In human form, they're not yet at the point of sticking to walls through Arachne power. Chi/Ki Power, on the other hand, may be a thing as they learn martial arts.

Now, can they pass the Futa on? Yes and no. They are changed, but they've already got the human gene set for passing on Futanari aspects. Previous to this condition they only had "y" percent of a chance. Now they have "y+z" percent of a chance, plus an inheritance of some of the aspect of the Arachne might be thrown in now and then. People they encounter who aren't Futanari or Arachne inclined are not likely (at this point) to just randomly contract it. My take is that - depending on story direction later - no "curse" of contracting Futanarism for regular joes and jills is in play. Rather the children that may be born to Annette and Taylor are more likely to be Futanari than they were in the past.

There may/might be a percentage of a higher chance of being influenced to reveal a current case of being Third Gender with a good solid dosing through sex (which, would be a lot, I would think), though that is also unlikely and it still wouldn't cause someone *not* Futa to be a Futa. And I think encountering someone who has Arachne compatible genes are going to be super, super rare - but will also depend on future jumps and so that aspect likely won't be passed on via good sex either. But the Futa trigger is more likely than an Arachne trigger by quite a bit. So let's say, there's a twenty percent chance, if someone has Futa going on for them, they'll "contract" it. But it's not really contracting. It's just stimulating.

That is, until Taylor and family jump (or portal) to a world where that is a thing and that is actually a possibility, given how many jumps go to places that have points of infection.
Chapter 20

Entering the school was like being smacked in the face by a wall; a wall of unavoidable scent and sensations. It wasn’t that the school itself reeked, of course. The school was pristine compared to Winslow. It was cleaned by students every school night and every day there were paid maintenance people who were there to oversee the general care of the building and grounds.

However, that didn’t stop pheromones or general odors from being present. Young people wafted around with their bodily scents - natural or manufactured and Taylor was well aware that Hana thought Yui was very pretty or Aiko had a thing for Kai and thought he was all that, with him returning the same feelings. The perfume or soaps just added flavor. She was even aware that Nabiki’s scent had settled from yesterday, while Akane’s had lifted, but she wasn’t sure to whom or what any of that was directed. It just was.

Outside, it was no problem. Inside? She needed a moment.

Taylor didn’t stumble to a stop, thankfully, but there was a pause. She took a breath; not through her nose, but through her mouth. She couldn’t keep doing that because it would look weird for too long, but she needed a moment to calibrate her needs some to dampen that first response down. She pulled her backpack forward, grabbed the phone inside without bringing it out, and pressed a three button code, which allowed her to access her pheromone and libido controls. A few seconds later, her body unclenched. Her pouch was since her cock had been awakened, still considering the possibility of erupting, but she had control again. Thank you, Slut Life.

“Are you okay?” Akane asked from several steps away. It had taken her a moment to notice Taylor lagging. Nabiki had noticed right away, from point of stun to the rapid activity.

Taylor offered a tight smile and dropped the phone back in the pack. “Thought I forgot some books. But we’re good.” Then she started walking again. She didn’t feel super-normal anymore, but she at least had a grip, which she hoped will last until lunch.

It did. For the most part. She got distracted a few times.

In Homeroom the speaker system announced an assembly that would be held before the end of the school day, taking two class sessions. Annette nodded her head firmly as if she’d approved the script and then started taking attendance. A bunch of the boys were paying super close attention, raising their hands high when called.

Taylor felt the edge of jealousy right until Lisa eye-rolled at her. Then the bubble burst. She had literally nothing to worry or be edgy about. Her sister patted her knee, let her hand linger on her thigh for a bit and then distracted Akane with some gossip.

Later, Taylor got smacked with chalk in the forehead for not paying attention in her English class. Her mom actually smirked at her, probably because she could guess exactly what had been going through Taylor’s mind at the time. The skirt she wore was a dark blue, complimenting the lighter blue of her blouse and jacket, but it was still tight and her teacher’s ass was in fine, totally ogle-worthy form. Taylor, however, had to admit that she kind of deserved the beaning.

Lisa had to not look at Taylor through the whole rest of class in order to avoid giggling.

Taylor got through Social Studies without feeling too pressurized and managed to pay close
attention. Her notes, were legible and she actually found the class interesting; it was obvious that this teacher was much, much better than Mr. Gladly.

She managed to pay attention in Math, long enough to reaffirm to herself that she was far beyond the skills that this class called for. She considered the idea of testing out. But spotted Crystal scribbling hard, looking as if she was taking a massive set of notes. And Taylor knew how advanced Crystal actually was, given what she liked to do with her time. That’s when Taylor realized she had options. So she took notes, yes, and for fun wrote her own directions on how to do stuff and then when she was done with that, she doodled.

She ended up with a few tiny, but accurate intimate pictures of a man’s prong and a woman’s vulva and vagina, in various states of arousal. She’d also had some minute explorative drawings of the huddled up creature she’d seen that morning.

It looked very much like eyes in the dark, fur and paws, plus leaves and shadow and maybe some tufted ears and not much else. Again, accurate, but fuzzy. If she’d been thinking about it at the time, she might have tried to tag the creature with an insect, but the critter was long gone from where it had been.

She couldn’t actually figure out what the creature was, but as an exercise in distraction and looking busy, drawing had worked. Before she could register how fast things were moving, the bell had rung. So she had her math notes (and pictures) and she was off to history class. It had not occurred to her that anyone might have peeked over to see if her notes were any good; which they actually were. But they also were, by the standards of the locals, very smutty.

Akane, who’d consistently chosen to sit by Taylor had been a bit taken aback. Fortunately for Taylor, Lisa had stayed a little behind to talk with the youngest Tendo before Akane’s other friends came to gather young martial artist for the next class.

When Taylor arrived at History class, a banana was on the desk and the history teacher gave her a pointed look. She blushed at the reminder of the day before and ate the fruit in large, but not offensive bites, before disposing of the peel in the trash can. She finished, successfully, before the final bell rang for the start of class. She also recognized the gesture was not meant to be embarrassing, but to be a kindness. He was just legitimately being a good teacher.

She was proud of herself for the morning's successes. She’d mangled zero desks and did not nearly crack the floor with her foot. She made sure to pay very close attention to history class. She also avoided drawing more dirty pictures.

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Lunch went differently than she expected though. While she had taken a seat out by a tree and had just got comfortable, she got a quiet buzz from Neo in her ear. “Your mother would like to see you when you finish your lunch. She will be in the classroom in twenty minutes.”

“Thanks, Neo,” Taylor muttered. She’d intended to talk to Crystal real quick about her ideas but prioritized lunch first now. She opened the lunch box, half afraid that Cherry had removed the fun. But no, the food was there and it looked surprisingly good. Biting into the first half of her sandwich, she hummed happily.

Fifteen minutes and some change later she’d hastened, without running, to the Homeroom/English classroom. She knocked before opening the door, peeking in. Her Mom finished what she was writing on the board and said, “Come in Taylor, I realize I made you rush through lunch and won’t make a habit of it, I promise.” She brushed her hands off. “But I did want to see how you were
doing, given all that happened yesterday.”

The younger woman stepped more fully into the room, letting the door close. “I’m doing better today, I think. It might have helped that Lisa didn’t tease me with a future opportunity, but I’m in control right now. Twitchy, but good, comparatively speaking.”

“And this morning?”

“All good. Made it out of the house without feeling like I was running. Even remembered Neo.”

Her mom smiled and sat on the edge of her desk. “Excellent,” she said. She laid her hands folded primly in her lap. “And once you got here?

“I followed the plan and set the controls when I got into the school. You were right. That helped a lot.”

“Even better,” Annette nodded. “I recognize managing your biological controls the hard way is not a perfect solution, as it’s not one for me, but as you say, it does help.”

“Wait, it’s not?” Taylor blinked and considered the idea that her parents might have the same toolset, no pun intended, as she did.

Annette laughed. “No. It’s not. Would you like to see the evidence?”

Taylor considered that for about half a second. “Yes,” she nodded firmly. “I absolutely would like to see.” She cleared her throat. “But how is this different than what happened when Dad said we shouldn’t this morning?”

“The exciting answer is that he likes to go at it with his pants half-on and we’re a mess when it’s all done these days. If I had allowed it, that would have made you late and untidy. Couldn’t have that; not on the second day of school. The less exciting answer is that is that we both agreed that lunchtime would be the reasonable time to expect things to go well and that after, there was an escalating chance that one of us - mainly you, but at this point, also me - because I’ve been thinking about this since this morning, would be raring to go. And I’m the lucky one with the illusion powers, so I get dibs.” Annette offered with a cheerful smile.

“Now if you’ll lock that door, I’ve already gotten the other one,” Annette said, as she stood up. Taylor took a moment to make sure things were locked tight. Then the older woman waved her hand and parts of the room transformed. The doors were suddenly gone and became black spaces on the inside. On the outside, they blanked into walls, with the room number disappearing. It might make for some confused students later, but it was lunchtime and very few people were in the halls just yet. Taylor, doing her part, set out sentinels to watch, in case.

She trembled with excitement.

“I’m going to take off my skirt and panties and you, my dear, can choose your option. The nice thing is, your skirt is somewhat roomy, but mine is quite tight. Though there is something to the thought of just hiking it up. Hmm. Decisions.” Annette tapped her chin with her index fingernail as she considered. “No, it would leave too much evidence. I’ll have to pack another skirt for next time, in case.”

“This is so… not at all romantic,” Taylor said, bemused. Her off-kilter feelings were mitigated by the fact she was growing more excited by the second. And she was in a classroom and that was hitting a lot of surprise buttons for her. She thought she hated school, but right now it was rocking up there with some amazing fantasies. But no, the moment she was having with her mother wasn’t romantic
or sweet. It was practical and weird and..., “Super hot though.”

Her mother gave her an amused glance, “Just think, every time you come to class, you’ll think about this day at least a little. Every lunch you eat, you’ll have this memory to ponder. I know that’s what I’m looking forward to.” She drew her skirt down, wriggling a bit as she did it. As she bent, Taylor could clearly see tops of her mother’s breasts through the drop in the V. Taylor’s pouch poked up and her cock peeked out. Her pussy clenched.

“You’ll be chalking me on the forehead almost every day, then. This morning was nearly impossible.” Taylor said. She considered and opted to leave her skirt on. She could push it back if she needed to, but the thought of floating the skirt over her teacher’s nakedness was doing things for her. Her staff popped out even further, thickening quickly.

“That’s how you’ll know I love you,” her mother teased. “Plus, my young Padawan, this way you will learn control.” Then the skirt and panties were off. Annette’s cock was hard and proud. At the top, Taylor could see the jewel drop of precum. At the base, she could see the glistening of liquid on her mother’s thighs.

“You’ve been thinking about now for a while,” Taylor whispered, a little awed that she could be the one that caused all that.

“Yes,” her mother acknowledged, then with careful movements, she cleared part of her desk and took a seat, lifting her legs and opening for Taylor so she could see just how ready she was. “I would really like to have you in me, dear. But let’s limit all hands to below the waist and only a few kisses. Mustn’t look mussed now.”

Taylor blinked and pretty much let everything she was holding drop. Then she reached under her skirt and pulled down her panties. She didn’t pull them down all the way, just enough to let her cock out. She’d just have to deal with being wet later.

It wasn’t until she was right in front of her mother, that she realized how intimate this position was; especially as Annette wrapped her legs around Taylor’s hips and drew her closer. “I’m too anxious to wait and we only have a few minutes comparatively. So sweetheart, go ahead and put that wonderful cock of yours in. I’ve been hankering for it all day. I want to feel the whole thing.” The way she said that made Taylor’s hair stand on end, it was so sultry.

The younger woman bit her lip and drew her staff down from Annette’s clit, which caused a genuine gasp from her mother to the slick opening, which glistened invitingly. Taylor noticed, the closer she got, the taller her Mom’s cock seemed. It easily stood between her breasts, where it pressed against her chest. With hasty fingers, she undid her shirt, so she wouldn’t have to deal with worry about needing to clean it if something happened. Her bra could get as wet as sin, she’d just run a few tissues over it.

Then, with a slow first thrust, Taylor pushed in; drawing in her breath just as slow as the first push, as the head penetrated and then the rest of her thickness slid silently and deftly in.

The sensation was a sheer, erotic pleasure. Her mother’s inner passage was snug and sexy and warm and wet. Taylor pushed in further and further, as her mother tilted her head and body back in an appreciative groan. “Yes, Baby. Yes. Give it all to me.” Taylor realized she was bending over and the tip of her mom’s cock was just there. She grabbed the base of it, not entirely convinced she could keep a rhythm once she really started, but she was going to try. Then as she finished her first slow plunge, she put her mouth on the top, looping her tongue around it and covering the cap so nothing would escape. After all, she couldn’t allow a mess.
She probably should have kissed her mom first now that she thought about it, but that sound her mom made was pure sex and she was dribbling. She grasped Annette by the hip and slowly pulled out, enjoying every single clutching motion that accompanied the pull. Then she pushed in, just a little quicker, and she pulled the cock a little tighter herself and she began to move; penetrating as deep as she could go and returning while she suctioned and licked her mother.

It wasn’t so hard to not reach up, with both her hands so occupied. She could feel Annette trapping and pushing her from behind. Each succulent squeeze on her sensitive rod caused exquisite feelings to rush through Taylor. She could feel herself tightening and readying, and the way her the cock in her mouth quivered was an amazing turn on. Her toes were only not curling because she was using them to help power her hips into the thrust.

Annette had put her own hand to her mouth to keep from making noises that were too loud. Her head was thrown back, eyes closed, as her hips shoving and moving against Taylor in perfect time and with the classic sounds of bodies moving together. It spun Taylor tighter.

The younger woman’s skirt rode along Annette’s thighs, partly hiding and partly revealing what was going on. Taylor was beyond caring, as each glimpse spiraled her. She no longer had to hold her mother’s cock in her hand, she had it firmly with her tongue. So she drifted her touch lower, let her fingers walk and stir around the sacred jewel until Annette was pantingly close.

Taylor was on the edge, knew it was close and she couldn’t verbalize that she was near to cumming. But the huffing groan she gave as she felt herself thickening and tightening in that final way gave her away. Annette’s pleased shout was heavily muffled, but her expression, the actual pouring out of her seed was enormous. Taylor drank it in, sucking and slurping and not letting any of it fall in a complex lingual dance she would never have thought she could have managed.

Then her mom bent up, overcoming her orgasmic haze enough to just touch Taylor’s ruby, just brush it while she, herself, spread her legs further so her daughter could plunge in deeper.

Taylor was gone then, the only reason her own noises didn’t roll through the hall was that her mouth was still stuffed and sipping. She might have missed the last little bit, as her vision blanked. She was panting hard as her mother drew her up, kissing her deeply and warmly even as she still bucked and finished. By the end, she was on shaky legs, not quite able to pull out in a hurry. “You were wonderful,” her mother said. “At least an A-plus, for the extra effort.”

Taylor laughed into the kiss that followed. “Do we have time for me to clean you up?” She envisioned licking her mother out, seeing if she could wring another orgasm out of the older woman. She licked her lips in hungry anticipation.

Annette caressed her cheek lovingly, gaze sensual and warm. “I’d love to say yes, but I don’t think we should risk it. Some students start wanting to come in early, especially at the beginning of the school year.”

Taylor checked, noting that there were already a couple of teens who kept walking past the classroom looking very confused. She giggled, a little high and most definitely satiated. She was finally able to pull away. As she did, she felt the wetness slide around her cock. She resisted the want that threatened to harden her again, making a choice to let herself settle down. Given time and place, she suspected she could go for hours if given the chance. They’d not had that just yet. “There is that,” Taylor said. “Handi-Wipes?”

“Please and thank you,” Annette said graciously, even as her fingers dipped to herself and gathered a small amount of Taylor’s spunk onto them. Then, very deliberately, when Taylor looked up from her backpack with the wipes in her hand, she licked the white cream off. “Next time, maybe.”
Taylor swallowed. “I don’t know if that was mean or the best thing ever.”

Her mom laughed. Then, together, they cleaned up and got each other rearranged and presentable again. Annette sprayed a little freshener in the room and fixed things on her desk. Soon everything looked as normal as if nothing unusual or supremely sexy had happened. The older brunette looked visibly more relaxed and easy, which meant that it was likely that Taylor did also.

Taylor noted that she could see the doors again, but not outside. She paused a moment, then impulsively, she kissed her mom, letting it linger and sweeten. Then she pulled away and gathered her stuff. She said. ‘I’m ready.’

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The assembly was held out in the football field because it was still nice out and the principal preferred it to the theater hall; as did most of the students and staff.

“Attention please,” the principal said. The stadium had a great speaker system, so everyone could hear. “It’s time for the assembly to begin. First of all, I want to welcome those of you returning back to school and to those who have just joined us, we also are very glad to see you. We hope you have a great academic experience here at Furinkan High. Ordinarily, an assembly this early would be more of a school introduction. However, due to matters beyond my control, we are now obliged to address certain issues that have come to the attention of the staff of Furinkan high. I now turn the time over to Captain Daniel Hebert of the Royal Police.”

Taylor, who had a much more relaxed afternoon than she’d anticipated, listened as her father delivered a lecture on expected and appropriate behavior in teenagers. He also talked about what abuse was, what happened to people who were bullied and to those who bullied, what the long-term consequences and damage could be as well as what it was like to rise above such things. He spoke with the eloquence of experience. Then, as he was speaking about how young people should treat each other, a voice rose from the field, somehow interrupting everything.

It was a young man, dressed formally as a Kendo martial artist. He held his sheathed sword to the side. “I am Tatewaki Kuno! I have come to claim the hand of Akane Tendo as is my right, as all have failed the challenge.”

“Oh for fuck’s sake,” Vicky muttered. Akane, who’d been sitting nearby the Heberts and had been starting to turn a red color, looked abruptly startled.

“What a moron,” Amy agreed.

“Know I wouldn't be interrupting an RP, but Dad when he's speechifying for the good of the community." Cherry shook her head in slow despair for another.

"I know, right." Crystal said, barely looking up from her notebook. She pulled out a feather and poked it into the pocket of her shirt. "It would have been worse if it were Mom though."

"Well, maybe not today," Taylor said, feeling just a tiny bit smug. "She was in a good mood when I saw her last."

Vicky bumped Taylor's shoulder playfully. Before she could say anything, Lisa spoke, as she idly ate popcorn she’d brought for snacks.

“You know what is worse than interrupting Dad?”

“What?” Inquired Nabiki, who was listening avidly to the conversation. Lisa offered some popcorn.
Nabiki took a few kernels.

The infodump began, but Nabiki listened to it with a smile on her face. She actually liked Lisa. “He kind of is a moron for real, even though he’s got smarts. He's got a condition. He’s so focused he’s made himself dumb. He knows darn good and well that Akane is spoken for. He’s just being deliberately obtuse. He wants her, so no one can have her and he’s into another girl too and feels the same way about her. Too bad he’s almost pathologically straight and wouldn't know how to be polyamorous if a guidebook fell on him. If he’d be willing to make an arrangement, they could probably live fairly happily. That is if the other girl weren’t also affianced.” She rolled her hand in Kuno’s direction. “He’s got their photos on a wall and some tribute kind of thing going on. Not a sin in itself, but he’s got a mental harem going. It’s the start of a pattern, which if he weren't such a paladin, could easily go wrong. We'd be looking at a classic stalker gone murder-y right there. Instead, he’s just compulsive and possessive, with a surprisingly ethical bent for the most part. Except when it comes to his rival and those he considers his “girls”; He’s probably salvageable. If he weren’t such…”

“Akane Tendo, come take your rightful place beside me! And I shall ensure that your beautiful petals…”

“An utter ass,” Akane Tendo finished for her, surprising everyone around her. Akane was known for her temper, not her swearing. She stood up and shouted, “You don’t own me, Kuno! You are not my intended. You’re not even in the running. Go away! You don’t even go to school here anymore!”

Nabiki looked startled. She’d known that Akane had told Kuno how she felt before, but this was a surprisingly coherent rejection. But she understood now that he was probably going to ignore this in favor of his fantasy… harem. She took some more popcorn and settled in closer to the Heberts. These people were fun and they seemed to be good for Akane, as the girl hadn’t devolved into fists first and commentary later. She might talk to Lisa about the photos she’d been giving Kuno and how to rectify that or if to do so. Wouldn’t want to make anything worse, after all. Funnier maybe.

Lisa offered that sly smile of hers that said she knew more than what she spoke. "We'll talk later."

Nabiki nodded, "Good."

Meanwhile, on the Dias, things were getting a bit stormy. “Mr. Kuno,” Taylor’s dad spoke calmly, his voice solid and deadly over the intercom. “You are interrupting an official School Assembly with a Royal Police attending. Be seated or leave. Either way, your declaration has no place here at this time.”

“I am the Blue Thunder of Furinkan High! I am the champion of the Kendo club. I have every right....,” he started to blather.

“Mr. Kuno, this is your final warning,” Danny said evenly. Taylor knew her father had a hammerspace, so no one would even see him reaching for his pistol. Final warnings with her father, outside of family and friends, tended to actually be very much the last word.

The Principal shouted, “Tachi sit down! Right now!” For a man who came off as a buffoon, he had a lot of authority in his voice. The young man nearly sat down on the ground but stopped himself by making it appear as a bow.

“As you request, Father.” Then with some dignity, he found a seat, mostly because he stared the young person in it into scooting over and sharing.

Danny gave a few seconds for things to settle down and then started up again as if nothing at all had
occurred. By the end of the lecture, several people had epiphanies, especially a lot of boys who realized for the first time that there were an enormous amount of girls their age who were thoroughly vexed and done with them. The groveling that would commence the next day would be legendary.

After the assembly, the students were all dismissed. The Hebert and Tendo girls gathered for the walk home. Danny and Annette had matters to attend to at school but had let them know that they would see them soon. No one knew where Ranma was, but Akane said he tended to leave early if he got splashed.

It was very apparent the lessons had been taken to heart. The young men who had been punished earlier had been peeled out of the wall, apparently still in one piece despite the dents. No one was loitering. Everyone was heading home or to whatever they had to do next. The students who were supposed to clean were excused from the duty for this one night. Thus it was, of course, the two groups of sisters encountered Kuno in his bombastic, florid glory on the way to the Dojo.

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Chapter 21

Kuno was a tall young man with floofy dark hair and aristocratic features. He was very athletic and aware of his surroundings; middle of the walkway, protected by shady trees and random homes. He was unaware of what he appeared to be, (an incredible jerk), as he accosted the group of young woman. “Akane Tendo, end this foolishness. I have won the right to …”

Taylor’s habit was to lead from the fore, and she immediately stepped in front of everyone, especially Akane. As she did this, her sisters surrounded both of the Tendo sisters, “No. Just no. First, Akane has publicly stated that she is not your girlfriend. Everyone heard and witnessed this. Second, you have no claim on her nor any legal standing of any sort in regards to her person; see the constitution of this country. You’re not her father, her mother, a family member or her fiance. Third, you didn’t win anything. The Royal Police stopped the assaults you started. You don’t get any prizes for assaults. No one does unless it’s an actual martial arts tournament.” She paused a second, considering, “Or dungeon crawling or hero-ing.”

He looked confused for a second, then rallied with, “My Akane, my thorny rose, is chosen of me for her beauty and strength. I challenged the world and the world broke against the purity of my heart.”

Taylor’s swarm formed in the background, hidden amongst foliage and not quite at full buzz, but ready to go. He hadn’t moved to swing his bokken in their direction yet, so things were still somewhat steady. Lisa shook her head behind the brunette, knowing it would be seen through her insects’ eyes. “Let Crystal try,” she said.

Taylor stepped back so the cos-player could step forward. The young woman handed her folder to Cherry, who handed it to Amy so she could fold her arms and look as intimidating as an Amazon with her height and physical conditioning. Amy stuffed Crystal’s folder into her pack, while at the edge of several yards, vines were crawling toward the sidewalk. Crystal folded her hands demurely in front of herself, bowing a short little bow and then focused her attention like a laser on the young man. “Mr. Kuno. May I call you that?”

His stance loosened a bit at her formality. “Lovely lady, of course, you may.”

“Every knight seeks their blossom, that they may continue to be inspired in their pursuit of righteous endeavors. But the Chevalier is reminded that the blooms of the heart cannot be forced in their choices, lest they wilt and die. Nor can they, if they are already of someone else’s garden, commit to being someone else’s belonging. Would a warrior let a thief snip from his well-groomed garden, even if the bandit brandished sheers, claimed honor and challenged him? Would a rose, who loved the garden she was in, fail to sting and cry for her caretaker?”

Kuno had gone perfectly still. His voice was humble, “But what if the caretaker is a cad, a bounder, a dastardly person?”

“What if he is but doing his duty and protecting what he has been charged to protect? What if they were not his own, but rather the Master of the House’s. Could he fail to return the Rose to her Master’s Garden? To her family?”

“And the knight, if he did not want to be a thief, but was trying to protect the blossoms?”

“He must consider that his own garden needs tending first, for it is overgrown with the weeds of
overbearing pride and failure to hear or even believe what the roses are telling him. He must consider that the path to a true garden is one of cooperation, compassion, compersion, and communication; of honor and truth in beauty it is sure, but also of observing and knowing when to let go. Every garden of the heart needs such care.”

“How can one let go of something so beautiful?”

“One realizes a truth. A rose snipped dies,” Crystal said gently. “A rose left to her proper garden’s bush blooms for ages and when she rests, later blooms again, and brings with her other roses for enjoyment and company. From one point of view, one is reminded that one may appreciate a garden without cutting and gathering the single rose.”

Kuno looked down at his feet, considering. Then he looked up. “Your wisdom is gently given. For that I thank you. May I make an inquiry? Perhaps two. No. Three.”

“Of course, Mr. Kuno.” Crystal said, still gently. “Ask what you will.”

“What is the meaning of compersion?”

“The simplest answer is that it is the joy one has at observing the happiness of another, joy in their success and their loves. To further clarify, it is the desire to see that happiness fulfilled, however that other person needs it even if it does not always include one’s self. It is the happiness of seeing one you love, love and be loved by another. It is sometimes described as the opposite of jealousy, of possession, but I don’t know that I’d call it opposite, so much as a cure to it or an equal of it. Compersion has a learning curve sometimes, as we are all beings that have emotions and desires, but as paths go, it brings a long-term personal and genuine joy.” Crystal paused and tried again, “Let's say you have a garden, and a favorite kind of flower, say a special carnation with an extraordinary sweet scent. Someone comes by and observes and smells the carnation. Then they express appreciation of its beauty and its uniqueness. Would you, as the gardener, cut the flower down for enjoying the praise and try to keep it only for yourself. Or would you enjoy that another also found something beautiful in it and then later, when you tend the garden, wouldn't you take even better care of the carnation, knowing that such beauty is better shared and valued?”

“Oh,” Kuno said. His bokken was no longer held as if he intended to start a fight. “And your name, wise one?”

“My name is Crystal Hebert, daughter of Annette and Daniel Hebert. These are my sisters and our friends, the Tendos.”

“Are you available for courting?” he asked hopefully.

“I thank you for your consideration, as it is an honor, but I am not currently available at this time. My family and I have certain obligations that prevent me from accepting your invitation.”

“I see.” He said. He shook himself a little and took a deep breath.

Then he angled so he could see the youngest Tendo. “Akane Tendo, I apologize if I have frightened you. I forgot that the natural bloom is the one that lasts longest. If you will allow me the opportunity to see your beautiful face on occasion, you no longer need to fear me broaching your garden.”

“Uhm,” Akane said, as her sister pushed her forward. “Thank you. I guess. I don't mind if you look now and then. I do mind if you grab and, uh, try to lay claim.”

“I understand,” Kuno said. “Thank you for your kindness. Your image shall continue to grace my walls and shrine, but I will remember that you are a free flower of your own garden and appreciate
you as such.”

Akane considered all the days, all the angry and complicated days, and she hoped this would last. She really did. “Thank you.”

“Does anyone know where the pigtailed girl is? The red-haired blossom? I feel as if I should say something to her, also. Or perhaps to her,” his face twisted as if biting something sour, “caretaker.”

Lisa stepped forth, “Mr. Kuno. I am Lisa Hebert. If I may offer free advice. Don’t seek out the pigtailed girl, let her find you. Then let her know of your intentions to view from afar. Don’t be too detailed. She is strong minded and sometimes too much talk can be confusing to her.”

“I have noticed this, yes. I will let her know that I am no longer seeking to court her.” He paused again and said. “I am troubled, however. I am a man grown, with needs and I do seek flowers to keep in a garden of my own.”

Crystal said, “The blooms who are yours will certainly let you know. The claiming will be mutual, you see. It is not a weakness for someone to claim love in return to another. If Akane had wanted you, you would have known and none of this would have happened. Next time ask or listen to what your blossoms are telling you.”

Lisa interjected, “However, in the meantime, at Jumper’s Plaza there is a tavern and above the tavern is a” Lisa cleared her throat and her gaze shifted downward. She even managed a semblance of a flush. Taylor was impressed with the body language that manifested, as she knew perfectly well that her sister had no real shyness about mentioning such a thing. “… public garden, with wonderful bouquets eager to be observed, held and… respected. Though there are charges for their time. Not for what they do, but for their time. Do you see?” Lisa inquired as she looked up again.

“I do.” He was blushing furiously.

Amy spoke up. “You might like Daisy. She is kind, sweet and prone to love everyone she meets. She will think you’re the most handsome of knights. She’s also really, really stacked.” Which she demonstrated with an uplifting of her palms motion. “I mean seriously. Like pillows. If I had been a boy at the time I met her, my reaction would have been super evident.”

“Amy!” Akane said, startled and shocked.

Nabiki, Vicky, and Lisa started outright laughing.

The plant mistress was unrepentant. She said, “I met her while shopping for some snacks. That is a woman who knows her fruit and vegetables. She taught me things. And I know plants! So she's not only everything I said but beautiful and smart. Seriously Kuno. Go and meet her. Even if you decide not to do anything, Daisy is worth saying hello to.”

He was still blushing, but he also looked enormously curious. “I will consider your suggestion.”

“Great!” Amy said, clenching her fist and lifting her thumb in an approving gesture.

“Is there any other way we can assist, Mr. Kuno, before we continue on to our appointment?” Crystal inquired.

The Kendo champion stepped back. “No. Thank you. Do you need an escort?”

Crystal cast a glance back. “I think we are of sufficient number to deter anyone who might have ill intent. Thank you for offering.”
“You are welcome, Crystal Hebert.” He bowed. “Farewell, everyone.” Then, as they were all saying their farewells, he seemed to glide away and vanish.

The group of young women were silent and still; stunned. Taylor rushed at Crystal, lifted her up into the air and then brought her back down into a fierce hug. She kept enough sense to keep her voice normal rather than shout. “I am so getting you your favorite flavor of ice cream. Because…” She raised her voice loud enough to be heard, but still not a shout. “You were amazing!”

Crystal’s eyes sparkled, as Taylor quick-bussed her, and then set her down on her feet again. Then Taylor said, “I didn’t know you spoke Poetic Paladin.”

Her sister whacked her on the shoulder, but not hard. “I don’t. I speak artist. I just translated from my head to his.”

“That, oddly, makes sense. So he thinks of himself as an artist.”

“He thinks of himself as a poet. It’s a thing. Symbolic language. You’d have probably eventually figured it out if you weren’t hypersensitive right now.”

“Oh,” Taylor replied.

“Do you think he’ll really stop?” Akane asked.

Lisa clarified. “He’ll never stop liking you. But what Crystal did was like using a programming language to communicate, including providing a definition for a rule - or rather - a concept, he was missing in his command structure. She refocused his thinking and gave him a means of understanding why everyone was pissed at him and then a solution he could deal with. So while he’ll keep liking you and likely keep a shrine going, he’s not going to hassle you about being his anymore. You’ll just be part of his personal worship of gorgeous girls. It’s not that unusual. Loads of guys keep magazines for similar reasons. Everyone likes looking at beautiful.”

Akane blushed prettily.

“So I can sell him pictures still,” Nabiki half whispered in sudden awareness. “With no guilt.” Not that she’d really felt any, but there had been a kind of pressure in her chest sometimes. Now that wouldn’t happen anymore.

Lisa said, “Yep! But share half the profit with Akane to make up for what you did before; at least for a while. You could consider maybe setting up some modeling work for some of the other girls - if they’re independent enough. He doesn’t like wallflowers. He’s into assertive or at least young women willing to stand their ground.” The Tendo sisters stared at Lisa for a moment, who shrugged and continued on, “But the more pictures we can get him, maybe the less he’ll focus just on Akane. Maybe he’ll even catch on about the one who really is into him. It is worth trying. And, if not, we can always make a calendar and sell it as a fundraiser.”

“I like the way you think,” said Nabiki. Then she turned to her sister. “If you agree to pose for some quality pictures, I will share the profits we make with you.”

Akane said, “I’ll consider it. But I want to talk to Kasumi first. I have some questions.”

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Soun waited for the group of girls in the very clean and ready Dojo. They did not immediately start working out. Instead, he had everyone do their homework first, like a reverse of their experience the night before. Afterward, when Danny and Annette had arrived and quietly joined them in the big
training space, Soun spoke to them about what to expect and some plans he had for improving their skills. Then Happosai, who hadn’t trained anyone in a long time, talked about focus, determination and dedication and how he would be helping in the training and bringing in guest trainers as was needed. After all, this was anything goes as a style, yet even here there were some rules. The meaning of Anything Goes was not that they should go crazy, but that they should take what was good, discard the bad and understand the spirit of the art and apply it creatively.

With Kasumi finishing up the presentation by discussing the techniques she would be sharing with them - some of which would improve their cheerleading skills by quite a bit. Then, in a kind of ceremonial way, they were handed new uniforms to wear during training.

Then, once they had the uniforms on, it was time to review what they knew or did not know, which meant tests of skills and abilities of the martial sort.

Things got a little rowdy after that.

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Vicky apologized for what happened to the wall one more time, even as she was handed planks by Annette, to hold up for Taylor. Taylor had a small bag of nails that had been filled by Lisa earlier and the standard hammer. She was actually pretty quick and good with it, having learned a trick somewhere of how to keep one’s thumbs and fingers from being pounded in. Two strikes not one; one to set the nail in, one to tap it down. Annette had measured and cut the boards, so it was just a matter of keeping everything in place for Vicky. She probably could have pressed the nails in with her thumb, but that might led to some cracked boards until they got the hang of it. She had commented that she wanted to practice that at home when everyone was less busy.

“They used to call her Collateral Damage Barbie, but really, she’s improved a lot,” Amy said. “I remember she knocked out the wall of the Mayor’s house once when we lived in the U.S. Our oldest cousin who was chaperoning was fit to be tied because it was a formal event. Wasn’t Vicky’s fault though, so they got a contractor to fix it and no one got grounded.”

“Thanks, Amy!” Vicky called out. “Always good to know I can rely on you to tell my stories.”

“You’re welcome, you big baby,” Amy replied. She was busy with Cherry, replacing some of the sod near the Dojo where one of them had gone sliding. Cherry was laying the squares down while Amy made sure the grass took solid root and rose to a perfect height.

Crystal carved something on one side of the new door frame of the Dojo. It involved circles and shapes and lines. She very intent, with her teeth clenched around the pencil she’d used to draw her marks first. Every couple of sigils or so, she’d stop, touch the carving and it would glow, with the glow seeping into the wood. Soun stood behind the young girl with folded arms, watching as she worked. He didn’t stop her, merely observed. Though he was holding a piece of paper with something he wanted to be put on the other side of the frame.

“Don’t worry,” said Akane who seemed far more relaxed than one might expect, given the carnage. She’d been one of the people tossed through a window. But, she found it easy to let go of grudges around the Heberts for some reason. “We are completely used to this. That’s why we have such a big storage room. We constantly have to make repairs; here, in town, wherever. Ranma can hardly go down a street without being challenged and its bricks and board everywhere when the fighting starts and ends. Though, like Vicky, he’s improved a lot.” Akane turned the screwdriver. “If nothing else, I have a marketable skill now, should I ever need it.”

“Truth,” Nabiki said, as she reclined on the deck stairs. A broom rested by her side. She had actually
done her part but was taking a moment to look at their garden being restored. Lisa stood near the
dench that held the toolbox and the huge bag of nails from which she’d been dispensing. She’d been
doing the fetch and carry and had offered a few suggestions to improve structural integrity, which
had been found useful. “She and Ranma are actually very good at quick, cheap construction. I get
them to help with all my set up when I need to stage something.”

Danny and Ranma cleared debris at a rapid pace, as others worked on setting the dojo right.
Happosai sat on the deck, somewhat away from Nabiki and Lisa, plucking his chin in thought. He
was watching everything. Including how Kasumi fluttered in and offered sustenance and drinks at
opportune times. This did include the occasional slow-motion eye contact that seemed to happen
between herself and the eldest daughter of the Heberts. He found it quite amusing.

Taylor, meanwhile, had “eyes” everywhere, but was relaxed about it. While they’d made a
commotion, no one had come rushing out to find out what was going on. Some folks had even
closed the blinds. She supposed they might be used to it. Then again, maybe it was like
independence day, sometimes you just enjoyed the fireworks.

The sun started to set, just as they were almost finished. The lights were turned on, making things
brighter. It was still warm enough for fireflies, who meandered across the yard without her
interference. She always thought they were pretty. She considered the day and realized she’d had a
pretty good one. It hadn’t gone the way she’d thought, but it wasn’t bad.

After everyone got cleaned up and changed out from the cleanup, Taylor and her family went home.

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“They have immense power and some control,” muttered Soun, as everyone except for Akane,
Nabiki and Genma sat around the low table in the house’s largest room. Steam rose from various
cups set in front of those gathered.

“They have many skills,” contributed Kasumi. “And sense enough to be careful, for the most part.”
She was not unmindful that passions had led to the broken wall.

“All are more than they appear,” said Happosai. “Training will be of benefit to them and perhaps to
us, if only because they would make constant allies. They are very loyal to each other. When we
picked teams, they guarded the daughters of the Tendo house ferociously if they were on their team.
I counted at least four brawlers: Taylor, Danny, Vicky, and Cherry. Four Defenders: Annette, Amy,
Crystal, and Lisa. Though none of them are unwilling to get in close as needed. They know some
weapons styles. You saw how Taylor used that stick and how Crystal tied up her victim with a
towel.”

“Vicky and Cherry could use assistance with control for strength,” Ranma commented. “They both
gave Akane a serious run. None of the Heberts are weak, from a physical point of view. They took
hits like champs. They could use some tutorial in agility and quick running. It’s not that they do not
seem to know how to maneuver, but like it’s some sort of long ago experience for them.”

“Of course they are not weak. And, I am sure, if they were chasing a criminal, they would be agile
enough. They’re Royal Police so there has been training,” commented Soun. “Annette and Daniel
led their teams very well. Both are subtle and very dangerous.” He offered a thoughtful smile. “And,
they do not fear to use their bodies as distractions.”

Kasumi coughed. Taylor had lost her top at least once, causing her sisters to tease her about it as if it
were some sort of habit. It had been amusing, but she had been on guard for it the next time. Only,
there hadn’t been a next time and then she’d been mildly disappointed. She reminded herself she was
older than the girl and had no place thinking such things. Kasumi was especially sensitive to that, as Akane had been so completely devastated when the task of being a fiance had fallen upon her. Not that Kasumi could regret her part in the events, given circumstances, but still the wound was still there for all the young women in one way or another. She was glad Akane and Nabiki appeared to be making up. For that alone she would be grateful to the Heberts.

Happosai said, “I am glad my hope to train the young Heberts is being fulfilled, but I feel we have been blessed with an abundance of gifts; beautiful, but dangerous ones. This concerns me. We will need to prepare them for what to expect, as once others realize we are training a whole family there will be challenges. We may have to make sure they understand the difference between martial challenges versus criminals accosting them. And so, avoid shooting first, asking later.”

“It will be a nice change though, to have others on our side. I knew things would improve when Ranma and Genma arrived. Now to have more, will be good. It makes us stronger.” commented Kasumi. “I have asked Annette for some training in some womanly arts that she may know.”

The older men didn’t quite wince, but they were aware that much of what Kasumi knew, she had to learn through her own diligence. “She has also permitted me the option of meeting some of her staff, who have expertise in areas she thinks I might find useful. I have agreed that I would like to learn so that I could pass it on to Nabiki and Akane. She said to bring them along. Which brings me to, Lisa mentioned a sleepover?”

Soun said, “Ah. Yes. Apparently, Taylor inquired of her parents, and then Annette and Danny offered to hold an informal dinner at their house, with a culminating event for the girls. Kasumi, as you’ve mentioned interest, then it seems that it provides the opportunity for you to stay.”

“Thank you, Father.”

“Bringing this back to the topic, of reliability, I understand they paid in full already?” commented Happosai.

“I joined Daniel at the bank when the money transferred from the department. We are officially a training branch of the RP, at least as far as the Heberts are concerned. Successful training may lead to other opportunities, which would mean steady funding for our family and Dojo. But I can say that for once, and hopefully, for longer than a week, we have funding to meet the Dojo and the family’s needs.”

“I know Dad has his issues about sharing stuff,” Ranma interjected, “but I think maybe I could step in and teach what I know of the Saotome style.” He lifted his hands in anticipation. “Not that I think I am in any way a master, but I know things they do not and it would be good practice for all of us who are still learning.”

“I am stunned,” Soun said. “Are you sure?”

“Yeah. I have been thinking a lot and I figure the way to lose an art is for only one or two people to know it. And then, it's gone if something happens to them. Gotta spread it around a bit. They stepped up and seem like good people. Plus, maybe I’ll learn some of what they know.”

“Would you and Kasumi be willing to also upgrade the training of Akane and, I can’t believe I am saying this, and Nabiki; at last, she shows interest. Not that she lacks skill, but you know her.” A beat of silence. “It will be good for them.”

“If Akane won’t take offense, then I’d be honored. But you know she’s kind of hated me for a long time. It’s a little better now, but she still gets irritated. But I’ll try if she will. Maybe since there are
more people training at the same time, it won’t be so difficult.” He shrugged.

“I believe that your thought has merit. I think we should submit some of our plans and designs for training and speak of this more in the morning.”

“We will revisit the training focuses in a few weeks, to check progress,” Soun commented. “It would likely be good for all of us to rotate, so they get the widest range of experience.”

Happosai sounded very pleased. “Agreed!”

Taylor quit listening in when Lisa started tickling her.

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This time there was no rushing anywhere for Taylor. While not necessarily overwhelmingly tired, given their adaptations, it had been a pretty long and active day. The girls and their parents entered their home sedately. Nathan offered, “A self-serve supper has been set up in the kitchen if anyone is hungry.”

“Awesome!” Vicky said. “I’m starving.”

“I owe Crystal some chocolate ice cream. We got any in, or do I need to go get some?” Taylor inquired.

“Several flavors of ice cream are available, as per usual,” Nathan said, with equanimity.

“Because it was so hard to walk a few more steps into the kitchen, where we are heading anyway, and open the freezer,” commented Lisa, ribbing Taylor. “I mean, the sheer laziness on display here…”

“I’ll lazy you, you lollygagger. Don’t think I didn’t see you goofing off while I lifted chunks of brick.”

“Strength training,” commented Cherry as she passed by. “They totally do it Mr. Miyagi style. A little here, a little there and all in. I think this is going to be fun.”

Amy bounced past Cherry calling out, “Wax on!”

Crystal finished, “Wax off!”

“I did my part,” Lisa said. “I kept things organized.”

Taylor leaned in and offered an apologetic smooch on the cheek. “I know you did. Sorry if I hurt your feelings.”

Lisa smiled. “I’m good.” Then she said slyly, “I’ll be better if you let me in your room tonight.”

Annette heard this in passing. “Remember it’s a school night. Taylor has to be up early for other things. So keep any late night activity reasonable.”

“Okay, Mom,” Lisa said, as she rocked a little. “We will.” She glanced at Crystal. “Are you sure ice cream is enough of a reward?”

“You don’t think it is?”

“She’s literally changed at least two people’s lives today, maybe more, for the better,” commented
Lisa. “I think ice cream is a nice start.” Her eyes gleamed, as she pressed close to Taylor and whispered, “But I think she’d love to have some very personal attention.”

Taylor began to smile.

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Taylor wasn’t sure about how she looked, but she kind of felt like a pirate. With a white ruffled shirt, a black vest, tight pants, and boots. It wasn’t bad for something put together quick. Lisa was dressed in much less, wearing a simple long tee that draped down to her knees, but with silver bracelets, she intended to take off quickly.

Lisa had set the scene so that by the time Crystal entered Taylor’s bedroom after a short knock, she had something to see. Taylor’s shirt was unbuttoned down to her pants, though it was tucked in, one foot on the bed and half-reclined. Lisa’s hand was caressing the brunette’s skin, half laying on Taylor, who had an arm around her. They looked like a naughty drawing.

Crystal’s eyes went wide. Taylor never thought of herself as sultry, but even she could hear the tone in her voice. “Hello sister, we’ve been waiting for you.” Ooh, just saying that gave her tingles.

Crystal looked down at herself in her nightshirt. “You should have warned me. I would have worn something different.”

This set Lisa to giggling. “I told you, Taylor.”

Taylor sat up and raised her arms. “Come here, sweetie.”

Crystal strode quickly to the bed, then settled into the warm hug by both of her sisters. Lisa said, gently. “We all know you would have come in with something incredible. But we didn’t intend to stay dressed long. I mean, look at me. I’m just in a t-shirt.” She slipped the bangles off and let the drop onto a side table.” She smiled warmly, sitting up so she was now kneeling. She propped her hands on her thighs. “So, Taylor and I have a question. We didn’t want to assume. But would you like to play with us tonight? Just us three. Adult play, not board games. You can say no and then we’ll just cuddle. Whatever you want for the next hour and a half or so. Mom reminded us of the time earlier.”

Crystal looked back and forth between them, then smiled widely. She said, “Yes, please,” before tackling them back onto the bed and kissing them both soundly. But then she found herself quickly put in the middle with her nightshirt off and somewhere and they were also quickly less-dressed. Or more accurately, not clothed at all, once Taylor finished kicking off the boots. Then there was a lot of slow kissing and caresses as Lisa and Taylor put their whole attention on their caramel-skinned sister. They scattered their touches, stroking her legs and arms first while they kissed her face, her lips, her neck. Lisa left a hickey on one side, while Taylor took her kisses lower, stopping to love at Crystal’s breasts and belly, while her hand cupped her womanhood.

Lisa said in bits and pieces, between the kisses, “Never doubt how beautiful you are. You’re sexy enough to light up a whole room. Your smarts are even sexier. Taylor could hardly keep your hands off you before we got to the Dojo. The only reason she didn’t cart you away to some corner to have her way with you was all the witnesses. She didn’t want to tell you she was going to get you ice cream. She wanted to tell you she was going to have you tonight if she could.” The platinum blonde grinned, the freckles dotting her nose and cheeks, making that grin seem even less innocent for some reason. “Thank you for accommodating us.”
Crystal who had been moaning and sighing in pleasure now laughed in an equal, but different kind of happiness. She’d parted her legs for Taylor, who had begun finger-playing, stroking and touching her intimate places. “You were wonderful,” confirmed Taylor. “Brave and a lot sweeter than I would have been. I would have flown bugs up his nose. But you made it better, not worse. I always think my sisters are gorgeous, there’s always a little buzz in my…” She thrust her hips against Crystal's side. “Ungh. But you have your own way that I appreciate.” She nuzzled in, “And it’s not just about pretty clothes or nifty buttons. I not only love you, I like you, Crystal. I always have.”

Lisa’s hand joined where Taylor’s was, dipping lower. She pushed in slowly, first with one finger back and forth and then two. Taylor cupped and kneaded the breast she’d been focusing on, letting her hand take over where her lips had been, as she trailed kisses down the sleek belly of her sister. “I’ve wanted to do this a long time. Or at least a month. I’ve been having such incredible dreams and you all keep walking around me like barely dressed goddesses. You have no idea what it’s been like.”

Crystal started giggling again. “I can guess,” the youngest of them said. “Oh!” Taylor’s mouth had found its destination. The elder brunette used her flexible tongue to wind around and play with her sister’s jewel, sucking it into her mouth. Lisa continued to fill her, thrusting in a steady rhythm, with an occasional shift to hit the sweet spots.

Their younger sister’s hips began to move in response. Neither Taylor nor Lisa stopped touching and stroking her. Taylor missed what Lisa said next because she was whispering in Crystal’s ear, but whatever it was, caused the younger woman’s clit to pulse under her tongue. One of Taylor’s arms wrapped around Crystal’s thigh, holding her wide for easier access.

It wasn’t long, not really, but she felt her sister’s spark and flight take off and ripple through her. It was incredibly intense to witness, she could only imagine how it felt. When Lisa removed her fingers, Taylor filled Crystal again, so she could lap her up, feeling the echoes of pleasure pulse through her tongue. Crystal was berries and cream, to go with her other flavors, a hint of smoke and dreams too. Taylor felt Lisa stroke her hair, and pulled back, leaving her sister clean and almost dry.

Crystal relaxed as they gentled their ministrations and let her come down from the heights. Taylor shared her epiphany with Lisa, “It’s not going to get old, is it. I mean, I enjoyed that as much as the first time I did it.” She looked a bit sheepish, “Maybe even a bit more.”

“They do say sex gets better with practice,” Lisa said, amused.

“Well then, obviously, we have to practice a lot,” Taylor said, smiling back. Taylor glanced down at Crystal.

“Obviously,” Crystal huffed, still catching her breath. But she was smiling too.
Chapter 22

For a good portion of the rest of the week, Taylor had fun watching Crystal essentially float through the days at school. Crystal’s beaming smiles actually gave her warm fuzzies. She and Lisa would share grins and tease the other girl - in a good and sexy way - to see how long the float would last. Taylor’s mother didn’t call her in, but Taylor did get beaned at least twice for mental wandering. Otherwise, school went as school usually did.

In the evenings, they went to the Dojo, did homework, practiced for Cheerleading or Trained or Sparred and ended up doing a bit more construction work.

Taylor changed into an Arachne at least twice, none of it her fault, once in school and once at home. Both times she was near enough to a source of warm water to mitigate things. The principal even nodded to her in passing as she made her way to the showers again. She made sure to wear a “Human” cap, but she reckoned their principal might be a little strange so she wasn’t entirely sure she needed to. On the other hand, it could be that as long as she appeared to follow school rules, she was in the good.

She continued to get up very early, milk herself, and leave some for those who wanted it, share some with the Kami or creature(s) who seemed to live in the back of their yard, and then stored the rest in the refrigerator. She and Cherry would start on the milk project more seriously as the due date got close, but Taylor did track her eating and Cherry kept a chart on flavors. Taylor still hadn’t managed to tag the critter that she spotted earlier. For some reason, the small bugs would get on it, but disappear very soon after. She suspected the creature was a groomer, which might mean it was a cat.

When it came to certain physical things, Taylor handled most of her business on her own. There were loads of cuddles and stolen kisses, but the timing wasn’t right for other fun things. Her mom had two lunch meetings, spoiling that idea. Her sisters had their own things going on. So late showers and early mornings were reserved as her self-catch and release program. Taking care of herself kept other things manageable. She was starting to think she might make it through the days.

On Friday morning of that first week of school, Taylor walked past a door. She was already dressed for school, had her pack with her and only had a few things she wanted to get. She felt a strong arm wrap around her hips and drag her into the den. A big, masculine hand clamped around her mouth. The door whooshed shut, leaving her in the darkened room. It wasn’t entirely without light, but she was a little blinded by the change in scenery. Instinct had her starting up her swarm, angling her elbow and prepping a nasty stomp until she heard her name spoken softly. That took maybe a couple of seconds if that long.

“I’ve got you now,” the man said in a harsh whisper, his tone that of a bond villain. She recognized his voice, even with the amusing alteration. After all, she heard it every day. But she didn’t speak in return as she still had a hand plastered over her mouth. It was a fairly strong grip, but not bruising. The buzz that rose in the background, went down.

She felt his tall, male body press against her familiarly. His free hand tugged at the hem of her shirt, pulling it out from the top of her uniform skirt. Then sculpted up along her abdomen and up to grasp and squeeze one of her recently emptied and still quite sensitive breasts. She gasped, at first slightly pained and then felt a spark of real pleasure roll through her. He let go abruptly, pushing her forward with his body, guiding her hips again, until he pushed her into a bend.
“Put your hands here, leave them.” Her hands were guided until she felt a soft surface under her palms. It was pliable but only bent down so far when pushed down to the edge. So, a couch then.

After positioning her hands, he spread her legs, touching her inner thighs intimately. He pressed up, brushing his fingers against her panties pressing up into her cleft. Then he deftly rubbed the damp, silky fabric against her clit. She whimpered. “Already wet, I see. They have names for girls like you,” he said a touch coldly before removing his hand.

He still had her mouth covered for some reason, but she was breathing fine through her nose. She could smell the pheromones, the aftershave, and the soap he used. If he hadn’t said her name earlier, she would have recognized him this way.

“Nod your head if you want this. Shake your head if you don’t. Slap the couch twice if it’s too much and you need to pause. Three times if you need to stop,” he said, in a heavy whisper. She was tempted to lick his palm but figured it would break the scene and she was starting to get into it. She nodded her head, like a scared young waif. He crushed up against her, so she could feel his thick hardness against her bottom. Her skirt and panties seemed like scant protection at the moment. His slacks brushed against her legs enticingly and she realized she liked the crisp smoothness she felt. She got wetter. She gripped the furniture in anticipation. His whisper got more intense. “Don’t scream, don’t talk.”

He let go of her face, but she felt coolness as her skirt was pushed up. She heard a zipper being unzipped, a button being unsnapped and various things being shifted around. He grabbed her hip with one hand and her inner walls flexed as her jewel pulsed in advance excitement. Her belly tightened as she willed her cock to stay put and it did. The pocket stayed tight and lean, even as she throbbed.

She didn’t know she could do that. It was a brief moment of revelation before she got to being distracted again.

He pushed her forward a little more, with a hand on her head. Then he angled her hips up a little. She felt his hardness thrust slowly along the silk of her panties, not quite pressing, but she was aware that his cock was heavy and wide. Then he pushed it up a little, making small, teasing and thrusting motions against her clit. She was pretty sure he felt her pussy’s lips try to flutter around him, stymied only by the thin cloth.

“Gonna make you take this,” he said. She felt his fingers against her sex, playing the silk at her sensitive bud again before she felt his knuckles fold and she realized he was looping the cloth and dragging it over past the meat of her vulva. It felt so naughty she had to press her mouth closed not to say anything.

The head of his cock bumped and swirled against her jewel as he pressed and pushed up against her, getting soaked without the panties in the way. Her grip had doubled on the couch’s edge. He stayed there a moment, as her essence covered him, to let his hands wander along her skin. Grasping her buttocks with both palms, he lightly squeezed. Then his hands roved up and along her back, petting her trunk and shoulders to wrap on down and under her bra; where he grasped her breasts again.

Her nipples pebbled tight as he tweaked her there, forcing them to a tender hardness until she ached. She moved against his length, not intending to but needing to. He let her for a moment, then moved his hands away from her, causing her to groan.

She felt him grab one of her hips and he seemed to pull away. She bit against a “No,” feeling it well up against her teeth like a demand.
Then the proud cap of his cock pressed against her opening, crowning into her with a slow firm push that had her digging in with her toes. Her arms relaxed as she bent with his pressure as he covered her. She felt the weight of his hips start to press against hers and the way his belly and chest covered part of her back.

He groaned softly, his breath hot against the middle of her shoulders. She could feel the way his hands were imprinting her hips as he thrust in deeply, filling her to the hilt. She quivered around him, pulsing and clenching despite herself as she took him.

Then he began to move, at first only his hips as he pulled out slowly and then thrust back in hard enough to make her grunt. Then he did it again, lifting up some, so that incredible pressure eased there, except the pace began in earnest as he pulled and slammed roughly into her again and again, picking up speed until he found a perfect rhythm. The sound of their connecting was amazing, physical and turned her on even more.

She nearly cried out, only not doing so through a force of will. She felt his touch change from her hip as one hand dragged through her sex and played at her jewel a moment, stirring her hard and soft enough that she was on the cusp of erotic detonation.

Then she felt him pressing against her again, his mouth on her right shoulder and suction, the weight of him pushing down as he piston into her and the sheer heat as his release sparked and he made a heavy plunge as if he were trying to push her into another world. His seed jetted into her as his fingers, rolled against her and she sparked out, trying desperately to be quiet, but she’d been thrust into a star, light flashing in her eyes as her release streaked through.

He covered her mouth again, her lips, with those wet fingers. She could smell the sexy frothing mix of their odors of his cum and her wetness. She came again as his body pushed him - and her - to the finish. He filled her up, his seed creamy and spilling out as he moved in her still. She rolled through several orgasms, leveling out as he slowed, but still shaking in the grips when he finally rested against her, breathing heavily.

“So good. You did so well. You always were formidable,” he said, quietly, as he caught his breath and then kissed her neck softly. He’d let go of her mouth and had wrapped his arms around her in a proper hug, though they were both still bending. He was still deep in her, the last pulses finishing, as he pulled her up a bit, nuzzling against her neck. He kissed her softly. “So beautiful,” he breathed.

She still gripped the couch. “You can let go,” he laughed softly, stroking down her arms to help her unclench from it. Eventually, he finally disengaged and made a space between them, ignoring the small whine. She was very aware of the way she spilled against him’ that heavy cream covered his cock, even if she couldn’t yet see the evidence. “You can talk, sweetheart. You were amazing. Thank you.” He squeezed her tightly, but not too hard. “Love you.”

“Love you too, Dad,” Taylor returned, breathlessly, still not quite steady.

The light flicked on, and she blinked a moment at the shift from darkness into brightness. The door was still closed, but her mom was there beside it, standing with her arms crossed. Her expression inscrutable.

“You’ve been very, very naughty Daniel Hebert,” Annette said. “As I recall, you were going to wait until at least next week. Did we not have this agreement?”

Taylor’s father squeezed his daughter one more time, as he planted a kiss on her cheek. He didn’t deny it. Instead, he said, “But look at her,” as if that was a good reason. Taylor was upright enough that her skirt had dropped to cover things, but she felt super-naked, as his cum dripped down her
thighs and her panties remained askew.

Annette’s expression warmed, “Yes, Danny, I know. But you made a bargain with me, about waiting until the afternoon or evening. A small one, true, but still. A punishment for each morning, I believe it was? Or do you prefer I follow through with my other threat?”

“I figured a day was doable,” Danny said, sounding not at all threatened. “Taylor, can you stand on your own, kiddo?”

Taylor still felt a bit blurred from the orgasm and its intensity, but she also knew she was fine. “I’m good,” she said as she straightened more and took her own weight forward. “That was pretty amazing.” His hold became much lighter.

He kissed her cheek. “Yes, it was.”

Annette walked up to both of them kissed Danny softly, but pulled Taylor into a hug to kiss her too. She looked straight into her husband’s eyes. “I think I’ll decide what you owe for later, but there will be payment.” Taylor looked back. Her father didn’t look all that displeased.

Her mom caressed her face, gently and kissed her again. “Are you alright? Feeling like yourself? No strangeness?”

Taylor was starting to feel more like herself and she nodded. “I think I’m good. I was a little startled by being dragged into a room, but it was fun once I realized what was happening. Dad’s lucky I love him. He’d be covered in bees otherwise.”

“I suddenly feel very fortunate,” Danny said, paling and more than slightly appalled at the thought. It did not take away from his generally good feelings but he found himself making a mental note.

Annette kissed them both again. “And so you should.”

She sighed, “Unfortunately, none of us can linger. Taylor, honey, why don’t you go take a quick shower and put on a change of clothes. Perhaps pack some too, in case. I dare say your attention at school is going to be a bit worse than normal.” She poked Danny lightly in the chest, “Which is one of the reasons I wanted you to wait for a bit, sweetheart.”

He wasn’t exactly repentant, but he said, “I know. My bad. But still. Look at her. Actually, look at all our girls.”

“They are sexy little treasures, aren’t they?” her mom said, pleased with how well all of their family had prospered and matured. “But they still have school and have to be presentable. I won’t punish them if they fall to your wicked ways. We all know they are old enough and we’ll make sure no one gets hurt, but still, you are the grown up. So fair warning, I’ll get you if you mess them up.” She smacked him hard on the butt, while Taylor was still between them. It wasn’t a teasing spank either.

He whistled. “Sting-y!” He rubbed the sore spot, then shuddered a little. “Fine, I’ll behave. I’m not shooting for a whole week anymore, though. It’s unrealistic when every single one of them is essentially wearing one of my turn-ons, every morning.”

“We’ll negotiate. Later.” Annette booped his nose with her index finger and stepped away from Taylor, but not before kissing her one more time. “Love you, sweetheart. Now go and get ready for school.” She looked up at her husband with minor pointedness, “Again.”

“Sure Mom, Love you too. Love you both.” Taylor gathered her pack, then, walking a little differently than normal, she made her way back upstairs.
School went by fairly quickly. Annette had another lunch meeting, which was super disappointing. She was not wrong about how distracted Taylor had been, but she managed herself through her controls and by forcing herself to focus on one class at a time. She started bringing her own snack to history class, which had gotten a nod from the teacher. Still, at one point, in art class, she’d seriously considered straight up pulling one of her sisters into a closet but she realized now how lucky she and Lisa had been. Furinkan High was a busy school. Her insects saw it all. She’d have to go through with her pericog sister and find the right quiet, secret places at some point.

At the last class, gym, Taylor stood in front of her locker staring at its emptiness, holding that extra set of clothes and a towel she’d brought. Lisa stood beside her. “This isn’t Winslow,” she said softly, barely audible. “They aren’t here. You have us. The locker is too small anyway. It’ll never happen again.”

Trembling, she laid the items in the locker. Then with a concentrated effort, shut it and locked it. In the back of her mind was a faint memory of odors and sights. She swallowed against the revulsion. Then she thought of how Emma and her friends might have reacted if she’d had her other form. “Maybe I should carry water around, put some in there,” she said. “I’d hate to get dehydrated.”

Lisa patted her back lightly. “That’s the spirit.

The plan for after school was that the girls would head towards the Hebert’s home rather than the Dojo. The Tendos had not actually been that way before, for reasons mundane and magical. After all, from a certain point of view, the Hebert’s neighborhood hadn’t existed until that summer. From the small city’s “point-of-view” it had been an expansion of a suburb, with the Plaza as part of its make up. From the Hebert’s’ point of view, it had been there when they ended their vacation. Their old home was in the states and did not have the Plaza. They’d awakened in their own lives and magic had done the rest.

Previous to the day, Taylor had broached the subject of what to tell or not tell the Tendos. They were generally agreed that the adults - meaning Danny and Annette - should handle telling the other adults what they thought should be revealed. Taylor’s concern was trickier. After all, the relationships in her family had taken on whole new tones given recent developments. And if the girls slept over, there would be some unavoidable things come up - for instance, Taylor's daily lactation (sometimes twice and three times if she were particularly hormonal). Then there was the magic version of themselves, which did tend to slip out and had already done so in the dojo - though the Tendos had been thoughtful enough not to say anything about it. And the Jusenkyo effects and … well... a whole host of things, actually.

Ultimately, after some discussion, it was agreed that they’d try for an organic reveal if any. If the topic came up, they’d share. If not, well, no news was good news. Instead, they would focus on building their friendship and see where it went from there. After all, as Vicky pointed out, it wasn’t like any of them weren’t “getting any.” Her point was crass but true. They could do platonic friendships and be very okay with that.

But it did lead to a few rules. The first one being, “none o’ that,” meaning no sneaking under the covers or over the covers while the Tendos were in the room. If anyone found they needed to smooch or do more, they had to go to their own rooms and have that fun there. Doors locked. The second one was to check the atmosphere. If the empathic wind traced north, then leave things be. If they traced south, they’d see where it went.
The third rule wasn’t so much of a rule, as a caution from Lisa. Nabiki was doing pretty well so far, but she liked knowing things and she had trust issues - not in that she failed to trust, but rather that if it weren’t in her best interest to keep something on the down low, she had the habit of using it; and she genuinely wanted to change that habit, at least when it came to her friends and family. So it was up to them to help her. Thus, if seducing was going to happen, Nabiki had to be one of the first ones. Lisa and Cherry both volunteered at the same time for that one, starting off a round of laughter that stayed live for several minutes.

And Taylor realized that she’d already changed what she considered normal in a space of a week. She was perfectly fine about the sexy times spent with her parents and her sisters. Her soul read it as bonding time, sinful only in the sense of erotic play, not in the sense of actual wrong. Of course, she had years of experience under her belt - despite appearances - and she had battled monsters, defeated evils that this universe hadn’t even contemplated, and had given her life twice for the right thing. As she tested her morals, they seemed fairly "square." But when it came to love and sex, she read only the good. It might help that her family was just that, good. She trusted them enough to share her body and they'd kept that trust.

So, fun and games were a yes, if somewhat inexplicable. She wasn't sure how she'd explain things to a future lover. Polyamory didn't quite cover things, but there had to be a middle ground. On the other hand, if all she ever had was the love of her family, well... she could think of worse fates.

So, so what if she couldn't verbalize why the vibes were right. They just were. But, as she considered things, she realized she was pretty sure that before now, she’d never considered seducing someone in order to keep secrets to be a priority or even a good plan. But oddly, she could hardly wait to see what happened next.

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Nathan led Soun, his daughters, and a female Ranma into the house. When Soun encountered Danny first, he offered his apologies for the missing Happosai and Genma, but they had business elsewhere and were unable to join them. The truth of the matter, as Taylor knew from her tiny spies, was that Happosai had been distracted by the Plaza and Genma was off being a Panda. Her network was growing and she was aware that Lisa was picking data off of her as much as she was cashing in on what Lisa could do. She was starting to realize that Amy probably had a similar network going - except it was all plant and biokinetics. She’d noticed that there were more plants in the house, in every room. It was only mildly invasive when one considered her family had unseen eyes everywhere anyhow. Alec, when they were discussing having the Tendos over, had mentioned that the editing station was still there, editing and technically, the show had been running since Jusenkyo. Annette and Danny had taken on the responsibility of informing the Tendos about the “security” system of their home and Alec would let them know if certain things got blurred on the stream for the non-participants or not. No one was sure. They’d never invited new neighbors before.

Taylor guessed they would be learning on the way. She was already out in the back, stretched out on the lounge in a simple bikini. It wasn’t anything too revealing, and she wore a knotted towel over her bikini bottom to ensure that nothing that shouldn’t be revealed accidentally got revealed, but she’d already been slathered by her sisters, so the sun wasn’t a problem. Not that, technically it was a problem, but appearances must be kept. She and her sisters (some of whom were brothers at the moment) smelled like sunshine, the outdoors and skin cream - all the right scents of summer. It seemed appropriate.

The staff was handling the food and making sure things lined up well. A vast picnic was laid out and Taylor strove to disregard the sudden the sense of Deja-vu seeing the food and drink brought up.
This wasn’t their only picnic in this lifetime and this time Dad wasn’t Bar-B-Que-ing, so already, things were different. Music played in the background, ranging in styles and beats, but all around nice to have.

A red-headed Ranma blurred by Taylor, before splashing in the pool with abandon. Like Akane, Nabiki, and Kasumi, Ranma had worn a bikini and brought other clothes with her. No one mentioned that for at least part of the time, she was a he. It wasn’t until she was in the pool that she noticed there were three boys in the pool with her. It stopped her short.

They all waved. The tall blonde one was carrying a shorter brunette, while another brunette boy plunged into the pool via the slide with a loud whoop. “Hey Ranma,” the blonde said. “Good to see you. I’m Vicky or in this case Vic, right now.” He pointed at the boy hanging off the shoulder. “This is Amy normally. He hasn’t really decided what name he likes. I’ve been calling him Carl when I’m not calling him Ames.” Vic got a solid slap on the shoulder for that and Ames used him as a springboard to fall back into the water.

The other brunette swam toward the pool’s exit, saying, “Hey Ranma,” before stepping out. He was wearing an ornately printed set of boardshorts. “As you can see, the water is very fine and the slide is awesome. I’m Crystal on the girl side and Crys on the guy side. Nice to see ya!” She waved at him jauntily, before trekking to the top of the slide.

At that point, Ranma shrugged and joined in.

In the meantime, the three sisters had arrived, coming into the backyard with a touch more decorum. Lisa waved from a shady spot she’d chosen that was away from the pool. The trees that surrounded the yard guaranteed their privacy from the public, but they also provided some fantastic shade. Cherry greeted Nabiki rather specifically, guiding her away from the watery shenanigans of Ranma and Crystal, while Akane joined people in the pool. Soun, wearing deck shorts and an unbutton tee, strode right to the buffet and grinned down at it with anticipatory glee. Kasumi made her way to Annette, who brought her into a hug before she could even attempt a formal bow.

Elliot and Alec had set up a gaming station near the house, near the shade, but away from the pool - for those who could not risk the cool water. There was, however, a hot tub that anyone could jump into if they wanted an immediate change. Music played over the gaming station while the families commuted in greeting.

Cherry led Nabiki over for a dance, while Lisa got up to join them. Taylor was debating what she wanted to do when Lisa grabbed her hand. “Don’t be a wallflower at home. No one cares how you dance, only that you have fun,” she said.

Taylor rolled her eyes, but gamely accompanied her sister and joined in the dancing. The one cool thing about all the exercising and the training lately is that her energy had been picking up in leaps. She expected it was a side effect of the lifting, but also it was that slow continual change that had been happening over the last few weeks. She suspected the boosters in her body had been acclimating to her futanarism.

Taylor did not start with anything fancy, just let her body enjoy the sound as the music moved from pop to a little rock to a slow techno beat that caught her attention. She was a cheerleader, so she did know more moves than step shuffle step, but it didn’t change that she generally started out shy when the dance wasn’t part of a routine.

The techno-music had a bit of an arabesque sound going and Taylor stopped without meaning to, cocking her head and listening to it. Then she started shaking her head as if she were a dog trying to shake off a high pitched noise. It would have been immeasurably hard for her to explain what
happened in the mere moments that followed, except that she had a memory flash that barely explained things. She remembered that she had spent points for the opportunity, every year, to gain training via the modality offered by Slut Life. It could be 3 topics a year, with 3 years worth of knowledge - or a mix and match. She remembered why she chose what she did, but she thought maybe the number of years intended got mixed up. She intended to learn 6 years of escrima and 3 years of belly dancing for her first year of learning.

She got the reverse, with related styles which included; trance, gypsy, classical, jazz, dubstep, and tribal. It was all there and a bit more, history and some martial adaptations were there too. Her whole body shifted into the dance as the techno beat began to pick up. Without saying anything, her sudden aptitude transformed her whole body language. Because Lisa was there, she began the dance-seduction without intending to start, with hip rolls and snake armed motions. She caressed Lisa as she danced, bringing her into a sexy swirl, before gently letting her go, so she could dance for her some more. The towel acted as the traditional scarf, only lacking bangles. But at that point, Taylor didn’t need it. Lisa was highly attuned to each hip snap and belly dip, each figure eight-roll, and shift.

It wasn’t just Lisa who was captivated, as the music played on, the shocked witnesses stalled what they were doing to watch the sex appeal evolution occur.

Except for Ranma, who noticed that the guys and Akane had stopped playing and, being a little “tone” deaf socially speaking, she got irked. “Hey! Quit showing off!” She rolled a huge wave of water towards Taylor.

Ranma only remembered the consequence of what she had just done after she’d done it, and felt bad almost immediately. But, of course, by then, it was too late. “Oh man! I didn't mean to do that!”

The cool water, intended to shock some sense into Taylor, had the full splash effect, as was evidenced by the transformation of three girls.

Lisa’s form altered as she grew taller with silky golden fur - in places -, which included a tail and the tufted ears that popped up at the top of her head. She also had an eye-shaped white mark on her forehead, barely visible, yet prominent. She groaned. “Damn it. Now I’m going to crave tuna sandwiches again. I just got over that!”

Cherry’s form also shifted as two fluffy tails emerged where none had been and, like Lisa she had tufted ears and soft fur - in places. Her marking was more of a heart shape. “Well, at least you only have to deal with one tail. Yours is at least a little prehensile. Mine is just… floof.”

Taylor’s form changed as it usually did, with her growing much taller, sprouting an extra set of arms and the body to accommodate more legs designed for spider-like movement. In any other place or mood, she might have come off as more dangerous. But it helped that her transformation had been witnessed before.

Around that moment, Soun bellowed, “Ranma Saotome! You know better than to do that!” Which led to a bit of a mad chase around the yard, as he whirled a wet towel with full intention to snap bottom.

Nabiki honestly didn't mean to squeal. Nor did she mean to grab both Lisa and Cherry in an instant hug. Truly. She didn’t. But they were adorable. And right there. “My camera! Tell me I brought my camera!”

“You didn’t bring your camera,” Akane called back from the pool, much to Nabiki’s chagrin. “You wanted to just have fun, remember? Besides, I think Dad mentioned they could handle any pictures
you’d want, right?”

“Don’t worry, we’ll have the shot for you,” Lisa said consolingly as Nabiki responded to the news. “You’re taking this way better than I expected.”

Nabiki had yet to let them go and nuzzled into Lisa’s neck. “So Fluffy!”

Despite Ranma’s interference, Taylor was still “downloading,” and so while the transformation happened, she did not stop dancing. And somehow, despite that transformation, the sexiness did not abate, at all.

Those not still captivated had a moment to consider how lucky they were that Taylor was among the good guys, because she’d turned up the heat. The towel really was more like a scarf now and the panties long gone, not really concealing anything, so intimate parts flashed into visibility with her hip movements. Four arms moved exotically, sometimes covering and sometimes not and one would not have expected an Arachne to be able to twirl, but not all her limbs had to be on the ground at the same time. Her hips still existed, enough that the kick was still there when she moved that way.

Kasumi had been just as captivated by her dancing, and just as appalled at Ranma for what she did. But she was also used to the shenanigans of her household. She watched the transformation, the continuation and knew that Taylor was unaware of the whole thing, even though her eyes were open. Thus she acted, with honor in her heart.

She splashed Taylor with a bowl full of the heated water from the hot tub.

Even through a second transformation, Taylor didn’t stop dancing, not until the music finished and Annette forced the power down.

Taylor only realized she was wet when she came out of the learning trance. She shook her whole body and turned to look at everyone else. She noticed Lisa and Cherry being held, no longer squeezed, by Nabiki.

“What just happened?”

“Ranma,” offered Akane, as if that explained everything.

And speaking of whom, Ranma, in boy form, tore past them followed by an angry Soun and Danny, who now was also swirling a towel of doom.

Taylor noticed her everything was wet. And that’s when she realized what happened, remembered it. “Oh boy!”

“Do you know what happened?” her mom asked.

“Apparently a training program kicked in,” Taylor said, sheepishly. “Seems that it just took this long. Or maybe just needed the right trigger? But apparently, I can dance certain kinds of dances now.”

“I’ll say,” shouted Ames. “That was hot Taylor! You gotta teach me sometime!”

“Ooh, Me too!” Crys said. “Wait, can guys learn it?”

Taylor considered what she knew. “Yes. Absolutely.”

“Awesome. Then I want to learn it both ways.” Crys said, with a smile. Then he dove into the water again.
Kasumi, who was standing surprisingly close to Taylor said, “I too would enjoy being able to learn this skill.”

Taylor couldn’t help the smile. “Nifty. But not tonight though. Tonight is supposed to be fun in the sun and then pajama party and then tomorrow, more of the same. But maybe I can show you a few moves in the morning or something.”

“Sounds great!” Vic said as he resumed horsing around with his brothers and Akane, who was having a better time than she expected. She did know, given that Vic had made sure she did, who she was really dealing with; but beefcake was always something that could be enjoyed and she knew for a fact, none of these particular boys had ever laid a hand on her, except in terms of hugs - in their other gender.

“We can make it a family event,” Annette said, supportively. “It will be fun. Remember our Saturday morning appointment though.”

Taylor smiled widely at her mom. “I’m not likely to forget. Some of it can be learned pretty quick and then it's just practice.” Feeling good, despite the shenanigans and download, Taylor thought that the evening looked like it was off to a good start.

Naturally, that’s when the city warning alerts went off.

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A/N So, things to know, things at work are going to pick up for me solidly for the next few weeks. One of my co-workers is departing for a new job, but it does mean we're short staffed. On top of that, I've started new hours this Sunday, so my work week has shifted around quite heavily. I do intend to continue my usual method of dink writing, but how fast and long it happens will depend on how fast I adjust to the time shift. Think of it as me going across the ocean kind of thing - I've moved from days to nights, with a potential to move back again, depending on how things roll. That said, hope everyone enjoyed this chapter.
Chapter 23

Everyone came to a halt, stopping whatever they were doing to take a moment to look up. The sky was clear blue, with soft clouds. So whatever it was, was not a storm. Maybe.

Annette sighed. “River, report!”

Her AI’s avatar appeared and shared the news. “A Massive Tentacled Monster, currently being dubbed as the Kraken, has been spotted offshore by several miles, heading in the direction of Sagami Bay with a possible split off into Tokyo Bay. All flights and shipping are being diverted and those living near the ocean are cautioned about the danger and the need to seek safety inland. A landing is deemed possible sometime in the next hour. Some broadcasts mention that the Navy has ships nearby and is on its way. They are planning on trying to delay or turn the creature with strategic missile strikes. Locals are advised to seek safety and stay indoors as the actual abilities of the Kaiju are in question.”

Furinkan was located in Nerima, which was a ward of Tokyo. It was a developed area, though there was some farmland remaining. Furinkan was a fairly new subset, with Taylor’s abode being very new. Furinkan had a lot of families who made their home in its fair and mostly peaceful environs, even with all the martial shenanigans. Kaijus were a bigger trouble than was usually encountered.

Kaiju was a cross-over word, one that the majority of the Heberts were intimately familiar with, only in their world, these creatures had been called Endbringers. Taylor first response wasn’t fear. It was rage.

Though she calmed fairly quickly after that brief moment. She had dealt with Kaiju before and won.

In their previous life, a Kaiju was fought with hundreds of superheroes. In this one, there were a select amount of lifted humans, martial arts masters, rumors of those with magical gifts and possibly some naturally very strong people; but not Kaiju strong and not in the hundreds. They were in the handfuls.

Then again, unlike Earth Bet, the Navies and Armies tried on this world. They got bounced a lot, but they at least tried. And Kaiju were rare and could be beaten.

Still, if the monster made shore at all, even if it didn’t get out of the water, it could do horrific damage. If it could get out of the water, it would be even worse.

Taylor looked at her Mom as River concluded informing them of where the Kraken was and knew that there was a choice to make. They could stay at the picnic or they could... “Gather up Heberts! Tendos and Ranma, our house is your house. It’s probably the safest place you can be right now. Please come inside with us. We have more food in the house, but if you’d like to help us out, with bringing everything in, we have a large dining room we can use and we can bring the entertainment center back in.”

It was a bit less helter-skelter than last time. Taylor was kind of impressed that no one on the Tendo side, including Ranma, commented about River. Nor did they hesitate to accept the invitation and pitch in. Before too long the backyard was cleared out and the house was full.

The entertainment room was opened, with the dining room left as the buffet area. “We have an indoor pool. Or, if you’d prefer, you can still use the outdoor pool, if you’d still like to swim. With
landfall estimated at an hour away, we might have time. But I don’t know how fast the Kraken will
move, or if it can even move on land. I hesitate to guess, but it’s been noted that octopi do move
fairly quickly on land when out of the water,” Annette offered. Danny had left the room already to
make a call, checking in with the Royal Police about whether they should attempt to join the fighting
or wait things out.

“I think I’d like to watch the news for now,” Soun said, and then he suggested a channel; which had
a map image in the corner, showing the location of the confrontation. “It has been a while since
we’ve had a Kaiju visit our island. I would hesitate to get onto the highway at this point, as it will be
filled with those fleeing and those who plan on sight-seeing.”

“No doubt,” Lisa concurred, as she took a seat as they waited for Danny’s return. This was “the
boring” part, except not really. Tension mounted as they watched the dot that represented the Kaiju
steadily move forward. The pericog said, “It’s going to land way ahead of schedule if they don’t do
something soon.”

Neo popped up, by Lisa’s elbow, startling Nabiki who had been sitting by her. “New estimates show
time to be approximately at thirty minutes and rising, direction points at Tokyo Bay now. Planes
have been launched.”

“This is where having a Mover with teleportation would be awesome,” Vicky said. “Dad and me
could maybe get there pretty fast, and Cherry would for sure, but some of us would have to take the
van with the sirens.”

“So you what? Plan on taking the fight to it?” Nabiki said.

Vicky shrugged. “It’s kind of what we do. But being RP, we wait for the go ahead.” What she didn’t
say is things used to go.

“What’s a Mover?” Akane asked.

“Mover is a category in a classification system. It’s useful in certain kinds of, uh, games,” Amy
offered. Ranma looked interested as did Crystal.

Lisa said before anyone asked, “Mover, Shaker, Brute, and Breaker. Master, Tinker, Blaster and
Thinker, Striker, Changer, Trump, and Stranger.”

“And these things mean what?” asked Kasumi.

So Taylor and the sisters who had been from Brockton Bay explained what they understood, sharing
how the system worked as a way to determine threat ratings. They also mentioned that other “game”
systems existed, but this was the one they liked when dealing with persons with extraordinary
capabilities.

Happosai said as he hopped on the edge of a couch, “You do not mention magic and the elements.”

There were various states of “Gah!” from those who had not seen him enter - or were not used to his
ways. The only reason Taylor hadn’t been startled is she’d been tracking him for a while. He’d been
a busy old guy, but apparently, he was happy with his purchases.

“Magic falls under different system rules, but the effects might be categorized this system, I’m
thinking. I guess Magic could also fall under the Thinker topic. Maybe.” Taylor considered.

“The elements would be their own system, but like Taylor said, the effects could be categorized.
Though they could also be seen as a Shaker ability. Or Trump. Or Striker. Or Blaster. Shaker
because they change the environment or Trump because they can be used in multiple ways.” Amy considered.

“If we took, say, someone who had fire elemental magic,” Lisa said with a smirk, “It would depend on how they use it. Can they fly with it, can they blast with it, is there a range of effects, can they master anyone or anything with it, does it allow the person to change their appearance, etc. Those can be laid out as part of the classification system, even if there is also a set of titles labeled: Magic, Elemental.”

“Or it could be school because there are *schools* of magic and types of magic too. So Elemental might be a school of magic, with types in there too.” Crystal offered.

“All very fascinating, but we’re going to have to take this up later. The Kaiju has made shore.”

“All right?” Cherry asked, startled.

“It picked up speed again. And now there are better visuals.”

The visuals were actually kind of astonishing. The Kraken wasn’t really a Kraken at all. It was very tall, very big woman-shaped being. Like the Arachne, her top half was female, while the bottom half was all flexible, prehensile limbs, tentacles, that swirled around to move her forward and moved and grasped things to move them out of the way. The creature’s “hair” wasn’t, really. It was the shape of hair, but smaller tentacles that waved and rustled in agitation. The face and neck were covered in ink, as was her bosom, hiding most of her features, but allowing the expressions to be read. She did not lack intelligence. Instead, there was determination and fierceness. Waves lapped over the parts that remained in the ocean, but she obviously towered over the buildings - some of which were several stories tall, by the beach.

She had no obvious wounds, but they all knew that missiles had been launched and she’d been struck. She’d also caught a bunch and flung them back after the first time, sometimes with her hands, but usually with her tentacles either top or bottom. The majority of the ships that had attacked were listing or stalled, some were definitely broken. The return volley had been surprisingly non-damaging, comparatively speaking - at least to the ships. The planes had other problems, as she’d captured and flung them away like they were annoying pests. While the majority of pilots could eject, some did not manage it.

The gargantuan figure slithered up the beach, wiping it clean of detritus in wide swoops. Then, she rose, even taller. The swirling motion stopped, even as the wriggling motion could not quite until she was “standing” with the tips of her appendages on the ground, but the whole of herself not so much.

She started walking, a determined march forward, where she stayed in the middle of the mostly abandoned streets. She walked over the buildings, avoiding the first few tall ones. She looked stymied for the moment as she encountered bigger and bigger buildings, then her whole body shifted.

She retained her feminine figure but seemed to flatten inward, until she fit on street, rather than towering over several. Though she did remain towering, this was no shrinking violet.

By now, Lisa’s pericognition had come into play. “She’s looking for something, not actively hostile, has no interest in humans, is making her way through Tokyo, very rapidly and will be in Nerima in a few minutes.”

“Okay girls. Suit up RP-style. The Kraken may be doing less damage than people expect, but it’s time to get into the game. Nerima is our ward and,” Danny said. “we’ve got the go ahead.” He nodded at Soun as his daughters moved quickly past him. He paused a moment. “I know you all
have supreme skills of your own, but we’ve got specialized weapons we can use in cases like these. So there’s no need to rush away on our account or to try to be a hero. Not that you couldn’t be. But, either way, it would help us if you stayed safe more than if you tried to join us right now. We have had a week of training against each other, but not with each other and looking at it, maybe we should consider changing that.” He shrugged, “Twenty-twenty, I guess. Be back in a bit.”

Suiting up wasn’t all that hard, and it was a matter of moments before Taylor was kitted out and dressed in her official Royal Police uniform. She could feel her ice magic humming under her skin and the insects buzzing in agitation, around her. She joined her sisters at the front, as Elliot brought the van around, lights already swirling. He wore his chauffeur outfit and refused to get out of the car with a simple, “I’m a better driver than any of you right now.”

“You leave as soon as we get out then,” Daniel demanded as he slid into the shotgun seat. Everyone got in quickly. It was possible that there were faster ways, but this conserved energy best spent in battle.

The sirens went on and the van roared off. Taylor noted that the Tendos seemed to spring out the door, all except for Nabiki and Kasumi who watched the news, asking Neo pointed questions. Taylor checked her belt, found it firmly on her and was glad to see her alternate tag system in play. Good.

She considered telling her Dad, but her Mom leaned over and spoke to him in a whisper almost as soon as Ranma, Soun, Happosai and Akane had left the building. So, spiders were doing their work too.

Now that they had privacy, Dad turned them and said, “Okay, here’s how we’re going to do this. We go in as RP, but combo-ing is allowed. You can make the call on whether you shift from the RP battle uniform to the Magical Girl uniform, our task is to distract and hopefully keep the Kraken from going further inland. I know this brings back some bad memories for some of us, and it’s not the same without the backup numbers, but I have confidence you will do your best. We are not required to die here, only do our best. Lisa says this thing has no animosity, we can try for a no-kill, but if she escalates, that stops. Any questions?”

Of course, there weren’t. At this point, they’d had days and months and years worth of work as a team. Taylor’s jitters weren’t from an urge to be in charge but from an effort to hold back while they were in transit. It’d be easy to open the door and go sliding out. Foolish, but easy.

It occurred her that one thing they hadn’t tested, was how their various new Jusenkyo forms would play out in the battle. But that was an issue to be addressed in the after-battle report. She made a mental note, but other than that, set it aside.

They were only a little past their neighborhood when they spotted the creature. She grew larger by the second, as Elliot raced them forward, sirens wailing along with several others of the regular police and emergency services. On top of that was the heavier alarm that still sounded because of the general threat.

They came to a relatively open space at a four-way stop. On one side was a park, and the surroundings were businesses or stores. “Stop here, Elliot. We’re getting out. Get back home.”

“Yes, sir. Stay safe everyone! Call if you need us.”

With that, everyone piled out about as quickly as they’d piled in.

They spread out quickly, now running toward the Kraken at the amazing speed they gained by being
lifted, which was enhanced by the speed they already had as magical beings. Those who had tricks to maximize it even further, such as Taylor’s ice sliding, used them. As they were moving Crystal was already buffing them with protective wards and spells, designed to enhance what they could already do. She did this while being carried by Vicky. Cherry was miles ahead of everyone. Danny considered stepping into a pool so he could use his power to walk through them, but it would trigger his dragon aspect. It could help in one sense, or it might cause the other forces to also fire on him if they mistook him for an enemy.

They knew when Cherry arrived because the Kraken was abruptly stopped - face first - by an invisible wall. This caused a stumble, but not, as hoped a tumble. But it was a serious delay as the creature shook her head out. She wasn’t dry, so water, cold enough to push transitions flew out.

After that, it didn’t matter that Taylor’s Dad had delayed. Suddenly he was a long, lithe dragon wearing the remains of an RP uniform. And Taylor and her Mom were switched into their Arachne form, a bit better “dressed,” but also mostly symbolic. Lisa retained her original shape, but Cherry was turned into her Kitsune form and now her tails whirled, as she used her air magic. Amy remained her usual feminine self, but both Crystal and Vicky changed to their male forms, so their clothes didn’t fit quite right.

On the other hand, there weren’t a lot of people present on the streets to be shocked. On the other plus hand, Taylor had four arms and apparently, her ice powers worked just fine. When she was near enough she rocketed off the slide, using her strands to balloon herself along through the air. Below she saw that trees had been transformed to grab at the limbs of the creature.

As she saw this, Taylor had a realization. Giant creature, tiny houses. Damage. It would be a little ironic, but still. So much Damage and possible death.

She couldn’t let that happen.

She angled her glide so she could attempt to land on one of the taller buildings with a flat roof. She managed to hit the side, landing solidly with her legs, which gripped the surface easily. She looked down briefly to see one of the persons in the office looking up at her in astonishment. She gave a chipper wave and salute and then wall-crawled up the rest of the way at great speed.

At that point, she paused and readied herself to do something she only had a few chances to try before. Her memories provided the formula though and so she knew it could be done. She made motions, using her upper arms, that felt both strange and familiar. Then she spoke the word of will, calling the magic forth and then through herself. A wave rippled from her palms and out, covering the neighborhood and beyond, through a good portion of Nerima; though not all. But it would be sufficient - if they could keep the Kraken in this area for a bit.

Feeling a little shaky, but otherwise fine, Taylor “tied the knot,” of her magical creation, leaving the barrier in place. The world went somewhat silent as the small sounds of regular (emergency) daily life dissipated. The normal world was now outside of the battlefield, as a new magical plane took its place.

“Good Job, Taylor,” Annette said through the coms. “Now let’s get spinning and help Amy out!” That one phrase was enough to remind Taylor of what she’d originally planned. She made another ice slide, using it to speed herself along and then shoot off into the air, while she assembled another gliding tool. As soon as she thought it could work, she began spinning together a long, thick, tight cable that she anchored to the ground first. Then, using the glider, she began a wide sweep around a group of tentacles, catching as many as she could, before gliding back around, in order to try to force a tangle.
Around her, she saw buildings subtly shifting and changing sizes; not because she was going past
them, but because her Mom was using illusions to manipulate the senses. Lisa was supporting that
with a light show, while Cherry manipulated the air so that every time the buildings shifted, it felt like
a real knock to the limbs. Her Dad, meanwhile, had increased his size and was rolling around the
Kraken, squeezing her. While Vicky flew in with a powerful set of punches, the first thing that had
an obvious painful effect on the creature.

It wailed in surprise and pain, with a surprisingly human sound if a bit more bass than usual. Then as
the Kraken was hobbled, it or she began to fall.

They hadn’t even brought out the big guns yet.

Caught in the Dragon’s grip and their spider silk and vine, the giant creature began to shake and
shimmy and then suddenly to shrink, faster and faster.

Taylor dropped to the ground pretty much as fast as everyone else did, taking a defensive position.
She honestly wasn’t sure whether they were in the middle of a real street or a park now, because of
all the switcharoos that had happened, but she felt pretty confident that she was on a flat surface of
some sort, even if it might be a panel supported by Lisa or Cherry’s power.

The tentacled woman was now just above normal human height, still on the tips of her appendages.
She flowed over the loops of silk rope and vines until she was upright and outside, glaring at all of
them. She spoke in a foreign tongue, her expression sharp and demanding.

Taylor caught a glance of the dragon, her father, thrusting a pool of water in the air, heating it, and
then letting it fall. Suddenly he was just Danny again, His pants torn, but mostly serviceable. He was
soaked through, so things stuck, tightly to him and, of course, he was very fun for her to look at now,
giving her a bit of zing.

Lisa said, returning her attention back to what it should be, “She’s definitely looking for something
or someone. Anyone good at charades?”

Technically, they all kind of were. But Crystal was the very best. The tiniest of them, currently Crys,
stood in front of the person who used to be a giant, lifting his cap up and off, placing it under the pit
of his arm. His uniform, of course, was intact - aside from being a bit off-size due to his shift in
gender. His badge was definitely on display, glinting gold on his chest. “Ma’am, I am with the Royal
Police and insist that we have a conversation, if we are able. Our analysis indicates that the reason
you have come to this island is to …” Crys raised his hand to his eye, pretended to make a telescopic
motion, squinted one eye, and then pivoted as if surveying around them. Then he made another
motion of opening a page and pointing to it, before using a walking motion with one of his hands.

The monster… no, the seeker, bent and looked closely at Crys. Her expression turned determined as
she returned upright. She pointed at her chest with a tendril, then used a hand with two fingers to
point to her eyes and then out. Then she folded her arms together, cocking them up a bit before
swinging them back and forth a bit.

Oh.

Oh dear. Baby seeker. That would be a motivation to come out of the deep and terrorize folk, yup.

What surprised Taylor was her mom’s reaction.

“Oh, sweetie!” The Arachne matriarch was there very quickly and her arms around the tentacled
woman before anyone could say much about it. Taylor held her breath, her whole body went still.
Her sword appeared in her hand, magic activated by her fear and sudden need to protect, when she observed tendrils sliding up and around her mother’s waist.

But it was just a hug back. One that didn’t last too long, as Annette pulled back. “Hmm. River could you come out for a moment.”

The holographic woman appeared. “How may I help?”

“Were you, by any chance, able to translate what she said earlier.”

“Other than it seemed to be a russian sounding dialect of some sort, no.”

“Drat. Okay, so, let’s try maps. Could you put up a map of where we are and scale it out a bit.” The avatar disappeared and a map appeared. “Okay, now flip it and generate the buildings and grounds around us.” The image flipped so that it angled to display the three-dimensional buildings at an angle, allowing them to see the dots that represented themselves.”

Annette, with two arms still around the waist and shoulder of the tentacled woman, pointed at the dots. “We’re here. Can you tell us where you think your child is?”

One thing Taylor had learned over time is that tone could convey a lot and Annette was very good at conveying ideas. The woman in her arms hesitated only a little bit, before using her fingers, as Crys had done, to walk to a point in Nerima.

Their house.

“Hmm,” said her father, who had somehow snuck up beside them. The tentacled woman’s eyes widened in surprise as she turned and got a very good look at him.

“Danny?” The words were said in pure shock; pretty much for all of them. Then the woman’s head swiveled as she took in a better look at Taylor’s mom. “Annette?” She shook her head as if suddenly realizing why she’d felt immediately comfortable enough to hug back. Then she looked closer, realizing that the person she spoke to was formed like a Spider. “What are you doing here?” She backed away, hastily. “Wait. That’s impossible. What are you? Who are you really?”

The ink covering her rippled, and Taylor could see it wasn’t really ink, but scales. Or… micro tentacles, that suddenly poked out in dangerously pointy ways. Fortunately, Annette had been smart enough to let go.

“Danny, Vicky, a little help please,” Annette said calmly. Water flowed out of Danny’s palm and he tossed it. Much like Danny had worked thing earlier, Vicky heated the water, which fell rapidly onto Annette, soaking her.

She transformed, becoming her own very sexy shape.

The tentacled woman stopped backing away. “But, you’re dead.”

Annette said, “Not so much lately. You seem to know us, or think you do. So let’s take a moment to clarify. I’m Annette Hebert and that’s my husband Danny Hebert. These are my children.” She didn’t identify them further.

The tentacled woman looked at the young people assembled around her, “Panacea?” She said when she recognized Amy Dallon. “I don’t understand. How?”

“I really want to ask the same question of you, now,” Annette said. “But I don’t know how much
time we have to get into it, as you had the navy and the army chasing you, because you were a giant.”

The tentacled woman’s flush covered her whole body, rippling the color quickly down and then gone. It was kind of pretty.

Lisa said, “Simplest answer is the best, Mom. Alternate Universe. Hers, for sure.”

“Taylor, how are things?” Annette asked.

“The barrier’s still good Mom,” Taylor said. “So currently no armed forces but our own are present. There are a few other physical presences, civilian, but they’re hanging back.”

“Well, that is a blessing,” Annette said. “Well, you are wearing a mask, so I won’t force you to reveal yourself. Right now your title is the Kraken. And, since you’re speaking English, if with a bit of an accent, I expect you understand what I’m saying.”

The tentacled woman looked more than a bit sheepish. Annette continued. “In that case, we need to figure out how to get you home with us and then refine the search parameters.”

The woman looked as if she might say something, but nodded her head.

Danny said, “Look, you can trust us. Even if you can’t trust our faces and our names,” he smiled. “You can trust our badges. We’re here to do the right thing and we have the authority to do it too. Sure, you’ve done a lot of damage, but don’t think we didn’t notice how careful you were being. You’re not on the chopping block, at least, not now that you’re in our jurisdiction. And no one will go against what we ultimately adjudicate. So, just come with us, and we’ll get all this squared away. And, trust me, if what you seek is here,” he pointed at the spot, “then we’ll find them.”

Cherry said, “Well, my take is we leave the barrier up, then waltz her through with an illusion to safeguard her identity. Maybe have Lisa and Amy do control since they’re both still in their basic forms and the uniforms look right. They can send the other authorities packing.”

“That’s a good idea dear,” Annette said, approvingly.

Taylor moved toward her mom, leaning over to whisper, “The Tendos followed us, but hung back. I think they were planning for an if things go south stand. Should we try to contact or let them fade to woodwork.”

“They’ll probably head back to our place. It was a good idea and this way they won’t be too concerned when we bring someone they don’t know home. Maybe track them and back them up if they need it.”

“Will do.” Taylor said a bit more loudly, “Cherry, want a ride?”

“ Heck yeah! Don’t think I didn’t see you flying!” The tall redhead slid up and onto Taylor’s haunches, wrapping her arms tightly around her sister. “Giddyap and all that.”

“So, you want the full riding experience?”

Cherry grinned and Annette gave the nod. Taylor left the scene by finding a wall to crawl up and away.

Cherry’s happy shout was heard.
“See. Perfectly safe,” Danny said, as he moved his hand indicating that she should go before him.

Kraken exhaled, nodded, and then moved forward, the once thunderous stomps now sounding like the patter of a soft rain. “I wasn’t thinking clearly,” she offered, a little repentant. “My baby was gone and the portal was there and I had no idea where she could possibly be, except I knew. I could feel her.” She pressed a hand to her heart.

The sharp points were gone and Annette risked it again. She wrapped an arm around the other woman’s shoulder and held her tight. As they walked out of the Barrier, a glamour formed over all of them. Suddenly everyone had clean uniforms that fit properly and the redheaded woman looked a lot like Cherry. The loud noises that had been banished returned as the alarm blared.

Danny had a phone to his ear, commanding that the clamor be turned off and informing the authorities that things were resolved. After they were well away from the scene, the barrier disappeared, leaving pristine buildings and roadways and parks. Between the Kraken’s efforts and the barrier, the actual damage to Nerima was insignificant and Tokyo had a minimal amount, considering that a giant had walked through.

It wasn’t that unusual for Kaiju to simply disappear after some sort of battle, but the disappearance of the creature seemed anticlimactic to those who had been watching for such a thing. It was like the threat of a hurricane turning out to be a fierce thunderstorm, yes, trees got shook, but the buildings were standing.

Taylor and Cherry watched from the top of a building as the Ranma and the Tendos slipped away, chatting as if what they’d witnessed was a daily sort of thing.

“I think they may actually really like us as people,” Cherry commented.

“Yeah,” Taylor said thoughtfully. “I think I like them back. They’re super resilient.”

“I want a ride too,” Happosai said, startling them both by seeming to appear out of nowhere. Taylor hopped and skittered to the side, but caught herself before falling. He continued blithely, just following along in long hops of his own. “Though I was more hopeful to see your magical senshi aspect, this was a very good fight, very in the spirit of the art. Resolved quickly, as a good fight should be. I was proud. Still, I saw much to improve.” He muttered. He held his hand up and waited expectantly.

Cherry and Taylor stared at the martial arts master, then Cherry leaned over. “Front or back.”

His smile was saintly, but his eyes were not. “Front please.” Then, when he was nestled between them, he leaned back a little and sighing happily as Cherry wrapped her arms around Taylor again.

To be sure no one fell, Taylor quickly rolled some silk along their hips and tacked them down. “This is something I’ve waited my whole life for.”

He patted Taylor on the top shoulder. “What are you waiting for girl. Don’t you want to see what happens next?”

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A/N - For those who don’t know: http://worm.wikia.com/wiki/Power_classifications
A/N - The Kraken is from a variant Worm Earth. You can guess, but I won't answer guesses until after I've posted Chapter 24 when the big reveal happens.
A/N - This one did not go the way I expected. I expected more blood and mayhem - again. But no. I mean, these RP are so non-violent compared to the others, that I just don't know what to say. Except
that the Friendship building perk set for Magical Girls is apparently very, very potent.
Taylor had promised Cherry a full ride and, once the elfin-sized old man was strapped in, she gave it to them. The Tendos and Ranma were quite fast, but she could glide, so she made one of her ice-slides and sailed into the air. Cherry gave another whoop of joy, as air was her power, but she didn’t play around too much. They glided above Nerima though and could see the stream of cars around Tokyo, some of them the military vehicles, but the majority civilian, now returning back to the metropolis’ center.

The “defeat” of the Kraken had happened so quickly that the news copters barely had time to keep up and were still circling around Tokyo proper, looking for it. Taylor, who was not giant sized, was a speck in the background, and nothing to be concerned about. Every now and then Taylor felt a small gust, which contributed to the lift of the glide. Even in the distance, she could hear the echoes of the alarms starting to turn off one by one.

They followed Soun, Akane, and Ranma by being high enough to track their various routes back. Happosai pointed at the Dojo, which looked to be in pristine condition and quite serene from their height. They were soon past it, moving towards the Hebert’s home at a quickened pace.

Ranma ran over walls and rooftops. Akane and Soun took the open roads and alleyways. Happosai watched all of this with lidded eyes, in apparent enjoyment of his circumstances. Taylor chose to land in the front, not far behind the Tendos and Ranma, but ahead of the rest of the Heberts. They landed very softly and comfortably.

“Well, little man, we are here,” Cherry said, merrily as Taylor disengaged the silk and gathered it up into a ball. She wasn’t sure, but she thought she might be able to use it for something else later. The redhead helped Happosai off Taylor’s back, then followed after herself. “Thanks for the ride sis, that was amazing. I do want to do more wall crawling at some point.”

“I’m sure it can be arranged,” Taylor said with a smile. “You okay there, Master Hap?”

“I am perfectly content,” he said peacefully. “It has been a good day.” He nodded to himself. “Thank you, Taylor, for the ride.”

“You’re welcome.” With that, the little man hopped away and towards the house.

“They say he’s a pervert,” Cherry commented, reaching up a little to give Taylor a hug.

“I don’t scan it,” Taylor admitted. “Except for maybe the panties grabbing… okay, maybe he is. But everybody has their thing.”

“Yeah,” Cherry said with a sigh, as Taylor embraced her in return. She cuddled in, as her head was right at Taylor’s bountiful breasts. “I can see why he was using me as his pillow. I’d be at peace too.”

Taylor laughed. “I guess that makes us pervs too.”

“I think maybe our perspective is skewed.” She patted Taylor’s sides. “I was more than a little serious about wanting all the ride, in your spider form.” Taylor looked a bit startled. “My turn soon, right?”
Taylor pulled back some, looked Cherry in the eyes and said, “It was never about turns. You’re always invited, you know.” She lifted her sister up, brought her close and kissed her firmly. “Besides, I was waiting for my turn. Don’t think I haven’t noticed you’ve been busy with my other sisters, or brothers, so to speak.”

Cherry giggled. “Well, there is that.” She wrapped her legs around Taylor’s waist, pressing tightly against her. She rubbed herself against a growing lump. “Don’t you feel nice. Too bad we have guests. I’d totally.”

Taylor smiled, reading what was half said. “Me too.” They kissed again, slowly and sweetly. Then Taylor let her drop down. “Well, I need to go get a shower real quick and then join everyone.”

The kitsune looked down at herself. “Oh, me too. Want a buddy?” she asked, impishly.

Taylor pointed out, “The quick part kind of spoils that plan, because no way would I be able to keep my hands off you. I want to be back down when Dad and Mom arrive.” She offered a small leer and cupped a feel on Cherry’s butt, just to amuse her sister.

Cherry grinned, snapped her fingers and said, “Darn. There is that. I’ll see you in a bit Taylor.” Then she ran into the house at an exceedingly great pace, her tails wagging.

“That girl. She’d be the star of the track team if it weren’t for the whole lifted thing.” Then Taylor went to get her shower too.

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Taylor finished her shower and got downstairs just in time to see the Kraken pause in the foyer, glance around, at first in interest and then suddenly her expression changed. She moved abruptly, jerking away from the light hold Annette had at her waist, forward toward the dining room.

Taylor could guess where they were heading at that point.

“No way,” she whispered. But her gut feeling was in the opposite direction. She hastened after them.

It was still mid-afternoon and the backyard, aside from a few points where they’d moved furniture and left towels, looked pristine. The koi were active in their pond, the grass was green and trimmed to perfection. The shade looked glorious.

Kraken slithered over the bridge covering the pond without hesitation. She made a noise that was so deep she felt it in her bones, even though it wasn’t actually all that loud.

A noise came back, also lighter, but at the same time sliding through her skin to her insides. Then, from the direction of the greenhouse, a dark little figure scrambled out from the bushes. At first, it looked like a four-legged creature, half dog, half cat, half something else. Then the “tufted” ears changed and started wriggling, and the legs split apart and started to slide, the body of the “creature,” shifted and changed, becoming more and more childlike; tiny even. The tyke had little leafy plants in her hair-tentacles, giving a sort of druid of the wild appearance.

She burbled, half-talked in the way that only the very small did. The most coherent word was, “Mama!” But everything else was baby-talk.

Kraken swooped in, lifting her child quickly. The child’s tentacles wrapped around her mother’s arms, and body, wherever she could touch and she leaned in, gripping her mother tightly. She looked healthy if a bit dirty and clingy.
Annette looked distraught. “Z...Kraken, we had no idea. I had no idea.”

Kraken turned, her expression filled with relief rather than anger. A tentacle stretched, looping around Annette’s waist. “She’s been fed. She’s had a place to sleep. She calling all of you mamas.”

Taylor glanced around noticing that Amy looked a bit sheepish. Her sister said, “I made a little bed for her in my workspace, gave her pillows and a blanket. I thought she was a puppy. I was working up to asking Mom and Dad about adopting her.”

Crystal, back in her female form, said, “I made some toys. But I thought she was... well, anyhow, they were stuffed little balls and dolls; nothing special.”

“Taylor fed her every day,” Annette commented. “Though we didn’t know who or what she was feeding.”

“She wouldn’t come out of the bushes, so I put fresh milk and food in bowls.” She wasn’t prepared to admit what kind of milk just yet. “But now I feel bad because I didn’t try harder to coax her out. I thought she was a cat.” Taylor admitted.

Taylor’s mom still looked upset, but the Kraken just nodded. “She is still very young, but she has always been very smart and a modest form of shapeshifting is in her genes. She probably was shaped like a cat or a puppy at the time. Or close enough.”

She patted her daughter’s back gently and the little girl leaned on her shoulder. Then she turned so she was facing them a bit more. “I have a problem, Annette,” the Kraken said.

“How can we... I help you?”

“I want to tell you who I am, but I’m bound by some peculiar issues before I do. And, I want to stay and spend more time with you, but there’s a portal that might close if I don’t get back fast enough.”

“Okay,” Taylor’s mom said easily. “So we have ways of getting you back to the bay quickly. Will you have to be a giantess again?”

“Not until I enter the bay. I mostly did the giant thing for speed. You saw how fast I got through Tokyo; though it looked very different from the top. I’ll be carrying this one in a pouch so she won’t have to change shape, but...”

The Kraken looked hesitant. “Can you ask those not of your family to leave for a moment? This is a clan thing and we need privacy.”

“Of course!” Soun boomed out, from the back. Taylor saw him nab Happosai by the collar and he jerked his head to the inside of the building. The Tendos and Ranma trudged in.

Kraken was a little startled, but she nodded in approval. “That was gracious of him.”

“Soun’s a pretty good guy,” Danny commented. “Is this something we should sit down for?”

The woman shook her head. “No. I’m afraid if I sit down or stop too much, I won’t get going again. This one,” she gently shook the sleepy looking girl, “seems as if she’s about to drop off and it feels kind of catchy.”

“Zoe,” Annette finally said, a bit breathlessly.

“You always were the smart one,” the other woman said, as the dark scales disguising her face faded
into a more recognizable form.

“And you were the fashionable one,” her friend quipped back. “I’ve missed you.”

“Me too.” The ache in Zoe’s voice was clear. “It is so good to see you.” She raised a hand, though a tendril still held Annette as if couldn’t quite let go. “Not yet. When I said this was a clan thing, I meant it. I’ve revealed my true self, fortunately not to strangers, but to those who cared for my little one, which makes you family. I kind of have a need to establish myself first.”

“You were always family, Aunt Zoe,” Taylor said, her throat tight.

“I know sweetie. I’m so sorry I failed you. Who knew Leviathan would come and the boat my family and me was on would capsize so soon after Annette’s death,” the elder redhead said. “We would have been there for you, otherwise.”

Taylor didn’t mention that she hailed from another universe. It didn’t really matter. This Zoe never had to know what another Emma did. She accepted on behalf of herself. “I don’t think that’s a thing you need to apologize for. I know I loved you. I know you would have helped us.”

“You triggered?” Daniel asked, his heart breaking a little. He reached out but stopped when she moved back a little.

“No. I was rescued, but only a few of us were. The Tinker who made the Atlanteans feared what had happened to Nilbog. But he is and was much kinder than that asshole. He wasn’t trying to make monsters. He was trying to save us. So he did to me what he’d done for the other survivors. He remade me, gave me a new form, one that could survive the deepest waters. You’d be surprised at the variations he came up with. I have freedom and can go anywhere, almost literally. I haven’t tried deep space yet, but who knows? But really, what was the point of going home? By the time I was myself again and had full control of my form, Brockton Bay was gone and so was everyone I loved.” Zoe explained as she shape-changed a little more.

It occurred to Taylor she’d been slowly shifting as they’d been speaking, moving closer to the woman that she’d known as her aunt all her life, while at the same time it seemed like she had a few more tentacles on the ground than she’d had before. “The thing is, I can’t give you money to express how grateful I am.” She paused as Taylor’s mom started to protest. “I know, Bizzy, we both would. But you saved my baby girl. I don’t care how you all did it, but you did. I know you would have taken her in as soon as you could.” She cleared her throat. “So a gift. From my family to yours.”

They probably should have seen it coming, but emotional whiplash had them spellbound. Lisa managed a yelp, but by that time, they’d all been tangled and brought close, very. Taylor gasped as she felt a large tentacle grip her tightly and dragged her forward, very, very quickly, into what was pretty much a massive family hug. “Sorry for this part. This is the quick way. The slow way would have been more fun for me.” Zoe paused, “But a little wrong. Fluids, you see.” Then Taylor felt a jab at her hip, and coolness spread from the point of pain and then gone. It was about as painful as a sharp pinch.

Zoe then kissed Taylor’s cheek, before setting her back down. She kissed all the sisters one at a time, in a similar way. Then she kissed Danny with a short, open mouth kiss that was filled with promises that she thought couldn’t be kept. She briefly transferred the baby to him, with a whispered, “please”. The little girl wrapped herself around his arm and waist and nestled into his shoulder as if she’d done that sort of thing forever. Then Zoe held Taylor’s Mom and kissed her as if she never wanted to let go.

“I might have been open to the fluid way,” Annette said, weeping a little. “If there was ever going to
be a tentacle monster moment, I’d want it to be you.” She stepped back, but still held onto her dearest friend. “Are you sure you have to go? Can’t you stay?” She looked at Danny who was nodding fervently. “Why don’t you stay with us? I mean unless you just have to go back.”

Zoe laughed tearfully and then she collapsed into Annette’s arms and held on. “I was hoping you’d ask.” Finding each other had been a lightning strike chance, and they all knew it. “I was sure you’d send me back, after…” She looked out towards the Metropolis.

“Oh honey, Danny meant what he said. We’re the Royal Police. We have jurisdiction. Besides, you’re family and we have plenty of room. Even if we didn’t, you know we’d make room or build or buy you a house.

“Honey, last I remember, money was a little bit of an issue.”

“Due to some,” Annette very briefly glanced at Taylor, “Family inheritances and special circumstances, we have a very good income. Technically we’re on the rich side, between our jobs and our Jumpercare.”

“Jumpercare?”

“You might call it a cover-everything insurance.”

“Oh,” Zoe nodded.

Danny gave Zoe a squeeze at the shoulders and a peck on the side of her forehead. “I guess this does mean we’ll have to play nice. I had a cell, specially prepared and everything.”

“One with manacles, I suppose.”

“Only the Heavy-dutiest.”

“Is that even a word?”

“No, Aunt Zoe, it is not,” Lisa said, as she hugged her new aunt. “Thanks for the upgrade. I’m sure it will be fun. I can hardly wait to test it out in one of the pools.”

“Which, speaking of, what is that water trick you used,” Zoe said. “As I am a shapechanger, of sorts, I naturally noticed when you changed forms.”

“Ah, Jusenkyo,” Danny replied, and then explained what he meant by that. Zoe listened curiously, waiting contentedly in her best friend’s arms. Taylor had a very, very short moment of envy for the return of a valued friendship and then remembered that Zoe had literally lost everything too and that right now, she not only had plenty of friends, she really didn’t need to see Emma. That was then, this was now, as the saying went.

But speaking of now, Taylor said, “You never did tell us her name.”

“Can you tell Taylor your name, sweetie?” Zoe coaxed. Her aunt said, “Sometimes she’s completely verbal, other times.” She shrugged.

The little tentacle girl wriggled, looking up at Taylor. “Beth,” she burbled, before hiding her face with her tentacles while reaching for her Mom again.

“Zoe,” Annette said, touched. She reached out and caressed the little girl gently. “Thank you.”

Zoe smiled softly. “All my other favorite names were taken or… or lost. I remember how much you
loved your grandmother.” Then she shook herself gently. “I have to ask. She looks really well fed. I can’t believe you were feeding her regular milk.”

“The short story is that both Taylor and I lactate. Taylor’s been giving her milk fresh from the source. Like you, we were altered. Danny, Taylor, and I. We died, we were brought back.”

“Fuckin’ Tinkers.” Still, even as she said that Zoe’s expression had brightened considerably. “So all natural fluids, then. Which means my baby is not only not hungry, she’s not starving.” That was an inexplicable comment.

“Oh, like, you need …” Crystal blushed and then said, “I guess it can’t be an entirely liquid diet…I mean…”

“Crystal, you are making very little sense,” Vicky said, blinking at her flushed sister.

“Tentacle Monsters, historically - or at least - according to the uhm, records I’ve read,” Crystal whispers. “They have nutritional needs. They might be able to have regular food, but they do better with…”


“Don’t worry girls, I have eaten all sorts of things in my life. I can handle regular human food fine.” Zoe watched all of this with some amusement. “I see they inherited your smarts.”

“You could say. I should mention that my whole family, as Royal Police, have been lifted - which is what makes us strong and fast, among other things,” Annette said. Then she asked, very carefully, “I know we’re all busy not panicking and choosing trust, but Lisa mentioned an upgrade. What did you do to us?”

Zoe winced. “It’s a little bit bio-imperative and a little bit security blanket for me. A part of me felt the need to claim you.” She blushed. “I guess it’s a tentacle monster thing. But as you’ve probably figured out, it was an injection, occurring naturally; a tiny marker, so if one of my clan meets you, they know you’re mine. It’s not really a possessive, just a family thing. There’s no master effect at all. You may find bits and pieces of yourself to be a little more flexible. I wouldn’t expect any sort of full tentacle monster whatever, but…” She inhaled and then exhaled slowly. “If you fall into the ocean, your lungs and body will be able to take the pressure for some distance. I couldn’t guarantee being able to hold your breath forever” she offered apologetically. “But it could buy you time, especially if you can still swim enough to make up to the top.” She gave Annette an amused grin. “Danny’s cock may become prehensile. I can’t say what might happen to you and Taylor. I wasn’t expecting you to be Spider-Women.” She leered. “Though you do make a very, very sexy Spider.”

Annette laughed. “I see. And you make a very sexy Tentacle Monster.” Then she said, “Why don’t you come on in and let’s get you introduced to everyone. We were having a small gathering when the alarms went off.”

Zoe winced again, but Annette was already steering her towards the house.

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By the time introductions were about to be made Aunt Zoe looked like a fully normal person. Crystal had pulled together a quick skirt, blouse and sandals outfit that covered her for current terms of fashion. On the other hand, Beth could not be convinced to un-tentacle and there was a small, riveting discussion about whether or not to introduce her to the Tendos or just hide her and Zoe upstairs. They were discussing it in the kitchen. This was immediately stalled when Kasumi strolled
in.

The long-haired young woman’s eyes widened in a “babies in proximity!” way and she soon had an armful of tentacle baby and was cooing. Taylor found the whole thing disturbingly adorable and sexy - because somehow that whole thing made the eldest Tendo daughter very, very attractive. She wanted to do very naked things with that young woman and she had no idea how to even begin approaching that topic.

Kasumi leaned against the counter, gently bobbing Beth in her arms as she listened to Annette explain the whole thing. “I love my sister Nabiki, but she is our weakest link. She either needs to be fully on board or not at all.”

Lisa and Cherry glanced at each other. “She’s a naughty girl, but we’ll make sure she’s our naughty girl if you give us enough time. And permission to court her.”

Kasumi, who was not that sheltered, managed to head off a blush by focusing on playing with the looping tentacles. “She did enjoy your cursed forms,” she said gently. “I’ve not seen her react that way since… well, for a long time. I think a special friendship with you would be a good thing.” She looked at Zoe. “In the meantime, I believe my father and his master understood immediately what happened as soon as they saw this one.” She lifted Beth. Then, she surprised Taylor. “Neo, please read off the current fatalities related to the Kraken, indicating injuries vs. death, please?” She asked this as if it were something she’d asked before.

“One hundred and forty casualties, no death.”

“Thank you, Neo. See. Nothing unforgivable. Property damage, yes. But that is what insurance is for,” Kasumi said evenly. “What you did was dangerous and perhaps not well thought out, but not evil. Even the newscasters make note that you avoided damaging things as much as possible. Though,” she glanced at Annette, “the pundits are speculating at the force used to defeat the Kraken might have been too much, given that effort. I’m afraid the Royal Police are taking a bit of public knocking about.”

“Incredible,” Taylor said. “You save a bunch of people and they still gripe.”

Kasumi shrugged, “I do not think it is so unfortunate, given circumstances. It is good that Zoe is able to assume a human shape, and Beth is obviously too tiny to be the cause of anything so serious. You are safe, Zoe. I would need to speak to my father, but I believe my family would avow to your presence as a late arrival of the Hebert family’s. You are their aunt, correct.”

“If someone were to take a blood sample, they’d see the relationship,” Zoe said easily.

Amy put a hand over her mouth, not quite facepalming, but cognizant of the implications.

“Then we are aligned.” Kasumi smiled down at the baby, “Though I admit, this is not the training I expected for tonight.”

Annette grinned, “Don’t get too caught up worrying on that account. We have 9 girls of babysitting age here.” She took Zoe’s hand. “They planned a movie night and that will still be on. Kasumi and I planned a women’s night out for us where we could talk about practical matters, and the guys, as I understand it, had a similar plan. No need for major changes, except now we have one more and the girls will be watching their movies in the G to PG range, at least until Beth is down for sleeping. The thing we do need to do is set up a room and then Neo, River, and Ben will watch over her once she’s down for the night.”
“We’ll keep a good eye on her,” Amy said, and those who were still in the kitchen nodded. “You could catch a nap real quick, as technically we’re still just at lunchtime.

“That does sound good,” Zoe said. “Though I could probably use something to eat. It took a bit of energy to transform.”

Keeping in mind what had just been discussed, Taylor was the first to the fridge. She pulled out what was left of the morning’s bottles. “You people and your milk,” she said. “I know I put four in this morning. She opened a jar and passed it to Cherry, who passed it to their mom, who passed it to Zoe.

Annette said, “You’ve been seeing an increase?”

“Yeah, I’m not sure why it picked up, except…” She blushed fiercely. “Never mind. I’ve figured it out.”

Annette laughed. “Well, Kasumi, I trust you’ll be discreet about that too.”

“That will not be a problem, though I admit, I am intrigued.”

“I’ll explain tonight,” Annette promised. “Maybe we can get Taylor a chance to let you sample the wares.”

Taylor was glad she’d already set the jars down because she likely would have dropped things. “Mom!”

“Sorry. Couldn’t resist. Okay, everyone, I think we’ve hashed out a good plan.”

“In that case,” Kasumi said, “I think my father has been dying to hold this one since he saw her.”

A/N - Zoe and Beth were not originally going to stay. In fact, I wrote four pages of going away, when I decided to roll the dice - because the characters were just making a clamor. So I submitted the plea to chance. Zoe rolled a 19 out of 20 to stay. Annette gets to keep her best friend and angst has been averted.

So… well… those four pages are gone.

The tentacle pinch was actually planned in though from the beginning, so that stayed. Because of reasons ahead. Also, Kasumi is surprisingly easy going. I mean seriously practical too. I was like, whoa.

Okay, well, this could probably all be better, but it's as good as I'm getting it tonight and given the time shift, I think it turned out reasonably readable. I hope you enjoy(ed) it. :)}
Chapter 25

Worm: Joyride: Chapter 25

A few hours later, most of the sisters had settled in for movie night, with sundry traditional snacks and drinks at hand and comfy seating; including blankets and pillows if they should be needed. Annette had disappeared with Kasumi and Zoe, heading towards the Plaza. Happosai had taken Danny and Soun out to a popular bar to discuss guy things. Beth had napped and then settled in with the girls for movie night. No one expected her to be completely still, but the goal was to keep her out of the backyard so she’d get used to being indoors and that did mean watching her closely.

Not that she seemed to mind at all. Beth was the center of gentle attention, which she’d been lacking and she basked in it. She also, for all their expectation of more play than not, watched the shows they’d picked avidly.

The movie choices had been left up to Taylor and her sisters, so they went with what they had. With Beth present, they’d exchanged the testing for shock movies for the Disney and guest friendly kind of movies. What they did not realize was that they had three different versions to choose from; including the local universe variants. So, they had three different versions of Little Mermaid and the Princess Bride and several other titles; not including the Porn version, which while they were discussing the topic of what to watch, Taylor suddenly realized they could totally make. They also had a lot of soap operas, in a lot of languages. On top of that, no one anywhere really had monitors so big and flat that they covered a full wall; screens, yes, with very expensive and fancy projection systems, but not the way the Heberts were set up.

But, as with the holographic AI, none of the Tendos said a word. They just, like Beth, basked in the privilege of being allowed to be in on this amazing experience.

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They paused between movies to stretch and change into pajamas and talk. Parker had arrived to whisk Beth away to bed. Someone (Lisa) had given Nabiki the remote and she had started switching through the next video options and “channel” icons. Akane was in the library with Crystal, looking at their collection of which there was a satisfactory mix from which to choose. Ranma had found the gym and was playing around in there, with Cherry spotting her. Vicky and Amy had disappeared into Vicky’s room.

Taylor checked on her weaving critters and her insect scanning. The night creatures were switching out with the day critters, but she still had a good idea what was going on. Her magic had cleared out the leftovers of their battle, but there were still some military vehicles roving about. The Plaza was surprisingly busy, with more people than normal accessing it, but that kind of made sense since there had been such a public event going on not too far away. The neighborhood protection had switched up and on, so there wasn’t a lot of traffic outside the Plaza. Taylor’s insect tags had broken off when Annette, Zoe, and Kasumi had entered the Plaza, but she had a general idea that they’d headed into the nightclub. Now she relied on River to keep an eye on things. Taylor’s Dad and his crew had passed the range of her creatures as they’d headed toward Tokyo, apparently “sightseeing,” the damage outside of Nerima.

Taylor had let go of trying to spot check at that point, which was good. Or bad, depending on one’s point of view, because that’s when Nabiki found the Slut Life channel.

The whole channel.
All of the above.

And right at the front was Taylor’s show, a season one special. “Short but sweet,” the advertisement said, “All the breast parts!” And as evidence, Taylor’s boobs were front and center, along with a stamp of “Insect Queen approved!”

Of the three sisters, they thought Nabiki was the one who had the most potential for problematic responses. But it was Akane who said, “What the hell is this?!” Apparently, she and Crystal had finished looking around the library just in time for the revelation.

Those who happened to be in the room turned and stared, because of all them, Akane seemed like the one least likely to swear. This made twice now.

“Why are you all staring at me?” Akane complained. “She’s the one who is naked on the screen.”

“Have you met Taylor?” Nabiki said. “Every training session we’ve had she ends up half dressed. I’m amazed she made it through the battle with her clothes on.” She waved her hand at the channel icon. “That’s nothing. Except the title is interesting.” The older Tendo girl asked, “Care to explain?”

So Lisa did, sparing Taylor that difficulty, because, despite everything, she was still shy about this particular aspect of her life story. The brunette seriously considered retiring for the night, but her sister laid a hand on her thigh symbolically keeping her there. Lisa kept her tone normal and informative, and offered an accurate description of how Taylor came to be on Slut Life; from the point of her trigger to the point of her death and the obligations of the contract.

By the time Lisa was done, both Akane and Nabiki’s original burst of prurient judgment had been stripped away and replaced with an assortment of conflicting emotions. Akane’s sense of fairness was burning with outrage and compassion. Nabiki’s budding sense of “what is right,” grew two sizes, but her sense of money-honey also increased two sizes, as she considered that she probably would have had no problem performing on that kind of show; depending.

“A week ago, this would have really, really bothered me,” Taylor said. “But things are better now and honestly, I don’t think I have anything of which to be ashamed. Embarrassed maybe, because I’d have rather had the chance to explain things after we’d known each other longer so you wouldn’t be put on the spot. Truthfully, a part of me is surprised you haven’t stormed out.”

“Why would we do that?” Nabiki said. “This is absolutely the juiciest stuff. I mean, I realize, I can’t go around telling the other girls at school, but phhfft. I only told stuff about Ranma & Akane because it drove them crazy and their reactions are funny to watch.”

“Hey!” Ranma said. She and Cherry had returned during the reveal, so they hadn’t missed the explanation. She threw a pillow, which Cherry caught before it could smack anyone.

“Gossip is fun and all, but you have to know that there are some things that need discretion. Not that we’ve played our own secret angles well, at all.” Lisa said, and she gave a playful shove to Vicky, who along with her sisters, had also returned. “Why, it’s almost like we’ve been playing New Wave.”

“Hardy-har. Well, it’s hard to keep a secret when water is pretty much everywhere. I mean, Ames, Crystal and I can do it easily, because splash and we’re just some groovy kind of guys.” She made a hand motion that ended up in gun-finger points. “But the rest of us all have the others forms that make it a lot less easy.”

“Trust me, no one will comment,” Nabiki said. “Or rather, they will. Because, hey, human. But,
around here, they’ll just think that the Gods are smiling on Nerima and won’t even consider the connections unless it’s right there in their faces. I mean, even when the Kraken battle happened, the cameras spotted a dragon, two spider ladies, a kitsune and a mau, and some policemen. Suddenly a bright light happens and everything changes. No more Kraken, no more Dragon, but one spider lady scampers away with the kitsune, while the mau and police guys escort some women they rescued. The people will comment on how amazing the battle must have been and that it is good to see magic is still thriving in Nerima. The shrines are totally going to be fluttering with prayers and donation bowls are going to be filled. If it were me, I’d put a shrine in your front yard and make some dosh. Certainly, when we get home, I’m going to set something up when we get home. I know people saw Happosai getting a ride, just before the camera feed got cut. So they’re totally going to be saying he’s been blessed.” She paused a moment, “Or cursed, depending on what they think things mean.

“But as for worrying, Ranma has been going around half and half for years and no one says anything; never mind the Panda. This is Nerima, they expect the crazy.” Nabiki said firmly.

“But do they expect the X-rated stuff?” Vicky asked, curiously.

“Only behind closed doors,” Nabiki teased. “But you do know I’m totally going to hit all of you up for naked boob shots. You have so little shame we might as well take advantage of it. Of course, we’ll probably have to blur the nipples for the censors, but trust me, they’ll sell.”

“If it involves costumes, Crystal will totally help out,” Lisa said with a grin. “And we already had this conversation.”

“But that was bathings suits. This is the altogether,” Nabiki waved her hand around and grinned back. “Completely different things,” she said mock earnestly.

“Believe it or not, a calendar or photo shoot is not really what I’m worried about,” Taylor said. “I think I’m worried about splash effect. Though, I guess it’s only been a week. I think I’m trying to say, to all of you, if this is too much, now is the time to get out. Because if this gets out…”

“Ah, don’t get so worked up,” Ranma said, waving her hands for emphasis. “Sure some people are uptight, but you’ve been doing alright and keeping it private so far. I wouldn’t know anything if Lisa hadn’t said something.”

“But you aren’t always the most observant,” Akane said with some concern. “Neo, where Is this being broadcast?”

“The show is broadcast multi universally, but not in the local universe at large,” Taylor sighed in relief. “However, you could set the option to allow the show to broadcast to the Plaza at any time. The broadcast would likely be limited to the brothel, however, if you want, it could also be broadcast to the theater, upping chances of discovery. Depending on when and if you allowed this, you could earn a series of progressing rewards. Hazards would include paparazzi and piracy as the internet grows.”

Taylor’s eyes went wide.

Neo continued blithely, “If you allow the broadcast to the Plaza brothel, it is unlikely that your peers will learn of the show, as they are too young to even be allowed in the Tavern. However, in the next few years that will change and by then there would already be certain adults who are aware of the show.”

“Which a) increases that splash effect chance and b) might conflict the dojo’s needs. I need to think about this.”
“Of course,” Neo said. “Please let me know what you decide. Note, once the decision to broadcast is made, it will remain live for the duration of the jump. You can reset this every jump.”

“Thanks Neo.”

Ranma looked thoughtful for a moment and then said, “The splash effect doesn’t matter.” The redhead nodded firmly. “You’re my friend and everyone knows I don’t care what other people think when it comes to my friends. You saved a whatachamacallit and that makes you a hero. And you’re a great sparring partner. That can be hard to find. We, meaning the Tendos and I, know we lucked out that it’s a whole family of good ones. Plus, it’s not like you’re just out there fooling around with all and sundry. And even if you were, it wouldn’t change that I liked you. Sure, that you’re part of a reality show is kind of kinky, but if Nerima can deal with grandpa being the way he is, they can deal with you. They chase him, then forget it. Still, if it bothers ya, just know if someone finds out and hassles ya, I or Akane will pop ‘em good.”

Taylor grinned despite herself, “Thanks, Ranma. I actually really appreciate the thought.”

“So can we watch another movie or are we gonna keep yacking?” the martial artist asked impatiently.

“Movies it is.” Lisa replied. “Nabiki, hand the remote to Amy. She’s been waiting for this moment for ages.”

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If Slut Life outraged sensibilities, the discussion and reality of the show, even if they hadn’t watched much, also kind of numbed them. Amy decided that they could all use some lightening up. Beth was asleep and she was done waiting.

So she brought up their original plan regarding Practical Magic. They discussed it and all decided to watch four versions on one giant wall, split up. The experience started out fascinating and surreal, like watching four variations of a play, run by different directors. Two of the movies had extra actors, two had completely different actors, three had the same setting and one was a completely other setting. All of them were in the same “time” zone and the premise of the sisters of the different generations working together remained as the theme, though, of course, one of the movies was explicit, while the other three ranged between definitely not and almost there.

The dialog was streamlined, with movies pausing at points of differences so they could hear all the versions, one at a time. It was a little confusing at first, but they all got the hang of it and, because once Amy started the running commentary, all of them felt free to join in.

At any other time, the experience might have ruined the movie, and maybe no one would watch Practical Magic the same again, but they had a fairly riotous time. Especially because somewhere at the beginning, Annette, Zoe, and Kasumi returned and joined them in the viewing. The older women were all a little bit relaxed and tipsy; not hugely so, but enough that normal inhibitions simply weren’t there.

So, when the porn version had something physically impossible happen and obviously was digitally enhanced, Annette and Zoe’s scathing remarks about the scene sailed into the air; which led to pausing all the movies and a brief-ish moment of education on the what works versus what doesn’t and why. Ranma had a surprising amount of questions - after all, he/she hadn’t really had anyone to asks these sorts of things. His father was hyper-masculine, his mother was hyper-feminine and neither of them was comfortable with sex talk, while Annette and Zoe were very comfortable talking about it.
So on one wall, there were the movies four, and in front of that, helpfully provided by River (whom it turned out was just as outspoken as Annette) and Neo (whom it turned out was less outspoken but interested), holographic depictions of parts and pieces were displayed, with explanations about how it all worked together.

It was a very frank, very funny discussion, one that included not just information about bodies and sex, and love and its types, but about consent and how to recognize it and ask for it and play with it, but keep it real. They also talked about comfort levels and how to know when they, themselves were ready and how to back out if they suddenly realized they weren’t; how to say no and how to say yes and more.

Annette said, “I can see some of you thinking about this now,” meaning, of course, Akane and Ranma and Nabiki. The elder brunette knew Kasumi already had something in mind, she was just deciding what she really wanted. “But this is a no pressure night, which makes it a good night to practice saying no if you’re not ready. It’s also a good night to practice saying yes if you are. But don’t feel rushed. Zoe and I will answer almost any question and if we can’t, you can always look it up or have Neo or River explain it.”

“And,” Zoe contributed, “If you’re super uncomfortable, you can let us know. No one will think worse or less of you if you decide this is too much and want to switch movies or go home.”

“I might,” Nabiki said jokingly. “But I’ll get over it.” Laughter rolled around the room.

Zoe grinned. “I’ll just point out here, a lot of people - including grown adults - get in trouble because they don’t want to look bad in front of their friends. It’s not even really peer pressure, though that’s a thing. It’s personal pride and over or underestimation of the situation. But honestly, I’d be happier if those we loved realized we’d prefer them safe and happy than hurt and not.”

In the end, no one immediately went home and the general consensus was that this was a rare opportunity to learn and have fun. So they continued the movie, starting and stopping in places where more commentary was had. Meanwhile, at least during the movie, hands remained where they could be observed, though Taylor's had placed a pillow over her lap because visual stimulation is still stimulation.

By the end, Amy and Vicky were snuggled up with Akane and Ranma, who had become more and more relaxed as things went on. They weren’t quite asleep, but they were getting there. Nabiki had been led away by Lisa and Crystal before the end credits. Cherry had snuggled up against one side of Taylor, while Kasumi had quietly taken another.

“Well, I think that’s it for us,” Annette said, as Zoe let herself be pulled up. “We’re heading upstairs. Danny won’t be back before noon, and Taylor and I have places to be at 10 am. Other than that, the rest of the night is yours. Play safe, darlings.”

As soon as they left, Cherry stood up and gathered a couple of cushiony pillows, laying them near the cushion support structure that Akane, Ranma, Vicky, and Amy had going. Taylor and Kasumi covered them with blankets. Then Cherry took Kasumi and Taylor’s hands. “Would you like to come up with me to my room?”

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Like all the bedroom’s in the house, Cherry’s room was big enough to have a king sized bed and wide enough for other amenities. Posters of favored sports stars peppered her wall, along with trophies from school events - pre lift and RP sports events - post lift. The one thing she really loved about their move (real or magically generated) to Japan was that Furinkan High allowed to cheer
athletically and as part of a martial art. She wasn’t a one-track person though. Her shelves had evidence of her watercolor hobby, her marvel and DC comics stack, and a bunch of books that ranged from fantasy romance to westerns. Like Taylor’s room, it had its own sizable bathroom. That room lacked the giant tank but made up for it with a massive whirlpool tub.

Taylor let herself be led into the bedroom, whereupon Cherry let go of their hands and turned to face them both. “Okay, so, it occurs to me that Kasumi was not here when we gave the low-down. Better tell her before we start something. Unlike Jewel, where everyone knows the score, no one does here.”

“I getcha,” Taylor said. “And after that memorable lecture from mom, I would be remiss indeed if I didn’t spill the beans.” She turned to the young woman who had been firing her sexual pistons, paused in mid-start as she got caught up in just looking at the brown-eyed, brown-haired walking state of graciousness and then rebooted to, “Kasumi, I’m a slut.”

She heard Cherry literally facepalm and winced. “Okay,” Taylor said as she blushed scarlet. “Let me try that again.”

Kasumi stopped her with a giggle and a smile. “Taylor, it is alright. Your mother explained about the show and about the circumstances of your needs. She loves you very much and was very kind about how and what she told me. You need not fear.” She glanced at Cherry, smiled sweetly. “You may trust I would not be up here if I did not understand the dynamics. And, I wish to continue this. I want to see what this is,” she waved her hand between herself and Taylor. “Even if it is a temporary physical thing, I can not help but think it will be good. It has been a long time since I’ve had time for special friendships.”

Cherry hugged Taylor at the shoulders. “See, you’re being silly. Go on and kiss the girl,” she sang out, causing her sister to laugh. They had just seen the movie, after all.

“Oh, by the way, I’m currently infertile, both ways via a reversible procedure. Also, I am disease free and healthy,” Taylor said, very formally.

“Me too. Mom made sure we were all protected,” chirped Cherry. “Though, Taylor, that’s like the least sexy way to share that.”

“Yeah, but it’s quick and efficient,” Taylor said.

Kasumi shook her head and did not quite roll her eyes. Instead, she said, “I am also medically fit to share joy with you. I am aware that this will likely be broadcast somewhere not here, unless you set it do otherwise. Now,” she grabbed Taylor by the front of her tee and dragged her forward, “Time to get to the good parts.” Her lips landed on the lanky younger woman with soft abruptness, partly open, definitely inviting and wet. The kiss fired up as Taylor felt Cherry’s hands slide up her waist under her shirt.

Fingertips scraped against her sensitive nipples and floated along her skin. When Kasumi let her lips free, she turned and kissed her sister with an equal fervor, until her shirt started to be lifted off. She noticed then that Kasumi was very much bare and Cherry was nearly there. Both of the women with her were of a paler skin. Cherry’s nipples had a hint of pink, while Kasumi’s were a warmer red, but both breasts were lovely handfuls - neither too big nor too small for their forms. And, despite their athleticism, both of the women were of the perfect combination of soft and strong to lean against. Apparently, they thought the same of Taylor, for both had at least one hand on her breasts, even as they traded kisses and long, sweet, but firm caresses.

Taylor learned a new thing when Cherry moved around her. It was possible, if a bit giggily, to kiss
three at a time. It just involved taking turns on a minimized scale. It was, however amazingly and hot, as her lips and tongue were sensitized enough to feel the stroking licks and flicks of their tongues and the gentle suction of their lips on hers.

They stopped kissing long enough to move to the bed. “Taylor, you lay down first, on your back,” Cherry directed, moving them where she wanted. “And you gotta know, you two, I plan on riding Taylor Junior, so get yourself ready.”

Taylor laughed as she reclined back. “That sounded so wrong.” Once her panties had come off, there was no way to hide the massive tower that her cock had become. Kasumi had been fascinated, taking the panties up and then down again, to see the magic at work, but she hadn’t let herself get too distracted. Taylor said to Cherry, looking directly into her blue eyes so she could see the sincerity, “I don’t think you need to worry about me being ready. I’ve been since that scene where the sisters said, ‘me too’.”

It had been a great scene, as they’d then proceeded to kiss and fondle each other, seeming to ignore the heavy breathing lothario, even as they accidentally magically poisoned him. The kiss had been stunningly hot and it wasn’t even the one that was the porn version.

Cherry stroked her fingernails along her shaft, while Kasumi crawled forward to lick Taylor’s lips, kiss her chin and neck, and then draw that kiss in a slide down to her breasts; all the while smelling like flowers and cinnamon. Taylor caressed where she could, but her attention was also captured by the varying sensations.

Her hips pressed up when Cherry captured her with her lip. Her fingers pressed into her sister’s hip possessively at the same time as Kasumi sucked and tongued her breasts. Taylor licked her lips, considering the issue and what she wanted to do in response. For one thing, Kasumi was at the wrong angle and for the other, her sister was doing amazing things.

“Feeling impatient, Taylor?” Cherry teased.

“Only a little,” Taylor said, deliberately thrusting up a bit, but not too hard. She didn’t want to hurt her sister. “Your mouth feels amazing, so you know. And Kasumi’s driving me crazy. Want to touch you both, but I can’t clone me…” Taylor paused and considered that, wondering.

A word frosted her lips, and then, another presence was there; cold, but not uncaring. “Whoa.”

They all paused, turning to stare at the ice clone. Taylor only felt a tiny bit strange. She’d had practice looking out of other creatures eyes before. “I don’t think this will last long, but neat.” She reached out, one chill hand cupping Kasumi’s breast, pebbling it instantly.

“Oooh!” the brown-haired girl said. “So chilly!” But she leaned into it, chancing a kiss with the ice clone. Her nipples poked out hard, and her kisses felt intensely hot against the cool ice. Taylor said another word, and the frost left her lips, as the clone disappeared into vapor.

Kasumi pressed her hands against her on lips, feeling the coolness there. Then she smiled like a tiger at Taylor, before taking her mouth with a fierce kiss. “We will have to try more next time. But this is good to know.”

“I think so, but you gotta know it’s short-lived. I couldn’t do it for more than a minute or two,” agreed Taylor, thinking in more terms than one.

The other woman nodded their head in understanding.

Then as she stroked Kasumi and Cherry while they were still close, she said, “Kasumi, Cherry wants
to drive the stick, but I want to taste the waters of life. Think we can make that happen?” She let her
tongue extend a little, showing Kasumi that it was long, without really revealing how much. The
older girl paused, then blushed, then grinned.

“I do believe we can, yes.”

It did not take long at all, for things to fall into place (so to speak). And soon Taylor was looking up,
taking in the dusky rose of her new lover’s sex. “So pretty,” she said. And it really was, from the
sweet plump outer part of the labia to the sleek silk of the inner labia, which was shaped like little
petals just begging to be sucked. Kasumi’s clitoris was pert and pinker than the rest of the vagina.
The pearl-sized head poked above the hood, looking like it needed to be rubbed and so, she did -
with her tongue; then she really got to work, humming in pleasure as she did so.

Kasumi’s legs shifted around her shoulders, as she pushed against Taylor’s gentle assault. She leaned
forward, pressing up against Cherry. Taylor could hear their moans as they kissed and it made her
toes curl and her whole groin throb, rod, and jewel. She was soaking with the aching, building need.
She groaned as she felt hands grasp her cock, holding the rigid staff in place. Then she felt Cherry
slide over the top, wetting the tip liberally.

The excitement was blisteringly scorching and that only escalated as she felt her sister slowly press
down onto her. Taylor’s hands gripped Kasumi’s hips, as she deliberately pushed her tongue in at the
same pace as Cherry’s deliciously slow descent. She smiled at Kasumi’s noise of pleasure before she
began thrusting in gentle twirls, pulling in the taste of the other women and loving it.

Meanwhile, Cherry started a slow bounce that was driving her sister nuts. Then, it sped up some as
Taylor reciprocated, but the brunette knew she couldn’t move too fast. She felt Kasumi lean in,
causing her to angle her tongue differently. One hand grasped her thigh, while the other apparently
held onto her sister. Taylor imagined that she was teasing the redhead’s breasts. Sometimes she had
the sense of fingertips brushing against her shaft, fluttering around Cherry’s clit.

The touches weren’t all just point a to point b, there were strength and softness to the caresses at
different points, but some things were always simple. Taylor focused on what she was doing,
enjoying every wet electric moment as her excitement spiked higher and higher. Kasumi was as
luscious as she imagined. Once Taylor knew Kasumi was steady, she held her there with one hand,
and then used the other to explore, until it ended up tickling at her jewel.

They picked up speed, with Cherry fairly quivering and grinding, as if she could push Taylor deeper.
Both women rocked above her, varied in pacing and motion. Their scents, Kasumi’s cinnamon with
Cherry’s mint and ginger, mixed with the earthy tones of their natural lubrication, providing a
surprisingly pleasing spice to the air that broadly hinted at their personalities. Taylor would have
loved to bottle the odor because the aroma of them together was so good it was nearly as electric as
what they were doing to her. And Kasumi’s flavor, Kami Bless! Taylor had long since given up any
shape of “resistance.” She was full on plundering and sucking, trying to take the other girl’s juices in
like it was candy.

And she couldn’t hold her own hips steady. Honestly, she needed to figure out how to have four
arms in her human form, because obviously, she needed all those hands. But it didn’t stop her from
rolling into Cherry with emphatic pushes. She felt her “balls,” though she wouldn’t exactly call them
that, tightening and preparing to surge and she was thrilled that she could feel the way Kasumi’s
fingers thumbed against her sister; like she was playing the samisen.

Then she felt Cherry spark, hard. Her soaked pussy clamped and squeezed and flexed around her.
She cried out, at first a loud surrendering noise that was suddenly muffled with a kiss. Taylor’s body
arched in response as her own pleasure roared through her and she came and came. Taylor’s vision
blanked, but she kept licking and supping, even as her body sparked like a fiery meteor skipping along the universe. She felt Kasumi roll into her own screaming release, almost louder than Cherry’s, but also soon muffled by kisses. Her whole body flexed as her inner world flexed around Taylor’s tongue and thudded in pulsing motions against her fingers.

Taylor’s body reached for more, in shuddering motions, but she felt the release steady back and back, letting her quit arching so high. She felt her fingers being softly pried off of Kasumi’s hip and knew she was making that sound of deprivation again when the older girl was moved gently to the side. She heard Cherry saying, “...have to do this... Lisa said she’ll just keep…”

Then Cherry’s face was above hers, her expression affectionate and warm, sweet. “Hey there, Taylor. You had a very good time there, didn’t you?”

Taylor wasn’t quite at verbal yet, but her answer was very much the affirmative; which was fine, because the redhead dipped down and kissed her hard and deep, before moving to licked the side of her mouth, and chin. “Oh, I can see why,” Cherry said, and she rocked on Taylor’s semi-soft cock and gave a heated glance to the martial artist. “How did the quote go? Oh yes, I think this is the start of a beautiful friendship.” Then she leaned over and kissed Kasumi fiercely.

As was traditional with sleepovers, Taylor did not get that much real sleep.
It's a little easier in a forum, because of the way you can set up tabs for extra things that belong with a story, but not in it. But this, I think is important enough to make note of:

So, I was going to put this in an author note at the end of 25 but decided that it might be better to put it as its own little space. After chapter 25, there won't be much in the chapter specifically about "Yes, consent," unless it's a particularly important part of the story. For instance, in Chapter 25 it was important because they'd had the "talk" while watching shows, so it felt right to see it play out.

But the reason for this informational note is that while check conditions should be in place on a regular basis for new things in real life, for a story, that can get a little repetitive. So, the thing I'd like to make note of here is that the reader should assume, after this point, that while the choice to check and recheck may not be explicitly in the text, it has been done at some point. This is just a time saver for me and to avoid repetition (again, unless it adds to the scene).

Which brings me to sex scenes. After some thought, while I enjoy sex scenes, I can already see there's going to be some this happened, then this happened going on that seems very familiar. After all, despite contortions, some things are just that way. It can be both fun and frustrating to write. I tend to in my other stories avoid that by having only one scene, but obviously, there will be more here. I don't have a "fix" for it, in terms of action, but I do have a fix in terms of pacing. So, from this point, the sex scenes won't be constant in the sense of every other chapter, but in the sense of "does it move the story forward."

We'll see if that helps some.
Actually, it wasn’t so much waking up, as coming up for air. Stopping points had happened and they’d taken a few moments to refresh themselves, but it turned out that Kasumi, the martial artist housefrau, had a lot of pent-up stamina and needs hidden behind that apron and peaceful expression. Moreover, the longer the three of them played, the sweeter the emotions and hotter the temperature of their explorations had gotten.

For instance, there was that one moment, where Taylor was plowing fast and hard into Kasumi. The eldest Tendo sister, while somewhat sheltered, had more experience than Taylor; both she and Cherry had been guiding the young woman through some mild, but new experiences for her. In the end, though, things got very basic and Kasumi ended up with her legs wrapped around Taylor’s hips, her fingernails digging deep into the younger girl’s shoulders. Taylor already had a smattering of marks - mostly kisses and hickeys, under the breasts, along her rib cage, at her inner thigh, already fading because of her quick healing, from previous encounters. Kasumi and Cherry enjoyed claiming territory, even if it were temporary. For the moment, Kasumi was winning.

A red trail indicated where the older woman's original grip had started, but it followed to where she’d eventually really dug in because she was holding on as if Taylor were a Bronco, and given how deeply Taylor was plunging this was not exactly an un-apt description. The bed was definitely bouncing with each hip thrust. The first marks inflicted on Taylor had hurt, but after that original burst of pleasure/pain, the younger brunette found herself in a zone that was nearly meditative. She forgot all about pain, hardly felt it at all, except in terms of how good things kept getting. She was very aware of what was happening around and to her, but she was in a space of movement that felt a bit like a run that was scaling up.

Meanwhile, two of Cherry’s fingers were well past Taylor’s inner corona stroking and teasing her sensitive spots with slightly-pressured hooking motions, while her other hand was occupied with playing near another puckered bud, stirring the lubrication that had gathered here. The silky and wet lubricant smelled like carnations and mint without being overpowering and was very slick, though not in an oily way. Taylor’s body was literally designed for pleasure and all of her orifices were maximized in that direction, the lubrication there was a happy surprise. Thus, Cherry mused at the discovery but inevitably pressed forward, though, only with one finger. Then her sister found a very particular sensitive spot and lightning struck Taylor from the middle on out.

Taylor hadn’t been quite sure when she’d fallen into her trance-like state, but she knew when she’d fully returned to the present. The purity of the moment when she started sparking into Kasumi was deeply powerful and unavoidable, even if she thought she was ejecting in a manner reminiscent of being a garden hose jet sprinkler. The only thing missing had been the swivel motion and she might have managed that if she hadn’t been held so tightly inside the other woman. It had been spectacular, but it was getting less and less strange. That original bliss had been compounded by the second round, where she experienced another intense bout of erotic fireworks, but that happened deep within her and just as deeply satisfying, and had been caused by her sister’s cheerful ministrations. Apparently, the redhead seriously loved watching her sister arrive at the glorious moment; over and over.

Taylor knew this specifically because Cherry said so, uttering words that were both loving and filthy. During that second round, Kasumi’s arrival had been an inarticulate shout, that culminated in soft gasps of erotic prayers to the divine, which seemed to spark with each powerful clench and shift that
just seemed to keep Taylor pouring out into her.

When it finally ended, they’d collapsed in a tangled heap, with Cherry being the only one who had any sensibility left. Taylor had full intention of remedying that as soon as she was occupying her own body. At the moment, she felt like she was spread out among the stars. She, of course, let her sister know her intentions.

That’s when Cherry said, “What makes you think I can’t handle my self.” Then she rocked hard onto the vibrator she’d had between her legs and wetly and loudly sparked - with a huge grin of pleasure on her face. Taylor had to agree then, that part of the fun of playing with each other was watching her lover cum. Cherry was positively gorgeous at that moment.

Not too much later, Taylor had still been having lazy, twitchy aftershocks as she apologized profusely to both Cherry and Kasumi for the mess afterward. She’d had no idea she’d be releasing in such a strong way, especially after everything they had already done. Cherry said as she hugged her sister tightly, “We were going to have to change the sheets anyway.” Kasumi just looked inordinately pleased with life, cuddled and kissed Taylor firmly and said she had been wonderful and then she’d gone to clean herself up; walking with a confident hip sway that was new and definitely appealing.

So, yes, there had been some sincere straight up rutting, but there’s also been tenderness; hugs and playful commentary, and lots of loving as they got to know each other more intimately.

Still, the night had to end because Taylor needed at least a little sleep before she went to her appointment. So they had a final rest, with Cherry in the middle, content and snuggled in. Their arms and legs wrapped over each other, as the night crawled forward.

An hour and a half later, Neo sounded the alarm in Taylor’s ear. Dawn was near and her breasts felt very full, even though both Kasumi and Cherry had taken their fill. The mere thought of them suckling had her nipples puckering up for more and her inner walls flexing receptively. She imagined there would be a few aches, but she woke up feeling quite fine, even for the short amount of sleep she’d had. Though likely she would end up needing a nap later.

She took her time untangling from her lovers, gently moving so they wouldn’t be too jostled. After all, they didn’t have to be up any time soon. She was the one who needed to milk.

She also needed a shower; not because she didn’t smell and feel clean, but she liked having one regardless. Taylor stealthed her way to the door and stepped out of Cherry’s room, heading toward her own. She looked down the hallway, noticing that their home was really starting to feel that way, with the new pictures that had been hung and the small stations of floral arrangements prettying things up. She paused in the middle of her walk as Vicky’s door opened. The statuesque blonde’s lips were connected with Ranma’s, kissing her with gentle intensity before letting her go. “If they wake up, tell them I’ll be right back with the snacks.”

The martial artist’s eyes crinkled in a soft smile as she nodded. “I will.” She turned her glance towards Taylor and her eyes widened, but then she just grinned and waved before shutting the door.

Vicky, having taken the cue, flew towards her sister and pulled her into an enormous hug. “Hey, Tay!” She gave her sister a heated kiss. Taylor could smell and taste sage and other flavors on her sister.

“Have you been having a good time?”

Vicky said happily, “Oh yes. Ranma and Akane are very sweet.” Then she beamed, “And
enthusiastic. Plus, they can keep up with us.” She leaned forward, “I was a little worried about that,” she mostly whispered. “And maybe, you know, being too strong. But they’re both as strong as me or at least near enough one way or the other. It’s been nice to not have to hold back.”

“I know what you mean,” Taylor said in empathy. “I think both Kasumi and Cherry out-stamina-ed me and I’m the one with the implants. The only reason we stopped at all was that I was the one who had to be up early. I guess Cherry is right, I have to step up my game when I exercise.”

Vicky chortled, then pecked Taylor again. “You headed downstairs?”

“No, just back to my room for a shower and then some expressing.”

“Expressing? Like faces in a mirror?”

Taylor pointed at her naked breast. That was when she realized she’d forgotten to wear a robe, unlike Vicky. Oops. That explained Ranma’s smile. She’d grab one in her room if she didn’t get fully dressed.

“Oh!” Vicky said, suddenly getting it. “Can I get a quick taste?”

Taylor grinned and arched her chest. “Yeah, but only a little. I want some for Beth.”

“Right,” Vicky nodded. Then she joked, “I guess it’s okay to share.” Then she gently pulled Taylor forward, leaned over and kissed her breast, then her nipple. She softly squeezed and then suckled as the milk gushed out. She hummed in pleasure. “So good.”

Taylor shifted on her feet as she felt wetness gather, again because of course, it felt remarkably good. Vicky took a few more sips, deliberately licking her lips when she was done to make both a point and sure she didn’t miss any. Taylor’s milk was coming out in generous proportions now and there had been a moment when there had been enough to overflow while Vicky drank.

“Tasty,” she said. “I think it’s sweeter too. I’ll let Cherry know,” she said, her body language chipper.

“Wait…” Taylor started.

But Vicky broke in. “Yeah, surprise, but she’s got us all taste-testing in the morning with the fresh bottles so she can make notes. It’s been fun.” Then she floated away. “Thanks,” she mouthed at Taylor, before turning away.

“You’re welcome,” Taylor mouthed back and then she giggled all the way to her room.

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She ended up with her usual six bottles of milk, though one was a little lower than the others. She took them all downstairs, planning to leave the usual amount out and store the others. She was not sure if she should continue putting the milk out in the garden. Now that they had Beth found and indoors, there wasn’t quite the same literal need. Yet, as a habit went, it wasn’t exactly terrible. She did use it to feed her insects too.

So, plan made, she brought them into the kitchen. Her mom and Zoe were seated on the stools, with Beth securely in the middle. “Sweetheart, your timing is perfect!” the older brunette exclaimed. She stepped off the stool, stopped in front of Taylor and gave her a short, warm kiss that curled the younger woman’s toes. Then she gathered the bag that Taylor had used to carry the bottles, pulling one of the milk jars out. She set it on the counter, uncapped it, then screwed on a sippy lid that
Taylor didn’t even know they had.

Zoe smiled at Taylor’s surprise. “I did bring some supplies with me, just in case. Also, it seems your people are quite prepared for almost anything. It’s impressive.”

“They kind of really are,” Taylor confirmed as her Mom handed Beth the cup. The little girl grabbed it with both hands and began drinking immediately. Her tendrils looped and played with the legs and the tray of her high chair. One held tightly to a small cloth doll, waving it around, but not letting it go at all. She burbled happily into her cup.

“Ah, that was exactly what she needed. Thank you, Taylor. Your mom was pretty sure you’d be down about now. Originally she was going to provide some milk for Beth, but then,” Zoe blushed, “I’m afraid I hadn’t taken in as much sustenance lately. I got a little greedy. Normally I have much more control.”

Annette patted her shoulder. “Zoe, the only reason I didn’t stop you is I knew Taylor would remember. So don’t take on a blame that isn’t yours. Besides,” she winked at her daughter then turned to face her friend, “it was lovely. I enjoyed nursing you, sweetheart.”

Taylor decided that Aunt Zoe was kind of cute when she blushed. And, seeing her blush actually made the younger woman feel better, a lot less like “the only one…” It was nice to know someone who had good social fu, could also have that kind of moment, without it being a bad thing.

Taylor smiled more. “I need four, but you can have the other one if you need it. I normally put it in the fridge.”

“You’re going to put one out for the Kami then? Even though we found Beth?”

This did bring to mind the answer Zoe had eventually given about how Beth could survive being on her own - aside from that she could turn into puppies and kittens and tentacle creatures as needed. That was the clue. Unlike a normal human toddler, she had the advantages of the genes that she’d been given. She lived on instinct but gravitated toward people who were trustworthy naturally. She’d been slowly warming up to the girls who were taking care of her, but just hadn’t hit that point of cross-over yet. But the instincts and her native intelligence had kept her safe and out of harm’s way. She might have a little catching up to do, but emotionally she was fine and ultimately, Beth would be a very healthy young person.

The real question, Zoe had informed them, was not how Beth managed to survive. That part she could figure out, based on her own experiences. The real question she had was how did Beth get so far from her point of arrival. That was a genuine mystery that likely would not be solved any time soon. But it did mean that Zoe would be doubling down on watching her daughter or leaving her in the care of trusted people who knew the score.

“Well,” Taylor hedged, “Yeah. After all, you never know. But, more importantly, I do have critters that have gotten used to having the milk around. I recognize its not an obligation, but it doesn’t hurt. I can stop, but I’ve pretty much got full control with any insect that’s a pest.”

“Maybe take it further towards the garden, just in case.”

“Sure mom,” Taylor said easily and then she put down the jars for Lisa, Cherry, and her Dad. But Annette picked up two of the bottles.

She said, “Lisa and your father will just have to give to the cause today. They both know the rules, babies first. School second. Everyone else third. I know Cherry is working on your project, so that
bottle is safe. Maybe they can talk her into letting them be taste testers for the day.” Annette grinned impishly, causing Taylor to smile back.

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The Plaza had changed a little since Taylor last remembered seeing it with her own eyes, but not so much that she didn’t recognize the original stores. The buildings had a little more Japanese flair to them, with ornamental spaces and plants had sprung into being. But Taylor recognized the plaza’s main fountain and the cafe still had the same tables and chairs. So things still retained a certain familiarity - and ultra-modernity. The stores still had holographic signs, but anyone who was local did not seem to overly notice it, except in terms of tourist oohs and aahs.

She spotted one couple snapping pictures of a display in the clothing store and could hear the ratcheting sound the film made as the shots progressed forward.

Until a month ago, that would have seemed very normal. Now it felt both normal and odd. She was getting used to that feeling.

It just so happened that there was a new store by the general store called Brot’s Bread. She intended to go and speak to the person who was running the store at some point but hadn’t gotten around to it yet. She also noted that there was a ramen soup restaurant with a “new” sign on it. It wasn’t open yet, but she pointed it out and everyone agreed they’d like to try it if it were when they got out of the spa.

Although only Annette and Taylor were required to go, the spa experience was a continuation of the girls night and so the women of her family and friends were heading towards that particular building, except for Zoe and Beth. Her aunt had opted to stay home so she could have some quality time with her daughter and reaffirm their emotional bonds, even though Parker, Sophia, and Elliot had expressed a total willingness to babysit, any time, any place. (Nathan and Alec were a little less kidcare-inclined, though they were both happy to meet the little tot and her mother). The sisters and their friends would have a “spa time,” while Taylor and her Mom would be getting pierced and then they planned on joining them.

Taylor was still waffling on where she’d like to get pierced. Originally she had considered getting her inny belly button pierced. The spa had a lot of pretty, pretty jewelry, but she was very aware that things that can be pulled might cause tearing. She was also, strangely, aware that they were living in a fairly - not prudish per se - but different era. In what she thought of as her original life, the one at Brockton Bay, she grew up when piercings were, if not common, seen often enough that there was no stigma or surprise. In her “first” life, the one she remembered as a reincarnation, ears were single-pierced, but other things weren’t. In her shortest life, she knew piercings were not only not considered that unusual, and there had been advances that allowed for holographic or stimulating implants, among other things.

When she first contemplated piercings, she was shocked to realize she was seriously considering a clitoral hood piercing as her most safe option. Of course, that decision had been made when she had not been having a lot of sex. Now, however, it would be inconvenient, even with her fast healing to have that stall on her just when things were getting good. And, even if intellectually she knew she would heal very quickly, emotionally she wasn’t ready to even chance giving up an opportunity for personal pleasure.

It was kind of irrational, she knew, but it was where she was at.

Thus she was led to thinking about higher locations and considering the option of a nipple piercing. Then she remembered the lactation and how that was also something she wasn’t quite prepared to
fool around with too much.

She looked down at her belly and considered that sometimes beauty was risk. After all, some people wore stilettos when they had no sense of balance at all. What’s a broken ankle to looking good? Not that Taylor had to worry about that. She now had a perfect sense of balance and could easily walk without so much as a wobble. But she had always saved heels as a special occasion sort of gear, so she wasn’t in the habit of them and thus did not put them on often.

She was contemplating wearing them once a week for Crystal though, but she hadn’t decided on when.

Wow was her mind wandering or what?

Taylor let her consciousness spread out a bit, taking in the local world. People were doing people thing, shopping, talking, going here and there. The weather was perfect. In the distance, construction was already happening and she reckoned that at least their part of the city would have things fixed from the events of yesterday very soon. She spotted one fist fight, but that was far away and over with one solid nose smack. Everything else in the world seemed calm. She noticed that the butterflies were really out that morning, fluttering around and being beautiful. She considered gathering some, but by that time they arrived at the spa. Again, she had a moment to appreciate how pretty it was on the outside, which led her to think the inside was going to be very nice.

It was beyond nice, it was gorgeous. Were it not a business, she might have mistaken it for a museum or a temple. They were met at the door by a handsome host in a grey suit who led them further in after confirming the appointments. He took them further in, leading them to very pretty guides in soft pastel dresses, who led them away to their destinations.

“Have fun,” chirped Lisa as they waved farewell.

“I’m not sure fun is how I’d describe it,” Taylor said, suddenly feeling anxious. But she didn’t say that too loudly.

Her mom heard her anyway and gave her shoulder a squeeze. “Nerves are normal,” she said. “I’m a little nervous too, but I’m excited to try something new.”

Their guide said, in a very sweet voice, “You will find the process quite painless. Unless otherwise indicated, we use a topical analgesic previous to the implantation. During setup, we will finalize preferences, though we have been in contact with your personal assistants in regards to preferences.”

“That does actually help,” Taylor commented. “I know I have a naturally higher pain threshold, but needles bother me anyway.”

The beautiful guide offered a reassuring smile and gesture. “Then you will be happy to know we use better technology than a mere needle. It will be bip,” she made a squeezing motion with her fist, “and all done. Seriously, the biggest thing you need to worry about is where you want it and what you want the end result to look like.”

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A half an hour later and Taylor had a curved gold bar with a jeweled holographic spider perched on the end of it at the top of her belly button. The holograph would move in and out of her navel as if it were a cavern, disappearing and reappearing and generally being spiderly. Taylor had both cracked up and loved it at the same time. The control module would let her shift to different kinds of spiders and insects and varying colors depending on her mood. Also, she was healing enormously quickly.
By Monday she’d be completely able to change out the bar with other kinds of jewelry. Her mom had treated to two other ornaments in celebration of her maturing into full Futanari and for bravely trying a new thing.

Annette had also considered the where and whys of piercing and had arrived at similar conclusions to her daughter. They both were enjoying their erotic opportunities and both had concerns about lactation and nipple piercing. While Annette considered that it might be amusing to have a double spout, there were reasons enough to be cautious to start - at least over the next little while. When the Slut Life enforced lactation period was over, then the brunette would consider adding to the collection. So, Annette also went ornamental, though with a secondary lobe piercing in both ears. This was still very uncommon locally and would be seen as exotic, at least in this time frame. It’d be entertaining to see how people responded. She almost immediately healed, but she was pleased with the jewels she’d chosen; a tiny holographic light show that moved through a gradation of rainbow colors.

The teacher said as she chose them, “I can wear them anywhere and they’ll match everything. What’s not to like.” Then she’d chosen some more expensive pieces to go with more formal outfits.

In the end, they were both pleased with their choices.

Before they left, however, one of the pretty women who pierced them said, “I just wanted to say how much I appreciate you stopping by. We haven’t had many people come in for a piercing lately. And if they do, it’s generally just a single for the lobes. It was nice to have a little variety.” She looked at the assistant. Both of the technologists sported several obvious piercings - on their ears and one had gone through her brow.

The woman hesitated and then said, “Before you arrived I was asked to remind you that this spa offers several temporary options also, such as corsetting.” Then her expression turned pleading. “You are both so beautiful we’d love a chance to decorate you. This does include tattooing if you’re interested. We have several different styles to try, and if you prefer something non-permanent we do offer specialized dye-work” She sounded positively hopeful and her puppy-eyes were surprisingly effective.

Taylor found herself nodding unconsciously, while Annette said, politely, “We will definitely think about that. Thank you for your reminder.”

“Cool,” the piercer said, very pleased.

Then Taylor’s mom turned to her, “Shall we go show your sisters? Maybe get our nails and hair done to match?”

“I think I’d really like that,” Taylor said, and she couldn’t keep the smile off her face.

While they were on the way, Neo whispered, “A reward is offered for corseting. The first corseting will net a large prize and every fifth one will net smaller ones.”

Well. That was good to know and it would mean she didn’t have to rely on being overly exposed while in high school. Better to wait until she was out of school, one way or the other. The RP wouldn’t care, but despite the unusual nature of her relationships with her family, she was well aware that they were not at all the norm. Better to be careful than sorry.

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Before Saturday had concluded with Akane, Nabiki, Kasumi, and Ranma leaving for home, everyone sat down in the den to have the big discussion on safety and security in a time of rumors and high school drama (or comedy, as the case may be). They discussed what to expect, how to behave, what and when to plan, how to prepare for various eventualities (such as possible discovery or just general interest from another person), what they should be doing at school or out of school, where intimate play was safe and where it most definitely was not, and so on.

Thankfully, Annette and Zoe had explained the concept of diversity in relationships and various terminology much earlier, so no one was confused when words like heteronormative and plurality were thrown about.

Danny picked up from one of Annette’s diversions, which in this case was about dealing with social pressures using the example of going braless for a week to see what happened. Not that she encouraged it, but her point was that individuals could be very non-judgmental, but society could be a tidal wave of emotion and judgment sometimes. Even if you had a solid sense of self-worth, you might find yourself bouncing against it now and then. Danny said, “We don’t want you to be unhappy. We want you to be happy and healthy. I think Kasumi has said it best, be special friends, but keep your best kisses to yourselves. Think normal-friendly in public, passionate in private.”

“Or, as Principal Kuno likes to say, ‘No Public Displays of Affection in School’, ” Annette said. “Another way of saying it is, be discreet, choose your battles, think about who you want to know and how much you want to them to know of it.”

Danny took up the thread, “I know, based on our previous discussions, that Ranma, in particular, has had to face the need for privacy of their person, but now we are all facing it together. Also, something to keep in mind. No one is alone here. You have our support and we want you to tell us if things get difficult. That way we can help.” Earnest nods gained them a warm smile.

“Excellent,” Annette said. “Now, our next formal playdate will be in two weeks. This is because this weekend the cheerleaders will be attending their first sports event. It also means our training will be at the school rather than the dojo so we can focus on routines. You may all, of course, come to our house or the Tendo’s if you wish to spend time together after or between training. However, please keep us,” she pointed at herself, Danny, Zoe, and Kasumi, “and Soun informed as to your general locations. Also, even if you are not my homeroom, please stop by my class. We’ll have communication devices. We’ve now come up with a reasonable list of expectations, safe spaces and discretionary times. Keep in mind we will be watching you and watching out for you, but make good choices. Remember our story of the goose feathers.” She pointed at her eyes and then pointed back at them.

The younger people nodded again. It was hard to tell whether Nabiki’s eyes were gleaming in anticipation of the new devices or the escapades that Lisa and Crystal had already planned out. Akane simply leaned into Amy’s warm clasp and they both reclined against Ranma, who looked the most relaxed anyone could recall. Vicky had her legs over Cherry and Taylor’s, while she played with Taylor’s curly black hair.

Soun Tendo and Genma Saotome had signed off on all of their children getting the birth control the day after they first met the Heberts, with Danny and Annette’s encouragement. So on that level the Tendos and Ranma were already secure, should they find that they had a sudden onset interest in
playing with others. The same rules of safety first would still apply, however.

The older people smiled approvingly at them and the conversation moved on to the farewells of the evening.

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Sunday afternoon, Taylor stood in front of the massive tank in her bathroom. Her mother and Cherry stood beside her, dressed in brightly colored bathing suits barely covered by laboratory coats and heels. Cherry held the clipboard and wore spectacles without the glass in them. Taylor was fully clothed, except for socks and shoes. Crystal was dressed in a prim, sleek official looking Royal Police Uniform, with bright silver handcuffs and the usual regalia - as if this were some sort of official thing. Zoe stood by her side, slicked into a very unnecessary diving suit, with goggles even. It wasn’t even close to necessary, as Zoe could dive easily into the deepest waters.

The only reason there were so many in the room though was that this first one tank immersion was the riskiest. This was where the gills and nictitating membranes and even Zoe’s gene manipulation bore fruit or didn’t. Also, after much discussion, they’d decided to keep the first dive private. The second one, if things went well, would use the pool room’s tank for a more family sharing experience. And, if things went really well after that, Taylor had agreed with Joy, via Neo, to attempt a public swim at the Spa for one of those rewards she kept trying to tempt her with. She hadn’t decided yet whether she would go bare or with a bathing suit, but Joy had okayed both options as valid for a public spectacle.

Water slowly filled the tank, as Neo and River set the “right” temperature. The water had to be the kind of hot Taylor would feel, but it didn’t have to be boiling to meet the magical needs of the curse water. What it needs to be is perceived as warm versus cold. Taylor had already prepped herself by chilling her own body with her ice breath. Anything after that would feel “hot,” and would satisfy the magic; at least in theory.

Still, Taylor wasn’t worried. She knew that if she shifted to her Arachne form she would still have gills, though there would be two sets of them, the larger billows on her trunk and the smaller ones near her neck. Under “normal” circumstances a human body would need larger, vaster gills to work, but with technological advances, the small gills would be sufficient. However, her “spider” body because it was larger needed the stronger set of gills to compensate anyhow, but she could see that there had been some gene manipulation in the Arachnes' past - which led her to remember that her alternate species had been an advanced one. Still, the bottom line was that breathing would be fine. Worst case, there was going to be enough room at the top to allow for a quick dash up for air, which would be circulated to enhance the general oxygenation of the tank. She could if necessary create a bubble and then use that to help stay underwater. There were handholds and seating and other small entertainments

The requirement was that she stay in the tank, not that she drown or be bored.

However, it did require that she be physically stripped. This was the part that was actually hardest, standing still as she was divested of her clothing until the only thing remaining on her was her piercing. The little spider was currently “hiding” in her navel, which she found amusing. But the impersonal method of being de-clothed was oddly embarrassing. Her mom had a surprisingly neutral science face, which made her feel less like a daughter and more like thing under the microscope.

That effect was broken when, once she was naked, her mother asked tenderly, “Ready?”

“Ready,” Taylor confirmed. She glanced about her natural stone bathroom, noticed in the mirror that she did kind of actually look nervous and then straightened up to her usual height. “I got this.”
The door to the tank unsealed and Taylor stepped into the knee-high water, prepared to wince. When she barely noticed the heat, she recalled that her body had a natural temperature control. While she felt the water as hot to start, as planned, she almost immediately reverted to feeling quite comfortable. By the time she realized she felt that way, she was standing in nearly thigh-deep water and the door had been sealed. The water filling the tank increased the speed of its pour and it wasn’t long before it was neck height.

“Remember to hold your breath, let it go, and let the rest happen,” Zoe said, encouragingly.

Taylor nodded, drew in a deep breath, and held it as the water covered her mouth, her eyelids, her head and then some.

She let the breath go, exhaling as deep as she could. Then she drew a “breath” of water in.

Her gills opened immediately, transitioning without any effort on her part. The nictitating membrane covering her eyes were in place when she opened them again. She could see quite clearly.

She grinned and gave a thumbs up. The water felt fine.

“We’re going to play with the temperature a bit to see what works,” Cherry said. “This will actually help all of us, so thanks for taking one for the team.”

Taylor’s laugh bubbled up from her mouth to the top of the tank.

By the end of four hours, she turned into her Arachne self fifteen times as they played around with the temperature. Each time she was just fine, but it felt a little weird to be “breathing” in two places; apparently, her mouth and nostrils took care of the top part, but she was “breathing” through a space near her spinnerets for the other.

She realized she knew how to make waterproof silk, the aspect of which she played around with for a bit, making a small hammock that let her float-swing in the tank while she watched a movie. It was much softer than the stone seat provided and she didn’t have to use the handholds to stay still. Though she did end up “stand” floating for the majority of her dive, just sort of hanging in the water and moving in comfortable, slow motions.

In between times she was visited by various members of her family, watched a couple of episodes of a soap she was catching up on with the screen in the tank and had seriously considered the idea of adding waterproof toys to a growing list of things to remember. Oh, and she read a book because the holographic technology was the bomb.

By the time they were done working out temperatures and experimenting with a couple of other variables, they’d found a nice middling one that let her stay “human” and was so comfortable she ended up taking a very relaxed floating nap. When she woke up, she felt entirely refreshed, deeply so.

She thought maybe, the full immersion tank might be one of the more fun things she could be doing. Maybe having one outside in the back, under a shady tree might be fun too.

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On Monday Taylor and Lisa arrived at the Tendos to pick up Nabiki and Akane for school. They were met by both girls and Ranma, in his boy form. Taylor noticed how completely at ease he appeared. She realized he’d been constantly carrying a tension in his shoulders, even when he was - in theory - relaxed. But now his whole body expressed a different kind of confidence as his arm
wrapped comfortably around Akane’s waist.

Nabiki kissed both Taylor and Lisa on the cheek in greeting, but her kiss on Lisa’s lingered a little longer. The platinum-haired pericog’s blush was both sweet to behold and unexpected. “Come on, sweetheart,” Nabiki said, as if she’d made a profound, but right for her, decision. “Let’s get to school quick. I want to show you off to my friends.”

Taylor looked at Ranma and Akane who both shrugged, but when Nabiki looped her arm through Lisa’s and started walking, and he and she also started walking together, she realized she wasn’t that surprised at all.

She looked through the gate, just once and spotted Kasumi, who apparently had been waiting for the moment the blow a kiss. Taylor kept it with her all day.

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The week passed quickly. They learned, they practiced, and they drilled. Cherry arranged for two jars of milk via negotiation with their father. Lisa sacrificed hers so the rest went to Beth.

Taylor small project continued, but she hadn’t spotted any new critters of appreciable size in the yard. Her swarm, however, was beginning to be of a useful and productive. She and Neo talked strategy and Taylor approached Amy for a little biokinetic perspective and Crystal for a little bit of magic-tech perspective and they planned a few modest experiments with which to begin.

At the plaza, Brots was very popular, as fresh breads often were. The store manager hired an assistant to keep up with the demand. Neo invested a percentage of the bread store’s profits and folded the rest into buying items necessary for Taylor’s powers, her play or the store.

The ramen place nearby opened up in the middle of the week. An older woman ran the place. She said she had another place in Nerima, but the rent was cheap at the plaza. Her granddaughter Shampoo and her husband had taken over managing the other eatery. They had considered going home to their village, but felt there was more to learn where they were at. Instead, other people of their clan had arrived to join them in their endeavors. The food was quite good and it was also a popular stop after school for many. It was definitely healthier than Fugly Bob’s of Brockton’s that was for sure.

While they were at school, Ranma received a note challenging him to a martial arts duel Wednesday afternoon. He had taken to sitting up front in the Akane “row.” He’d managed to intimidate the original “owner” of the seat by the girl via mere presence. Not one to back down, he went to the appointed location, with the Tendo sisters there to lend support. The challenger never showed.

On Friday night, the football team walloped the other team into the ground, figuratively speaking. The cheerleaders put on a half-time routine that had the whole stand, local and visitors, shouting and chanting with them. The laser show that accompanied the routine had been spectacular. It might not have been the reason the team won, but it certainly contributed to the enthusiasm as a whole. The visiting team’s cheerleaders vowed to up their game, but no one left a sore loser and Taylor kept most of her outfit on. She counted it as a success.

She celebrated by seducing Vicky and Amy when they got home. Or maybe they seduced her. She was not really quite sure. Either way, she woke up in their room on Saturday morning quite satisfied with life, a little more in love with her sisters, and generally hopeful.

==**==
On Saturday, Taylor lay on a flat, soft surface, with her back towards some excited piercing technicians. The technicians were plotting out the piercings and the ribboning. Kasumi sat in front of her, her expression interested and grave. Annette, in a similar position, had an amused Zoe in front of her. Danny stood between them, camera in hand.

Taylor said, as she leaned her chin on her arms, which rested on a soft pillow, “So much for waiting for birthdays.”

Annette reached over and poked Taylor in the side, “And who wanted to see what the prize would be?”

Taylor smiled at Kasumi, who smiled faintly back. “I think the midnight blue streaked with sparkles is going to be very pretty,” she complimented her lover’s choice. “I can hardly wait to wear it.” Taylor then gave her mom a quick grin. “Well, Zoe’s new experiences speech did kind of kick in some motivation too. Also, I used to be a feared warlord in a previous life. I couldn’t back down from Lisa’s dare.”

Annette cackled just a little. “My fierce Little Owl.”

“You know it.” Then Taylor said, “Thing is, it’s the one thing Joy asked to see, you remember? And I got to thinking, what’s one thing compared to everything she did for us. Four hours of a pretty ribbon through some rings? I can do that, at least once, if it makes her happy.”

“Danny will take some really good pictures. He always did have a good eye,” Zoe said gamely, even though she didn’t know who Joy was.

“Thanks,” Taylor’s Dad said. He’d already wandered around to catch a few images of the technicians prepping.

“I think your … She’d like that,” Annette said around the same time, nodding her head.

“Okay, I think we’re ready,” the piercing technologist said. Taylor felt the warmth of another person drawing close at her back and then the very cool glide of the antiseptic slash very basic analgesic being rolled under her shoulders and down.

It was a pinch, sting, and stretch after that as they temporarily changed the texture of her back as they looped rings through her skin in preparation for the ribbon. She made small noises, at first grunts, then hums. It wasn’t exactly pleasure, but she had a comfortable numbness and gigglly spike rolling through her.

Kasumi held one of her hands, fingers warm in hers. Taylor remembered not to squeeze, just to hold. “You’ve got beautiful hands,” Taylor said, admiringly.

“You mean you think she has beautiful everything,” Danny teased gently, even as he took a close up photo of the moment.

Taylor nodded into the wince of the next sharp pinch, “True. I really do, inside and out. Thanks for coming with me.”

“It is reciprocal and you are welcome,” Kasumi said with some amusement. “It is a learning experience, that is true. I am not sure this is something I would or could do.”

The piercer said, “Yeah, it’s not for everyone, but it’s so pretty when it’s done. Probably one of the more ‘pointless,’ body modifications, while at the same time it is one of the more artful if done right. Taylor’s will be really nice and tight, without pinching the skin, so she won’t look folded over, but
the ribbon will lay up correct against the skin. Glad you’re taking some pics, Danny. I’ll want a few to hang up on the wall, I think.”

Taylor’s Dad smiled at the compliment. “Glad to do it. I’m looking forward to getting a shot with both of them in it.”

A little while later, the ribbon was threaded through the loops on her back and then she felt the “corset” part happening as it was tightened. The piercers had been careful in their choices of distance, so there was no folded skin except by the rings and then only the rings and ribbon pressed in tightly. She felt them shift with her movements. Because of the speed of her healing, her piercing was already healed, so that pain was gone, but there was still a kind of sting to the pull of it. She wouldn’t call it a sensual experience, exactly, but there was a tenseness she liked to it - the pressure, the sense of things being held together. She wasn’t sure she could explain it adequately and was kind of glad she didn’t have to.

Since Taylor had gone with the midnight blue, her mother had chosen a dark crimson lined in the middle with bright vermillion sparkles. The contrast wasn’t exact, but it was still striking.

The technicians led them to a room they’d set up for the photography. They set up the lights while Kasumi and Zoe decided on positions and framing as Danny switched out the film in the camera. Then they began a small photo shoot. Various scenes were shot from familial to traditional to a little naughty. One scene had Annette holding Taylor with a maternal affection. The lighting was soft and sweet. Another scene had Taylor crouched above Annette’s prone form, her teeth on the bow of the ribbon. Another scene had Zoe’s tentacles wrapped around them, “tying” them together. Another scene had them sitting primly, sipping from teacups.

Kasumi said, near the end, “Nabiki is going to be so jealous that she wasn’t here.”

Taylor laughed. “We’ll just have to make sure she has one for her calendar and she’ll forgive us, I’m sure.”

Thus, there was one scene, with Taylor in her cheerleader skirt, with her back revealed and her pom-poms covering up the hint of a breast that might be seen in the twist, but her back threaded through with the school colors as she looked behind herself with a cheerful and inviting smile.

It would be a popular image in many young people’s lockers or collections (and quite a few older people’s too) and she ended up signing a lot of autographs because of that one picture.

She celebrated the success of the piercings later at home by rocking on Danny’s cock while the other women played with her, her father, and each other. It was a very, very nice party. No photos were taken, but the memories were indelible and incredibly sweet.

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Later, two very, very small cages were delivered to house. They came with a letter from Joy.

Dear Taylor (and everyone)

I loved the photo shoot! You looked so pretty. Thank you so much! I admit, at first, I was just going to give you a few perks from another Magical Girl jump. But honestly, I can do that any time. I also nearly got you your own tentacle pet, but you have Zoe for tentacle fun right now (lucky you!). Then I got to thinking about some of the rare things out there and how jumps can last a long time. (And to answer the question of if I caused the portal, no, it wasn’t me.)

There are creatures out in the universes that have longevity naturally, but not all of them can do what
Rocket and Jet do. These babies and I mean that literally, are special creatures called Gemgorgers, and yes, they are very much like tortoises, though - of course - slightly different. I’ve included two because one is for you, Taylor and one is for Annette, for joining you in the mini-game. You can decide which one you want, but right now both are so little that they haven’t quite got their personalities set yet. They’re diminutive now, but they will grow up to be very big and strong, as where they come from they are pack animals and mounts. They are very strong, very tough, fast in spirit, but not necessarily in pace, magical and intelligent enough to understand and do what you ask. Treat them well and they will be loyal forever.

Their name indicates their diet. While they’re small you can feed them metal and coins and small gems and they will prosper just fine. As they get older, you can give them more, but you will find that you are able to discover what they need to eat by feel. So take them with you, while they’re little so you can get used to how it feels. It will take several years for them to get large, so you have plenty of time. When you feed them, they will purify and enchant the gems and metals they have consumed and these gems will grow on their shells. These can be removed without harming their thick hides, but you might want to let them grow a bit first, as the longer they are on the shell, the purer and more empowered they become.

I hope you both enjoy your presents and I loved the pictures of you and Annette and will treasure them forever. Pass on my love to everyone. Hugs and kisses!

Joy.

Taylor took the small creature out of the cage. It was basically the size of a quarter, and looked like a tiny stone, with legs and a very tiny head. Lifted by a squat neck, a squarish face looked up at her with eyes that seemed too big for its head and it peeped.

She loved it instantly. “Hi, Rocket!”

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Crystal made small clasp/saddles for Rocket that allowed Taylor to put him safely on her shoulders. Thus she could carry him without worrying about accidentally crushing him. Crystal provided small two toned stones to put in the saddles for visual balance. To most, he just looked like a jewel. For Taylor, she knew the little guy was secure.

She didn’t take him to school, but she did take him when she rambled about town, especially when the Masters had her on projects. Thus, she discovered all sorts of nifty things, small gems, lost necklaces and rings. Rocket was a bit like having a personal metal detector. Then one day she realized she didn’t need to have the gemgorger there for the power to work.

That’s when she realized the ability to sense metal and gems, even through stone, was a developing perk. Nifty.

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Ryoga, the challenger, eventually showed up after school ranting at Ranma and aching for a fight.

Ranma, hands in pocket, apologized to Ryoga for past events, introduced him to his fiance and invited him to dinner at the Ramen place. Akane called Soun on her phone to let him know they probably would not be at the training session that night, but they might have a guest. Then they waved farewell to Taylor and her sisters. Then, to keep the young man from getting lost, he and Akane looped their arms through his and led him away from the school, explaining that fighting on or near school grounds was no longer allowed.
Vicky said, “That boy has no idea what he is in for.”

“Oh?”

Vicky cast a glance at Amy and smiled smugly. “I’ll put it this way. Both Akane and Ranma have seen both sides of Ames and I and enjoyed them very much, thank you. Ranma’s been feeling very experimental lately and Akane just puts more heat under the beaker. If that boy shows even a hint of interest in either, he’s getting a team deal.”

“Oh!”

Amy just shook her head. “Poor kid. Hope he’s a strong sort, or he’s going to be worn out.”

“He could say no,” Taylor pointed out.

“But he won’t,” Lisa replied with a cat-like smile.

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“He’s outside my range,” Taylor said apologetically when Akane asked her to look for Ryoga.

The girl sighed. “Ryoga’s sense of direction is completely terrible. I have to wonder if it’s just a straight up curse. I wish there was something we could do.”

Neo spoke up, “Perhaps a GPS tag slash tool would be helpful. If he had a communication device that would serve. We could reach him anywhere then.”

“Well, if he shows up again, we’ll ask,” Taylor said, confirming the idea. “That is if you’re sure he’s trustworthy, Akane.”

Akane turned and looked at Ranma, who was currently back in the swimming pool with several of the Hebert sisters. ‘Oh, I don’t think we have to worry. He’s a Jusenkyo type. Besides, he’d do anything for my Ranma, now that they’ve worked out their differences.” Her lips curled up as her expression seemed to go distant in sensual memory. “And I do mean anything.”

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It was not a happy day for Tokyo and its municipalities as the alien shock troops dropped. Well armored and trigger-happy, they loomed over the regular human types at seven or so feet. All the Royal Police were called up and Taylor and her family rolled out sirens blaring, ready to set up a defense for their Ward.

The safest place was Taylor’s neighborhood. Alien troopers bounced off the familiar shield that protected the family home and Jumper’s Plaza. As soon as they realized this, Danny started broadcasting the notice for the locals to make their way to the safety zones of the Plaza. They might not be able to fit all of Tokyo there, but a good number of people of the ward could be saved that way. Nathan and his crew were put in charge of making sure things went smooth.

Along the way, they picked up the other martial artists of the Dojo and the Anything Goes team joined the Royal Police at the “front lines,” defending Nerima tooth and claw.

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The ancient Amazon pogoed over to Taylor, eyes gleaming at the small tortoise-like creature on the brunette’s shoulder. Then it blinked at her and meeped. “His name is Rocket,” Taylor said, as she
gave it another small bite of a small gold ring she’d found. It ate like a tortoise ate, slow and methodical, but inevitable too. The ring slowly disappeared until it delicately finished the last of it.

Taylor scrubbed its tiny head with her index finger. The little-bejeweled creature closed its eyes in pleasure before it settled back down into its little cradle. “I wanted to introduce you to him because I was going to ask if I could let him wander around on the table a bit. I promise he won’t leave any droppings.” She considered. “Or if he does, they’re not exactly the kind you have to worry about.”

“He poops really tiny gems,” Crystal said with a giggle. She held up a little bag of what looked like sparkly dust.

The elderly woman held out her hand. “May I?”

Taylor gently released the clasp and lifted her pet out of the socket. Then she just as carefully placed him in the woman’s open palm. He sniffed around a bit and crawled around the middle of the palm before setting down and looking like a gaudy looking stone. “He is precious, isn’t he,” the elderly woman beamed. “So cute.” She rubbed her fingertip along its back and brought it to her lips, before delicately tasting it. Then she nodded. “Magical.”

She then gently set the creature on the table. “He is welcome. But you will clean his messes if he makes any.”

“Yes ma’am,” Taylor said.

The Amazon said, “You are the modern kind, so I expect that offering a betrothal is out,”

“Yeah, I’m not likely to get married any time soon. Plus, according to some of the neighbors outside the Jumper Zone, I’m a little on the scandalous side.”

The old woman waved that away. “Envious of your youth, the lot of them. I’d like my Shampoo and her husband to meet you anyhow. If nothing else, it is good to establish friendships, yes? And not everyone is blessed by the tortoise in such a way. So many have the tiger, but a tortoise, very solid.” She pumped the air with her fist. “Reliable. I like that.” She smiled at both of the young women. “You’ve been good customers. I am going to bring you some wonderful soup.”

And so she did.

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Chapter 28

Taylor wore a navy blue one-piece suit, which covered a lot less than her plenty revealing magical girl outfit. This meant the basics were covered but her belly and its little jewel were free to be seen, and there was a lot of skin to be seen right up to the curve and crevice of her breasts. The “bra” was connected to the bottoms by a golden ring which matched the bar in belly and a stretchy strip of navy blue cloth that clung to a golden ring that hooked to the cloth of her bottoms, which were snug, but not tight; so there was no camel toe, but it was good that she was trimmed, because there was not a lot of room for error.

The suit probably only barely counted as a one piece, but she was okay with the compromise. She might not be as modest as she used to be, but she wasn’t wearing anything another student or teen her age range wouldn’t ever wear. It was a swimsuit. Beachwear varied from year to year. One year it’s a bit more coverage, the next a lot less.

Then again, when she’d gone to her closet to get a swimsuit, a variation of this particular suit was all that was available; many different colors, but all of them revealing. This disturbed her on one level because she was fully aware that she had lots of different suits to choose from. But, once she thought about it though, she’d realized, she didn’t actually mind too much and once she chose the color, the other suits vanished.

One reason she didn’t really mind being seen in the suit, was because she had been accidentally or deliberately stripped several times in impromptu martial arts battles over the last couple of weeks. The Anything Goes Martial Arts Dojo had issued a challenge to other oddly specific Martial Arts teams and individuals to try their best against herself and her team. The idea behind this was instruction through observation (and battle). Soun explained that a lot of learning in Anything Goes had to do with figuring out how to adopt styles others used against you and make them your own. So, Taylor realized it was a bit more street fighting than the more formal Royal Police training. It wasn’t like the masters left them purely on their own though. Unlike Ranma and Akane, who had a lifetime’s worth of education to lean on, she and her family slash team had only a few weeks in comparison.

Yet, they also had enough expertise that the masters of the dojo felt fairly sanguine things would go well. They didn’t even disallow weapons, but they did want them to focus on unarmed and improvised weaponry first. They could practice different sword styles and archery at the dojo, but in the challenges, the intent was different than if one were pursuing a criminal or fighting off an interstellar monster.

Still, the challenge led to a lot of scuffles and impromptu undressings due to some hazard or grip or attempt to distract her. After a certain point, a person realized that breasts are just breasts, that shock value is only shocking if you let it be, and you get up and sock a guy for deliberate acts of sabotage so they learn better.

She’d become appreciative of the Akane school of percussive education. Not that she set out to do it often, but still, if a challenger deliberately tore her shirt or her bra or her other clothes without remorse of some sort, their nose was going to bleed and not for the fun reasons. Either that or they’d learn what an insect swarm tasted like or what ice spikes through important muscle groups felt like. Except she’d promised Master Happosai to reserve those kinds of escalating responses for the big battles, not for the regular joe martial art challenges; though she did get a caveat that if it changed from regular joe to empowered, she could do what she needed to do.
Anyhow, a bathing suit felt like plenty of coverage after those kinds of days.

To help with the symbolic necessity of “stripping,” Taylor wore a robe and sandals. Once again, she was surrounded by people lab coats and bathing suits, though this time it was the spa technicians. Cherry and Neo had passed on the vitals that needed watching and so the water had been prepped to cycle enough that Taylor would remain in her human form through the duration. Neo remained with her, strapped to wrist pouch. Cherry went to join the rest of her family as part of the audience.

The tank was set up as a display, where those looking in could see a fantasy background, but not see the openings that would let Taylor in. It was an indoor version of a “natural” setting, with tall aquatic plants, a sandy floor with large decorative rocks, a throne-like chair to recline in and some toys and games to play. A toy trident was latched to the chair. A chess set was set up so that a player could move a piece on the dry side and she could move a piece without touching anything on the other side. Yay holography. There were a couple of other board games available too.

She was really looking forward to playing them, as her sisters promised to play at least one game with her. It gave Taylor the motivation to have a good experience this time. She loved board games, even if they weren’t made of cardboard. As long as the dice felt right, it was all good.

One thing about being in a world with supers like the Royal Police and the villains they sometimes chased down, it allowed for all kinds of tech advances, even if advances seemed a bit haphazard. For instance, instead of gas, the cars used fusion cores, which were considered completely safe. At the same time, most computers, even personal ones, were terminal systems using massive servers running in the background. The internet never got called the world wide web, as it wasn’t quite, even though they did have satellite communications.

Japan, however, was making great strides in interconnectivity. But while they were working on networking, they also had advanced storage spaces, comparatively speaking. The cartridges for games and personal content, including videos, which were known to be space hogs were massive compared to what Taylor remembered and sometimes the cartridges could be a little bulky depending on the system they were compatible with. But, the memory space was large enough to support such content and run just fine on pretty much any terminal; portable or otherwise.

Fortunately, Alec, their tech chief, was brilliant and their AI were versatile, so the Heberts adapted - once everyone had reawakened to the new reality. And things got integrated well enough, that other than the oohing and aahing at wall-sized displays and holographic phones from the Tendos, no one really commented. Alec was “the man,” for tech. Taylor considered him more than a servant of the household. He was family, if not a companion of the jump sort. Where she went, he and the others would go and so she could trust them as her own.

She could also trust their advice, as they were utterly loyal, but also perfectly fine with telling her or the rest of her siblings no if it needed to be said. These were not yes people. They were brilliant people, whom she was beginning to understand better, now that she was a bit more “awakened.”

Sophia was a font of wisdom that was as precious as any coin or jewel for value. Parker was just fun and sneaky. Elliot was a stud and brilliant with anything mechanical and so was Alec but in a different way. Nathan was like Sophie, knowledgeable, sexy and while he was kind, he also held himself back a bit. Taylor had to respect that.

But they were all game for letting her practice her “moves” on them, which she was still working on improving, without being offended or hurting her feelings. They were part of her training and they knew it, so they made her work for their time, and she suspected they coordinated with her parents and the Dojo.
But they also acted as secondary parents of a sort, not assuming, but guiding when she needed it. Before she awakened, she knew for a fact any conversation she thought was confidential, was. Now, not so much, but that was through no fault of their own. It was the price Taylor paid and it was likely something that needed to be brought up with Joy at some point, just for security reasons. It did no good to be a Royal Police officer and have all their secrets blown because somehow the world got a copy of Slut Life. Right now they controlled that, but Taylor did worry about things getting revealed that shouldn't be.

Meanwhile, her whole family felt fortunate to be in Japan, which was considered very advanced by most of the world. The country had moved well beyond the tube-based computing and robotic systems that were pretty much the standard in almost every other first world country. Part of this had to do with the fact they seemed to fight off Alien invasions every other year and so had access to microtechnologies and another part of the advances were probably just because being able to do cool things with technology was simply fun so they kept on doing new things.

But there was a reason that the plaza was becoming a hot tourist spot, and it wasn’t just because Taylor was about to take a dive in the Spa for people’s entertainment. While the Plaza had automatically blended in with the local environs, the basic technology was at Jewel’s tech-level. So they had holographic displays as well as Neon signs, and the theater's three-d were literally that as opposed to something requiring glasses. The technology couldn’t be taken out of the plaza, but the ideas were there and the library had lots of interesting material for people to explore.

It was quickly, in the last little while, becoming a very busy space. While tech could not be checked out, books could - because with auto return function in place nothing could get lost or stolen. No one at the library thought to withhold information and some of it simply jibed with the current knowledge received from alien sources anyhow.

What did happen was that Jumper Plaza was being discussed at a high level in quiet rooms, with some trying to make it a less public resource; though no one seemed to be able to manage to get the paperwork pushed through and they were stymied by the fact they couldn’t just invade the neighborhood to try to take over. So individual military types, scientist types, doctor types, visited the library and the medical center and the spa. While Danny’s non-familial Royal Police officers made sure those visits didn’t become incidents; or that any incidents disappeared with an aura of mystery - as necessary. His people were very protective of the Heberts.

Meanwhile, Neo took the permission to invest and encourage technological advancement and ran with it.

Taylor had given that permission if only because she wanted to keep the trend of positive change going; especially since she thought the better the technology, the safer everyone would be. And, of course, the more fun she could have. For instance, she loved that Neo’s phone was waterproof and she could read her books in the tank if she wanted. Access for others seemed like a no-brainer to her. (It was also an inevitable money-maker).

Not that on a day to day basis Taylor really considered the technology issues of the world she was currently inhabiting. To her, it all seemed normal, as up until a few months ago, she’d lived this life. If it worked, that was all that was important. If she had “cheat” tech, well, more to the good.

At the appointed time the technologists slipped off her robe and the sandals came off. Taylor took the step ladder at a run and dived into the tank, with hardly a splash. She waved at those of her family who had come to see her make this public spectacle of herself and grinned.
The rest of Saturday and Sunday after the dunking, as she liked to call it, was family time. Nothing major happened of which she was aware, except some scuffle near Alaska between Russia, China, and the States. They were constantly duking it out over a large, icy parcel of land, but that was nothing new and it had very little to do with how things were at home. On the news, it was a footnote. It was an otherwise restful weekend.

On Monday, however, she woke up and things felt different somehow. She couldn’t quite place her finger on what it was, but she knew something had changed. Maybe it was anticipation? The reward hadn’t arrived instantly after the dunking, but then, neither had Rocket. So she wasn’t that anxious about things. She was just curious as to why she thought things felt odd.

Then she noticed several packages on her desk, by Neo; or rather her laptop. What was really strange was that Neo’s holographic head looked cartoonishly huge and she was lying down on her back and rolling as if she were in pain; outside the machine. When Taylor started to speak, Neo raised her tiny hand and said, “Shush!”

Taylor tried again.

Neo said, “No! I am processing. I am processing a lot. Please….just please.”

Taylor pantomimed zipping her mouth, but she decided she did want to see what the packages were.

She carefully took the items off the desk, trying to make as little noise as possible, because with each crack of the paper, the little avatar winced. Taylor opened her mouth to make a suggestion, but the glare that pointed her way had her just turning around and slinking out of her own room so she could look at the goodies.

Then she stepped into the hallway and paused, glancing around herself. The house still felt the same, but there was this energy which she couldn’t quite place. Her bugs were fine and the spiders were fine and those in her immediate care, the ones she’d claimed were all doing the work they’d been assigned. She let her senses rove through her swarm, spot checking family and friends. Everyone seemed okay.

She sighed, puzzled, but had more pressing matters to attend. First, open the packages and second, get back in her room. Then milk, shower and get ready for school. Neo could retreat back to the laptop if it was a problem.

She sat down cross-legged by her door and began unwrapping the packages. She pulled out a book that seemed pretty normal except for the Technomancy 101 printed at the top. Then she pulled out a ball of stuff. That was basically what it seemed like until she held it in her hand, and then suddenly it was shaped like one of Dr. Who’s screwdrivers. She read the note attached to it, describing the item as the magical multitool that formed shapes and worked its purposes to the owner’s desire and grinned - widely. Then there was a visor, that seemed reminiscent of Vista’s visor - though it was shaped more like a pair of clear goggles.

Taylor put it on, appreciating the immediate HUD, but then she heard Neo groan, loudly, in her ear. “Still processing. Please access this service at another time. Service will resume in approximately six hours. Take the phone, but don’t expect any help with homework today.” Then there was a horking sound. “I think I just upchucked my holographic spleen!”

Taylor took the visor off and considered that maybe she could borrow one of her siblings’ shower and find the lactation gear that was supposed to be in the kitchen.

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A couple of weeks later Taylor felt an urgent need to make her way towards Minato that had her leaving classes early and bolting out the of the school, despite the principals rule about not running. She was halfway toward the city when a light flared in the sky, not quite blinding her, but for a moment it seemed brighter than the evening sun. But once the light flared and dissipated, the impulse to run toward the city vanished entirely. By then, of course, Neo was back in fine form, in fact, she was faster and more versatile than ever. “What was that?” Taylor asked, even as she read through the information her visor provided.

“Systems identify it as a magical manifestation. Damage reports are trickling in and indicate that a group of super senshi has taken dominion over the territory and there was a battle.”

“Huh,” said Taylor. “Any explanation why I felt the compulsion to get there in a hurry?”

“A general call for assistance was made on magical channels. You apparently heard it, even if you did not process it.”

“Huh,” repeated Taylor. “We might have to do something about that. I can explain something like that once to Mom, but twice is gonna be a hassle.” She spotted a taxi and raised her arm. “Might as well go see what we can find out. But I’m not running all the way.”

“I don’t know how useful it will be, but I can at least analyze the area for clues if we arrive soon enough.”

By the time she got home, news about damage to the Minato was attributed to an earthquake. She had found no sign of the other super team except for a crispy looking rose stem and burnt out bud that actually pierced cement. She’d managed to cut the cement block with her multitool, but the burnt rose stayed firmly embedded in that block. She brought it home so Crystal could play around with it. The next day she told Happosai what happened. For the next couple of weeks, he trained her on sensing, moving and blocking magic and ki. They were two different energies, but both potent experiences to wake up to. Her memories of her reincarnated-self helped a little, but some of this was very new to her and uncomfortable. The strange and also somewhat difficult part was that she had a sense that she should be able to spread the energy through her swarm like she used to do with her more difficult emotions. But all that seemed to do was result in is little burnt out husks and a smaller swarm, which made her feel a bit sad. She stopped trying because she realized that at the moment she had limited resources and as her martial art sensei’s pointed out, she would benefit from figuring out how to manage those sensations inward first. Maybe then she could control the outward flow in a satisfactory way.

She still felt like it should be easier, given that she had magic powers and did use them more and more. But Soun said that was a bit like using muscle memory after having been an amnesiac. She needed the foundation to get it right.

So, she gained even more things to try to learn.

==**==

One day it was Indian Summer and the next it was Fall. The leaves turned all sorts of brilliant colors, except for the evergreens. The air smelled different as the cool air settled in for real. The outdoor pool was drained and covered, though the pond remained with its koi population. The indoor pool was the refuge of choice for the swimmers in the family, which included Taylor now that she’d learned how to actually swim as an Arachne. Her friends and family got used to seeing her in her multi-legged form on a semi-regular basis. She felt like her self either way.
The sisters helped each other with their projects. Amy had Taylor help insulate her greenhouse and the small shed with her heavier silk. Taylor also made special silks for Crystal’s winter outfits and she was currently working on several for herself and for some gifts she’d like to give at the holidays.

Vicky practiced artwork using her flames, which had begun to give her a delicate touch with her magical skill and gave her a great sense of satisfaction outside of being “the brute.” Her artwork got better with every piece.

Cherry continued her nutritional and health-related research but had started playing around with “air sculpture,” that no one could see, but they found easy enough to bump into it. She started adding water and light as special effects, making it easier for everyone else to appreciate.

Lisa had taken Taylor’s maps and transferred them into the den, creating a logistical space that the whole family could use. Taylor’s insects were replaced with holographic pins, which were controlled by their AI. The AI had successfully created a network that tracked a lot of local and non-local information.

Danny took advantage of that in his work as RP captain.

Annette and Zoe took over part of the craft room to prepare for the upcoming holidays. Beth grew an inch and started speaking a bit more. She started mimicking the martial art routines, that is if she were around for it. Everyone agreed it was amazingly cute.

The martial arts cheerleading competitions were in full swing. For the first time in years, especially since they hadn’t had a real team in a long time, Furinkan high had made it to the second rank and was heading towards the finals. The team doubled down on their drills, planned out new routines based on some of the flashier ones from their past lives and had plans to rattle the standing champions of Seisyun High.

==**==

Taylor looked down at the ground in thought. She could sense the slowing down of the insect life in the cooling ground. Soon, only those small creatures which kept to the deeper parts of the earth or lived near human habitations would be most active.

“I think… I think I’ll have to talk to Kasumi first. You and she don’t have quite the same relationship I and my sisters do and it would be kind of wrong for me to just assume it would be okay. I mean, I don’t think she’d say no or even mind at all, but I don’t want to hurt her feelings in any way. Not when we’re all trying to figure things out for ourselves.”

Akane nodded. “I can understand that and I think it makes me happy that you would take my sister’s happiness into consideration. But please do ask. Ranma has expressed an interest and I have one too. Amy and Vicky believe that we would enjoy a good compatibility and I have found that I enjoy multiple partners very much. Think about it?”

Taylor offered a gentle leer as she replied, “Oh, I’ll do more than that,” she said. Then she reached out a hand, “I really want to spend time with you.”

Akane beamed and took Taylor’s hand and gave it a squeeze. “Me too.”

==**==

Toes clenched, back arched, eyes rolled back. Taylor felt Ranma’s hands press and play against her breasts as his dick slid and teased her. She rocked her hips until he brought his hands down to grip her in such a way to keep her still and then ground against her slickness. She could feel Akane’s
knuckles, just so, brushing against her jewel and bells, causing Taylor to try to move again.

“Do you need this,” Akane teased. “Do you want it?”

“Yes!” Taylor hissed, almost glaring at the grin of her friend.

“Well you’re so lucky I feel like sharing,” Akane said, as she took Taylor’s mouth with a searing kiss. Ranma lifted Taylor, which caused her to open her eyes wide; especially when she realized he was holding her there, so Akane could position him perfectly.

She felt the tip of the head of his cock press up and then a slow, relaxed slide as he brought her gently down. He said, “You’re so tight, so wet.”

Taylor almost told him that she was designed to be, but instead, took it for the compliment he meant it as and just enjoyed the pure sensation of being stretched and filled.

With Ranma sitting, deep inside her, Akane crossed a leg over Taylor’s thighs like she was getting ready to ride. One hand pressed on her shoulder as the other grasped and then held the Futanari’s thick, long cock still. The martial artist bit her lower lip as she concentrated and ever so slowly descended.

“You don’t have to do this,” Taylor said, softly. “I’d be perfectly delighted to just taste you. I’ve liked all your kisses.”

Akane grinned. “I’m taking this monster and liking it. You just be patient.”

Ranma slid his hands along Taylor’s thighs and then up Akane’s helping to steady her. Taylor could hear the smile in his voice. “She can do anything she sets her mind to,” he said confidently.

Then Akane lowered herself, not all the way, just so that the lips flowed gently over the tip of Taylor’s cock. She rocked slowly, brushing herself over and over Taylor, bumping and lightly grinding her sexy little ruby against the cap, with each movement pushing things a little deeper, until she paused. Taylor could feel the fluttering of Akane’s opening, like a butterfly and she anxiously wanted in. She was frankly amazed at how still Ranma was being, but then again, he also wasn’t stopping Akane or herself from moving.

Taylor gently pulled Akane forward enough so they could kiss and so she could rub her palm over the young woman’s beautiful fingertip sized nipples. She loved the crinkly feel of the areola too, and when the kiss melted to a stop, she leaned down and captured the other nipple with her mouth, rolling her tongue along the sensitive skin, before she suckled at it. No milk would come, of course, but she loved how the nipple tightened with each pull and how excited Akane became; Taylor basked in her gasps and thrilled to the twitches of her pussy.

Akane sat down, barely controlling her pace, but soon she wrapped tightly, even as she flexed, around Taylor, which caused a responsive pulse that both of them could feel.

This time it was Ranma who groaned because he was ready to move. He’d waited long enough. He pressed up, just a smidge and Taylor rocked up. Akane gasped even more and her eyes widened. Then her expression turned sensual as she caught Taylor’s moan with a long, hot kiss before she pushed down.

The insect queen, or should she call herself the in-sex queen, nearly came right then and possibly would have if her thoughts hadn’t taken that quick little swerve. But what it didn’t change was that Akane outside and Ranma inside felt amazing! The most articulate phrase she could come up with, right that moment, was a slow moan of, “Fuuuuuck!”
Ranma said in a heated whisper, “I think that’s what we’re doing.”

Then he upped his pace. It wasn’t delicate, it wasn’t soft. It was hard and strong as he thrust into her, pushing her and Akane into motion. She thought she was deep into Akane, and then she really was. Instinct caused her to push back into Ranma and rock, and every move they made together was felt by the other.

Akane leaned forward, capturing Taylor with another fiercely torrid kiss. Their bodies rubbed together, sleekly. Taylor used what she had, reaching back with one hand and forward with the other to grasp her lovers closer.

Taylor got an understanding of what "pounding her pussy," really felt like, as Ranma gave it to her good. She felt stretched and felt him bouncing against her cervix, which caused all sorts of interesting tingles. He also got surprisingly dirty as his usual bluntness took on a raw sexuality, which Akane just volleyed back at him and then towards their friend. Taylor wasn’t silent on the subject, but how she responded was closer to her mom; which was that she either made full sentences, which frankly, she was too focused to do at the moment, or she definitely did not. So her sounds were less real words and more like breathy moans and groans and sensual sounds.

A glorious time later, sexual heat rolled through her body, rising and twisting in the sweet spiral she was starting to recognize. Ranma was definitely sending pleasure ringing through her with the way he thrust and pushed. Her cock and jewel throbbed as she felt the familiar tightness and lift ready. She warned Akane and Ranma, “I’m going to cum.”

“What!” Akane arched against her. “Do it!”

The way she said that was not just a command, but a desperate need to finish. The whole moment pushed Taylor’s inner buttons. She unraveled. Exquisite gratification pulsed headily through her body over and over again and her center clenched on Ranma in a flaring, pulsating vice as she filled Akane full of her seed.

Akane cried out as pleasure streaked through and then Ranma followed. He erupted into Taylor, sparking another round of intense eroticism.

They were all leaning into each other, breathing heavily when Taylor said, “Oh yeah. I definitely am glad we spent time together.”

Akane giggled.

==**==

A/N
Taylor gained prizes from:
Sailor Moon Jumpchain:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1qb0_OLhDrDVm84LXV6anN2VUE/view

She also “bought” some prizes from the document with CP - so that I can just integrate it as a Jump. So essentially she gained some extra discounts for perk/items in a particular tree (in this case, the drop in) and then purchased stuff off-screen.

She’s going to be getting another jump (or two), for a different reason, because there was a mistake (on my end) of the paperwork and so she’ll get a “this makes up for that, but this is a handy way of doing this,” kind of jump. Also, the rule of funny applies (at least to my mind)

Meanwhile thank goodness I said chapter 30, because, I may have to fudge on that now and make it
32 or something… These people. They keep doing things. Or, I may just have to figure this story has its own direction, so… I have this small outline of things and I just under anticipate how long it will actually take to get there.

This is another reason I’ve decided to just try blending in some jumps as a natural “this happened next,” rather than an arbitrary stop and jump at ten years. I mean, that’s how jumps normally work. A person lives for ten years in a world for ten years and the world stops and they get off. And that may happen, but… maybe that should just be part of a set of ways. I kind of like doing the jump as a reward that has a “world effect.” It feels more organic. Yet at the same time, Taylor’s definitely going to have a “universe stops and you move to another one,” point, because it needs to happen too. I just no longer know when, because… look at it.

I think we’ve been having fun here in Ranma (plus the other jumps) land. :)

Anyhow, that's where things are for the moment, jump-wise.

I should mention here that it’s become sadly obvious that I’m working at a much slower pace than I was in the summer. The current necessities of this semester is just taking up more of my time. I’m sometimes lucky to get in 500 or 700 words on a day on the slow days. On the regular days, when things open up, then it's words ahoy and all good. Anyhow, please forgive me if things get a little slower. Real life has its needs.

You want to know what is really hard, realizing that if I want to read the next chapter, I’m going to have to write it… *blinks* Argh. That is the thing they don’t tell you. Because I’ll wake up with a secret hope that the next chapter is there... and then I remember *I'm* the one who is writing this thing... *blinks*

On the other hand, hope you all enjoyed the story so far.
Chapter 29

A/N - I fixed the chaptering in AoO - putting the disclaimers back at the end. So now this will be listed as both Chapter 29, but at the 36 instead of 37. This is why I don't like auto labels sometimes...

On with the story:

Worm: Joyride: Chapter 29

Taylor strove to be a somewhat ethical person. She was, after all, a Royal Police officer and they had classes on the topic. Also, in her previous life, before the locker, she’d been on the good side. Later, not so much, but even then, she had her standards.

However, she couldn’t always ignore the advantages she had in her swarm. True, as they neared the end of October, she didn’t quite have as many insects to work with, but there was plenty to find in an indoor stadium. This meant that unless Taylor was careful to tamp down on awareness, she was often had a view of what was going on with the other teams.

Some teams were softies with lots of hugs and group support for their ambitions. Some were more hard-driven, with caustic words and bitchiness. Some hit the middle of that. Seisyun High’s Cheerleading team was that middle.

Their head cheerleader, Mariko was a beast. Not literally, but she was a powerful girl, with a great sense of rhythm and a high kick that brought tears to the eyes in its perfection. She was also scary because she had amazing skill with her baton and the pom-poms and her team had their choreography maxed out.

Taylor was legitimately worried.

Until their mom, the coach of the Furinkan High Cheerleading Team (FHCT), gave the speech. She stood in front of them, hands on her hips, wearing a recognizable coach outfit - including the whistle. She held a tablet, rather than a clipboard, but even so, she matched the look, walked the walk and now she talked the talk.

Fortunately, she didn’t use her porn voice, just her normal pleasant one or Taylor would have been in trouble. Because her mom looked hot enough in that outfit.

The coach said, “First, I want you to know I am immensely proud of you. You’ve all worked hard and because of it, we are here. But there are challenges we still face, with our biggest being the champions of the previous years. And make no mistake, they are champions for a reason. But knowing this does not limit us, it emboldens us, for we know we face a worthy opponent and we know that we will be worthy opponents to them. They have their secret weapons and we have ours, but I think ours may be the stronger; because their secret relies on one person, whereas ours relies on the team as a whole.

“Together we are stronger and better and that will show because cheerleading is meant to be a team sport. Beyond other kinds of sports, it operates on the synchronicity that builds when everyone works together. And it is unique in all the sports, not for the dancing or the gymnastics, but for its precision and purpose; which is to uplift and energize those who watch it.

“Now, we have heard the rumors of Mariko Konjo, and I, as a coach have had the opportunity to observe her. She is a good girl, very talented and skilled. When they say she can energize a whole team to win and that anyone she has cheered on has always succeeded, I believe them. But the same,
my dears, can be said of you. And the difference here is that there is one of her and there are six of you.

“That said, I am not worried about winning. Truthfully, you could leave here in the last place and I would still be immensely proud of you, for what we’ve accomplished getting here. I think it would be fantastic to win, but what I really want you to do is to have fun. Go out there and enjoy yourselves. If you must cheer to impress, do it for your special friends, for Furinkan High, and for yourselves. And know I love you to the ends of the multiverse.”

It wasn’t a pep-talk, but it was exactly what Taylor needed to hear at the time, and so when they went out to do their first routine of the night, she was on point and in a great mood. Being in a great mood, as with many things, only enhanced the whole experience. Their team sparked with energy, amusement and the more they got into it, the power of their art could be felt. It was hard to recall how gloomy and alone she felt so long ago when she could feel the energy lifting herself, her team and the audience up. She grinned all the way through as she and her sisters tossed each other around and showed their style.

When they faced their first martial challenge of the evening, Taylor was ready. Like football, her team had plays that they used to great effect. They could roll out the individual tumble and kick, but the plays kept them in the rhythm and pace and style that the judges would use to measure their success. Because it was more martial than cheer, there were bruises and contusions, but all of the sisters healed fast and they kept on strong. They easily took the first team down.

And so it went until it was their turn to face the champions.

Mariko’s outfit sparkled as much as her personality, which is to say, a lot. She outshone her team, but her team supported all her special techniques, providing a superb backup to her finishing moves. The first portion of their routine included high tosses, gymnastics and a perfectly synched set of movements that would shine in any stadium. It was fun and inspiring to watch. Taylor and her team applauded just as much as everyone else when the pure cheer part of the tournament was performed.

Then after Mariko’s team left the field, Taylor and her team ran in, bounce mode activated, and they had a delightful time pulling the pieces of their routine together and watching it come off seamlessly. Lisa and Crystal had gotten together to develop the play, while Cherry refined it. Vicky and Cherry were their strong girls. Amy was actually a pretty good tumbler with absolute trust in her sister. Taylor had always been a good support for the teams she was on, only really taking over if things got dire. Both of them let themselves be tossed about like juggler balls, lifted and twirled.

Absolutely nothing was dire here. So they had fun, and in doing so, invited the audience to join them in the celebration of strength, rhythm, and a touch of naughtiness; not a lot, but enough to tease and cause laughter and a bit of a thrill. No one lost any tops, but cheerleading had always had pretty girls and boys on their teams for a reason. By the time they left the field, the audience were cheering just as loudly for their team as they had the other school.

It was a thrilling, thrilling moment.

But it was time to get a little more serious. The martial art portion of the tournament could be the determiner for the top. Each team had ten minutes to make a plan, if they hadn’t already, and to get dressed in a “fighting” outfit. These were usually the less dramatic versions of the uniform. Taylor’s team wore the school colors with the mascot on the back. Their batons and pom-poms and ribbons also were the school colors. She made sure everything was tucked in. She wasn’t chancing an unexpected reveal tonight.

Taylor, like her siblings, had learned how to store such things around her person, making use of the
techniques she’d been taught by Soun and Ranma to make carrying things easier. They had also been taught a few ki techniques, such as sharpening, which would make the batons spark and the ribbons strike with knife-like precision. She wouldn’t bring that trick out unless the other side went hard. However, she felt just fine using her insects to tag the other team. They were allowed to use small powers, just not the major ones and they had to make it apply to the routines. Thus a flutter of butterflies erupting in someone’s face after a baton throw was fine, but just bringing in bees was not.

Their martial routine had to be showy, inspiring, and kick butt, somewhat literally.

By now Taylor and her sisters had been through several cheerleader martial art sessions, so they knew that despite the looks it wasn’t an entire free for all. On the other hand, unlike the remembered martial art tournaments of her Earth Bet life, the battles went all out. So speed, strength, agility, endurance, and agility all came into play, as well as knowledge and skill. The two teams moved at each other as soon as the whistle blew, engaging speeds enhanced by ki or other powers, which were astonishing. The teams crashed together with bodies, arms, batons or pom-poms moving lightning fast.

The other team was good. Really they were. They had skill and power, but it turned out that the coach was right. They relied on one person far too much, where-as the Furinkan team had practiced working together. They weren’t seamless (at least to their own eyes), but they were focused and they were innovative. Vicky shot-putted Cherry into a crowd of cheerleaders acting as a platform for Mariko and utterly toppled their formation. Mariko landed fine, but half her support system was gone at that moment as they were pushed out of the arena, knocked unconscious or otherwise injured. Taylor, Crystal, Lisa, and Amy formed a square of doom that trapped the other cheerleaders inside a boundary for their control and they knocked them out of the running one by one, while Vicky and Cherry focused on keeping Mariko busy. Amy got clipped on the shoulder by one of Mariko’s super-fast flying batons.

If they’d been battling as magical girls, then Crystal, Lisa or even Vicky might have cast a healing spell. Instead, Amy had to try to fight injured. Fortunately, they had been training at the Tendo Dojo and wounds happened. She kept up, but she wasn’t as fast. Vicky spent a lot more time trying to protect her and that meant Mariko had a moment of come-back. So they switched out, with Vicky and Crystal acting as the defense with Amy and Lisa, Cherry and Taylor taking on offense.

It was a hard fought battle. Everyone got struck. Taylor was tossed about by a clever rope-like application of ribbons, her body at the full-out arms and legs spread and her eyes comically wide. But she managed to stay in the battle square when she landed - barely. Lisa got in a few lucky shots, but it was Cherry who bruted the big hits until Taylor got back in the game, using a distance throw of her own batons to knock back Mariko.

Then she got in close and suddenly that escrima background came in handy. She had Mariko on the ropes, but she had to force herself to keep it cheer versus pure escrima. It was a real exercise in adjusting and versatility. She spun her batons in blocks and hits, pounding Mariko back and back. She wasn’t even trying to hurt her. The other girl gave as good as she got. Her eyes widened at the last, though, when she expected another hit, but instead got a half turn split low to the ground and double foot kickback that took her out at the legs and pushed her past the boundaries.

The crowd’s response was absolute mayhem.

Taylor felt their cheers and noise through her bones, the jubilation singing in her blood. She leaped to her feet and then, still moving quickly, she grabbed the stunned cheerleader and pulled her into a standing position and a fierce hug. While she held the sixteen-year-old she said, “You were absolutely marvelous!” Then she abruptly kissed Mariko passionately, before hugging her tight again.
and letting her go.

Then, before the girl could even begin to compose a reply one way or the other, Taylor was dragged away by her exuberant sisters, leaving behind a very confused, but oddly turned on champion cheerleader.

Her team went to their side of the stadium to await the judge’s final tallies. They held each other’s hands, as was traditional for such events. It was a near, near thing. But in the end, for the first time in years, Furinkan High took home the oversized golden trophy.

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The celebration afterward was intensely fun, they went to the Plaza, where they visited the Arcade and played all the games or enough of them that it seemed like it. Taylor was good enough and had gained a small bit of local renown for being able to usually hit the top tier in the games she played. She rarely had to kick in more tokens once she started. Lisa and Cherry loved the dance-off games. Amy, Vicky, and Crystal tended to float from game to game, finding one that allowed multiplayer or at least competitive playing. Taylor tended to pick one and stick with it for a night, as it could take a while to get to the first place if others had been using the game too. She loved the bright colors and the crazy sounds.

That night she picked a game she’d played before and enjoyed. She noticed that someone else had made it all the way to number one and replaced her score; someone’s initials were UST. The initials gave her a bit of a giggle and her family planned to stay until the food was ready at the restaurant/ Therefore, she decided to have fun playing. She might not make it all the way to the top spot, because of time, but she’d do her best to make it more of a challenge for the unknown competitor.

A little less than an hour later, her mom called them all together and they went to have their celebratory dinner.

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They were the heroes of the school for a little while, and it was fun. Taylor used to hate the spotlight, but she got used to signing autographs fairly quickly back when she was part of the government hero team. She just reminded herself that everyone needed heroes. It was a mindset that kept her calm as she signed the photos and autograph books extended to her. She also consoled herself that she wasn’t the only one being accosted by the yearbook team or young people who suddenly found cheerleading so interesting. She also discovered that the consequence of that publicized kiss was that she suddenly had an expanded pool of suitors; one that included all the genders, not just traditional “opposite.” Of course, she felt like her personal dance card was pretty full and she truly valued what she had.

Her time with her family was incredibly sweet to her. It is said that ice-cream has the same kind of chemical and emotional side effects as winning something. Taylor wasn’t sure about that, but she was pretty sure that licking chocolate ice-cream off of Lisa was going to be a treasured memory for a good long while; as would the memory of playing pirates with Crystal. Or being had by Cherry in the family gym as she made ‘Taylor hold a position for just long enough. Or being “captured,” by Amy in her garden and then “rescued,” by Vicky. Or finally fulfilling that one fantasy her Dad had in the showers and being fucked silly on a towel on the bench. Or that time that Zoe played underwater sea monster in the tank with her. Or her Mom tucking her in at night with what seemed like a thousand kisses. This didn’t count the times that she started things.

Then there was her time with her friends. Ranma was surprisingly daring in both forms. He liked finding places in school or outdoors or well, just anywhere - and she was game, so long as it was on
the list. But Ranma was one of her go-to friends at school when things got too intense and she needed release immediately. And that, unfortunately, was happening more often - even with the immense amount of control Taylor actually had. The young woman simply had a lot of energy - sexual and otherwise - flowing through her all the time and every day. It was a continuing exercise of control and mastery that she had yet to find the end of; because technically, she was still growing. Knowing that kind of scared her a little, but she had a lot of help and had been reassured by the masters of the dojo that she would learn to bring it all under her control at some point.

Still taking Ranma in while she was in her female form against a school wall was a favorite for many reasons, either when Taylor was hilted deep or full face and tongue in, digging deep into the cavern to get the nectar that the martial artist exuded. Ranma was sage and savory, like a full exotic meal when she came. When the redhead’s leg was lifted over the brunette’s shoulder and her shoe dangling half off her foot, Taylor felt an immense sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. That she had the “power,” to bring such abandonment to pleasure made her extremely happy.

But at the same time, having him roll her over a desk or chair or grip her up against the wall herself and pound on home was just…. Exquisite. And she loved that it wasn't really an either/or thing. Taylor loved all of Ranma’s aspects.

She also loved spending time with Akane, who was surprisingly strategic and brilliant in finding and timing places to canoodle; especially considering the droves of nosy friends she had. The implied illicitness, even though neither she nor Akane felt any guilt whatsoever, provided a dash of excitement that flavored their encounters. When they didn’t have a lot of time, in order to keep from losing track, and not risk one of Akane’s semi-serious wallops, she’d opted to lick her fingers after the girl’s final release. Taylor loved being knuckle deep in her because the girl had firecracker taste of cinnamon and sweet that she couldn’t resist. At home, she just dug in and licked that woman out until both of them were breathless; they both loved that. And Akane had been serious about loving Taylor’s cock. She was a terrible tease at school once she learned that the brunette’s cock might not be seen, but it could be felt. Not that she had a problem playing with Taylor’s pussy. Akane was by nature a giver and that most definitely included tongue. One thing she loved to do was have Ranma and Taylor lay back while she “took care” of them.

Though, really, they were very, very careful. Taylor had taken to carrying sticky silk with her to “lock” the doors or cover windows. They always chose the empty room or the space not well-traveled. They were careful of cameras and spies. Fortunately, Nabiki was on their side and more inclined to watch out for them than spy for anyone other than herself. Though sometimes she was more intimately helpful too.

Then there were the teachers.

On the feminine side, Kasumi was more than a teacher to Taylor, but she had a wholesome eroticism that she was fearless about sharing and she loved guiding Taylor into new things. Sophie was completely easy with demonstrating different expressions, positions, and touches of seduction that matured the younger woman’s approaches. Taylor still felt like she flailed a bit, but she was starting to become a bit more suave and subtle her approaches to others and foreplay. Zoe and her Mother taught her how to wear the heels and certain outfits properly, how to walk in a way that grabbed attention, how to experiment with touching and pleasing.

On the masculine side, her Father taught her how to dance both in and out of bed. He led by example, but also by explaining, demonstrating what felt good and why. As did Soun. She hadn’t expected Soun to act as another father figure, but as the Heberts essentially adopted the Tendos, Soun essentially adopted the Heberts. Taylor was pretty sure he’d never slept with his daughters, at least, not until the Heberts came along. But she also knew he was an incredibly sensitive lover. He
taught her how to pay attention to the mood of her lover, how to ride the distance, so to speak. He taught her to use her ki to bring the energy up and the energy down and how to recognize the spark in others so she could play with it. He also liked trying new positions he read about in a magazine. That was sometimes hilarious.

They all gave her small assignments. To meet those assignments, which were a kind of homework, Taylor would sometimes practice pleasuring herself or a volunteer, using the webcam; which was only broadcast in-house - but it was also shared out-universe too. She had no idea how eagerly awaited those practice days were.

Happosai was also a teacher, though it was a lot less about him than one might suppose. He was well known as a pervert and womanizer, but half of that was he was entertained by the process of the “hunt” and the “chase.” He said, “I’m too old to get things going like I used to.” Viagra was at least ten years away. But he did have his tricks and he was thrilled to share them with the young people. Though he still kept them on their toes by continuing to steal underwear out of easy to get into rooms.

For awhile he was in a competition with Parker, whose ninja methods made him very happy and who was fairly successful in keeping him out of the places he shouldn’t be. But when he’d pointed out his real intentions, to teach the young people how to guard their belongings, then things got interesting. While she didn't just let him in, she eased back, or if she felt the lesson needed learning, started helping.

It wasn’t until Lisa asked one of the Masters how to set a trap that the revelation and the revolution occurred. Taylor would have given, but Nabiki insisted on buying, some of her sticky silk and the library provided some fascinating research on the topic of securing one’s goods, personal or otherwise. Then the "war" was on and Happosai got happier and happier the tougher the opposition got.

He was still a handful and Taylor respected him intensely, but if he copped a feel, she might react as she required to socially and martially, but she actually didn’t mind too much; because he never meant it badly and he always rewarded the success of putting him off later with a bit of illumination.

The point was, after a certain point, she did not feel a pressing need to date much; at least not for the purpose of finding a mate or a long-term boyfriend/girlfriend. On the other hand, life was all about diversity and apparently, Joy didn’t want her to get set in her ways. After she started getting serious offers for dates, Neo offered a challenge to for her to date three people, not with the intention of seduction (though she could), but just to go out and do new things and have a few teenage experiences.

Taylor decided she probably would go for it, but decided to give the celebratory atmosphere a chance to die down, before trying.

Then, one day a brunette ball of energy arrived at the school gym. Taylor was called away from practice to meet with the cheerleading captain of Seisyun High.

Taylor cartwheeled out of her tumble and bounced towards the other cheerleader. “Hey! It’s great to see you.” She decided to tease her a bit, “Come by to pick up where we left off?”

Before she could say more, the other girl raised her palm in a stopping motion. Mariko said, “I ... I am not interested in you that way.”

Taylor blinked a moment, “Okay,” she said slowly, but with a grin.
"But I have something else important to tell you." Then Mariko jumped forward, grabbing Taylor in a massive hug. "Thank you! Thank you so much!" She held her tight. "Until you kissed me, my Tatewaki only saw me as a silly girl. But you made him see me." She let Taylor go. "We may be enemies in the stadium, but could we be friends all the other times?"

Taylor smiled warmly. "I think I would like that very much. But I guess that means no dates?"

"No dates," Mariko confirmed. "Unless they’re just for fun."

"We can do that," Taylor said. And she made a mental tick.

==**==

There was a reason that Genma Saotome was not on Taylor’s sexual master’s list. She accepted him as a Master of the Anything Goes Martial Arts (AGMA), but she refused to let him touch her for a reason; mostly because he managed to do a few things she found personally difficult to forgive. One that currently came to mind, was what he did to a very young Ukyo Kuonji. When she first heard the story of how he abandoned the girl and ran away with her means of making a living, the outrage had been sufficient enough to bring out a real swarm. The only thing that saved Genma was that he was out of range.

It had taken her father swearing that he would have a talk with the man, Ranma swearing that Ukyo was currently fine, and Akane promising she would introduce the girl when she got back from her vacation visiting her family before Taylor had calmed down enough to let the swarm go.

Taylor continued to have a strong sense of justice and someone must have told Genma, because it had been awhile since a random Panda had been seen locally.

When she did meet Ukyo, Taylor found the girl to be amazingly laid back, sensible and a wonderful cook. It was hard to credit that she was a profoundly good martial artist. Then she saw the giant spatula and the bandolier of mini-sharpened-spatulas and had to believe what Akane told her. Ukyo owned a very small restaurant near the school. She might not have the family cart, but she had her own cooking tools and methods she’d used to fill the hungry bellies of her hungry customers. The sheer bravery and "come-back" success impressed Taylor immensely.

One day Akane, in a moment of privacy and while they recovered, said, "You know, if I’d known then, what I know now, I might have approached the whole thing differently." She cuddled into Taylor, holding her tight.

"How so?" Taylor asked as she threaded her fingers lightly through her lover’s hair. "It seems like you did pretty well. You’re good friends."

"For the most part," Akane confirmed. But she grinned slightly, "But I might have taken her to bed and gotten to know her better. She and I and Ranma would have worked well, I think. The problem is, I don’t know if that’s a something she’d be interested in. We have everything in balance now."

"You worry that if you brought it up now, you’d lose her as a friend?"

"Yes."

"Is this something you really want? Is she someone you would trust with us?" She let her arm drop around Akane’s shoulder, gently squeezing.

"I don’t even know how to ask or even answer the questions. Being with you is easy, because you Heberts, you’ve been so open. But I also know you share our secrets, so we keep yours. Genma
A buzz started up in the wall, but Taylor tamped it down. “It would be a hard thing to forgive.”

“Yet she did. For Ranma. But she thinks of him as her fiance and of me as just the friendly competition.”

“Hmm,” Taylor said thoughtfully. “Any other prospects on her radar?”

“Ryoga.”

“Whom you’ve already conquered,” Taylor teased a little.

Akane blushed. “Yeah. Another thing she might not be happy or talking about, as she says he’s just a good friend.”

“Do you believe her?”

“For a certain level of friendship. I've seen the way she looks at him sometimes. And Ryoga is a good man. I think they'd make a great couple if they recognized what they had. But though I am very glad to have Ryoga as a lover, it makes me wonder if I did her a disservice, by loving him first.”

“And I guess Ryoga is the same way,” Taylor said carefully. “I mean, in being good friends, but compatable?”

“Mnhm.”

“Would you be willing to give up Ryoga, if it made him happy?”

Akane moaned, and not in a happy way.

Taylor resisted the urge to palm her face. “You Tendos and your complicated love lives.”

“Us?” She pushed Taylor lightly, but smiled and said, "It’s not us. It’s Ranma.”

“Uh-huh,” Taylor teased gently before kissing Akane gently. “Here is what I'm hearing? You want Ryoga and Ranma and have that worked out. You're open to Ukyo being your lover, if she's open to the idea, but you don't want to spoil anything because right now, things are okay. If a little uninformed. You do realize, you'll eventually have to come clean because she's going to notice. She's a smart girl Akane. So, what that means, is, ultimately no matter what you do change is ahead.”

"I know. And yes, I think that covers it."

Taylor kissed her lover's forehead gently. "Want me to talk to her and feel her out on the topic.” She paused and added, “Or topics.”

“You mean feel her up?” Akane joked weakly.

“Not before you get your chance, first. Though, if you don’t mind, I’d probably take her on a date.” Taylor riposted gently.

“I see how it is. You go on a date, then I have to show up and do a better job?”

“You can always take Ranma with you. It worked with your other boy toy.”

“True. But, I don’t know. I just… it makes me feel more nervous. What we did with Ryoga was
“absolutely so right at the time. And he loved me enough to trust me. Ukyo only likes me.”

“As far as you know. But she loves Ranma.”

“Yes. But the trust, it’s only just starting to return…”

The bugs started buzzing in the wall again. It wasn’t exactly a non-sequitur. “Genma’s not bothering you is he?”

“No. Daddy and Danny put their feet down. Genma lives with us when he is in town and teaches us, but that is all. I think he’s off taking time to contemplate things. Either that or visit his wife. His notes back have been a bit vague.”

“Well, if he tries anything you don’t like, you can come to stay with me.” The bugs settled again. “Have you talked to Ranma about Ukyo?”

“I probably should.”

“Yeah, I think so. I mean, I get Ranma likely thinks of it as old news, but you know its a bit an out of sight, out of mind way - if I know Ranma. Sort of an as long as it’s not making trouble, don’t stir the pot, right.”

Akane laughed. “Yeah. Pretty much. And we let Ranma do it because either way she or he is cute and neither of Ukyo nor I really want to hurt Ranma or each other.”

Taylor nodded. “I’m not sure I’m really the best one to do this. Lisa would probably be better, but… Want to go on a double date? You and Ranma and Me and Ukyo, if I can talk her into it? Then, if things aren’t too weird, we can feel her out about how she feels about Ryoga.” She paused a moment. “We’ll make it a no sex date, just to be sure. Just a regular old, going to do something together out in the world. Maybe dinner and the night club?”

Akane smiled and kissed her. “Sounds good. But know, I’m honestly not being greedy. Though I fear it may seem like it, I am happy now. Don’t think I’m not.”

“I know you are, but I like when you’re very, very happy. You’re so pretty that way. No harm in asking right? Worst case, she learns something new. Best case, you gain a new playmate and I get a new friend. We’ll take it slow and cautious. I might have Lisa go visit her and come up with a plan.”

Akane exhaled in relief. "I think that might be a good thing.”

Taylor thought of something amusing. “Speaking of Ryoga, Beth found a tiny black pig the other day wearing his scarf. She adores him, but I’m not sure he knows what to think of her. We were thinking of chipping him with a GPS tracker. But then, I heard a rumor that he’s yours?”

Akane exhaled. “He is my pet. I call him P-chan” She ducked a little into Taylor’s neck. “He’s also Jusenkyo cursed. No one knows I know. Well, except for you.”

Taylor laughed. “Why?”

“It was a fun way to tease Ranma. I’d let P-Chan sleep with me and it drove him bonkers.”

“Akane Tendo, you naughty, naughty girl,” Taylor said with great affection. “Want us to chip P-Chan slash Ryoga anyway?”

“Yes,” Akane said firmly.
A/N - I actually had a lot more I wanted to put in this chapter, but then the discussion about Ukyo happened, but it's a situation that needs a little resolving. At least for Akane, Ranma and Ryoga. I suspect, looking from the outside, there is a potential for a really solid foursome. With friendly visits with the Heberts.

I should mention that Genma will be staying with his wife rather than traveling anywhere off planet. That's about as spoilery as I'll get on that. Taylor doesn't *hate* him. She's just mad at him right now. She has always had a strong sense of justice, which is normally balanced by her native kindness. But her kindness has had to regrow, given her previous life experiences. He really, really was lucky he was out of town that day.

I hope you enjoy the chapter.
Worm: Joyride: Chapter 30

Taylor talked to Lisa, explaining the whole issue. The swarm moment only came up once, for which the brunette was grateful. Lisa suggested talking to Ukyo at school, so the next day, when they spotted the young woman in the hallway, just at the beginning of lunch, they asked for a moment of her time. They invited her into one of the currently empty classrooms and shut the door.

Proving that she was far more observant than the great majority of her other classmates, she said, “So are you leading me in here to be nibbled by the Spider and the Cat or is this something else?”

Lisa pinked, but grinned merrily. “We promise we’ll be gentle,” the platinum blonde said, causing a return blush. “But seriously, Taylor and I just needed a little chat with you. We can negotiate the other at another time.”

“Lisa,” Taylor said, a bit of caution in her voice.

Lisa waved it away. “She knows all about Jusenkyo.” Then she turned her attention on the brown-haired, sweet-natured (unless provoked) young woman. “Don’t you? You figured out Ranma a long time ago.” Ukyo started nodding, looking intrigued. “So you saw us around the town, doing our thing, on the news and Taylor can fool most of the people most of the time with her not-a-glamour, but you’ve seen the weird enough to see past it. She gets hit by water enough I’d think she was doing it on purpose, but really she’s not. I actually want to see her try to stay in a class one time. Maybe two times and see if a professor ever says anything about it.”

Ukyo cracked a laugh and a smile. “I know! But I think it’s because Nerima is strange. Or it’s of Principal Kuno. She obeys the rules and so he treats her like a student, so she is. I think she could get away with it.” She relaxed and leaned against a desk, laying her belongings down. “My family has connections in the spirit world. Thus, I recognized both your kind, though Taylor is of a version of spider woman I’ve not seen before. You are an oracle of sorts.”

“She’s Arachne, I’m Mau,” Lisa said, “I used to claim I was psychic, but what I am is a pericog. I put information together, very quickly. It can be handy.”

“I am surprised you are still in school,” Ukyo commented. “You could be graduated by now.”

“Mom felt time with peers was important. Plus school is fine and fun in the right company.”

“Well, you and your sisters certainly have found many diversions.” She pinked again, “Though it is scandalous, you have only ever exhibited kindness to everyone else. I felt it would be wrong to say anything. Plus, it’s been entertaining to watch people completely fail to figure things out. You’re all very clever. I have enjoyed trying to discover all the unknown trysts spots. I know I haven’t found them all.”

“And, hopefully, you won’t because the whole point is that they should be secure. But thank you for being discreet.” Lisa said warmly. She too had relaxed and sat on another desk’s edge, while Taylor remained standing.

“So then you know about Akane and Ranma,” Taylor asked gently, reaching out to touch the girl’s shoulder.
Ukyo nodded glumly. “Ranma has obviously staked his claim and it has been hard not to notice. I also thought of leaving school, but …”

“You can’t play the game if you aren’t trying,” Lisa provided. “And, you really are their friend.”

Ukyo nodded sadly.

“How would you feel about joining Akane, Ranma and I on an outing. Would you be able to find time for that?” Ukyo’s brows rose. Lisa read it one way, Taylor another. The brunette raised her palms, “It would be platonic …”

“… at first.” Lisa jumped in before Taylor could finish. “We did say we’d be gentle. Also, I know you need a little time to process the idea. But it’s not so strange. You had full intention of enjoying Ranma in all the ways possible if you could.”

Ukyo grinned. “I think I would like that very much.”

Taylor let out a breath she didn’t know she was holding and rubbed the back of her head. It was the first sign of nervousness she’d shown. “Cool. Great. Just let us know when?”

“Halloween night.”

Taylor blinked. That was quick. “You’d be willing to give up the profits for a date?”

“Absolutely,” she nodded. “We should go costumed.”

“Oh. Crystal is going to love you,” Lisa said.

“What happened to subtle, Lisa?” Taylor asked as this whole thing hadn’t gone as she thought it would.

“Ukyo does best with plain speaking. If you get too waffly, she thinks you’re not genuine and trying to get something from her and that hits her in her trust button. We are trying to get something from her,” Lisa waggled her brows mock-suggestively, “but she knows exactly or near enough what we want. That’s something she can work with. Plus, now she has people she can go do the Halloween thing with. It’ll be a nice change.”

“You I like. But do you reveal everyone’s secrets?” Ukyo asked, not miffed, but not exactly teasing either.

Lisa waved her hand. “Pish. None of that was secret and I’ve gotten a lot better about it, haven’t I, Taylor?”

“Absolutely, but it’s an aspect of her gift. She didn’t always have a toggle or a means to scale things back and it would come out whether she wanted it to or not. She played it off as being on purpose, but it wasn’t. She used to get the worst of the worst headaches because when she saw people, she saw everything.”

Ukyo lifted one hand to her mouth and gasped and then laid another on Lisa’s arm. “I am so sorrowed by that. I am glad to hear it is better now. Gifts can be hard.”

Lisa took Ukyo’s hand in hers. “Thank you, Ukyo. You are very kind. Would you like to have lunch with Taylor and I before she gets dragged off to do the naughty by someone in the know?”
This time it was Taylor who blushed. “Lisa!”

“I’ll tell you all about it,” Lisa said. “We can whisper in the cafeteria. No one will notice.”

Ukyo started giggling.

“Lisa!”

Ukyo giggled harder.

The blonde said puckishly, “It’s not like she hasn’t figured half of it out already. We’re just making sure there’s no misinformation. Not that she’s much of a gossip.”

“I can keep secrets. I have kept what I have discovered to myself.” Ukyo said firmly, with a smile in her eyes. Taylor considered what she said. Well, that had to be true, as no one had assaulted any of her siblings, herself or Akane with lewd suggestions or rumors.

Ukyo, in the meantime, withdrew a small, sharp-looking spatula. “And to anyone who tries to take your secrets from me, I promise this.” The spatula sailed past Taylor’s head and thwacked firmly into the wall, sharp-end first.

Taylor nodded, impressed. “Fair enough.”

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As the week progressed, making its way to the weekend holiday, the news trended towards the grim. Political tensions were rising between the three big powerhouse countries. Two more Senshi teams had been spotted, fighting dark creatures. Damages were usually attributed to natural or ‘logical’ reasons like gas mains, but only those in denial really bought those reasons. The Royal Police had teams assisting the cleanup and Danny could attest to at least two major events near Nerima, if not in it.

On the better news front, a new fashion house opened called Covers and a new school was being built in Honnō City at Tokyo Bay. The academy was considered quite exclusive and was scheduled to open the next year. The American company of Vault-Tec was recording record profits. Neo invested in both and had ordered a few new things from all over.

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Vicky cracked up when she saw Taylor’s costume. Above the brunette’s head, a yellow-green plumbob hovered, angled into place by what appeared to be a clothes hanger wire, but it was a holograph. She added the wire so it wouldn’t be too noticeable. Otherwise, her outfit was very low-key. She was dressed in a tee that said, “Gamers don’t die, they respawn.” She wore jeans and high tops with a pouch on her belt. At her throat was a necklace shaped like a game controller, a teeny bag of Cheetos, and a soda can. She also wore her visor, this time shaped like the glasses she used to wear as her Brockton Bay incarnation, but with tape over the bridge. She liked being able to access the HUD this way and was seriously considering wearing glasses all the time, so she could it.

“That’s meta and I don’t think anyone will really know what any of that means, but that’s too awesome, Taylor,” the blonde said approvingly.

Taylor twirled, causing the plumbob to bob and wiggle, and said, “Thank you.”

Vicky laughed again.
She met Akane and Ranma on the way to Ukyo’s. Akane was dressed as an angel, with full-on wings and a halo and Ranma had little gold devil horns going on in her red hair. “You both look cute as heck,” Taylor said in greeting and she pecked them demurely on the cheeks. “But I’m pretty sure you should switch the halo and the horns.”

“Hey!” Akane said as she swatted at Taylor’s arm and laughed at the teasing. “I’ll have you know I’m perfectly angelic.”

“...in bed,” quipped Ranma, causing Akane to blush and smile. The redhead gave Taylor a once over. “What are you supposed to be?”

“I’m a meta-gamer. I’m a character from a game, who plays digital games.”

“Oh. That’s clever. I don’t recognize the game, but I recognize that’s some sort of controller. Maybe you can show me it sometime.”

“I’ll see if we have a copy at home. It’s been a while since I’ve played, but I gotta warn you, it can suck you in. You get started thinking, “Oh I’ll only play for a little bit,” then the next thing you know hours have passed.”

Akane’s eyes widened. “That’s some game!”

“Yeah, we’ve got a few of those long-hour games at home. It’s not like the arcade stuff at all.” Taylor smiled easily and they began walking.

They met Ukyo in front of a darkened restaurant. She was dressed in the colors of red, blue, gold and white, in a recognizable outfit of a superheroine. Stars adorned her shorts and a golden loop sat at her hip. Taylor said, “You make a great Wonder Woman.”

Ukyo beamed. She took in their outfits and had to shake her head. “I don’t know what you are, but I think I recognize the type.”

Taylor just grinned and pushed up her unnecessary glasses. Then she offered her arm and, after sparing a glance at Akane and Ranma, who were both smiling benignly, Ukyo hooked hers through it.

They decided to head deeper into Tokyo, taking the bus. They’re not the only ones in costume. Guessing what some of the costumes were made for an entertaining ride and made time seem to speed by. Taylor’s glasses noted a bit of magic and she turned her head. Viewing through her glasses she saw a kid, just smiling around as if enjoying themselves utterly. They were dressed normally. She didn’t think anything of it until she accidentally looked over the top of her glasses and realized she couldn’t see anything there.

Oh.

The little boy waved so she waved back, causing him to startle a bit. But he grinned even wider and settled in on his bus seat, innocent and happy. Her visor and her senses indicated that he was benign, so there was no reason at all to disturb his fun.

She mouthed, “Be careful. Stay safe. Play nice.”
The boy nodded firmly and she leaned back and relaxed and people watched again. He got off the stop before theirs.

Halloween is a time for fun and Kasumi recommended a place to eat and dance that they could go to and use their student discount cards. By the time they arrived, there was a crowd, but it was not too bad and Taylor found it oddly energizing. The colors of the eatery were a bright, kind of a neon pastel. She was pleased to note that it was fairly clean, but she was also glad she brought her own little spiders to act as tiny watchers. They just made her feel more comfortable these days.

The music was loud, but people are louder. No one seemed to mind that they were all talking over each other. It was raucous without the danger and soothing in its own way. Right until she felt a hand on her thigh, awfully high up. Having committed to platonic behavior for the outing, she gently dropped her palm on top and guided the hand lower, without looking at the owner. Then she gave Akane a look over her glasses. The girl just smiled innocently back.

Taylor mouthed, “Behave!”

Akane just grinned more. Then Taylor pulled out her sonic screwdriver, fiddled with it a bit. The noise level died down and she knew they were now in the cone of silence. “Lisa said plain talk is the way to go. So talk,” she grinned right back at Akane, who suddenly looked flustered and silent.

Ranma rolled her eyes, but she gave Akane a one-armed squeeze and was relaxed back into the seat of the booth. She was often blunt, but she started out fairly gently. “Ukyo, you and I have been best friends for years, and we would have had longer if my Dad hadn’t been an asshole. You can feel free to kick his butt any time, though I hope you don’t kill him because he’s my Dad. But he deserves what he gets until he pays you back. By my reckoning that’s millions of yen and trust me, he doesn’t have it. Or he could give the cart back, but it’s been years, so who knows what rickety condition it’s in right now or even where it’s at.

“But that’s his business. You and I had our big fight and I think we both know we got eyes for each other. Akane and I are together, but she’s got eyes for you too.” The Tendo girl who, to that point had been looking up, suddenly blushed and looked down because of the intense look that Ukyo gave her. “The thing is, Ukyo…” Now it was Ranma’s turn to look a bit red. She rubbed the back of her neck.

“We want you to date both of us,” Akane said, her words hurrying towards the end. And then she looked at Taylor and suddenly she calmed down. “And, well more. We would like you to join us if you are interested.” She leaned to the side and pecked Ukyo on the cheek. To an outsider, it would be completely demure. “It’s okay if you say no. We would, either way, want you to be our friend, that is if you’d like to continue. But there’s the Ryoga thing too that we need to discuss and...and you saying no is way okay…”

“Yes,” Ukyo said.

Akane stuttered to a stop. Her eyes widened. “Really?”

Ukyo smiled warmly. “Yes. I’ve just been waiting for you to ask.” Then she looked a bit sad. “Or to tell me to go away.”

Akane lurched to Ukyo’s side around the half-circle booth, scooting into a hug. “Never.”

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Taylor put her magic screwdriver away when the food was delivered. It was as good as Kasumi said
it would be. They talked about a lot of things, silly and innocent topics now that the hard emotional
business was over. Taylor was working up to asking one of them to dance.

The air grew heavy, thick. At first, Taylor thought it was just a consequence of the crowd and the
dancing, but it felt different. Then her visor begins flickering messages of an imminent arrival. She
called out, “Get down everyone!”

Her voice carried some, but not that far, but the ducking caused by her shout seemed to cause a
domino effect that seemed to time perfectly with the sudden burst of energy that balled up from
somewhere in the middle of the dance floor. Loads of people were knocked over or out. Then the
screaming began as the very large creature at the center rose.

It seemed to be made of scales and fangs, but mostly it seemed to be black, dark and ugly. Taylor
didn’t need her spiders to see that. She stood up immediately, knowing that this thing had to be
stopped now.

“Youma!” Someone called out. It opened its mouth, rearing back into a roar, massive arms extended.

Taylor felt a ball form in her belly, one of the bad memories, making itself known. But she ignored it.
She looked back at her friends. “Get to safety, I’m going to try to keep it busy. Call my Dad.”

“Go on,” Akane said as she looped her hand over Ukyo’s wrist
Ranma ducked out of their booth, pulling the other girls with her. “We have your back.”

And Taylor knew they did. “Handle it by staying safe.”

Ukyo said, “You’ll need more than two arms for this.” She had a moment of curiosity when Ukyo
grabbed a cup and uncapped it. And a half a second before she realized the intent.

Then bam, Taylor caught a faceful of iced liquid.

The magic made the transformation faster. One moment she was a human senshi, the next, she was
the Arachne senshi. “Well, I hope no one shoots me by mistake,” she said, only mildly irritated.

Ukyo laughed. “You haven’t been watching the news much, have you. No one is going to shoot you
unless you don’t get out there and show your stuff.”

Taylor may have been shocked, but she didn’t have time to think about it. “Right!” Ice formed on the
windows and her breath cooled as she summoned her power and finished transforming. She stamped
her foot and ice spread in a line to the monster’s foot.

As she did that, there were loads of twirls of light all around the restaurant and Taylor couldn’t help
the laugh as she realized that of all the places to pick for revealing an evil monster, this was the one
that probably should have been avoided first.

She counted something like seven heroes, not including herself or her boothmates. She was tempted
to leave them to it. Then she noticed another signature of magic coming from the back. “There’s
another one in the kitchen!” They could hear the screams over the music that still played.

Akane had her phone out, the one they’d been given ‘in case’, and was already talking to Danny.
Ranma had decided to act aggressively. Ukyo just sighed. “I’d hoped not to have to use this,” she
said, as she pulled out an extra, extra large and sharp spatula from somewhere.

Taylor took the high road, leaping up to the wall, and crossing along the ceiling with quick casts of
her thread. Over time, she'd been developing quite an arsenal beyond just her sword. She had silk needles that she'd been proving - they were hard, sharp and deadly. She also had small and large hooks that could be slung into walls and ceilings. She had nets and silk bolts that let her swing the vulnerable out of the way before she even started pulling out her sword.

As others started throwing spells, she started throwing her strong sticky thread, binding the arms and legs of the creature as rapidly as she could.

One of the other senshi shouted, “We got it from here, stop the one in the kitchen, Spider Senshi!!”

“Call me Weaver!” Taylor shouted and she sprinted, very fast, towards the kitchen, bypassing the hazards of the counter and busting through the double swinging doors. Later she might consider she could have done something more punny with her name, but she was used to being called Weaver as a hero and she liked it well enough.

It didn’t take her long to spot the Youma terrorizing the staff. One poor guy was on the floor, bleeding heavily but no one was really damaged, just super scared. The bigger than human creature had a bulldog face, fat eyes, and a terrible smell. It was chewing something, but fortunately not the people. She saw flipper like paws gathering up plates empty or otherwise, stuffing them into its mouth.

Her visor indicated this was a more neutral kind of critter, but the energy of it was still far too dangerous to be around regular human beings for long. She bound it quickly and stuck it to a wall so it couldn’t do any more damage. But, just to make sure it didn’t try to just break through the wall, she stuffed its mouth with more food. It chewed, contented.

Then she raced to the bleeding man, noting that his arm was broken. “Sir, unfortunately, my team isn’t here, so our healer isn’t here to do this. You’ll have to deal with my first aid. I am going to cool your arm, very fast, and then I’m going to numb it with … well, you don’t need to know that. It’s harmless, but this way you won’t feel the pain. Because I’m going to move your arm, then bind it so it will stop bleeding, but it will hurt otherwise. I’m not going to try to straighten your arm. You’re going to have to see a doctor.”

She heard curses and crashes outside, the sound of explosions. “There are more outside!” Someone shouted.

“This doesn’t usually happen on Halloween does it?” Taylor asked, mostly rhetorically, as she did as she said she would. He shook his head no, as she magicked ice across his arm, cooling and numbing it a little. Then she pricked his skin with one of the concoctions that Panacea created for her, that allowed her to use her fingernails or one of her silk needles as a delivery method. She had something she jokingly called numbitol and a soporific. She could have gone the poisoner’s route, but she already had plenty of slaughtering tools. This stuff was designed to help people.

The man toughed it out, but they both heard the grind of shifting bone as she gently arranged his arm into place and he went a very pale shade, even though the nerves were not sending pain signals. Soon his arm was secured to his chest at a comfortable, but higher angle than he might be used to. “Just to make sure that the swelling stays down and the blood flow remains otherwise good. This is why I haven’t bound your whole arm. It’s like when you sprain something, it’s going to swell and we don’t actually want it too tight. Just tight enough. My friend Neo has contacted emergency services and an ambulance should be here soon.” The man nodded his understanding.

He patted her hands. “Go. There are more to save.”

Taylor hesitated. She looked at the Youma on the wall. It reminded her of the giant dogs that Bitch
used to make. “Poor thing. It’s just … an animal. I wish my sister were here, she’d be able to send it somewhere it could live safely, but not be a problem. I’ll come back and … and…”

“I know someone who can banish it,” someone said to her right. She didn’t recognize the voice and she knew her eyes must have been very wide when she turned to look at the new person. They wore a sailor uniform with a blue short skirt. “I’ll make sure she knows. I am Sailor Mercury and I could use your help, Weaver. One of my team’s nemesis has stolen a piece of technology that is allowing these other Youma to cross over. We need to find that equipment and shut it down. Can you help me?”

“Do you have a way to find it, or are we just going by magical signal or something?”

“Yes,” the senshi pointed at her visor. “Kind of to both.”

Taylor nodded. Then she said, “Neo, let my friends know where I’m going. Status on my team’s arrival?”

The tiny holographic Neo appeared, wearing a mask and a skimpy super suit of her own. Sailor Mercury observed her with interest. “They are on the way, Weaver. The Driver has the siren on and is moving very fast.” A quick hologram of a map top-down showed a dot rocketing down to their destination.

“Side benefits of being Royal Police. We get the fun noises. Thanks, Neo!” Taylor quipped. She looked at the senshi, crouched down a little more and extended a hand. “Hop on and let’s get out there.”

==**==

In the scheme of things, it did not take Weaver and Mercury long. Less than fifteen minutes to find it, but monsters can do damage quickly. Their time on the way was spent subduing or fighting the monsters, then moving on.

Mercury was very impressed with Weaver’s sword, as well as her clever uses of what was at hand and her magic/powers. Many a monster found themselves iced into place or smashed against a building with webbing or assaulted with the darkness of a full swarm until they got out of the way or were netted by a spinning silk web. Many an innocent was swiftly rescued, deposited safely away from harm. Taylor was strong enough to move cars, so when she encountered a blockade that some smarter Youma had set up, she used the leverage her abilities allowed to drag the thing apart. Then she whipped up a solid binding on the dozens of creatures that had created that mechanical nest, sticking them in place for the senshi she knew to be following them to otherwise handle.

Since it was nighttime the building where the technology was located was mostly empty. Taylor scaled up the wall, with Mercury pointing the way. Before she got level to the window they planned on using, she said to the blue-haired woman. “Mercury, I have a bit of magic that will allow us to break the window, but not do it permanently. But it will block off everyone else from coming unless they are also magical. This means we may be very alone for a bit. Should I do that or break the window?”

Mercury spent maybe a second considering it. “Do it.”

Taylor centered herself. Each time she did this, the magic got easier. Of course, all the practice helped too. Soon the usual noises of the world went silent, especially the sounds of battle and
mayhem that had been behind them. Mercury seemed impressed and then used her magic to push the window back into the building. The window fell with a solid thud, somehow unshattered, though the outside rim was definitely bent.

“Handy,” Taylor said. Mercury just grinned back. Then Taylor carefully looked in. Seeing no one, she carefully grasped Mercury and put her in the room, before crawling in herself.

Once inside though, she could feel the magical vibrations. “Whoa, that is potent.”

Mercury shook her head in agreement, looking about the office space curiously. “It seems like a normal office.” She gazed through her visor and a holographic interface spread out in front of her. Mercury pointed at the only door. “We go out there, turn left in the hallway. I think it’s another office three, no four, doors down.”

Taylor nodded. She crawled up the wall, then opened the door and peered out. “Nothing obvious in the hallway.”

Then she stepped in, cautiously. The vibrations felt very heavy. “So much magic.”

“I know,” Mercury said, equally cautious. “See over there by that door, space is bent.”

“I see it,” Taylor acknowledged. “How much you want to bet there’s a guardian in there?”

Mercury laughed a little. “No bet. Though my sensors don’t indicate anything.”

“My equipment agrees with yours, but my senses tell me something is in there. Give me a moment, let me see if I can send some tiny friends in.”

“Tiny friends?”

Taylor held out a palm to a wall, and a stream of spiders flowed from somewhere. One of the perks she’d chosen was the ability to hide “weapons,” effectively. It translated well with her insects; as did the little pouch at her belt. “I’d send some local creatures, but they’ve all kind of disappear when I do the magic, because of the living thing clause. I only have what I can carry. At some point, I am going to figure out how to get around that. Because my swarm is very useful.”

“Fascinating,” Mercury said. “You have dominion over insects and ice? Oh, and I guess spiders.”

“What can I say, I’m my friends say I’m multi-talented,” Taylor offered.

Mercury barked a laugh.

The train of spiders slid into magically warped space. They seemed to enlarge, then shrink and then disappeared behind the door.

Taylor blinked. “Oh. That’s a big one,” Taylor said. “I hope you put your bet down on tentacles because those are tentacles and not the fun kind. Looks like thorns and Oh, there are the eyes. Many eyes and a lot of teeth. Not a Beholder, but I wouldn’t guarantee it doesn’t have powers in the eyeballs and poison on the claws. Yeah, I don’t think that’s a creature from this planet or incarnation of this planet.” She sighed. “Too bad. It doesn’t look too bright though, so we may get lucky and just have to chop it up good.”

“Good to know. I’ve got a notice from my team. Jupiter and Mars are on their way. Should be here shortly. They’re flying. Moon and Neptune and your friends are taking care of the other things.”
“Okay. I like the idea of backup, definitely. I am totally down with waiting, but isn’t this a case of, if we don’t handle this quickly, more oogly-booglies will manifest?”

Mercury grinned. “We’ll call it a calculated risk. It is more important to retrieve the contraption intact than not. And we can handle a few monsters.”

“A few…” Taylor said as she watched the guardian move about lazily. “I’m not sure if it knows we are here or not. It’s very relaxed right now.”

Neo manifested. “Spinner said Triton is sending Adept and Zephyr your way. The rest will be helping to corral the monsters that are generating on the street.”

“Wait, how are you getting a hold of everyone. We’re behind the protected field,” Taylor said.

Neo shrugged, tapped her temple and then saluted. “Magic.” Then she faded out.

The creature wiggled as if it were riding a wave. “Oh, that is an odd feeling. But the Youma is holding position, but something just happened. It pretty much is wrapped around the thing that’s causing this and it looked like it was surfing for a moment.”

Mercury sighed. “I’m going to do a scan of the building. If the Displacer Module is here then it’s possible that the one who set it up is here too.” She began moving about, using her equipment to slowly evaluate the area more deeply.

“Displacer Module?!” Taylor said, alarmed. While it made sense in context, just the name sounded incredibly bad. Now she understood why Mercury hadn’t mentioned it. “That’s not a good thing, Mercury!”

“I know!” the Sailor Senshi said.

“Just how…” Taylor swallowed a bit, “… how dangerous is this thing?”

Mercury hesitated a moment. Then her shoulders slumped. “In the wrong hands it could rewrite reality?”

Taylor’s eyes widened in alarm and she swore in Arachne. The hissing chittering sound made Mercury wince, but the blue-haired young woman kept her eyes on her scan. Taylor knew, somehow, that Mercury was downplaying how dangerous things were and it made her hope that her magical barrier was sufficient enough in case things went wrong.

Not once did she think about abandoning the senshi. Instead, Taylor spread a few more spiders out, to help keep watch and she began making some weapons out of her silk. “I think I’m going to block a few doors. No sense in being surprised right?”

“Leave the stairwell uncovered,” Mercury said. “My friends will either leap to the room we were in or try to come in from the stairs.”

“Gotcha.”

Taylor got busy and really wished she’d brought more than spiders.

A/N - So, I’ll go ahead and list the “hero” names in the magical girl informational section (at some point...). After some thought, I went simple. I’d planned on elegant names and then realized that -
unlike Earth Bet, the realm of hero names was wide open on this particular world. They might earn titles, but the names could be simple as heck. Thus, a return to Weaver and Annette being Spinner. They couldn’t use Arachne, because that is their alt-species. ;)

I hope, however, that you enjoyed this update.
Chapter 31

Worm: Joyride: Chapter 31

Taylor secured the doors that they did not want to open randomly, giving them a full coverage of silk that would take a massive effort or very sharp shears to cut. She, of course, could dismantle the blocking she’d put on the doors, but if something tried to exit, they’d encounter an enclosed space. She closed up six doors that way, leaving only the stairwell, the office they’d come through and the office in which the monster floated long an invisible crest of magical waves.

Everything otherwise looked so credibly normal. The fluorescent lights buzzed. The exit signs were lit. The air conditioner was working. But the feel of the air was thick and slightly miasmic.

Taylor suddenly felt better when she heard the blare of sirens. She smiled at Mercury, who looked a bit startled at the invasive noise. “Almost here.” She glanced around, pacing toward the open door of the office they’d been in. She glanced in the room. The window was still on the floor, so her magic was still working. “The monster hasn’t apparently made any major moves. The stairwell is empty. Got anything with your scan?”

“Yes, but I think it’s just another Youma and not one of the servants of the Dark.” Taylor almost cracked a smile at the emphasis.

“So monster equal check, but bad guy equal who knows.”

“Pretty much. If they were still in the building, I’d know. So they’ve either escaped or…” Mercury cast her eyes at the closed door where magic emanated. “They have since learned the error of their ways.”

“Oh boy.”

Mercury nodded, lips compressed seriously.

While they talked the Adept and Zephyr stepped out of the car, which then spun around and raced away. Adept and Zephyr arrived at about the same as Jupiter and Mars and they all made their way toward the building. They had a short conversation when Jupiter pointed upwards. Zephyr offered them a ride, having them step close, then, as if the air were a platform they lifted up and up as if they were on an elevator until they were at the single broken window.

Taylor stood half way in and half out of the office, so she could keep an eye on both the room and Mercury.

A tall young woman stepped into the room. She was long-legged, but curvy too, with a kind of fullness to her figure and face that long brown hair emphasized. She wore the sign of Jupiter and wore white, with a green tiny skirt and pink bows. It was very pretty, but very skimpy too; that was a lot of leg she was showing. Taylor appreciated it very much.

“Jupiter,” greeted the Arachne cautiously, wanting to make sure that nothing untoward happened. She offered a warm smile. “Mercury is scanning things in the hallway.”

She also smiled warmly at Taylor, saying, “Thank you, Weaver,” in a pleasant tone of greeting.
Then she turned around to help her friend, who while not struggling was also much smaller than she.

“I can do this,” the girl sort of groused, but not too snappishly. She was a raven-haired, dressed in white, with a red very-mini skirt and purple bows. She wore the sign of Mars. She nodded at Taylor, not too stiffly, but more in a formal kind of way.

“Mars,” Taylor greeted. “Glad you could make it.”

“Mercury said it was important.”

Taylor nodded firmly. “Oh, it is. Monster Guardian aside, there’s a doohicky… Displacer Module, Mercury called it. I’ve counted at least five pulses since we’ve been here. The guardian’s not moving a lot right now though. Can’t say what will happen when we get started though.”

“Fun, fun,” said Adept as she stepped in. Then she bounced over to her sister and gave her a hug. “You looked like you could use one.”

Taylor’s bottom arms wrapped around Crystal and she hugged her back. “I did. Thank you.”

Adept gently caressed the fur along Taylor’s flank. “I sometimes forget how truly soft you are. We should make plushies.”

“I know someone who would buy one,” Jupiter said, smiling a bit more.

“Or two,” Mars quipped. “She’s loved seeing you since you took that old man and Zephyr for a ride. She thought it looked like a lot of fun.”

Zephyr laughed as she stepped in. “It was a lot of fun. Also a bit ridiculous, as obviously, I didn’t need it. But T… Weaver is a lot of fun to ride. She’ll take you to the highest places, but she’s also very careful.”

Weaver blushed, knowing that her sister had thrown in a double-entendre. Crystal smiled indulgently at both of her sisters. But no one, except the sisters, seemed to catch it. “Well, come on, let’s not keep Mercury waiting,” she said, moving away from the door and into the hallway.

Mercury had moved closer to the unopened office. “The space warp has expanded. Nothing dangerous, I think, but we should prepare ourselves for odd happenings.”

Soon they were gathered and geared up, with their chosen weapons or magic. Taylor, once again, was on the ceiling, leading the way. She supposed she could have let the strongest go first, but so far their strategies had been holding up pretty well. She snapped a bit of silk at the door handle and pulled, dragging the door open.

Then everyone flowed in, incredibly fast, just as the creature who had been guarding the object also started to act. They outnumbered it, but it had a good number of limbs that were both strong and lengthy. Taylor caught several in her webs, binding them tightly together and to the floor to keep it from using those limbs as a club. She felt a boost of energy from Adept and used it to circle back around to try to grab the thing from the back. She was surprised at the lack of zaps - from the creature - but there were several from the other senshi. Lightning flashed from Jupiter’s fingers, knocking the creature back enough that they could see the Module.

It was about two feet tall, built like a brick with a few knobby bits and lit up from the inside. The
light pulsed at the same tempo it had been, growing steadily faster. Taylor noticed a hat and slacks that seemed to have fallen to the ground. They looked a bit chomped.

She noticed that the creature had started to open its maw and it seemed a lot larger than it should be. A solid bolt of fire from Mars discouraged that maneuver.

Zephyr’s mighty executioner’s blade sliced down, severing several arms, causing them to flop about uselessly. The creature howled.

Then it picked up the most dangerous brick in the world and started waving it around, trying to smash at its opponents. Spells did their work, but some did manage to look like trick-shots.

“Hey, watch where you’re…” was all that Weaver got out, before, in an act of perfect cataclysmic timing, the displacer module, a batch of spells and one of the thornier sides of the tentacle creature managed to connect with her, just as Zephyr managed to chop it off.

Mostly she felt the pain first. Then she felt the rest of the pain. Then she felt the falling from a very great height and the nothing underneath. Then she felt herself get caught up as if she were in a vastly oversized vacuum.

In a heartbeat, Taylor was elsewhere.

But then, so was the Displacer Module, which abruptly shrunk down to a palm-sized object in her hand. It wobbled and she thought for a moment she might drop it. So she gripped it tight and felt a pinch in her palm as if she’d scraped a sharp edge of something. She opened her palm and the object flickered for a moment and then went still.

Taylor, still in Weaver mode, knowing she was definitely not in Tokyo, looked around herself. She seemed to have arrived in the middle of a shopping center. She looked at the signs and thought she recognized the writing, but she wasn’t sure from where. Then she noticed people either moving closer out of curiosity or running away or just glancing, shaking their head and moving on. That’s when she realized something new. They all had colorful plumbobs hovering high above their scalps.

“Well,” she said. “That can’t be good.”

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First things first, Taylor knew she had to try to blend in, as much as she was able. She pulled a cap out, the one labeled human, and put on a pair of sunglasses. Then she used what she remembered about the Sims and hoped to get a little lucky.

The easy part was finding hot water. She found a local swimming pool and it had showers and no need for an ID. She always carried extra clothing with her now, in case; even if it was a bit on the skimpy side. No one seemed to notice or care. So it was a matter of picking a shower and enjoying the hot water for a moment. Then she got dressed and went back out. People wandered about with their little plumbobs, seemingly unaware of even having them. Taylor felt the need to sit down. Fortunately, there were benches by the nearby park and a couple of seats by some old-fashioned looking chess/checkerboards. Taylor chose a bench and once seated, took a few steadying breaths and closed her eyes for a moment, just to get centered and try to think on what to do.

A few breaths in and she still didn’t have a coherent plan. What she had was worry; worry that she had no way back, that she wouldn’t see her family again, that she was massively hallucinating, due
to being struck by those thorns. And yet, she could feel the bench under her butt, the palms of her hands on her thighs, the way her feet touched the ground and the way lift of her chest as she breathed. She felt solid. She felt real. The bench felt solid and real too. She considered that it made more sense to treat things as real than not and it gave her a way of handling things that getting panicky did not.

Decision made, she opened her eyes. A panel of information sparked into being in front of her; one not produced by her visor, which she’d put away so she could confirm that she was not imagining things.

The holographic image was a notice, with words sliding by as if they were on a slider, like on the game, except with different words.


Well, that one should have been first, but hey…


‘Oh. Here it comes,’ she thought. She wondered, again, if she were in a coma. But it seemed so real. Or surreal, depending.


“Yes,” Taylor said firmly and with a little hope that verbal commands would work.

A blue screen lit up brightly in front of her. “Hi Weaver, this is Adept. The monster is dead, but you’re not, so Yay! We don’t know where you are, exactly, but we have a plan. Mercury, says that the Displacer Module has to refill with more mana before we can grab you back, but that it’s totally doing that right now and we definitely can get you back here soon. So no worries. We think it should take maybe a couple of hours maybe, so hang tight. We’re all okay. Monster problems are basically solved. So take care of you and come back safely. Love you!”

Taylor’s chest warmed and she felt a little teary. Her panic lessened dramatically. “Love you too,” she whispered.

“Close Message?”

Taylor didn’t want to actually cry in public. She wanted to go home. “Close Message.”

The blue screen reset back to what she thought of as the loading screen. “Downloading Choice Menus. Please Choose and Apply Perks.”

Well. Heck. On the one hand, this was kind of reassuring. On the other, she felt annoyed. But she knew it had to be that Joy was trying to help. So she made some choices, some of which were very hard because there was a lot to process. Some of it seemed to jibe with something that had already happened.
Time stuff. She was pretty sure she was laggy as heck right now, from a certain perspective.

“Please Choose and Apply Items.”

So she did.

“Error. Warehouse Malfunction. Please Hold.” Taylor clenched a bit. She hadn’t really used the warehouse much, but she did like having it and it had all her special bugs in it.

“Patching.” She was vastly relieved to see that notice. Basically, at this point, despite the oddity of a game interface, she was gratified by the transparency of the process. “Success! Warehouse Modification: Inventory Access Approved. Warehouse Door Access Closed. Reset Options Currently Unavailable. Inventory Access Approved. Warehouse content may be accessed via inventory. Inventory items may be sent to the warehouse. Some limitations apply. New transfer buttons integrated. Accept changes okay?”

“Well,” Taylor said. “I guess it has to be.”

She was really surprised she was taking everything so calmly, but at the same time kind of grateful. She checked to see if the calmness had the usual cause, but no… not really. She wasn’t spread out through a multitude of creatures. She saw a status notification that indicated that she had a sort of perk that let her stay calm. She could feel, however, the local insects starting to gather and hum in her senses. Knowing the hazards of remaining too cool, she carefully checked for a toggle and found it.

And she sighed in deep relief as she felt her emotions catch up to her. If she had them and her swarm, she knew she’d be alright. Calm mind was great in a crisis, but not so great always on. And she’d learned to value of using those emotions in her ki exercises.

She chuckled as she thought of the streaming messages again, realizing she really was in a Sim world. The thought of Maslow’s Hierarchy got her thinking about current needs, such as finding a place to sleep and funds to keep fed. Now that she knew her family was working on one end, she could try to figure out her end of things; one way or the other.

So. She was in a game world, with a game interface. Time to get working. Except, she couldn’t quite move at the moment. The screen remained. It took her a moment to realize what the hold up was, and then said, “Yes. Okay.”

Having done that, suddenly she felt a shift in her perspective as if she were rising a bit, but it wasn’t literal and things settled down inside after a moment and she felt more like herself. A new window displayed. “See new Options?”

“Yes.”

A series of options displayed from the type of menu to some input and output setting, including sound. She chose a mix, so she could use whatever worked best at the time and she set the sound so it would only be heard by her. Oh, and she turned Neo back on; Because she would rather have a known and trusted ally managing her processes. Plus second opinions never hurt. She heard a recognizable ping of her friend waking up and suddenly Taylor felt much less alone.

While Neo got herself settled, Taylor opted to explore the available content. It was a good time to do so, as no one was bothering her while she was seated; reading the help menu, enacting sundry
command options, playing around with the menu visibility and color. When she felt ready to deal with it, she looked in her inventory. It was fairly generous, but she did worry about having enough room. She thought she might have to figure ways around that. Then she spotted the transfer buttons, which connected the inventory to her warehouse. She would still probably noodle at that issue, but her worries were ameliorated. She found a key to her new house, along with directions to her hopefully temporary abode and pulled them out.

“Neo, is the minimap working yet?”

“Not yet. It is still integrating but the original mapping system is still active. I can link to the local net if you’d like, but you’ll need your visor for that to work.”

“Sounds like a plan,” Taylor said. She put on her visor, shaped into glasses - this time without the nerd tape. The HUD that had been sort of peripheral to her vision transferred over and rapidly integrated with the system she’d already been familiar with. She noted that there were hit and mana points listed and shaped into red hearts and stars. She could work with that. She noted the toggle for gamer’s mind again, easily switchable to on/off manually or scaled, but set to auto if she found herself in an altercation.

She’d made a lot of small setting changes, where she could. Some options had been locked out, but the lockouts seemed reasonable. She didn’t really feel like living in a two-dimensional scroller. But, now that she’d seen it was a possibility, she had to recognize she might experience it at some point.

She saw companion options. They were all greyed out; except for the option to use points, for someone called Bonehilda, and to be visited by the Traveling Merchant. He would only show up every week or so, but he would be a guaranteed friendly face. Bonehilda was listed as a helper/maid and active. The greyed out boxes listing her family had been a crushing blow because it solidified that she was here on her own, while they were back in Japan. On the other hand…

She was able to spend some points anyway. Even if they couldn’t be with her didn’t mean they couldn’t have the advantages she could give them. She didn’t know if they would apply now or later, but she’d rather take or make the option than find out she’d denied her family something valuable through lack of forethought.

But one of the things she knew for sure, was that despite what her sister said, a few hours in the Sims could be a half a lifetime. And the Sims games were a lot more dangerous than one might think. Lack of foresight, overuse of equipment, not checking for a ladder, could get a person killed. She planned on being careful. But it was why she’d bought the death flower and opted for the Medium Core. No sense taking chances.

==*==

Her abode was a tiny, tiny house on a really large piece of property. It was a single level, with one small bedroom and a single bath. The bathroom had a mixed shower/bath and the usual stuff. The bedroom had a double bed, which was nice, but not near as awesome as her bed at home. The lack of a sizable bed only made her miss her family even more and her mood dropped enough even she could feel it. She checked her HUD, noting that she was approaching yellow-green on the mood indicator, but not quite at super awful red yet. She would have to work to stay out of the orange range.

Of course, she still felt like herself. But she also had a moment of insecurity as she thought about the implications of a bed in a sim-verse. She placed her hand over her inner pouch through her pants and
felt a light lift as a part of her responded, then she checked lower. Everything was where it was supposed to be, acting like it was supposed to act. She felt an immense sense of relief that all her known parts were still there. She was not a digital doll.

Just like that, her mood lifted and she had to laugh at herself a bit. But still, Thank the Kami. She hadn’t even realized how important having all her gear was to her now. She liked being a Futanari; even with the heightened senses and occasional inconvenience being one had some true graces. She felt ready, now, to move on.

The front room area had a single couch, a small tv, and a fireplace. The kitchen had a fridge, a stove, a sink and the various things one would expect of a kitchen. Her dining set was two fifties era chairs and a square table. She had two exits/entrances; one at the front and one at the back. They looked and acted like regular doors.

The house was basic, but it felt otherwise cozy. She considered two specific menu tabs: Build and Buy

She had played the Sims, so she knew what those tabs implied. She chose Build, just to see what it was like. The menu opened and she suddenly had a birds-eye view of her house. She clicked walls and roof off and could see inside the house. She could see her own hand hovering at the ready. She saw that she could move the furniture and some of the outside plants. Not all of them, but enough that she pretty much redesigned her yard to maximize space. Also, she thought having a line of flowers by the sidewalk was pretty.

She needed money for things like building new walls and floors, though she could do a few paint jobs for free. So she chose a color that wasn’t white, a nice yellow pastel for the kitchen and soothing blue for her bedroom. Instant Makeover. Nice.

Once she had money she would have options for doing some incredible things, just outside of time. It would appear instant to anyone watching, but for her, it might take a little bit. She wondered if she had access to cheat codes, but wanted to save that effort for if she felt she really needed it; just in case there were unusual consequences. Things were hairy enough for her already.

She closed out of the build menu and suddenly everything was back to normal. She didn’t feel at all weird. Then one of the blue menu boxes came up with a notation. “You have other Building Options, would you like to see more?”

Why yes. Yes, she would. Taylor figured she could pout and get distressed or she could do something while she waited for her family. Might as well learn what she could do or not do around here. Also, she felt oddly energized for someone who’d just had a long day followed up by a battle with a monster.

Neo’s voice took on the role of her inner helper. She was given a few suggestions. That was when she found out that she could, in fact, add to the house without actually opening the Build Menu and do so for what was essentially free, so long as she was willing to put in the time and effort. And she already had what she’d learned at Nerima under her belt. Adding to her home using Terraria method required what could be thought of as a quick-time manual labor. Or what passed for labor, as it was more a laying a connecting system together. She’d be interested in seeing if she could connect her alterations properly to the original house.

She also noted a persistent “Construction Ability” listed in her stat box right along with Gamer’s Mind and Gamer’s Body. Gamer’s Mind and Gamer’s Body were fully operating, but she was
apparently at about 20% on Construction Ability. Crafting was listed at 10%. Well, okay.

And then there were the general stats, listed in separate tab. In the Sims personality and physical stats were pretty set, but they were also reflective of a different mindset than other roleplaying games. She had that kind of set, but she also had the usual variants of strength and vitality and mana and so on. They appeared not actually be at their limit yet. They were all at various levels, that somehow aligned with other numbers related to her original Magical Girl status. There was also an Alt-Form label, currently greyed out. Which meant, likely, her stats adjusted when she was an Arachne. So essentially she had four different columns representing similar, but different aspects. It wasn’t as confusing as it sounded. Mostly because they had very helpful labels.

For her, the headings beside the numbers were more useful than the pure numbers. Not that she couldn’t figure them out. Of course, she could. But the labels helped her gage what the numbers meant and gave her a mental “range” with which to work. Puny versus Olympic would lead one to think, “Perhaps I should work on that stat a bit,” even without the numbers. Not that she had any “puny,” labels. But she did have a couple of normals.

Then there were the skill tabs, one of which was fully dedicated to the martial arts. The other tabs were different in their displays, with the “Sims” skills tab being more global than the general Skills tab and the Magic Skills tab.

So now she knew there were skill lists and skill trees and she considered what that meant and imagined a lot of time trying to min-max all that. And instantly rejected that as a life path. Sure, she’d try to improve things as she went along, but no. Just… she might be forced to live in a game, but grinding for the sake of the grind was no way to live. She wasn’t going to try to live for the numbers. The thought made her shudder. On the other hand, mastering new things for enjoyment or profit, that might be a lot of fun.

She vaguely heard what sounded like it might be a knock at the door, but it took her a moment to free her attention from investigating some of her new aspects to go answer. By the time she arrived at the door, whoever had knocked was gone.

Taylor shrugged and then closed the door. Then she sat down again and investigated her inventory.

She discovered some basic gear to start; a copper ax, sword, and pickaxe. She also had a piggy bank with wings on it and a few other sundry items from her recent choices. Well, okay.

She verbalized, “Neo!”

The holographic avatar cocked a hip at her and smiled winningly. She said cheerfully, “You have got some awesome upgrades!

“I’m not sure I quite see it that way, but I do find them interesting. I personally think it’s just Joy giving me something to do so I don’t panic.”

“Maybe,” Neo concurred. “Or she’s taking advantage of something that happened to make some improvements for you. See the tab over there. You have an actual spell list now. And it’s not all just cold based. You’ve got some flame spells too. And some cleaning spells and well, just a whole host. I’m not sure what level you’re actually at. I think you’ll need to cast some magic before it’ll let us know what your level is.”

“Huh. That is interesting,” Taylor said. She thought of her new wand and it was suddenly in her
hand, straight from the inventory. “Cool.” She put it back. Then she waved her hand. An apple appeared in her palm. It was pretty, smooth and red.

She took a bite. It was juicy, sweet and tart at the same time; a perfect apple. A memory of what a magical Sim could do with an apple rose in her thoughts and she smiled despite herself. “Hello, my little money maker.”

“Could you do that again?”

She did. And she stored that apple in her inventory.

“One more time, please.”

Another apple appeared and she heard a faint ding.

“Excellent. Well, Taylor, according to this, your Sim spell level is at ten, which is the maximum, but you haven’t practiced the spells so I’d exercise caution anyway. I expect the high number is because you have been actively using your personal magic for a while now, so my suggestion is to find time to practice when you can. You Terrarian mana monitor is currently at 5 stars. You can gain more, just like you can gain health as you find or make the appropriate items to do so. I’ll be sure and point out what you need when you need them. Your … I don’t know what to call it… but the innate magic, the gamer-like magic is adequate for trying new things, but likely needs to be developed too. I think you’ll need to play around a bit with pure mana before I have a good idea of what that means. We’ll have to experiment. I note you purchased the spell book?

“Seemed logical at the time, but honestly, I was picking through while in shock. I have no idea why I bought it.”

“That’s okay, we can practice, right?”

“Oh, absolutely. Maybe not today.” She finished the apple she’d started eating and disposed of it. “That said, Neo, could you see what you could do to… I dunno… spiff up the tab and menus. They’re a bit cluttered. It’s cool and all, but the format is kind of distracting. It’s not quite Sim and it’s not quite an RPG menu.”

“Right. I see what you mean. Give me a little bit to play around with it. I should mention that I see a quest option. You also still have plenty of daylight.” Neo looked thoughtful. “In fact, since you’ve given me some backdoor access, let me give you your first quest.”

A new menu popped up, “You have loads of extra trees around here and wood is useful. Gather some wood, check your inventory and learn how to craft something for some experience points. Accept quest?”

“Sure.” Taylor agreed as she gripped the copper ax that appeared in her hand. “But I don’t want to be bothered by a lot of quest requests if they’re tiny things. You know me pretty well by now Neo. If you think I’d accept a quest, then go ahead. If there’s a question, then let me know. But don’t accept anything that would put me in danger. Inform me of those. And the bigger quests, right.”

“I believe we can manage that, yes. So basically, run the game behind the scenes?”

“Yeah. I mean if I get a cool award, let me know, but I don’t want to have to pause every time I’ve done something or successfully met a goal or something.”
“Why did you pick the quests option, then?”

“I thought it might come in handy.”

Neo laughed. “Okay, Taylor. I’ll manage things behind the scenes, but I’m not going to let you go in blind, either. I’ll put a list of quests where you can check them easily. I’ll manage the small awards, but if there are bigger prizes or events, you’ll need to accept them. My suggestion is to check in the mornings and evenings for a while until we get a feel for things.”

Taylor said, “I can work with that.” She smiled at her holographic friend. “I’m glad you’re still with me, Neo.”

“Me too.”

With that, Taylor stood up. “I think it’s time to find out what happens when I chop a tree around here. I’ll let you get to work on your end.”

Neo popped a quick salute and disappeared and Taylor made her way outside.

It turned out chopping a tree didn’t actually take that long and it wasn’t that difficult, especially since she was already dextrous and strong. The chunks of wood fell and never hit her because they all went straight to the inventory. She even got a few tree seeds that way - not just acorn either.

As she finished, she felt a tug towards the ground. She looked around herself and considered her options. Not wanting to be too obvious about digging holes, she decided to try a little construction, using the Terrarian model. Following the directions given by Neo, the framework laid down quickly. She followed the directions and made a workbench. There was another faint dingding sound. She saw numbers rise in her visor as she accumulated the new experience points. The level bar, with a number one on it, above the hearts moved to the left by about half. Her quest was accomplished.

Okay. That worked. She found it a little hilarious that she was starting at level one, considering her real-life experience, but why the heck not. If you were a game character, you would start where you are.

At the same time, as those points uploaded and the workbench finished settling onto the floor, a message alerted her that her crafting choices had expanded and she should check her crafting tab. Suddenly she had access to wooden equipment, armor, wooden chairs, tables and doors, and other sundry items. The items were displayed as images, but she glanced at them, an information text would display letting her know what was needed to complete the item. She found that interface neat. Now that these new items were available, she had a task she wanted to complete, based on the guiding information she’d been given earlier. She made wooden walls and then filled up the frame, fast nailing them with hardened silk nails so they’d stay solid. Before she knew it, she had the basics of small square cabin-room around herself. It was dark on the inside, except for where the light was let in at the doorway. She made a door but didn’t attach it. She didn’t want to be completely in the dark, even if she actually could see fairly well.

She remembered she had a Magic Lantern and so opened her menu, exploring until she found her pet slot. She moved the item over and suddenly she had a tiny lantern following her around; better than a flashlight and she could see quite well. “Let there be light,” she quipped.

So she attached the door she made and felt quite content with the process.
For fun, she made a chair to put by the workbench. A notice said, “You need a permanent light source to complete the house.” House? She wasn’t building a house. But she also did not currently have an alternate source of light she could use. She had no money and no gel with which to create a torch.

She slapped her forehead, wincing as she put a little too much power into it. But she kind of deserved that one. Then she created an apple and put it on the workbench. Not trusting her wandless cast, since she hadn’t used the spell on her own, she pulled her wand inventory and then pointed it at the apple. She carefully cast the conversion spell, mentally crossing her fingers, while she pushed just a little bit of mana to make it a good one.

A puff of smoke later and she was staring at a red uncut gem. She lifted it and the powers she’d gained from Rocket let her know it was a ruby. Her HUD analysis confirmed it. She was especially grateful that her senses remained, even if Rocket was at home. She knew her mom would take care of her little gem eating tortoise while she was away.

But she also smiled, because now she’d never had to worry about whether she could provide for her pet.

Still, Taylor had a purpose in mind. She set the gem back down on the workbench and opened the buy menu. Then she cackled unbecomingly as she sold the ruby and the chair and then the workbench. It was a small amount, but plenty to buy a nice enough hanging light. She also bought a better chair and made a new workbench and placed it against the wall, instead of smack in the middle of the room. She placed the lamp overhead and then visited the build menu and painted the cabin walls a nice light color so the light would reflect well. Suddenly she was not only not in the dark, but she was also comfortably set. When she exited the build menu, a notice displayed and more experience points rolled across the top of her visor and she went from level one to level two. The room was, according to the notice, a small house fit to live in and she now had points to add to her skills and stats if she so desired.

Weird.

Deciding she didn’t want to play around with stats and skills at the moment, she felt ready to attempt the dig. It was almost a compulsion, so she had to be right above the cache of metal. She put the hole in the ground in the middle of the floor, and then laid a platform over part of it so no one would fall in accidentally. She figured she’d make a proper trap door later when she had time and the option to do so. But as she dug down and realized the cache was further down than she suspected, she opted to head back to her “real” house to grab a quick cold shower.

In this case, four arms would be better. Also, she needed a better tool and that she could make. When she was done with the bath, she went back to the building with the workbench and used the wood to create more pickaxes, which she then sharpened with hardened and sharpened silk. By the time she was done, the ground pretty much gave up resisting her. Even the copper one was much improved.

She began digging, moving quickly. As she followed her senses down and then a bit east. She created a silk ladder along the way and laid a few platforms so she could cross without hopping. Though she had no problem doing so and her silk made swinging around the larger cavern she found, super easy. She found the swath of copper her senses had indicated and dug it out. Then she because she had an orderly mind, she refilled the hole she made with the dirt she’d somehow accumulated along the way. She had more than enough. She also had a lot of stone, but her help menu indicated it was useful for building, so she kept it.
She checked the time and realized only a couple of hours had passed. It was nearing noon. She felt filthy, hungry, and she needed to chop some more wood for a couple of things she wanted to do. But the reason she even checked the time was that it had pinged a danger notice.

That’s when she encountered the large blue jelly, bouncing its way in her direction. She didn’t mean to kill it but kill it she did. And what was left of the creature promptly dropped a copper piece and a gel piece, which was sucked toward her as if she were a vacuum and disappeared into her inventory. She felt one copper richer. And she found a moment of hilarity in that; giggling helplessly. So, she had simoleans and she had actual RPG coins. She wondered what would happen if she’d gathered Yen or Dollars and actually, genuinely hoped she would find out soon.

She made a few torches because now she could. Her inner helper indicated that these torches would stay lit and so she plunked one onto a wall and enjoyed the extra light. Then she killed another jelly monster. At first, she thought they were just being particularly aggressive, but then she realized, they were heading toward a pond and she was just in the way. She used a few torches and planks over it and noticed that the fish seemed quite active. Where the jellies were just bouncers, the piranhas were a bit more vicious.

She’d read once that piranhas were actually not as bloodthirsty as people assumed unless there was a reason to frenzy, but she couldn’t say that was true about these things. She ended up killing a few of the bitey fish, getting a small amount of change for it. More fish of different types swam around in the water, which had a good depth to it, for a cavern. She could see, in the distance a small fall that fed the waters but wasn’t sure where the fish were coming from unless there was some connection to the outside somehow.

It was a puzzle, but not one she cared to try to solve just yet. She decided she’d managed to get what she’d come for and had explored enough under the ground and went back the way she came. (She was nowhere near thinking of her little plot of Simlandia as home).

She spent the rest of the afternoon chopping wood, gathering ore that was close to the ground and then filling the hole back in so no one would get tripped up, encountering random creatures, including more jelly monsters that seemed suicidal. Then she got a ping on her “collector’s” GPS in her HUD, which led to some wandering about the neighborhood and park. She found all sorts of interesting things, seeds, gems, butterflies, a few beetles, flowers that her crafting menu said would come in handy and a couple of ores that she didn’t have to dig out of the ground. The real score, however, was a literal treasure chest, where she found five gold coins, some lead bars, and a healing potion. Neo indicated that the treasure chest might respawn content if left alone long enough, given that she seemed to be in a mix of the Sims and Terraria. But she also found that she could inventory the treasure chest once it was empty. That eventually led her to decide to try to add a stone room to her house.

It was a convoluted mental path, but generally, the idea was she wanted a room to work that was closer to her real house and she had enough stone she felt pretty confident she could do it. Plus, she was still feeling experimental. She wanted to know if building the frame against her house would make a new room or if she’d get stuck with a blocky “mini” house again.

She was relieved to see that she could successfully connect the two (or was it three… no it had to be four if she counted the web-based construction she knew) methods successfully. The stone essentially snapped to the wall of the house, forming a framework. Then she put the chest down and built her third workman’s table, then a forge and anvil to go with it. She needed to make the walls, and she made stone walls that filled out the room properly and allowed her to connect the forge to the
wall. She built a few shelves to go along with that. And, then, bought a light and a fire alarm from
the buy menu. She also bought another couch with a fold out bed, setting it against the other wall so
she’d have a comfy place to relax or have a guest if she wanted. After all, she was in a three-
dimensional space, not a two dimensional one.

Then she painted the wall, tiled the floor and felt quite happy with things. Especially when Taylor
realized she had somehow accumulated enough money to buy some windows and a better door to
the outside. She was super glad that it was all working together so well.

The sun was on a downward swing so she knew it was time to get some shopping done and get a
few groceries before it got dark. She heated up some water and gave herself a good splash.

When she stepped out of her front door, she noticed a bucket of school marketing materials, a
newspaper, and a couple of notes of welcome from her neighbors.

She grinned despite herself. One of her least favorite aspects of the “first day” of simming had
always been the disruption of having to talk with the neighbors and then try to get rid of them later.
Now she didn’t have that worry.

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A/N

The Jumps in Effect:

Sims 3: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1qb0_O1hDrDcI9DR2lRS0Rrclk/view
Terraria: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_06wh93xfKQOTNpU29rTjh6OGc/view
The Gamer: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5-2fmC98oF_MGlzRENxcGQ2bTA/view
The grocer wasn’t that far away and so Taylor walked. She noticed people moving with a bit more pep than might be expected for an evening crowd but did not really think anything of that. However, she also noticed she randomly accumulated more money along the way. The auto pick-up setting was doing its job quite effectively. It wasn’t a lot of Simoleons, but it did add up. She was glad to see that could enter the store as normal and so she grabbed a cart and got to shopping. An announcement about closing times was made just as she swung up to the cashiers.

The cashier said, “Great timing.” Or rather, that’s what Taylor heard. She realized the other woman was speaking Simlish.

Even more interesting was that Taylor was able to reply. “I try,” she said. She laid out the goods and watched as everything got tabulated. She had just enough to pay for it.

“Remember, if you call early enough, we do deliver. The number is on the receipt and you can always visit our website,” the cashier said with a friendly wave.

“Good to know!” Taylor replied easily. “Have a great night!”

The cashier smiled back. “You too.”

Taylor heard a ding in the background as she finished a socialization quest.

She tucked things into her inventory and was glad to see that the bags went in whole and did not dump the food into the available slots. That was what she had been hoping for. She’d have to test with various things like boxes versus treasure chests to find out what worked, but if she could get the inventory to accept storage items as legit items of their own, then she had some good options.

Blithely she started home.

The street lights were on, even though there was still plenty of light - well, maybe for Taylor. She was still being followed by her lantern. Outside the zone of the streetlights, it was likely dark enough for the average person. Taylor decided that while she wasn’t entirely tired, maybe it was time to go home and get some rest.

Along the way, she met her first Zombie. It wasn’t the plant Zombie that she knew the Sims had, but an actual grr-arr brain-seeking the-night-of-the-living-awful zombie. She didn’t even realize she’d summoned her magical sword until the monster was in pieces and coins popped into the coin slots, which were labeled PL, G, S, C. There was also a section for “Residual Cash” with a ¥ and a $ sign. The Yen section indicated the amount she’d had in her wallet when she was transferred into this new reality. Then there was the § for Simoleon and that indicated the amount she had gained so far selling various items or had somehow trawled from her auto loot. She didn’t know how that all worked, but now she wondered what would happen if she killed one of the plant Zombies. Would she get Simoleons or would she get coins? And could she use coins to buy stuff in her buy menu? (The answer, she later learned was a definite yes being able to use coins and she never got around to actually killing a Plant-based Zombie. Those she just learned to cure.)

She encountered a couple more of the bad kind of zombies and one proper plant zombie. The plant zombie saw her, saw the sword, moaned in fear and then wisely shuffled away. Apparently, they still had a few levels of smart. She could respect that. Aside from being a nuisance, the plant zombies
were mostly harmless. The non-plant zombies, on the other hand, weren’t fast, but they were surprisingly numerous and straightforwardly dangerous. She never was surrounded, but they did seem to just keep moving onward as if they had some sort of destination; at least until dawn. She had no idea where they were going or even how it was they disappeared a dawn.

Then there were the flying eyeballs. They were massive things with long bloody tendrils. Sometimes they had eyelids and sometimes they didn’t. They bounced off random objects and had weird flight patterns. They could hurt a person, but they were also fairly easy to kill.

If she were at home, she’d be doing the magical transformation by now and smiting things. But she was already very fast and these might be a hassle, but she’d seen worse. She just kept the sword handy and walked on, slicing and dicing as she went along.

As she continued she heard a whistling sound, looked up and a star-shaped object dropped to the ground in front of her. The auto pickup did its job, tickled and suddenly she had a bright little star in her inventory. A notice let her know that three stars could be made into a mana repository at the workbench, which she could consume or later sell to Alchemists. That was nifty.

By the time she got home, her clothes were gory and she felt dirty, even if she was technically everclean. She had accumulated four other stars, though she hadn’t crafted anything yet. She put the groceries away, noting that the condition of the items within had been well preserved. Good to know.

She got another shower and then dropped into bed.

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In the morning she lactated. With no pump, she had to work everything by hand. She used glasses and asked Neo to see if there were pumps that could be purchased. That was legit something she hadn’t been prepared for.

She drank one of the cups of milk and then let the rest go. She could save some, but she had no caps and no way to preserve it really. She didn’t put any out, because then she didn’t want to attract any of the more dangerous critters.

Then she set about getting a few things done.

Taylor couldn’t say her days were super organized, but over the next couple of weeks, she spent time exploring the sim world, visiting the museums, finding the library, visiting various stores and the beach. The fortune teller there recommended a place that sold alchemical potions and actually told a really good fortune. Taylor also spent time finding collectibles, crafting new things, improving her home, practicing her magic. It was a little random, but aside from killing various kinds of creatures, she was having a pretty good time.

Then someone tried to kidnap her. They weren’t too good at it and at first, she thought they were a burglar, given how they dressed. But they mentioned that there was a reward for her listed on a specific market. That is, they mentioned it once Bonehilda got done turning them into a human pretzel and Taylor proved she could actually make it worse. The end result wasn’t pretty. But the cops carried the bad person off fairly easily and with a lot of derision and Taylor was now aware that there were people with less than kind interests in her person - if not why they wanted her.

She also now knew about something called the Abyss Auction. After some research, Neo determined Taylor actually had an account active. The catalog wasn’t an internal thing like Taylor’s Buy option. It needed a computer to access. Being paranoid, Taylor didn’t want Neo to do a direct
exploration, so she bought a high-end PC as an intermediary device, which made Neo happy. Then they explored the auction catalog in an effort to find out if she could buy the contract out.

It turned out that the cost was a good amount above what she could afford at the moment. That had been disappointing, but also kind of obvious in hindsight. But she had never been a person to go down easily. The description was laughably vague and she suspected that whoever had her in their sights really didn’t know a lot about her - despite her Slut Life aspect. Still no sense in not being careful.

The zombies had been reason enough to build tall walls, but Taylor had enough room on her land, despite the original size of her house, so she went a little fortification and trap mad after that. Castle-like stone fences wrapped around her yard and she bought an alarm system.

As she learned new things, she did new things. She emplaced all sorts of traps, lethal and non, with the soporific darts and the misdirectional walls being the mildest and the lava and freezing pits being some of the worst. She found that for some reason, she liked the swing saws the best though. It might’ve been the buzzing noise they made. She found them oddly soothing.

Her house had grown and she’d redesigned things so it was easier to get from point a to point b because she noticed she was having problems navigating a few times. She’d rolled her eyes at that realization, because, of course, it was a game world issue. But now she had two stories and a basement. The first level was the basic living and crafting level. The second was the sleeping and entertainment level. The basement was more esoteric. She’d purchased an actual cauldron.

Over time she accumulated spell books and magical wands while she wandered. While she found a few tomes with spells in them - as in readable spells - she also found a few that acted as the spell when opened. Thus, a book of fire, was, well… a book that spat fireballs. The wands were the same way. They either were straight up focuses of power or they were the enchanted device. Focus wands could only be used by people with magical power. But enchanted wands or books could be used by anyone.

For instance, the chain lightning wand was devastating in anyone’s hands.

Over time, she eventually began making special podiums and boxes for the magical items before shunting the great majority to her warehouse. No way was she selling them to let someone else use against her. The ones she liked she kept handy and she practiced with them.

She practiced her martial arts every morning and her magical arts in the evening or vice versa if the spell or enchantment needed a particular time of day to operate. During the time she was otherwise awake, she did everything else, including making some very valuable potions, cut gems, smelted ores, various items of interest and more surprisingly, laying down rail for faster transport to places underground. She was very glad Bonehilda was a good housekeeper because she kept Taylor fed and her house clean.

One would have expected doing all of this to be grueling, but with the aid of Neo and her inner helper, she had a pretty good idea of how to manage the tasks themselves and she didn’t actually require a lot of sleep. Four hours a night and she was usually pretty good to go. Longer nights were nice, but staying too long in bed reminded her of what was missing.

She really needed to buy a better bed. Or make one.

Somewhere during that time, a merchant moved into the tiny house she’d originally built. He said he couldn’t pay her yet, but he offered advice and good deals on some products. Because it was good practice, and because she felt bad about the whole sleeping bag thing, she gave him a second story
with a bathroom and a bedroom and added a kitchen to the main story. Neo hinted she should build another tiny house. So she did and a nurse moved in and said to call her Claire. She ended up doing something similar for her, revising the layout so she could perform her duties locally if she needed to.

Taylor hadn’t had a lot of time to develop relationships to the point other sims were willing to “woohoo.” So she became very good at entertaining herself. But Nurse Temple was more than a sympathetic ear, she was an interested and interesting person. She flirted with Taylor fairly regularly - when not offering to heal for a price. Taylor warmed up to the other woman because she really, really missed cuddle time with her companions and she missed the intimacy of being with someone.

A part of her held back because she didn’t want to make things complicated. Everything she was doing she considered temporary. She had confidence that she would be returned to her family. On the other hand, maybe that was a good reason to try approaching romance differently and just appreciate the time she had with someone.

Thus, one day, she said yes, after some explanation of where she was coming from and why. Claire seemed to understand more than Taylor expected and said none of that should stop them from enjoying time together. And so, Taylor had a wonderful time, while trying to make sure Claire also enjoyed herself. Later, when Taylor had time and Claire was willing, they woohooed where they could, experimenting with locations and giving each other lots of warm cuddles.

As Taylor explored she rebuilt Terrarian style houses in the depth of the caverns as well above ground. More people moved in, underground or otherwise. One day she found that she’d managed to dig all the way to one of the other islands, where a “living tree” (not that they weren’t all living, but this one had unique properties), existed and she found a very nifty set of tools, including a special loom. She built a treehouse, just because she could.

She explored the island a bit. That’s when the largest group of wannabe kidnappers she’d encountered so far tried their hand at capturing the “lone and unprotected,” Taylor. They realized their mistake when a horde of giant spiders overran them, followed by devastating cursing spells that scorched the earth and ruined their health. The kidnappers regretted everything and she let them because it would have been a mercy to let them die. She wanted the message passed along and made sure they knew it. For every extra attempt, she’d do something worse. Then she banished them away, scattering them hither and yon and far away from her, without any personal regrets at all.

Then it was a matter of duty as she fixed the problems she had caused. Taylor had to cast numerous spells to keep the corruption from spreading and then she had to cast more to cleanse things. But she managed it, clearing out the whole island again. She hoped she got down low enough, but the flying pincer monster things stopped appearing, so she thought she had it all cured. In the end, she left stronger in her power than she’d arrived.

When she got home, a Dryad had moved into the latest “apartment,” she’d built. Realizing things were getting a bit crowded, Taylor took a step to fix things up. She bought the property next door, expanded the wall and then rebuilt new abodes for everyone, making things a bit more old_town like. She had to admit, her house looked less house-like and more castle. But it was still fairly small, because she lived alone, with only Bonehilda and Neo for company.

As more time passed, she learned a lot of new skills, growing them both naturally and artificially. She purchased a learning machine and spent time with it. Not a lot at a single go, because this was one of the machines that could really backfire. But she learned cool things like cooking, handiness, how to play the guitar… She liked spending a few minutes a day with it and the “level ups,” really made a difference in the quality of her life. She learned that good food made life very pleasant, playing music could be very satisfying, and if she was willing to practice, she could learn all sorts of
things - even how to play chess properly.

She scuba dived and found even more treasure, including a beautiful old oil lamp. The genie was absolutely unexpected, but he was also very kind. So she was kind in return. She tended to favor happiness based wishes anyway.

She made friends with a fisherman, who sent her on ridiculous quests, but her angling got really good. That was helped along as she improved the quality of her equipment and the bait. She found it restful to fish, even when the zombies marched their nightly march and tried to disturb her. She learned strategies for dealing with them passively so she could spend her time the way she wanted.

She killed a lot of creatures and bad guys. She tried not to, but events tended to lead that way. Goblins came from nowhere and attacked her fortified home. Different kinds of monsters could be found in different places. The deep underground had elemental monsters and giant worms of doom. The worms moved so quick they were hard to wrangle, but eventually, she got one and then it got easier and her swarm portfolio grew; because she could store terrariums and she knew how to make really big ones.

During her explorations, Taylor found an ancient temple where she was warned off entering until night time, due to a curse.

She waited and talked with the old guy, learning a few new things about the world she inhabited. She actually enjoyed herself quite a bit. He was a bit of a fashionista and reminded her a lot of Crystal. Things went well until the dusk arrived and the night sky took over. The man grunted and tried to warn her off. Her visor had been blinking warnings almost as soon as the sun had set. She was ready.

The magical girl transformation took him by surprise and then when he passed out and a skeleton arose out of his body, she wallop the giant thing with great abandon; taking out her general fury at so many things on the villainous creature. When the Skeletron was finally crushed, she breathed easier and noticed that the old man was gone. But she got a notification of a new clothier in town and she was able to enter the old temple. There she delved into her first “real” dungeon, avoiding sharp objects, leaping across vast spaces and generally dealing with the skeletons and other spooks that inhabited the place. She gained loads of treasure, but only because she’d found random keys along the way. In the meantime, her library expanded massively with that single outing. That was where she learned about “skill” books.

Those were regular looking books that, if she chose, were enspelled to provide instant access to skills based on the contents and context of the book.

Thus, a book on armor crafting improved her skill in making such a thing.

Wow. Just wow.

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More weeks passed, then months. Taylor discovered new places, found and sold treasures and mystic works, and visited locations around the world, which she could now afford to do. In Egypt, the pyramids were slightly more dangerous than one would expect. In France, she learned to make the Sim version of wine called Nectar. In Shang Simla, she took the final steps to gain her mastery of the sim version of martial arts.

She had good days and excellent days and then some terrible ones. The blood moon rose every few months (reminding her a bit of Endbringer alarms and tensions) and it made anything with even a
touch of bloodlust excitable. The werewolves were out of control and she tried not to kill them as most days they were fine, but there were those who refused to do the commonsense things like locking themselves up for a night. The vampires had loads of ways to control their appetites, so they had no excuses either. Even the plant Zombies got excitable during the blood moon.

She cast a lot of sunshine and curative spells on those nights.

As fortified as her home was, there shouldn’t have been any problem, but the blood moons had creatures coming out of the woodwork; sometimes literally. Her people, or rather her neighbors, fought hard, but things got ugly and people got hurt. Claire patched people up left and right, while the Dryad raised the protective wards.

Taylor took on her Arachne form and then magical-girled it, just so make sure she was working at her best. And then, to protect her property from damage, she magicked the space.

Except, it was different somehow. She couldn’t put her finger on it. It felt the same as when she usually created a safe space, but it also felt off. Then she was too busy fighting monsters to care or understand what had happened. The auto loot did its job so she never noticed that the drops had changed in a subtle kind of way. The zombies seemed dumber, but she figured that had to be the blood moon, and the bad guys just seemed to be out in force.

Then, after slaughtering a whole bunch of zombie executives, there was the towering giant combo-zombie she had to beat. It was massive, but she had experience killing giant things now, quite a bit. When it fell it dispersed into sparkles, which was unusual - but game bosses, right? The auto loot picked up the money and the prizes. Her visor asked if she wished to dismiss the instant dungeon.

That’s when she learned she had a different kind of dungeon to work with. She would have to be careful with her intentions and spells, she suddenly realized.

When her first instant dungeon broke she found her yard was still a mess but the houses and people were fine. The mess was from before she made the dungeon, which did help them, but apparently had separated her from the group and caused genuine worry.

She apologized to Claire with a lot of kisses.

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New crafting options, ones not requiring a workbench, opened up for her. She still used the bench, because it was handy. Her workshop had expanded considerably over time as there were other tools - bigger forges, kilns, sawmills, and other sundry crafting spaces. Her kitchen acquired an iron pot that looked a lot like the one she used for magic, except maybe a little smaller. She had kegs for brewing and several potion and alchemical stations. Rather than running around town for all the materials, she now had her garden and her fishing pool.

The new drops from the instant dungeon were made differently, but she was an adequate seamstress now; not perfect, but she could do it well and was getting better.

She had gained an amazing assortment of skills, both sim and otherwise. One set of skills required that she have a specific job and she was so amused by that she had to do it. So she learned how to do stage magic. She didn’t focus all her efforts there, but each performance got a little better and she liked entertaining the kids a lot. Fairies, in particular, seemed to really appreciate the illusions. She also got a nifty uniform out of it, one with a very decorative top hat. She could hardly wait to put on a show for her family. But improvement on those skills only happened when she had time to focus on it.
Her construction and crafting bars had moved up quite steadily. She mastered things like pottery and smelting. She could do incredible things with ores. She became very good at creating armor and she made sure her neighbors had some good quality armor to wear during the next blood moon.

She also learned to build houses in the sky, where the zombies were much less able to reach. She couldn’t get too high though, because then there were mythical creatures that made themselves known. But she learned odd little landscaping skills with cloud-stuff that she used to float her fortress, and so that which was on the ground changed. The height not only helped her people and herself, but it stymied the bad guys.

Not that the kidnappers were as enthusiastic in chasing her around as they had been. They had learned that numbers didn’t help them, “trapping” did not help them, trying to keep her in an instant dungeon definitely did not help them.

And Taylor always, always escalated when they tried. The amount in the auction for her capture rose and rose, so she knew people would keep on trying, but she made them regret it so, so much. Word was getting around, even if she didn’t quite know it.

She’d discovered the giant underground queens and their hives and that changed her life. The first one she’d encountered had been this massive fluffy thing of yellow and black and adorable - at least in Taylor’s eyes. She gained enough control that it allowed her to fly on its back, a little slow, but always steady. She gained special goggles in her inventory so she could call it to her any time.

But now she not only had giant spiders under her control, worms of enormous scale and bitey-ness, but swarms of immense bees, as well as the weapons related to those; beenades, beeguns. When she found the armor, she had to giggle. She cackled far too much in that set of armor, she knew she did.

She did gain better and stronger armor along the way, of course, but for a while, her would-be kidnappers encountered a Spider-Bee Queen and she knew it was horrifying by the way they responded. Add in the spells that conjured even more bees and wasps (Mellifera Attackum) and wands that grew them larger and meaner. Then there were the other terrible spells she knew - and had no problem using - Heavus Ho, Corpus Fleshicus, Servantus Attackum, Tabula Rasa, Hunger, bladder and hygiene curses and the Pestilence Curse… This didn’t even begin to include all the things she could do with ice. Bad guys around her tended to experience very terrible moments.

It wasn’t all fun and games for her though. The longer she remained the stronger her opponents got. Part of her success lay in the ability she had to learn from them, thanks to Anything Goes School of Martial Arts. She copied a lot of moves, both mundane and magical. But her strongest learning by that method was probably something she could least explain that happened while she was in Sim-China.

A Master of a mystical art managed to trap her in an instant dungeon. She had only just begun to call in the spiders when the other woman went still and lifted her arms to her sides. Then like a magical girl transformation, she grew bark and leaves. Taylor stalled, despite herself, appropriately horrified.

Because she’d heard stories like this. “Am I so terrifying?” she said, feeling a bit of her ego wobble.

The older woman smiled at her, “No child. But your mistake is to think I am your enemy.”

“You trapped me in here.”

Her feet became roots. “I stopped others from coming in, so you might learn. Plus, I heard you were dangerous. I have spent weeks, observing you, so I know this is true. I also know you are diligent and kind. I offer this lesson as a gift.”
“What lesson?” Taylor said, dismounting the bee and not yet in her spider form.

“The gift of discovering your connections,” the tree whispered and then grew silent. She watched as grass and flowers grew up around the tree, as its roots expanded. Then another tree grew and another and another until she was fully surrounded.

Then the forest reached out to her, speaking. “I know that a part of you sees this world as a game, and maybe it is, but it is also a living breathing thing.” A deer with curling horns leaped in front of Taylor, startling her to raise her hands defensively. The flowers turned in her direction.

Taylor felt a deep moment of loss and dropped her hands. “You remind me of my sisters.”

The forest stilled a moment as if a little shocked. “That… wasn’t quite the reaction I expected.” The Master stepped out of the tree, but the tree remained upright and strong. Taylor could feel the power around her, both ki and magic. She felt the speed of the other woman when she approached her.

Taylor glanced around the forest. “So do I need to destroy the forest to destroy you?” she asked. “I mean if we’re fighting.”

The other woman laughed then. “Now that is the reaction I expected. We’re not fighting yet. And that would be telling. I will give you a hint though. I have formed a ring of power around us. It’s my power. You have yours, but my power will continue to grow, while yours will diminish. If we fought, power to power, what would happen?”

“I’d have to rely on torches and my very sharp ax, but even I have limits. It would be a race. I couldn’t say who would win, but I know I am at full mana and full health now. I could give a good go.”

Taylor let herself draw a little of her power to her hands, not spending it, but so she could show that she had it.

“You’ve studied under other masters.”

“I have. I miss them.” Taylor said. Then, just to see her reaction. “I miss the sex too.” Only the word came out woohoo because she was in the Sims. “Though I do love the time I’ve spent with Claire. But my libido is not a small thing.”

The other woman laughed but didn’t look shocked. Rather, she suddenly looked thoughtful. “That is … one way to pass on knowledge.”

Then the green-skinned woman smiled and offered her hand. “Would you care for an exchange of knowledge.”

This time it was Taylor’s turn to be taken aback. But it didn’t take her too long. Worst case scenario, she could poison the other person by getting close. Best case, she learned something new and gain an ally in this world. She hoped she wasn’t being led into danger, but she already was there.

“Who are you?”

The woman’s smile warmed. “Think of me as one of your Mothers.”

Taylor wasn’t exactly sure what to make of that, but the humorous look on the other woman’s face made her laugh. She took her hand.

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If someone asked her what the experience was like Taylor might not have been able to describe things adequately. For one thing, there were the Sim blocks on the experience. For the other, the woohooing was beautiful in its simple commonalities; in that bodies moved, kisses were given, woohoo was made. She remembered things in flashes; The pressure of the other woman’s hands on her, the way her milk tasted sweet like honey and flowers, the feel of her and the gorgeous strength in her and in the final surrender.

Making woohoo with the Master of the grove was different on several levels and it likely was one of the most spiritual experiences Taylor felt. When the Mother said knowledge would be shared, she meant it and it was too much. Taylor was pretty sure she’d forgotten the great majority of what she’d been given. She could honestly say she left the space a different woman than she’d gone in.

Later, on the cloud where her fortress dwelled, a magical forest grew. It was Taylor's first, so it was small, but it wouldn’t be her last.

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More time passed, her fortress became a kind of enclave and one of the safest places in the world.

It had been hard going. The world had its heroes, its magic users, and its martial artists, but the dangers were on a scale reminiscent of Earth Bet and somehow, she often ended up fighting alone.

Thus, it was Taylor, on her own, that defeated the Wall of Flesh after a cult sacrificed a particular living doll. That had been a fully and utterly horrifying experience and she felt more frightened than she had in a very, very long time. She feared she would fail, but knew she couldn't because the whole world was at stake. Everything in her had wanted to run, but that's when she relied most on her past experiences - the one where she'd had the similar dreads and she stayed, chasing the monster until she’d killed it dead.

Taylor slept for days afterward.

When she awoke everything changed. Good things were aggressively good. Bad things were aggressively bad. The "boss" monsters were bigger and meaner. But after the Wall of Flesh, she was far less afraid of them than average persons. Freaking Unicorns chased ‘unpure’ Sims around fully intending to kill them and this absolutely included herself. She ended up having to create actual moats of lava with stone drawbridges to keep the things out of her garden. And if she killed them back, the magical community got all up in arms about it.

Getting called a Dark Witch was just icing on her cake. Taylor saves the world one day, she’s a hero. She kills a unicorn the next to avoid getting skewered and she’s a bad guy. This happened often enough that she was pretty sure the magical community was just a little crazy. But it wasn’t like she hadn’t been accused of villainy before. Still, how was it her fault for using self-defense? It wasn’t like she was hunting unicorns to eat them, but she was warming to the idea. Pests, the lot of them. Her insects were much more well behaved and they tended to solve the dueling problem presented by irate witches before things really got started anyhow.

Life went on. Claire was killed. It wasn’t anything that Taylor had or hadn’t done. Claire took nursing seriously and had gone to see the wounded and bad guys still did bad things. But it was a deep blow to Taylor. She didn’t even have a chance to try to spend her flower.

Then Taylor heard whispers about how to get someone back and she tracked down a few books and articles describing various resurrection methods - pros and cons. The risk: Zombies and Amnesia. The success: Claire returns. However, as she read on, she discovered other methods and one was actually very simple. If Claire returned as a ghost, she could be fed ambrosia and return as a person,
but there might be a little amnesia - not enough they wouldn’t be friends. And that was important to Taylor. But, ultimately, it would have to be Claire’s choice.

Ambrosia required definite preparation and a good ability to fish because she needed to acquire the Deathfish, which required several different fish previous to that. She ended up creating a special pool near the enclave’s graveyard and then seeded the small lake with a fish spawner from the Build menu. After all, it couldn’t just be Deathfish, there had to Angelfish and Alley fish...

Then the recipe required the life fruit, which was a bit finicky and required several generations of the plant to optimize. It had to be watered consistently, fertilized and maintained. And guarded, because that fruit was one of the reasons the Unicorns and Plant Zombies kept trying to cross her defenses. Jerks.

Then it was stocking up on the ingredient and mastering the recipe.

She had one point where she wondered if she ought to just try to raise the zombie of Claire and cure her. But then she’d heard that raised and cured Zombies had to start from scratch in their relationships.

She didn’t want Claire to forget her and she wanted her to have the choice.

Taylor knew she had the recipe right when she tested the ambrosia and suddenly the world felt brighter, better, happier, amazing. She shared the joy with loads of Get Happy casts at random Sims and Beautificus Locus until the enclave fairly shone with light to the outside Sim World.

People started visiting just to get in on the happy vibe. A party started with balloons and streamers seeming to float all around. Bunnies and birds and happy creatures puttered about. It was all very Disney for a few days.

Then on a clear, moonlit night, when all the vibes were shiny Claire rose from her grave. She was happy to see Taylor and Taylor was just as ecstatic. The younger woman offered the plate, but the ghost pushed it away. She caressed Taylor’s face. A notice appeared over her head. “I will see you again, but not in this life. I have places I must go. Be well, my sweet. I am happy. You made me happy. I have no regrets.”

Taylor cried, but she’d already grieved. The ghost of Claire kissed her. Then a light dropped down and she disappeared upward.

Taylor went home alone. But she ate the ambrosia and the sadness went away like magic.

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Taylor knew she still had far to go in terms of improvement, but at the same time, she was pleased with her personal progress. She missed her family, but Neo and Bonehilda were solid friends and helpers and so was the Traveling Merchant. She accomplished a lot and ultimately didn’t need the Ambrosia to keep happy. (Though it sure didn’t hurt…)

Taylor accumulated more powerful armor and items, either through discovery or making them. She loved using wings now that she could make her own. She flew over the landscape as both her human self and her Arachne self. She wasn’t expecting a fan base or the paparazzi that started following her, but she’d achieved fame for several monster fights and for defeating the Moon Lord.

Now that… was a fight to remember. She’d longed for her team then.

Longed.
Because fighting an ancient space demon was … more fun than might be expected, but stressful in ways that were incredible and indescribable. The invasion alone was nerve-wracking and it had taken everything she’d had and then extra she didn’t know she had and then a little more before it was all done.

And yet, it was finished one day and the world she’d come to love knew it well. The celebration lasted for days.

After that, Taylor spent a few weeks until the corruption was completely pacified and the enchanted forest was sequestered so regular people could live. Things started getting good and she had time to actually focus on her stage magician job long enough she got some real stage props.

It was when things had settled down enough that the good days were the norm that Taylor got the notice. It had been about ten years. “Make sure you have the displacer unit on you or nearby. We’re going to attempt to retrieve you.” This would be easier than when she arrived, as the module was actually smaller than when she arrived, though it glowed more. She didn’t know if the inventory counted as keeping it near, so she kept it on her as a necklace. She didn’t know how safe that actually was, but she had a medical bay in her warehouse for a reason.

Taylor had plenty of time to break down her crafting lab, gather her furnishings, gather loads of materials and bank them away; days and days, in fact. until the great majority of her personal effects and accomplishments were a memory. All the banners were stored, waiting for their next residence. All her armor and the weapons and the wings and the boots and the servobot she built were all stored away. The awards she was given for saving the world twice were put in special presentation cases. She pushed everything into the warehouse, except for items she might need if things “went bad.”

She had her best hamaxe and pickaxe, her best magical tools, bags loaded with her favorite wood, stone, and smelted ores, seeds, and other materials. She had her favorite magical armor. Her magic lantern which was always with her. Her bee goggles and the pirate ship she captured. She had the infinite water and lava buckets and her piggy bank, which had more stuff, including food, fish bait, and the Deathflowers she’d found over time.

All that she had left, all that made the castle her home at the moment were simple furnishings that she bought that qualified it. She had a place to rest, to clean up, to cook and to eat. She could entertain herself endlessly merely by stepping out of the fortress and exploring the town.

Thus, it was on one such perambulation that the displacer module activated and she was returned home; changed, but in a good way.

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Chapter 33

Worm: Joyride: Chapter 33

The tug of the magic seemed much more powerful than she recalled. Taylor reappeared almost exactly from where she’d disappeared and, very oddly, she appeared almost exactly as she had appeared before, a Magical Arachne Girl. Except now her armor seemed to glow, even more, sparkling with a powerful enchanted glow. Taylor looked incredibly intimidating, with two swords crossed at her back and a stance that indicated she was prepared to fight. Before she only had the visor. Now she had a helmet crafted around the visor and armor on all her legs and her covering her vulnerable spots.

She stared around as a young woman in blue and white shouted, “We did it! She’s back!”

Beside her was someone who looked very much like her sister, who started to move upright from a bent position, where she’d obviously been observing a magical process.

No one else was in the room, but Taylor still moved cautiously, observing everything first - from the wreckage of the office space to the black spot that her comment box said was all that was left of the monster, to the two women who remained outside the summoning circle that she occupied. She red the commentary about both the Sailor Senshi and her sister, which caused a brief smile before she moved so rapidly neither Mercury (Ami) nor Adept (Crystal) had time to react.

She gathered Adept (Crystal) and carried her up the wall, pulling her about as close as a human could be pulled without being crushed against armor and then she began to kiss her - forehead, cheeks, nose, lips. The lips lingered the longest, as she deeply kissed the other young woman with the stored up longing she had. Each kiss sweetened with the last, with Taylor’s smile widening with each one. “Missed you. Missed you so much.”

Taylor was mindful that there would have been a time that she would not have been able to hide just how happy she was from her sister, even with the magic of her clothes. But time had been her friend. She might have aged back a little, but the sim life had given her more physical control. She could be and would be patient.

Adept stopped the kiss, by grasping Weaver’s face with her hands and then pulling away. “How long?” she asked.

Taylor shrugged and said softly, “I don’t know. Ten years maybe?”

Her sister’s eyes widened. “Were you alone the whole time?”

Taylor leaned in, inhaling her scent, sighing as the familiar smells set something right within. “Claire was with me for a while. But…”

“Claire,” Adept said, gently tasting the depth of the word.

“My lover for a while and my friend. She was beautiful and kind.”

“But?” Taylor could hear the dread and the honest caring in her sister’s voice.

“She was killed during one of the great battles. Healers gotta heal. Even if it’s in the middle of a fight,” Weaver shrugged, unable to take the explanation further.
“T… Weaver,” Crystal said, leaning her forehead against Taylor’s. She held her close for a moment. Then she pulled away, knowing they had to face practicalities. “We have to let everyone know you’re back. So that means we need to go back to the floor. Also, tell Mercury thank you. She did most of the work.”

Despite herself, Taylor chuckled. She kissed Crystal one more time before flip-dropping down to the ground - with Adept in her arms - in front of the other young woman. “Thank you, Senshi Mercury, for bringing me back.” She let her sister stand on her feet and then Taylor reached to her neck and pulled off the necklace, holding it out by the silver chain to the magical girl, while one of her other arms still held onto her sister. “Here is the Module, safe and sound.”

The young woman smiled back, a little teary from having witnessed the beautiful if unusual reunion. “It was my pleasure,” she said. “I learned.” She paused and nodded to Adept. “We learned, a great deal trying to find you. I apologize that it took so long.” Then she took the necklace.

Taylor nodded. “I learned a lot too. I didn’t mind the adventure too much, but it was lonely without my loved ones. Try not to lose this, eh,” she said with a kind smile. She was very happy to be returned home.

“Of course,” Mercury said firmly. She held it up, impressed with the jewel work that attached to it. “It’s supposed to be used with a computer so the portal opens where it is supposed to go. Without that, it just,” She swung the pendant a little, before folding up the chain and then put it away. She shrugged. “Thank you for returning it in such good condition. Fortunately, the source magic always leaves a trail that can be tracked. That is how we found you, or rather your signature, so quickly.”

“Fortunate indeed,” Adept said. “I’m afraid the guardian was done for when you disappeared. Zephyr didn’t take kindly to you disappearing.”

Taylor grimaced, well aware of her redhead sister’s temper. It was the Hebert temper for sure. But it was balanced by her passion and joy in life. So Taylor could easily imagine what happened when thing went pear-shaped. She squeezed Crystal and then let her go as she looked about. “So, where are Zephyr and everyone?”

Crystal replied, “They went to take care of the Youma that are still out there. Very few people are actually panicking, because it’s Halloween, so some people think it’s just part of the celebration. But it is a priority to find them and kill them if they’re evil or send them back where they belong if they’re not. Luckily, there were a surprising amount of heroes in town.”

“So are we done here then,” Taylor asked, glancing around. “All of this should go away when I disperse the spell.”

“Aside from a call, yes,” Mercury said.

“Neo, could you let everyone know that all is good and I’m back, please?”

The avatar popped up, armored in robes made of starlight and wielding a staff. “Notice sent! Your team is ecstatic. The building is cleared, by the way, so I also let them know we were on our way down.”

“You’re the best!” Taylor said.

Neo grinned. “I know it!” Then she flickered out.

Taylor summoned her pet lantern. “Hey everyone, this is Bobbing.” An ornate lantern floated above the Arachne’s head and then jigged a little to the side, floating towards the black spot on the floor.”
Crystal said, “As in Bobbing Lantern?”

“Yes,” Taylor said impishly. “She’s got a personality, but she’s a little shy around strangers. Bobbing, that’s Dead Youma leftover crap, don’t touch it.”

The lantern immediately floated back to Taylor, hovering very close. Crystal compressed her lips in amusement. Mercury looked fascinated and she raised a small tool in its direction, her brow arching at the information on the display.

“So would either of you like a ride down?” By appearances, it seemed as if Taylor’s armor grew two saddles, but in actuality, she’d just switched her armor in her inventory.

Mercury and Adept glanced at each other and then let Taylor help them up and get secured. Then, they were off, far faster than either remembered going. Out the window, down the wall of the building, the world seemed to fly by as Taylor easily followed the map Neo provided for her. Tiny icons represented the people she knew. Jupiter and Mars and Zephyr had moved to a few buildings down, but still within the range of Taylor’s magic. Taylor was so used to her pet following her, that it never occurred to her how strange it might be to find that the magic lantern kept up with her amazing speed.

The three other young women were in a fight with a flying head. The creature’s beard was made of tendrils and its skin color was a fierce red color. It reminded her of the flying eyes. Taylor summoned her bow. She wasn’t the ultimate best, but she’d gotten fairly handy with it and she had plenty of arrows. In this case, a holy arrow seemed very appropriate. She might not kill it, but she knew she could do respectable damage with enough of them.

Four twangs later and the creature was screaming and flapping about wildly, now blinded and screaming. Zephyr’s magical air bolts sliced it up even further, cutting away a wing, which caused the head to fall to the ground. It continued to flap about, sticks on poking out of its head until Mars put it out of its misery with some magical firebolts.

A black inky smoke indicated its defeat and then the whole creature dissipated quickly. Taylor noticed other black marks on the ground. “A swarm?”

“Looks like it,” Mercury confirmed as she was helped out of the saddle.

“Weaver!” Adept was barely on the ground when Cherry charged at her Taylor, leaping into her arms. “You’re back!”

She peppered Taylor with kisses, much like Taylor had Crystal, and of course, those kisses were returned in full and with enthusiasm; if also remaining careful prevent her hug from being to be too crushing.

Zephyr pulled back finally, looking at her sister and trying to understand her mood. “You look a little hungry Taylor,” quipped her sister. She leaned in and whispered, “You want some Cherry pie?”

“You have no idea how much.”

Cherry’s fingertips drifted over Taylor’s face and she sighed a bit. “I’d say tell me about it, but monsters to kill and people to save.”

“Which, speaking of, we are mostly clear in the area.” She pointed in a direction. “The next one is that way.”

With the slowest person being Adept, and she had her own ways of getting someplace fast, they all
arrived close to their destination very quickly. The creature before them stood on hooved legs. It’s bull’s heads snorted steam at them and there was a gruesome smile on its face. The eyes glowed red, which made the steam seem even more heated. It was big and broad, taller than Weaver.

For a moment, Taylor regretted not breaking the protective field and building an ID around it. The creature looked like the kind of thing that came with a solid amount of loot. Her lips twisted in amusement at the thought. She had no idea if that would work or not. Obviously, she’d have to test out the premise sometime. She fired holy arrows at the creature, having not put away her bow yet.

It bellowed, but it didn’t die. The creature’s reaction was evidence, however, that the minotaur could be hurt. But her arrows were a signal for the others to join in, and they did. Taylor felt magic swirl around her as Adept boosted her speed and vitality. The jumper switched out her bow for her Magic Sword and Betsy’s Wrath, which, while not her favorite, favorite wand, was something that brought her great amusement to use. She fired it off and heavy fireballs arced and dropped onto the fiendish minotaur. When the spell faded, she called forth a gleaming, fiery sword aiming hard for the neck. An incredibly fast bolt of light lanced out with her swing. It cut one side of the minotaur’s neck, causing spurts of blood to fountain out. She ignored the blood and prepared to swing again. But by that time everyone else had made their own impact and Zephyr got the final cut. The minotaur’s head rolled onto the ground and its body toppled after it. A black mist formed around both body parts and then everything disappeared - except for the black spot where it had been defeated.


Weaver nodded. “This is why it’s good to have a team,” she said.

“Truth,” Mars nodded, approvingly.

“So is that all of them? In this area, I mean.”

Mercury ran her scanner. “That’s everything. Whoever started this all…. I think either suffered a similar fate to you or worse.”

“Well in that case,” Taylor responded, “It’s time to remove the spell of area protection.”

“Do it,” Adept agreed. “Time to start gathering people up and head home. The word from Spinner is that things are pretty mopped up everywhere now.”

As always, taking down the spell was much easier than putting it on. Metaphysically it was the equivalent of pinching out a candle-light, an easy trick if you know how. What Taylor noticed was that unlike the instant dungeon, the spell evaporated rather than “broke,” but the revelation of clean streets remained an incredible contrast; even the black mark was gone.

“Wow,” Jupiter said, the word elongating in amazement. She turned several times, just taking in the lack of destruction around them. “That is amazing!” She turned to Taylor, “You can do that any time?”

Taylor shrugged. “There’s no special time for it, but it takes a lot - and I mean this - a lot of mana or energy, depending on what you want to call it. And it doesn’t start out super large. My first try wasn’t very large at all. It’s gotten better. My goal was to be able to protect my neighborhood in a pinch.”

Jupiter was nodding thoughtfully. “Still handy. You think you could teach it?”

Taylor considered. “Maybe? I have a couple of similar techniques that are less energy consuming, but they have… odd side effects and I don’t know if I could teach those either. Maybe we can set up
a meaning time and try it out.”

“I think I’d like that.”

“Mind if we join the magical tutoring session?”

“More the merrier, as they say.”

==**==

The Sailor Senshi were reunited fairly quickly. Sailor Moon was so starry-eyed at meeting Weaver, that Taylor was disconcerted. Yet, she still signed the blonde’s autograph book with good humor. She added in the emergency phone number to use if they needed to get ahold of her team real quick. Taylor said, “We can bring in the legal authority if you ever need it. But admittedly, based on what we’ve been able to glean of your battles, you might not always like our methods. They tend to be … very permanent for truly bad guys. I’m all about second chances as one can be, but zombies are not anything to play with.”

The blonde senshi blinked at her, blue eyes very wide. Taylor wasn’t sure she heard a word that had been said.

“I’ll make sure the number is kept safe for emergencies. Thank you,” Mercury said, as she led her friends away. “See you next week!”

“Righto!”

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A/N - This one was admittedly shorter. Was sick during that week of writing.
It took some time before Taylor realized why she felt a little off. She’d assumed it was the transition through whatever warp space the portal contained. However, it wasn’t until she realized that while her HUD still displayed information giving her a bit of insight into how she was feeling but that she hadn’t actually seen any floating plumbobs on anyone else, that she realized why she felt so strange. The plumbobs had become an unremarkable fact of life for her and it had been so ubiquitous that she had eventually had acclimated to seeing and being informed by it all the time.

On the one hand, it was an incredible proof that she was - in fact - back where she should be. On the other, it felt so very strange. On the third hand, she still had the info menus, which did display moods in colored text form when she read through them. But the plumbobs had been a fast, visible and easy indicator of general/emotional well being on which she had unconsciously based some of her choices. On the fourth hand, she could always talk with Neo later about seeing if they could adjust the menu with an alternative. This wasn’t an unsolvable problem. She’d lived without the plumbob for the majority of her life and a simple targeted visual moodlet based on the context menus would solve that problem.

Still, it felt weird to have to rely mostly on body language. Not that her family lacked clear body language, especially when it came to letting her know she was missed, even if technically to them she’d only been gone for maybe a half hour. If that much.

Taylor was barely in range before Lisa, enveloped in a light ball shot toward her, impacting with a solid, but harmless thud. The blonde, like Cherry, wrapped her legs and arms around the Arachne, hugging tightly to her. Most of the family had dropped their magical girl aspect by now, though Taylor remained an Arachne for the speed and because her sisters were having a good time with the ride. So this time the hugs were a little less armored and Taylor was once again blessed with a wealth of feeling and kisses.

Lisa refused to let go, her face buried in Taylor’s neck. The brunette whispered as she rubbed the blonde’s back gently, suddenly aware of how scared her sister must have been. After all, Lisa had lost a Taylor before. “I’m here. It’s alright,” she said gently, calmly.

Lisa nodded but she didn’t let go. “Give me a minute.”

“Sure, hon. I got you.” Taylor carried Lisa with them, both arms on one side filled with her sister’s clinging form. She slowed her pace, but still moved pretty quickly once she started moving again. Her HUD map led her back to the Deli where the rest of the family waited with her dates from earlier in the evening. She stopped before they were totally in view. “Okay guys, I guess it’s time to switch back to my human form.”

She unstrapped her Cherry and Crystal and helped them down and then gently set Lisa down. Then she pulled some hot water of her inventory and splashed herself. She wasn’t entirely sure she needed it anymore. In the Sim world, she’d eventually discovered that she hadn’t. But since she was back, she figured there was no reason not to test that at another time. Taylor transformed into her very obviously fit human shape, sans Halloween costume, dressed in jeans and a t-shirt lettered with Simlish and picture of a famous band on her previous world, and really awesome high-top sneakers. Her visor transformed into glasses again.
As she transformed, so did Crystal and Cherry, finally letting go of their magical forms. Lisa already had.

As Lisa stared at her, Taylor raised her hand and gave a short wave. “Sul, Sul. Cuh teekaloo.”

“NO way!” The pericog was shocked.

Taylor just smiled tightly and nodded. “Farzies.”

Cherry glanced back and forth between them, and then her eyes widened as she got it. “Wait.”

“NO WAY!” Lisa said again.

Crystal merely looked boggled. “What?”

“Delco webney,” Taylor shrugged. Then she switched to the more local tongue. “Ten years of this. Ten.” Then she grinned. “But I learned some very cool things, not just the local language, which I can hardly wait to share with you.”

“Wow!” Lisa said, stunned, as pieces that seemed to make no sense suddenly came together.

“Docka Morpher,” Taylor said ruefully. Then she smiled and wrapped her arm around Lisa’s shoulder and turned her around so they were walking together. “Come on, let’s go catch up with the rest of the family.” Crystal grabbed her free hand, while Cherry grabbed Lisa’s.

As they approached the deli, Taylor was gratified to realize that despite her fears, she recognized everyone and they looked as wonderful as she recalled. Vicky and Amy promptly grabbed her into a fierce hug between them, kissing her as warmly - if not as deeply - as her other sisters. “Glad you’re back safe and sound,” whispered Vicky. “I was worried we would have to come and get you.”

“I would have loved that,” Taylor admitted, whispering back. “I can hardly wait to get home right now. I need to be with all of you and I just haven’t figured out how that’s going to happen.”

Amy laughed and kissed Taylor again, just scraping by on the edge of socially acceptable for public affection between family. Then she gently took Lisa to the side and just held her for a moment, while their mom and dad folded Taylor into a long group hug of their own. Annette kissed her cheek and Danny kissed her forehead, but they held her for longer than a minute.

“Thank you for coming back to us.”

Taylor, by that time, had tears rolling down her cheek. She said jokingly, “Well, I didn’t want Dad to spank me. Well, not for real anyhow.”

Her parents chuckled and squeezed her a bit more before giving her some room. Taylor took a deep breath and said as she looked directly at her father, “Speaking of, now that I’m back home, I want to try that thing we talked about. Soonish. Like, tonight soon.”

Her father’s eyes widened and Annette said since she knew exactly what was being talked about, a very soft, “Oh.”

Taylor blushed, hard. “I mean, technically I can wait. But, it’s been,” she stopped and blushed a
little. Really, she wasn’t that shy anymore, but the topic she was hemming about was a bit spicy for her. “It’s just been a very long while and, trust me, I’ve had plenty of time to think about what I want.” She looked back and finally drifted into, “I’d like to have my family close tonight.”

Danny looked at his wife and then back at Taylor. “I think that can be arranged,” he said kindly. Then he tugged her ear gently. “But what about your date?”

Taylor looked around and saw that Ukyo and Akane were standing very close together, with Ranma’s hand on Akane’s shoulder. “I planned on inviting them, but I am pretty sure they are going to be able to find ways to entertain themselves. I’m going to go talk to them real quick.”

Ranma took one look at her and said, “You look like you’ve seen stuff. You feeling alright?”

Taylor nodded. “I’m fine. I’ll tell you more about it later. So you know I was gone right?”

“So it was true then,” Ukyo said.

“Traveled to another world? Yep. That was all true with a dash of time differential. It’s been years since I’ve seen my family and friends. I wanted to invite you back home with us, but...”

Taylor explained what she was planning, ending with, “It’s not quite what we thought we’d do with the night, but I wanted to give you some options.”

“Oh honey, thank you,” Akane grabbed her and held her. “I’m glad you’re back.”

“Me too,” Taylor said sincerely.

Ukyo said, “I would love to get to know you better, Taylor, but I think I would like to spend more time with Akane and Ranma right now.”

“Of course,” Taylor said. “I think that sounds wonderful.”

She turned to Akane, “Will you extend the invitation to those in your family who might be interested?”

“I will,” Akane promised. “If they’re home. You know how it is. Tonight is both a Friday and a party night.”


The girl beamed and whispered back, “Love you too.”

A few minutes and more hugs later, Akane whisked Ranma and their new girlfriend, Ukyo, away with smiles. After all, they’d actually accomplished what had been originally intended. Everyone, aside from having their dinner interrupted, was basically pleased.

===**===

Taylor was immediately aware of the difference as soon as they crossed from into her neighborhood, a sense of rightness and ownership woke into being, which was confirmed by the text message:
You have arrived at your home territory. Your property is extended, as per the item House or Home, to encompass the whole of your current existing properties or connecting properties not currently stored in your warehouse. This includes the neighborhood and its commons and the Plaza from Slut Life, the Sailor Castle (error!) from your Magical Girl jump, your mansion (error!) from your Slut Life contract, and any environs which you establish from other jumps as being “in world”. You may alter, create, build and construct in this space using your available talents, perks, skills, and equipment. However, the space may have specific zones that must be accommodated. For instance, the Plaza is a communal commerce area, with only a modest amount of living space.

Taylor was a little confused, but she knew what to do to solve that problem. First, she followed the error links, the message for the mansion generalized to “Oops, Slut Life’s bad! They meant to give you a mansion but gave you a regular house instead. Yet another reason Joy whisked you away. The system has reset the house to allow you to build your living space as you may require it. Warning, some of the features of the house may become disabled if the house or rooms of the house are deleted.”

Taylor understood that to mean that if she disappeared part of the library to remake it, she’d probably lose that nifty furniture shifting feature. Based on that she committed to adding on, rather than deleting anything.

The second error message read: “Conflict! The Sailor Castle is currently in use by the local variant of Sailor Senshi! CP has been stored. Castle is not redeemed. Further attempts to redeem Castle encountered a (garbled) error. The management apologizes. Expect redemption points or options adjustments later.”

If she’d found out about this sooner, Taylor might have been more upset, but as she knew she could build a pretty banging castle of her own now. She regretted the loss of some of the technological aspects, but she had other perks and items that made up for it. They’d be fine. Plus, she could always try again later. It might be a temporary error.

Now, as for the other part of what to do with the changes she sensed, Taylor applied a skill she’d learned to really enjoy. She paused the world and entered the build view.

For a moment she floated above the world, or at least this little plot of the current jump-world gazing at the demarcations her HUD made. Jumper Plaza was in blue, the neighborhood had options for rezoning, while her home was very specifically green and locked as “HOME.” That was interesting and useful to know.

She noted small purple dots that indicated strategic points along the original shield’s grid which had protected her space was still there, if inactive, and it made her wonder if there was a switch somewhere that needed to be thrown or a generator somewhere that needed fixing. She’d have to do some investigating. But that was a task for later.

She glanced over the terrain, noting that it was mostly flat with some small hills. No water beyond fountains to speak of, yet. She realized that the area felt somewhat vulnerable to her - mostly because she’d had everything so locked down at her other place, that this felt wildly uninhibited and dangerous. She would have to think about that - as this particular world’s fences did not normally run towards turrets and castle-like walls. Except, she had heard of other enclaves that were fairly fortified. She’d have to do a little research. She didn’t want things to stand out too much. The only reason she suddenly wanted walls, was that she was slightly paranoid now. Nightly monster
migrations made for worrying details.

She also wondered, as she looked above for a moment, if she could still build on clouds; possibly if she used Terraria based cloud-stuff. She was pretty sure that vast majority this world’s clouds were solely based on water and dust. But that didn’t mean she couldn’t get creative.

One thing she did though, was zone a small space for industry, just on the other side of the plaza, a little away from the rest of the neighborhood. She planned on putting her forge and crafting gear there. She could do that at home she was sure, but even at her Simworld domicile, she’d made a dedicated space for it. Beside it, she would place the biome farms, which were technically also considered industrial spaces, but were more nature-friendly next to the crafting spaces for easier access.

Then, with a sense of purpose she chose a space as a place to “build” a park and landed in the area between that and the ‘neighbor-zone,’ and she spent time growing a small, very new, forest. But, knowing that aesthetics mattered sometimes, she made sure to include a few spaces for shrines and picnics, because she knew the people of Nerima would appreciate it - at least if they made it that far.

When Taylor felt the extra trickle of the mana of her power pick up again, she breathed easier. She always had mana and plenty of it, but this always felt nice and reassuring and it made a safe space for magic to dwell.

She allowed herself to rise again into that broader perspective and considered that she and her family would be arriving home. Her room had an extra large, very comfortable bed. But it was not the kind of thing that could hold ten; three or four very comfortably, but not the whole family. And she had needs, which were creeping up on her very quickly.

On the other hand, even if this was technically her house - even if it should have been her mansion - it was a shared home. It would be a little wrong to not at least consult with her family about what to do.

So, with no fanfare at all, she quit the high view and snuggled into the crease of Vicky’s shoulder and breast, enjoying the sensation of being held comfortably very much. No one even noticed she had been gone.

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Taylor felt warm nostalgia about the front room fill her heart as she stood by the couch. Everyone else was still standing too, not that they had to be, but the stresses and energy of the battles still held a bit of sway. But the slow-motion emotional and physical drop down from high alert that had started on their way home in the car made it easier for talk about what she wanted.

Neo had thoughtfully contacted the house before their arrival, so Zoe had been at the door to greet them. Nathan and the others had been away for the night, celebrating at another party, as they had not been required to be on duty. Beth had been put down for the night some time ago. Then they’d congregated in the front room, for a quick debrief. Now they were at the part where Taylor talked about returning. She hadn’t said much yet about what actually happened, because that would have been an hours-long discussion and frankly, she had priorities.

“Wait, so, essentially, you want to have an orgy.” Cherry’s expression held amazement, a little bit of disbelief and then a pleased sensuality.
“Well, I wouldn’t call it an orgy,” Taylor replied. “But if it involves spending time with the majority of my family and getting laid by everyone I love and care about until I am a wet noodle of spasms, then yes, that is what I’ve been fantasizing about for something like four years, seven months, six days, 15 hours and 37 minutes.”

Cherry, who had been teasing her sister with her original outburst, blinked slowly at her. Then, in a choked voice she said, “That long huh?”

“You have no idea. One can sex it up alone in the Sim-verse, but there are oddities that go along with it. And Claire, my lover, was in very short supply once she passed on. Bonehilda did her best, but she finds people with skin sexually loathsome. She loves them as people, but not as companions.”

“Wait,” Amy said, lifting her hands in a stopping motion. “Wait. Isn’t Bonehilda the literal skeleton maid. You and Bonehilda...”

“Tried at least once, yes,” Taylor said with frank amusement. “And yes, Bonehilda is a skeleton maid. She’s currently asleep, but I do plan on waking her. I promised she could meet all of you if we made it back. As for trying to woohoo? It was sweet of her, but it wasn’t at all good.” Despite herself, a laugh slipped out, because the treasured memory was still funny. “I think she fantasized about Death - I mean the literal person in a cloak - the whole time. She told me once she thinks he or she has god-like bones and has a massive crush on them. I’ve never been clear on the gender. But I don’t think Bonehilda cared one way or the other.

“But she is a real person and we do love each other. So we thought, why not? It was very, hmm, experimental and completely hilarious for both of us, so we ended up bonding even more over how bad everything was. I think I’d call it, texturally weird, at the minimum.” Taylor shrugged, not at all ashamed. Everything had been done out of love and friendship. “Now we just stick to hugs. It’s boney, but it’s sincere and no body parts get accidentally kicked off the bed that shouldn’t be.”

The only reason Vicky wasn’t on the floor when she fell down laughing was that she had been floating at the time. But in general, the laughter was shared by the whole family.

Then Taylor said, “After we come to a decision, if you want, I’ll bring her out and introduce her. She’d probably be happy to watch the house and take care of Beth for the rest of the night.”

Annette was obviously also amused, but her expression was concerned, “We’re coming back to this Claire issue. But yes, I think we’d all love to meet your good friend.”

Taylor smiled and nodded. “Cool and I know. I’ve made my peace,” she offered in reassurance. “Claire would have found the phrasing hilarious. I wasn’t being disrespectful.”

“I realize. But I can hear what she meant to you in your voice, and you skimmed by that revelation fairly hard and quick,” her mom replied softly as her fingertips brushed a stray hair off of Taylor’s cheek.

Taylor nodded, looking down at the backrest of the sofa and enjoying the feeling of fond memories. “Yeah. It’s all still a bit difficult to talk about, but she’s also where I got some of this bluntness from. She was very much about speaking in words when it came to what I wanted. Especially since we generally had to lay the rules out before we started, if we were going to add anything supplemental, so to speak. As I said, Sim-style woohoo is still technically sex and one does feel immensely awesome afterward, but it’s odd.”
Amy wrapped her arm around Taylor’s waist. “She sounds like she was very fun to know.”

Taylor’s smile was brilliant. Her eyes glimmered a bit with the hint of past tears. “She really was. You would have liked her. I was really looking forward to everyone meeting her.”

A moment of silence filled the room, but then Vicky said, “So. If we’re talking moods here, are you into catching or pitching tonight.” She waggled her brows, “Or a little-lot of both?”

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Bonehilda was immensely tall for a girl, bone-shaped or not, but she was also immensely sweet. She hugged everyone and enjoyed the hugs back. Amy found her fascinating in a biological sense, as the bones were very real, but made of sterner stuff than mere human bones would be. Zoe had worried at first about how she would handle Beth, or rather, how the toddler would handle Bonehilda, but the maid reassured the tentacled woman that Beth would be no problem, even if she did get a little grabby. Bonehilda had magical ways of reclaiming her body parts.

Taylor invited her to join them, even knowing what Bonehilda would say.

“No thank you,” the tall creature said, as she fluffed her uniform a bit. The smile could be heard in her voice though. “I appreciate the invitation, but I think we both know how it would end.”

“In laughter and embarrassment?” Taylor offered.

It might have seemed impossible for a skeleton to grin, but Bonehilda was surprisingly expressive. “Among other things.” She pecked Taylor on the cheek. “Have fun without me.”

“Oh, I will,” promised Taylor, teasing back.

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“Honey, this is your first time with your father in this particular form. Not to put my foot down, but I’m putting my foot down. There is no way we are or rather you and your father are just going at it. Trust me, I know. You’ll need some solid preparation and foreplay first,” Annette said firmly, while Danny and Zoe nodded just as intently and seriously. Then her mom said as the realization hit, “Suddenly your need for a lot of family attention doesn’t seem so spontaneous.”

Taylor shrugged. “I did mention that I’ve had a lot of time to think about this. But just so everyone knows,” She tried to catch everyone’s eyes at least once. She didn’t want them to think they weren’t invited, but she also knew they might have other preferences. She didn’t actually expect everyone to share her kinks, especially since some of them were quite new to her and she wasn’t sure it wasn’t only a one-night “show,” so to speak. Some things, she knew, were better left to fantasy. Yet some things needed trying.

She really wanted to try this and hoped it would work out well. But she also gave them an out. “I don’t actually expect everyone to be into this or even want to and I won’t be hurt if you say no. I just… am letting you know where I am right now. Plus, I figured, the more the merrier and the easier things would be in the long run. I figure we’d need space, time, food, hydration and...”

“And a very generous helping of lube.” Zoe supplied with some amusement. “I can help with that,” she laughingly offered.
Taylor grinned.

“And a wide, wide surface,” Lisa said helpfully. “With shock absorbers maybe.”

“Ha-ha,” Taylor said as she pushed her sister lightly at the shoulder, fully cognizant that her sister was making a callback to an internet joke. Lisa gave her a smug smile. “Well, I’ve been thinking about the details, and I sort of have a cunning plan if anyone is interested in hearing it.”

“And what would that be?”

“I am going to add a couple of new rooms to the house. One of which will be a large adult playroom. No doubt, partially unfinished in the sense that it won’t have *all* the toys, but one that would have a definite bed of size.”

“Wait, I thought we were planning for tonight, as in a few minutes from now,” Vicky said, a little confused.

“And that would be still true,” Taylor said. “You wouldn’t even really notice time passing.”

“Wait,” Lisa said slowly as the epiphany hit. “You got the Sim Build power as well as living in that world?”

“I got all sorts of nifty things going, Lisa. All. Sorts. Because not only do I have a build menu, I have a buy menu.” Taylor paused. “Not that I have a bed that size in the menu. I think. Maybe there is. I think it’s supposed to adjust as I move from universe to universe. I’ll have to look now. I’ll try to have Neo peek at both the catalogs. She’s helped me organize things.

”That said, I could straight up build a bed that size, but that would take actual real time and I don’t have my crafting stations set up yet. So instead, I figure we can put a couple of the beds in the buy menu that scale at the 10 comfort level together and then tie them down so they don’t push away from each other. Either that or we find out if our bedrooms also have alternate furnishing setting with a large enough surface. I’m pretty sure they would have if I’d gotten the mansion I originally purchased.”

“What?”

“Oh, yeah. Slut Life owed me a mansion and gave us a house. A nice one, so I’m not griping, but it’s not what I paid for. That’s okay, we have loads of room to build one if we really want it. Definitely, we can add on to this one, so long as we don’t knock out the original stuff.” Then she got a far-off look in her eye. “As for the bed, I could get some cold water and make a silk hammock bed. Except, no that wouldn’t work. Or maybe, I build the room with a kind of a pit, put in some silk springs and mattress for padding. That would work for shock absorbers, but it might be not everyone would be comfortable with that idea. And, I’m not sure how long that would take, but maybe we could use the mattresses of the 10 beds instead… And then there’s the need for places to relax and sit...”

She took a breath. “I’m probably being unreasonable in wanting everyone there. Aren’t I?”

“No honey,” Annette said as she hugged her daughter. “It’s completely understandable. But you are right, the size of the rooms we currently have would make things crowded unless we pull the shades and use one of the larger rooms on the lower level.”
“Ooh. We need a pen and paper!” Crystal said. “I have an idea.”

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It was a little of a slower attempt at building than normal because Taylor would pop out into the present to get an opinion as she worked. She hadn’t yet figured out how to share what she was doing for faster input. And it likely was “impossible,” at the moment anyhow. Those not involved with the process had gone to get themselves cleaned up from the battle, but Annette, Zoe, Lisa, and Crystal had stuck around to help Taylor refine the ideas. After some discussion, the playroom was added to the house as a third level, so it could take up a greater amount of space. Stairs were added to the second floor. Then the new space was split up into several parts. One could have almost thought of it as its own apartment, given the facilities that Taylor added just to spare people from having to run down for food or to take care of other personal necessities. Included was a very, very spacious bathing area that was just as futuristic, though differently set up than ones previously on the premises. She’d also included a kitchenette/dinette space with the sim version of the food replicator and several big closets. Otherwise, the room was set up to accommodate playtime with a creature of large size - which included the biggest double-doored entrance she could find into the room via the house or via the deck, which she’d also included for fun and accessibility.

Other than that, she followed Crystal and Lisa’s plan for constructing the bed, which ended up mixing the silk-springs with the super mattresses to form a very comfortable bed space at just the right height. It was firm enough a person wouldn’t be pushed into the bed and get lost. And springy enough there’d be a nice bounce.

It took about fifteen minutes of time from their point of view and a bit longer from Taylor’s, but the jumper never really felt tired from using her build/buy abilities like this. They only time weariness would creep up on her was when she crafted in real time and even then, it wasn’t so terrible. Still from her family's point of view, the quick change was very impressive and a bit alarming.

But mostly, it was awesome.

When everything seemed set - from the colors of the walls, the fancy carpet and the bed with color-coordinated bedding that fit somehow - Taylor waved her hand speaking in a nearly non-verbal whisper as she blessed the room, which even in its pristine new condition, brightened and filled with a sense of sunshine and happiness. The young woman was aware that a certain amount of tenseness would be natural, but her goal was good experiences for everyone, not just herself.

Crystal’s eyes widened. She was very attuned to magic as her power was all about wards and mana. “Wow.”

Taylor tugged on the belt around her sister’s robe and untied it before leading her to the bed. “Did you like that?” She slid her hands along her sister’s trunk, enjoying the softness of her skin.

“Oh yes,” Crystal admitted.

Taylor pulled the other young woman closer and leaned in for a kiss. “Good. Thank you for your help, Crystal. I know this is not yours or my usual style.”

The shorter girl smiled and caressed Taylor gently, before leaning into her. “Sometimes it’s good to try new things. And I’m kind of excited by what might be experienced tonight. It feels a bit like sacrificial virgin night, except, neither of us is.”
Taylor giggled despite herself. “Yeah. I think I get that. Are you okay with me letting Lisa orchestrate things tonight?”

Crystal nodded. “She’s got a knack and it’s wise to take advantage of it. This is the sort of thing that will either go really, really right. Or…” Without letting go of Taylor, Crystal leaned over and knocked on the nearest woodlike object.

“Thus my reason for blessing the room first. Also safe words.” Taylor offered a cheeky grin. "Green Light."

Crystal let the robe drop off of her shoulders and then gently pushed Taylor back on the massive bed.

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A/N -

**Those were real Simlish words:**

Sul Sul = Hello
Cuh teekaloo = How’s it Going? (or Hey there! How’s it going?)
Farzies = Yes
Delco webney = Believe it or not.

I don’t think it is too much of a spoiler here to mention that this is pretty much the prelude to an NSFW chapter. That one is now at over 2800 words. It was originally part of this chapter, but I realized I wouldn’t finish several of the scenes as fast as I wanted so (harking back to my earlier admission of things that take me a bit to do) I decided to go ahead and separate them a bit so you could have this chapter and because the natural cut point that last bit presented.

That said, I hope you enjoy this update!
Chapter 35

Worm: Joyride: Chapter 35

==**==

Cherry joined them soon after, blending in her kisses with theirs. Taylor luxuriated in the feel of their naked bodies against hers. They were sleek and solid and marvelous to hold. Their nails sent little firecrackers along her skin. Their teeth nipped and tugged sensually. Their lips constructed prayers wherever they touched. Her skin felt like it was sparkling with joy and she returned the favors of their affection avidly. And then it got better.

Once they got past the basic caresses and started focusing on the directions they wanted to go, things got very interesting very fast.

Soon Taylor was exploring Cherry thoroughly with her tongue, pressing and flexing deeply so she could tickle the innermost spots of pleasure. Her redheaded sister panted and gyrated above Taylor’s face and seemed oblivious to how tightly she was being held. Taylor, however, careful with her strength knew there might be bruises, but that’s what healing potions were for. Taylor made a mental note to put some nearby, in case. But for now, she was occupied. The taste of her sister was sublime, but it was the solidity and realness of her presence - from the fulsome wetness to the healthy smell of womanhood - which grounded and turned Taylor on.

Even better, Taylor could see everything, not just with her own sight, but via tiny observers. Not that she used anything objectionable. But being able to see things from several angles was an incredible experience. She was massively aroused by the colors, the textures, and sounds. Sim Woohoo was a lot of fun and very giggly, but Woohoo was a lot more smoothly organized and mostly in designated undercover spaces, which meant it was often in darkened spaces, like beds and closets and enclosed showers. Her sight was good even in the dark thanks to her enhancements, but being out in the light was something to celebrate.

Here, their loving was out in the open, fraught with a sensual vibrancy. She ached with it, missing Claire and knowing she would have adored the experience, but exulting in being with those she loved. It was tangible, messy, and very sweet.

The brunette’s hum deepened as her other sister, Crystal - now Crys - whom Cherry had deliberately triggered into male form, plunged into his sister with happy abandon, pushing Taylor hard into the sturdy mattress with each thrust. For such a short person, Crys had a lot of power in him and his thick, long rod filled her energetically. She could feel the flexing of his thighs, the textures of him rubbing in her. Taylor hadn’t quite cum yet, but she was super close.

Her own cock wanted to push out and explode with the joy of it, but she’d made herself a promise to wait as long as she could and so she held it close. This slowed her orgasm some, but after a lot of experimentation she knew she could have several before she would have to let loose. She wanted to wait, however, because she wanted to feel penetrated and full and if she did let her cock out, she knew her focus would change. Because she liked penetrating just as much. So, she held a part of herself back, but only enough to keep that one point of control. Otherwise, she surrendered, enjoying the sensations that her sisters were giving her.

When she finally reached her first joyful peak, Taylor felt that internal emotional click that meant things were right again. And then Crys spilled into her with jagged, marvelous heat, and Taylor
sparked again and everything shuddered hard, including her tongue. Cherry screamed out her pleasure and tensed hard around Taylor’s tongue, semi-drowning her with her release. It was a heady, wonderful moment and Taylor loved every second of it.

==$*==$ Later, Crys rested his head on Cherry’s lap, where the redhead caressed him as they recovered; not that they would need long, given the inspiration nearby. On one side, Aunt Zoe was thoroughly wrapped around their Mom and Dad in such a way that it was hard to tell who was doing what to whom, but it was sexy and fun to watch; partly because they looked as if they were enjoying each other very much. As examples of play went, they were a good one and Taylor found them very inspiring.

On the other side, Lisa clutched the covers as she arched into the tactile sensation she was receiving. Amy and Vicky had claimed her breasts and were touching her all over in soft caresses. Her expression was one of ecstatic bliss. Taylor was face deep between her thighs, having kissed her way in slow motion in that direction. Lisa’s nipples were plumped and slightly red from the suction that Taylor had applied and then her sisters had taken up the job. Lisa was not among those lactating, but she felt as near as she’d ever been and her loins were pure wet fire. Her legs were hooked around Taylor’s shoulders, securing her sister in place.

Taylor had adored how Lisa tasted and felt since the first time and she appreciated it even more now, since it had been so long. The brunette suckled and tweaked her sister’s tender clit while filling her with a couple of fingers. Lisa could take more, but Taylor had opted for simple, because her sister was already very, very close - since she had started off excited.

Taylor felt strong hands grasp at her from behind and realized she had lost track of Vicky, who was now Victor, because she felt his cock tap against her buttocks and then rub between her legs. Taylor spread herself a little more, offering herself up.

“Crys did a pretty good job here, you’re nice and juicy and if you think I’m worried about getting my brother’s cum on me, well, that would be silly. We’re going to fill you right to the brim, Taylor.” He leaned forward and whispered into his sister’s ear. Taylor could feel the pressure of his chest, his whole strong body against hers. “Did you know Amy checked you. Do you remember when you last had your fertility shot? It’s been a while, hasn’t it? I have to wonder how good it is now, years and years later.”

Taylor felt a frisson of “Oops!” roll up her spine. “Too late now, sis.” Vic said cheerfully. “Should have checked that before we started. Now, we’re going to test it out. You’re going to get creamed and creamed again. We’re all going to breed you, Taylor, and who knows what might happen.”

Taylor’s eyes, which had been half closed, were now wide open. Lisa gave her a lazy, predatory, teasing grin, while Amy added nothing reassuring with the looks that she also gave. Instead, she caressed Lisa’s belly, right above where her uterus would be and raised her brow. “I can hardly wait for my turn.”

Taylor’s ears and face turned a bright red and somehow she got wetter and hotter. Her breasts suddenly felt weighted and very sensitive. She knew a good suckle would get her started, but that wasn’t the only thing. Her cunt seemed to open wide.

And she knew darn good and well her sisters were on contraceptives. She also knew that her fertility and contraceptive items were not things that just faded over time. However, knowing that on a
cognitive level did not change that Vic’s nonchalant announcement had set the hook and now Taylor was brimming with a horribly anxious need fueled by an overactive imagination.

Even knowing she was fine, that her siblings would never do anything just to be mean, she found herself looking at her biokinetic sister.

Amy kept offering her that smile as if she knew something. Taylor’s gazed narrowed back at her, but she had deliberately closed out her HUD when they started so she could just enjoy the moment. Now it felt like cheating to check.

Also, she was absurdly, incredibly turned on by the idea of the risk alone. She glanced at Lisa, who smirked back; naughty, inspired sister that she was. She knew exactly what buttons she pushed when she got Vic to say that.

Before Taylor could begin plotting, Victor slid into her pussy in one long gliding motion until he was hilted. Taylor’s opening wrapped tightly around him, flexing as if to pull him further in. She groaned in pleasure as he then began to expertly jog and fill her, pushing her into Lisa with each little bounce to the rhythm. One thing about Victor/Victoria was that he was fully accepting of who he was in either form. He loved being he and she loved being she. Vic was a hedonist at heart either way and he plowed into Taylor with lusty, enthusiasm that stirred Taylor and by extension, Lisa up to greater heights.

For a few moments, Taylor found it difficult to concentrate, or more correctly, lose herself to the moment. But then she felt a hand cover her hand, where she held Lisa’s hips. It was Crystal, now in her female form again. Taylor looked up and her sister just smiled, no teasing and no worries, just love in her eyes. She reached up, caressing Taylor’s face softly, then stroking down her shoulders and underneath to tease her breasts with her fingernails.

It was just enough. Taylor still felt that heat in her belly when she thought of what might be (impossible!). When she looked back at Lisa, there was a smirk, but it was far more gentle. Then Vic slapped her butt. “Get busy!”

Amy cackled, but Taylor was able to focus again and she dove in, letting her tongue do the work for which it was designed. She pushed back at Vic too, her hips unable to be completely still, as he plunged in and out. One of her brother’s hands roved along her body, stopping to join Crystal’s play at her breasts, tweaking her sensitive nipples, before roving down to cover her pouch and caress there, before moving down further. His fingers tantalized her, moving through her slit, deliberately missing the tender pearl and teasing by not quite reaching the parts that wanted touching.

Taylor’s complaint was muffled but heard. Vic began thrusting a little faster and his fingers finally circled and played with her bells, tickling and pulling them out despite Taylor’s resistance to letting her cock out. It was, a very new sensation because her bells pushed down, thickening around her clit and it made her inner pouch feel heavy and thick. Vic stimulated them all the hot spots then, teasing Taylor in such a way that she was now trying to shove herself onto his cock in full rock-back, enjoying every smack of the parts that were connecting.

Lisa changed pitch as she neared climax. “Oh, oh! OH!” Her head was thrown back and her body was arching again. She chanted Taylor’s name, adding erotic profanities that just inflamed the air.

Cherry had taken over from Amy sucking on Lisa’s breasts and giving full body caresses. Amy had moved to the shower and come out as a young man. He was already fully charged and ready, his cock was fully upright and a near-cherry red.
Lisa began to shudder and shake as release rolled over her and caused her to cry out. Taylor drank her up, reveling in her taste. She was very close herself, given the way Vic played with her. He let her hang there for a few moments more until Lisa was limp and breathing heavy.

Then, he strummed Taylor like a harp one last time. Wet lightning struck through her, vibrating her soul with its impact. She clenched him hard, over and over. Ames kissed him, and he shoved himself into Taylor, firing in hot spurts, coating her inner spaces with his seed. The thought that any of them could be fertile (not likely!) right that moment, threw her over the edge again, when he kept on for just a bit longer normal - no doubt due to Ames’ influence.

It was sizzling, torrid. Hot.

Victor’s laugh was deep and vibrating. “Love you, Sis.” He kissed her shoulders, the inside of her neck as he pressed in, finishing the job. “Love you so much. I’m so glad you’re back.” He played with her breasts a little more. “Gonna come out now. You’ve got some clean up to do.”

The sound of him slipping away was indecent but so incredibly sexy. After he pulled out, Taylor felt more thick cream dripping down her thighs.

Taylor was aware that Amy had drifted away for a moment, then she saw him return. Both Ames and Vic patted her butt as they shifted places and kissed each other fiercely, fervently.

“Decisions, decisions,” Ames said, as he took his place. He dipped down and slid his tongue along the inner thighs, lapping up the cum rolling down Taylor’s leg. “Mmm. Delicious. Can hardly wait to add to the mix.” Long fingers pulled her sex, revealing that Taylor’s opening was a bit wider and ready. “So, so pretty. Taylor, you look gorgeous this way.” Then Taylor felt Ames’ tongue rove along her opening to her clit and back. “Yep, still good,” her randy brother commented. Then he pulled back and she felt his cock between her legs as he bent over her. “Hope you’re ready for the next round.”

Even as he said that Taylor felt a wash of pleasure and renewal roll over her. “Ames,” she said in affectionate appreciation.

Taylor had allowed Lisa to slide away, but she was still on all fours. Vic had taken a position in front of her. “Time to clean it off,” Vic said, pointing his cock, which was still stiff, at her; now doubt thanks to their brother.

Taylor gripped him with her tongue, wrapping around him several times. She groaned at the taste, which, as promised was incredibly good; better than she remembered. She then diligently and completely cleaned him off, while Ames tried to distract her with what he was doing to her ass.

She felt one of his fingers slide in, followed by the other. She nearly went weak when he found one her spots. She abruptly let go of Vic’s cock to utter, “Holy Fuck!”

“Oh we will be,” promised Ames as he stirred pleasure there. “You sure you aren’t ready to let your cock out. Don’t think I’ve not noticed how you’re holding back on us.” He leaned forward, “Or are you waiting? Are you waiting for Zoe to fill you with her tentacle cream? Or maybe you want Mom to make wee spider babies in you? Or Maybe you want Daddy’s big dick, pushing all the way in? Maybe all at the same time.” Ames eased up a little, “Though I’m not sure how that would work. So, I guess one at a time for now, but still… look how hard thinking of that has made me. Feel it, Taylor.”
Ames took one of her hands and placed it on his cock. It was throbbing and wet. He rocked his hips forward under her. His voice deep with desire, “You know what to do. Give it a good rub, Sis.”

Taylor was whimpering and moaning then. She felt Vic’s hand on her head. “You’re not done, here, Taylor. You’ve got that lovely wide mouth. Show us how good you are at multitasking,” He teased as he pressed his cock to her lips.

She narrowed her gaze at her brothers, but opened her mouth, extending her tongue. He didn’t wait but pushed in. She managed to keep him from shoving all the way down by looping her tongue around him, but she saw his impish smile and knew he had planned that. Meanwhile, taunted, she’d firmed up her grip around Ames’ dick, and began slicking her hand up and down, while he teased her with rocking motions.

When she moved to try to push him in, where she wanted, Ames, just pushed a little forward so he was knocking her clit and bells instead. She couldn’t complain. Her mouth was full and she was getting into it because as designed, it felt so good. She felt the tingles starting at the roof moving along the base of her tongue and through it and then down her throat. Meanwhile, her center was starting to feel that spark again and her velvet cave had started pulsing with need.

Taylor wasn’t so far gone she couldn’t think. She kept her strategy simple though because she knew her sisters. She started focusing hard on milking Vic. The young man’s eyes went wide as she began applying a trick she’d learned. “Oh shit!” His exclamation carried through the room, as did his body language. His eyes rolled back as the suction and the flick and rolling of her tongue began taking effect.


Ames, meanwhile, had to consider he’d made a miscalculation when Taylor’s grip changed and then moved at the backstroke. Suddenly he was fully into his sister’s depths, with her pushed all the way back. He looked up to see Lisa grinning and mouthed an imprecation at her, but the platinum blonde just shrugged and waved at him to keep moving.

Vic groaned as Taylor’s chuckle rumbled along his cock. The tip of her tongue roved along the cap, playing with and under the skin that covered it to find the sweet spot and tickling the opening. He pushed back and she opened for him, as he touched the back of her throat. He was well aware he had to be careful of his grip, so Vic never grabbed anyone by the head. But his grip tightened on her shoulders.

Ames held still, tempting Taylor to move, but both held still for what seemed like an absurd amount of time. Except for the part where Taylor deliberately flexed around his rod. Ames finally groaned and then shoved hard into her, before pulling back and doing it again. “You are such a ...” he said, and the words trailed off as he smacked her butt once.

Taylor laughed again. Their other sisters had joined them and were freely caressing, exploring and kissing the three of them. Vic enjoyed Crystal’s deep kiss, while Ames surrendered to Cherry. Lisa came in under Taylor, offering a wink as she fingered her sister. The platinum blonde began to suckle and play with Taylor’s breasts, causing the brunette to moan excitedly, while Ames rammed into her.

She began to tingle in all sorts of places but it didn’t take long until Taylor felt the pressure in her breast release and spurt, which caused the rest of her to do the same. Vic was already close and when
Ames picked up the pace, moving hard and quick. The blonde young man came and came in Taylor’s mouth. It was so quick and so much she couldn’t quite contain it all, but Taylor tried to drink as much down as she could. A very inspired Ames thrust enough to push them all forward and he gave a powerful shout as he splashed into Taylor.

After a few seconds, as Ames made little pushes and thrusts even as he held tight to her in a backward cuddle, things calmed down. Then, he pulled back, slowly releasing from her and taking his weight off her back. Taylor rose from all fours, milk leaking from her breast and cum down her thighs. Her smile was radiant as she kissed her siblings with a deep abiding love; also, a deep abiding sense of satisfaction.

She could hardly wait for the next part.

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They refreshed and rested. Taylor meant to talk with Lisa about what she’d instigated with Amy and Vicky but got distracted. Not that she hadn’t enjoyed every moment of the time spent with her siblings, but a little forewarning would have been nice. She also hadn’t checked her HUD, beyond the bare minimum. The moodlet, life and mana bars were plenty of information for the moment and she certainly didn’t need the moodlet to tell her that she felt right as rain and very sexy. The rest could wait.

She wasn’t wound as tightly as she had been, but she could feel the need for touch still ramped up within her. Her increased libido sang with both relief and she was anxious for more. Her enhanced biology gave her increased endurance and a sense of health and well-being that matched her desires. She also had spells, which could be liberally applied, for extra energy and athleticism. Not that her family wasn’t already completely capable of the escapade without them. No one was tired, they were just happily satiated and relaxing for a bit.

Taylor’s desire was still on the toasty side, though and then Kasumi had arrived and it flared like a bonfire; white-fire hot.

The eldest Tendo daughter seemed to also feel this way as she wasted no time disrobing, practically tearing off her modest costume in a flurry of cloth. The sisters helped, and she accepted the hugs and kisses between the flourishes of bits of the outfit being discarded. By that time she arrived at where Taylor now stood.

The younger woman hugged Kasumi tightly. “You came!”

The brown-haired girl said smiling warmly, “Yes, and so have you, it seems.” She stepped back, taking a good look at her lover.

“Over and over,” quipped Cherry. Taylor stuck her tongue out. “I’d say promises, promises, but I know what you can do with that thing.” The redhead leaned forward, kissed Taylor and then booped her on the nose. They both grinned at each other.

Kasumi glanced down and said, “You are controlling yourself very well. I am very impressed.”

“Well,” Taylor demurred, “I’ve had time to work on it.”

Vicki hugged Kasumi from behind, laying a kiss on her cheek before letting go. “I was certain we were going to get her to pop out, but Lisa warned that Amy’s plan might not work.”

“Amy’s plan?” Taylor said. “I was so certain it was Lisa’s!” She leaned around Kasumi and spotted the light magician, who had laughed and sent her a kiss. “It was close though.”

Kasumi, who had lost her shyness around the Heberts awhile ago, caressed Taylor intimately, gently raking her fingernails over the hidden seam. “Why are you waiting then?”

The pressure, which had always been strong, rose. “I’ve been in the mood to be filled for ages. But I admit,” Taylor said, as she grasped Kasumi’s hand and held it still and in place, “that I’m quickly beginning to change my mind.”

Kasumi’s predatory smile, on that gentle face, was a huge turn on. Never let it be said that the martial
Taylor wasn’t entirely sure how she was back on the bed again, but Kasumi was above her. Her large breasts dangled above Taylor’s and she deliberately moved so their nipples connected. Taylor was reminded that she was still leaking and that she was currently over-sensitive there.

Kasumi peppered kisses everywhere, except for Taylor’s mouth.

“Mind if I join you?”

Kasumi paused and both she and Taylor looked toward Zoe, who had kneeled on the bed beside Taylor.

Taylor took a moment to appreciate the contrasts. Both women were very beautiful, but Kasumi was tan, where Zoe was very pale. Kasumi lacked freckles, though she had a few other endearing marks on her skin, while Zoe had a smattering of freckles to go with her vibrant red hair. Kasumi’s hair was a brown that had flecks of gold, much like her eyes. Zoe’s eyes were green. Both had a depth to their personalities that shown through those eyes and in their smiles, but their experiences had been wildly diverse from each other; while having similar griefs. Both smelled heavenly, though Zoe’s held more sea salt to it and Kasumi had a bit more honeysuckle. Both were very nurturing, but also very naturally erotic. Then, of course, Taylor was reminded, as Zoe wrapped an arm Kasumi’s and Taylor’s waist, the redhead had tentacles.

The brunette smiled. “I think we’d like that.”

“Good,” Zoe said, as she drew Taylor closer. “Because I know I will.” She proceeded to pepper them both with indulgent kisses. Taylor felt something sleek and warm slide along her legs and arms. The sensation was more like heavy silk, but with a something that smoothed the friction without being slimy. Taylor took a moment to watch as strong looking loops formed. She glanced up at Zoe, who grinned. “Don’t worry. I’ll be gentle.” Her next kiss was fierce. “Mostly.”

Then Taylor realized that both she and Kasumi were about to experience something new to them. The young woman reclined against Zoe’s tentacle enhanced support. “I’m not worried. I trust you.”

Several expressions crossed her aunt’s face, finally settling on a mix of emotionally moved and passionate. The kiss that followed was very toe-curling. “The things I’m going to do to you dear will make you very happy.”

Taylor wasn’t still. Zoe had been thoughtful enough to leave her arms free, but her legs had been gently parted and held in place by thick, fist-sized tentacles. Zoe, in a display of great strength, lifted them both above the bed, gently maneuvering them to more compatible spaces.

Even if she looked like a teen, it was obvious Taylor had become bolder and more experienced. “I want to taste Kasumi.” Taylor glanced her crush, her expression filled with both fondness and desire. And like a chef presenting a meal, Zoe held Kasumi up, her legs spread wide, the tips of two small tentacles holding her open to be gazed upon.

The eldest Tendo girl was surprisingly relaxed, considering her position. Taylor knew for a fact most people would be panicking if they’d been in a similar way. But Zoe was an amazing woman, and she treated Kasumi firmly, but carefully. And if there was a zestful amount of caresses and kissing, it was all to the better. The tentacled woman had shape-shifted a bit more, so even more tentacles were visible and active; some large and some very small and delicate. The delicate ones caressed sensitive places along Kasumi’s body, while the bigger ones acted as support and holds. The tentacles had
gone from a pale color, like her skin, to a reddish, fleshy color - though they remained warm and silky. Some had formed odd little heads - a few with suction cups and some with the more cap-like knobs. The knobbed ones were most definitely potential phalluses.

“You’d make a great masseuse,” Taylor commented, as she felt the firm pressure Zoe applied to her body too, not too hard, not too soft, but oddly and perfectly relaxing. She looked down and like Zoe, she was at full presenting, though she was currently pointed away from Kasumi and more towards… well, not Zoe.

Taylor checked with her other eyes and saw her Mom starting to make her way toward them.

Oh, fun.

Zoe grinned, pleased. “Your mom said the same thing.”

Kasumi said, “It does feel wonderful, Zoe. I think, in this one case, the reality is much better than fiction.”

Zoe’s laugh was bell-like. “Glad I stand out from the crowd,” she flirted.

Kasumi was fully supported and being touched everywhere. It was good none of them wore clothes at the moment, because they would have been in ruins by now. Taylor kissed her aunt Zoe fully, before drawing her attention back to her other lover and really looking at what was being presented. “Beautiful,” Taylor said. She reached out, pulling Kasumi by the hips so she was closer. The tentacles didn’t try to hold her back, but rather played “support,” to Taylor’s actions.

The young brunette had been vaguely aware of how strong her aunt must be, but now it had a different sort of impact as it lifted and manipulated all of them - Zoe, Kasumi and herself - in sensual directions.

Tentacles had latched Kasumi’s breasts and started suckling, with moist kissing sounds. Zoe was also paying very personal attention to the eldest Tendo, kissing her warmly and deeply, nuzzling her neck and suckling. Taylor had practically dived into tasting Kasumi and she tasted glorious.

Taylor was aware of when her mom joined them, her hands slid along her back and trunk. Her touch felt tingly against her skin. One would have thought she’d be saturated with the sense of touch now, but every caress filled the long empty well. She followed those caresses in small undulations.

“Hello darlings,” Annette said. “Mind if I join you?” Taylor’s mouth was full, but her answer chimed with the others, as they welcomed the elder brunette. Annette’s hummed before she started peppering kisses around. “Wonderful.”

Taylor noted that Zoe, who could have been a one-woman show if she wanted, had not wrapped around her mom, leaving her free to maneuver. She also noted that the extra limb she felt between her legs was not a tentacle, but it moved a little like one. What?

Her mother’s long cock, which before had been fairly “normal” in the sense that it pointed and it shot, had just begun to jut out and thicken. Then, it moved, like it was a hand feeling Taylor up from thigh to mid slit. Annette started to laugh as Taylor froze, pulled away from Kasumi long enough to look down and back and gape. “Mom!”

“I’m sorry, honey. I couldn’t resist.”

By then they’d all paused. Zoe said, “Your mother pointed out that she’d ticked the box for such a thing when she modified her body, but she’d never been able to get it to activate. I cheated and
furthered my gift for her. Now it works.”

The cock wiggled against Taylor’s ruby. “Oh my god.” She closed her eyes. “It feels strange but good.”

“As I recall,” Annette said, “You also had that option check marked. Did you figure out how to use it, yet?”

Taylor opened her eyes into a narrowed gaze. “No, I,” she paused. “I don’t think I ever did. I think I just forgot it was there. Everything else has been so fun, I never even thought about it.”

Annette leaned over Taylor, gently playing with her breasts. “Thinking about it?”

Kasumi, less distracted, but wet as a jungle river, gazed down at Taylor, eyebrows raised. The younger woman said. “I am now.” Kasumi threw her head back and laughed.

Then she made a motion. “Finish what you started and then negotiate. I was this close!”

“Sorry, sweetheart! I’m not usually so easily distracted.”

Kasumi blew her a kiss, but without the hands - because Zoe had her arms enfolded in the tentacles. “I know. But, please.”

Zoe grinned. “Let me help.” One of the knobbed tentacles reformed slightly, thickening so that vein-like structures became more obvious and the cap held a slit. Then it gently probed at Kasumi’s opening, before sliding in.

“Oh!” Kasumi said, in mild surprise. Then it was a long sigh of pleasure as the tentacle began to move.

Zoe side-eyed Taylor and said, “Well, don’t keep your girl waiting.”

Taylor’s reaction wasn’t quite a lunge, but she did have motivation. Of course, she wasn’t plumbing the depth, but Taylor had long since learned how to use her tongue well. She let the flat of her tongue work to rub and play around Kasumi’s clit, but she wrapped her tongue around and under the tentacle, tickling around the edges of the sweet cavern with the tip of her tongue. Sometimes her tip pushed in, sometimes not, but Kasumi squirmed and rocked as they played with her. And Zoe moaned with pleasure.

Annette was also busy. Taylor was reminded she wasn’t the only one with “features,” her mother played at her entrance before pushing in. Fingertips stroked her pleasure centers, tickling and teasing and adding just the right amount of pressure. She felt her opening widen around Annette’s cock, as it seemed to thicken and grow longer.

Then she felt a gentle nudge at her backside, and her eyebrows raised.

Oh, that’s right. Zoe had tentacles and tentacles…..

Went everywhere.

But Zoe was also her aunt and Taylor was literally made for this kind of thing. She unclenched.

It softer than fingers, it was sleeker than fingers. It was warm and slithery and definitely wider than fingers. And it felt so, so good.

Tight. But good.
Taylor was well aware that had she her old body, things might have been quite a different sensation, however, Zoe’s slow-motion entry was such a turn on. The benefits of which was shared. She clenched Kasumi’s hips firmly, even as they both squirmed a bit from the way Zoe and her mother played with them. Even wrapped around the cock, Taylor could still taste her brown-haired lover.

Somehow Zoe managed to angle Taylor so she was back down face up and Kasumi and Annette hovered over her. Kasumi over her face, and Annette at the other end. She felt a bit like a doll in a giant’s hand, but no one was complaining.

Taylor looked down her body to see the head and part of the long, thick shaft of Annette’s cock slither up and poke up above her mound, then bend in a waving motion. Then she saw her mom’s super cheeky grin and burst out laughing. Her tongue slipped out of Kasumi. “Oh my god! That is hilarious!”

“I know right?” Annette cackled. “And then there’s this.” The shaft began to undulate against Taylor’s clit, moving faster and faster.

Taylor’s head tipped back, “Oh. Wow. That… that’s… very nice.”

“Isn’t it though,” Zoe said. “Your mom always was one who enjoyed trying new things.”

“The best way to learn,” Annette said proudly.

“She also loved teasing and playing small tricks.”

Taylor had become abundantly aware of that. Everyone in her family knew to be cautious on April 1st. It was never mean-spirited, but it could complicate a life. “I know!”

“Speaking of, I think Kasumi would love you to repeat that trick you just stopped.”

“Whoops!” Taylor’s focus, normally strong on its own, returned to the other young woman in Zoe’s grip. She wrapped her arms around those strong thighs and felt the soft, reassuring pressure of multiple tentacles at her back, supporting and massaging her as she positioned herself just under Kasumi. She waited for the right moment, licking and teasing at the edges until she could wrap her tongue around one of Zoe’s bits and join the dance again.

“Such a good girl,” Annette purred as she slid home. Taylor felt her mother’s tentacle cock slowly expand in size, puffing out so it was less about length, which was already naturally there, but more about girth.

Then it was all about the movement. Zoe was fearless about moving deep within Kasumi, taking Taylor’s tongue, which spiraled around her, with her. The older woman was flushed and gasping through the kisses she applied to Kasumi, then herself, then her mother. She said, “Thank you for giving yourselves to me, for letting me love you.” It would have sounded cheesy at any other time, but at this point, it delicious. Taylor felt small stings as the some of the tentacles developed suction against her skin, marking her.

She felt her mother too, moving in tandem with Zoe’s thrusts; deep within, thrusting, moving, curling. It left her gasping and moaning into Kasumi. She felt wide open, while at the same time clinging hard to the cocks within her. Taylor trembled with the sensations.

Annette gazed down lovingly at her daughter as she plunged into the younger woman’s depths. Taylor could feel the thickened length tap hard against her cervix with each push, edging closer and
closer to pushing in. Her legs were hooked behind her mother’s tight thighs, pinning her closer as her hips pushed and gyrated. Taylor’s mantra now that she could say the actual words since she wasn’t in a sim-verse consisted of semi-coherent “Fuck Yes!” and “More!” She was wet as a river and only growing more so as the fire warmed her belly.

Zoe’s eyes had rolled back in her head. Her whole body had changed to a ripe cherry color. Kasumi’s cries of pleasure thrilled down Taylor’s spine. Annette was flushed and thrilled too. Taylor felt herself spiraling closer to that erotic wave.

Then Zoe’s attention snapped back to Taylor. Her words were almost formal. “More you want, more you shall have.” Her eyes flashed. Some of her teeth gained points, almost like a vampire’s. Not that Taylor could see any of that super clearly. She was busy, busy and her eyes were mostly closed.

But she felt the sharp pinch at her shoulder, then her mother’s call of “Oh! Take it all baby girl!” just as she felt the press of something winding and pushing along with her Mom’s cock. She felt stretched with it but was distracted by the painful sting, which changed to a sweeter erotic warmth that flowed from her shoulder down to her heated center.

Kasumi cried out then, cumming all over her tongue. The taste was amazing, but its effect was like gasoline to a fire. Taylor shuddered, trying to hold back just a little so she could stay tasting her lover’s marvelous elixir. But then she felt the shape of Zoe’s members change, as a bolus formed and then pushed and pushed past her tongue, into Kasumi, splashing the other girl’s inner walls, but coating Taylor’s tongue too. Then she felt herself stretching again as if a great knot had formed at the “joined,” base of her mother and Zoe and they pushed into her all at once; at both ends.

It was an amazing sensation, intense, but not painful. The heat of it threatened to melt Taylor, poured fire through her veins. She cried out as the sultry spark lit and flamed, taking her higher. She squeezed around them and felt them as they came and came within her.

Forever and a day seemed to pass, but then as with all things, it was time to let go. Taylor felt Zoe thin and then undulate away, causing Kasumi aftershocks of pleasure; which Taylor fully understood as she was gently freed from what Zoe and Annette had done.

They were all brought into a softly moving cuddle, as the tentacles still moved and slithered under and around them. But it was all perfectly relaxing. So they were drifting for a moment on the ambient feelings of pleasure and comfort.

“Zoe,” Annette said softly, but with a hint of steel, “What, exactly did you do to my daughter?” Her fingers gently stroked the already healing bite mark on Taylor’s shoulder.

“I’d say oops, but…” Zoe expression was calm, “… you know what she is planning. I knew she could use more of my gifts.” Zoe looked down at Annette’s semi-relaxed cock. “Plus, my dear, you mentioned she had made similar choices as you did. It seemed like the time.”

Taylor patted her mom’s leg. “It’s okay mom. I feel fine.”

“Mmm,” Annette gave them both a look, but then settled into the cuddle. “Let us know if anything… more unusual happens.” Then she reached over and caressed Kasumi’s face gently. “Still with us darling? Are you doing okay?”

The brown-haired girl smiled warmly and snuggled in, resting her head on Taylor’s free shoulder. “I am wonderful, thank you.” She let her palms rove where they will, on Taylor, Zoe, and Annette. “I feel very satisfied and comfortable.”
“Good,” Zoe said, before kissing her gently. “That was my hope.” She smiled whimsically. “Thank for playing with me and letting me play with you.”

“Believe me,” Kasumi said, “It was very much my pleasure.”

Then there was a domino effect of giggles.

As they rested and communed a bit more, Taylor checked in and saw that her sisters were also at a place of rest. She glanced to the side and saw her father, in a meditative pose, watching them all. He was obviously hard, but he did not touch himself. She realized he was preparing himself for what was to come.

Her mom said, “He has been very excited since you said you wished to do this. But he wants you to be very comfortable and ready. How do you feel?”

“Excited, but a little scared.” Taylor glanced at her dad again. “After all, I may be a lot more experienced than I used to be, but I’ve never made love to a Dragon before.”

Kasumi’s eyes popped open. “You’re going to what?”

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A/N - I debated whether to make this a 35.a chapter or something, but it holds its own. So, while it is a smaller chapter, I think it works. Next week's chapter is smaller too, given the things I needed to focus on that week. But hopefully, it will be worth the wait or at least entertaining - as I hope this was also enjoyable. Hope you all have a marvelous week! :)}
Taylor hadn’t really quite used her warehouse since she’d been given it. She’d been aware of it, had been in it a few times, with her sisters, but hadn’t tried to actively use it until her time in the Sim/Terrarian combo world. She not only hadn’t been able to access it physically, but she’d also been limited to her personal inventory. Though her inventory had access to the warehouse and that was how she circumnavigated being able to send and retrieve her creations and rewards to the warehouse. She’d learned to be clever with her inventory after a certain point, between storing things in chests and organizing her piggy bank, she generally knew where and what things were. Her HUD helped with the labeling.

In terms of power, she had weapons and armor that would take on alien invaders and ancient gods. In terms of wealth, she’d accumulated a vast amount of rare and magical items. Including gems and items she fully intended to feed to Rocket. This did not even begin to count that which she found via just walking around. The blessing of her inventory was the “auto” pick up, which filled her imaginary pockets with change. Nor did it count what she accumulated through her battles in the IDs she’d learned to create. She was quite aware she still had a lot to catch up on with that one, as she’d learned about that power late in her stay.

Since she preferred “real” life, she saved the IDs for training or when she wanted to stretch herself, but still, she’d accumulated several unusual and interesting items that needed evaluating. Being able to craft a ghoul armor was entertaining, but she could make better with other items. It was the skill and spell books that she really valued and once the wands and the staves and the parchments and the useful potions, ingredients, and spirits started dropping too - as if something in her particular IDs had changed once she got past the zombie one -, well, things started getting interesting.

But for her, the most precious of her belongings didn’t have to do with what most would consider treasure; especially once she realized she had a knack for making her own stuff anyway.

This did not mean she didn’t thoroughly enjoy being able to wave her hand and finally, finally walk into her warehouse. Taylor had been a little worried, given that she hadn’t been able to actually go into her warehouse, that things would be haphazardly stored. But she had rows and rows shelves, a lot of them with very organized chests and the great majority of which weren’t even used. They were all, much to her relief, in amazingly good order. Her HUD, which she had opened just for this purpose, led her to the massive closet that contained her toybox. She didn’t need it, but she wanted to see it and had promised her sisters she would bring it out later so they could play.

She followed the map to the medbay, which had a storage area formed around it, also filled with chests. Those chests were labeled and filled with potions. She chose one that had health and mana potions, wanting to ensure that she and her family were in tip-top form. She considered getting some of the more playful potions or the skill-building ones, but set that aside. They could always enhance their personal “stats,” later. But for now, it was health and spiritual wellbeing that needed some topping off.

Later, she was glad she’d taken the time to examine what she had, necessary or not. It had given her a little space in her mind to regroup from the intensity of everything she’d experienced so far and to prepare herself for what was to come. It might not have been meditation in the proper sense, but even a moment of organizing had a way of adjusting one’s thoughts, peacefully.

She remembered to bring the toys with her too.
When it was time, when they’d all rested and regrouped, and the dawn sky was starting to gleam with light, Danny and Taylor both agreed that they were as ready as they were going to get.

Danny stepped outside onto the patio, just to ensure that things wouldn’t get knocked over. Then Vicky and Crystal who had flown out before he did, carrying buckets, splashed cold water over him. His transformation usually always took longer, because the change was so massive, but it sped up because of their efforts.

It started with his height. An already tall man, his body elongated and for a brief moment, he was a giant. Then his body changed, expanding and gaining even more height as wings sprouted at his back. It always looked a little painful, but he never had time to cry out. Soon though he pushed off the platform and was flying/ floating, lithe and long and sinewy.

He transformed again then, as his magic as a dragon was now fully active and he was suddenly just a little smaller; small enough to fit through the patio doors, but large enough that it was his semi-serpentine nature that made it possible. It was his smallest non-humanoid form and even then, he was massive. The dragon was most definitely still dragon-sized, but he wouldn’t crush the ground, or more importantly, his daughter this at this size.

Taylor thought she had been ready for this moment, but she felt tremors run through her body as she witnessed his transformation. It was a mix of emotions and not just fear that led to the thrills running along her spine. But when she considered what she planned on doing, she had to question her own thinking in the matter.

She was, however, surrounded by people who loved her. Zoe had transformed even more and was on the bed, undulating in soft slow motion. Taylor reclined against her, supported on her supple surface. Annette sat very close, holding Taylor’s hand, arm wrapped around her waist. Kasumi was also nearby, on her other hand, stalwart and brave and holding Taylor’s other hand. The brown haired girl leaned in and kissed her quick, before pulling back just a little.

Taylor felt chills roll down her spine as she gazed at her father in his transformed form. The look in his eyes sent a rolling sense of electric awareness through her whole body. He had allowed himself to only grow to his smallest-sized shape, the one that would fit in the house and even that was impressive. His head and hands were large enough to easily make a meal out of her if he so desired. The rest of him, was long and thick enough to support that measure, not including the wings, which he kept folded. She was reminded of another Dragon, who had grown and grown, but Lung’s intentions had been fully one of death and danger.

Danny’s gaze, on the other hand, held desire and heat and love. When he fully entered the room and clambered near the bed, he nudged her chest a little, and she could feel the whisper of his whiskers tickle her breasts. His tongue slid along her body, tasting her like she was a morsel in one long swoop. She shuddered despite herself and she felt his playful chuckle rumble through her bones.

The sight of him alone was awesome in the formal sense, a sense of majesty and terror, filled Taylor’s breast, not because of the massive erection the dragon sported, which was immensely impressive, but because of the pure dominating size of the whole. His belly was metallic-white to the metallic blue-silver that composed the scales that covered the majority of his body. His tail circled around the bottom of the bed and curled enough she could see the tip weaving in lazy anticipation. He crouched over her, staring at her with those massive golden eyes. “Are you sure,” he rumbled, whispering so no one’s eardrums cracked.

She gripped Annette’s and Kasumi’s hands tighter and said, as clearly as she could. She was
positioned so her hips were pointed up, supported by very thick pillows and Zoe. “Yes.”

Her hips canted up and she could feel her opening fluttering with need and fear. “I know, baby. I know,” her mom said. “But easy, honey. Remember to nudge your pain to pleasure up. Do that now, so you don’t forget later.”

Taylor blinked up at her mom, then she closed her eyes and revisited some of her inner workings, as she knew good advice when she heard it. When she opened her eyes again, she was rewarded when an amazing sight. Her father’s cock hovered just above and before her slit.

The point of the tip was pink, but that was the lightest and smallest part. The dragon’s dick darkened from that point until it was almost a cherry-chocolate color and Taylor was vastly grateful that it expanded out slowly until it reached its full, wide shape. She knew just looking at it, she was going to be stretched impossibly wide. Then he inched himself forward with remarkable control until the tip of it nudged her clit, which had quickly hardened into a throbbing stiffness. Her cunt was already opened in receptivity and she was beyond wet and right into sopping, and that was on top of everything else. Her entrance had been fully coated in lubrication and everything else was extra. As soon as she saw the living pulsating redness, she ached for that cock.

Taylor lost all sense of vocabulary as his push moved past the tip and she felt the first hint of his real girth. Suddenly she was both incoherent and incredibly grateful for her mother’s foresight. She was wet enough, she was stretched enough that the increasing width, while strange only felt amazing and profoundly good.

Her mother held her hips to keep her from pushing up. “Stay still, honey, let him do the work right now,” she said gently.

So even as she had the urge to plunge herself onto him, she stayed patient, trusting. It was a truth that he likely wouldn’t be able to hilt completely into her, but she wanted as much as she could physically take. The slowness was unique aching of its own and she was so glad she’d been indulged so well by her family beforehand because she might have hurt herself trying for more too soon.

She listened to the noises around her, his gusts of controlled breathing that seemed to fill the room and the sound of the scales shifting and the way her siblings and lover breathed in when he moved - as if they too shared the awe of it. Then there were the scents, the clean smell of his dragon form seemed to be one of air and fire, wild pine and smoky without being overbearing; a bit like a beautiful fall day. He was sleek and warm, and his scales were the size of her palms. They were soft against her skin where they happened to touch. Because she couldn’t reach him “everywhere,” she’d asked her lovers to touch him for her, to caress him if they could. She could see Vicky’s bare feet, where she hovered and pressed against their father. Kasumi was close by, one hand against his long trunk as she held onto Taylor with the other, moving in waves. Her other sisters were in various places, hugging or moving, “holding him,” in their hearts, while Zoe and Annette held onto Taylor, or rather Taylor held onto them. Mostly both ways.

Zoe, because she had more limbs, was maximally attentive. Taylor’s constantly stimulated and leaking breasts were covered by her gentle suction tentacles. Small tendrils carressed her front and back, while strong ones supported and lifted, as if she were in the easiest of easy chairs; one which was half gynecological-chair. That thought made Taylor giggle.

She couldn’t help it. This whole time she’d managed to control herself, but as soon as he really began moving her, her dick popped out of its pouch and sprung out like a Jack in the Box - only hard as a rock. As he jogged himself in and out, her dick and clitoris smacked against the massive rod he sported. And she knew when she came there was not going to be a warning sufficient that she could give her family - about how she’d been changed in the grove, about her seed was wildly extravagant
in proportions and even with her bodily controls she’d not been able to get it to lower by much. Because she couldn’t form words at the moment, all she could do was ride the ride.

Each thrust seemed to strike new matches in her box. She felt like a blaze in the sky, hot and sparking. He went deep, deeper than she’d ever had anyone or anything. Even though she was fully on her back, it was probably one of the most athletic things she’d done in her life. Her feet were on his massive thighs for balance and she bent with every push, blessing Zoe for her thoughtfulness because she felt the difference in her flexibility at her joints, in her body.

She could feel him moving her belly, follow the track of his girth. She was reminded briefly of the joke about death by snu-snu and laughed again, despite herself. She’d finally had to let go of the hands and was clasping her own thighs in support, but she was still held and caressed and kissed.

Each second of breathing and moving held new sensations and was filled with incredible intensity as she edged closer and closer. She twitched and gripped around him as he pushed and pulled, just a little faster each time. She was vulnerable, merely human against his massive might. She was empowered because she was filled to the brim and it was exquisite. But it didn’t change that she was making noises she didn’t even know she had in her. He was thick and she was tight and even as wet and slick as they’d started, even with the lube, there was no escaping that.

He roared through clenched teeth, biting down on the sound so it wouldn’t injure sensitive ears, but it was still loud and profound as his body’s urges rushed forward and let go. He pushed in, heavily, as far as he could and his thick, wide base filled her with a puff of sound. She could feel him outlined within, but not comically so. Then, she felt the heat; overwhelmingly sensual and liquid, pulsating within and pushing.

She had a moment, a frisson of fear, but then the fear was suddenly gone. Her HUD flickered, but she knew without looking. She wasn’t torn, she wasn’t halved. She wasn’t done for.

She was, however, fucked, well and thoroughly and deeply and awesomely. And it felt gorgeous.

She writhed and bucked with the pressure as his pleasure eddied into her, held down carefully by loving arms and loving people who whispered sweet, supportive things. “Yes, Taylor. You’re doing it. We’ve got you. Look at you, taking it all. So hot, so precious. So very, very sexy.”

Taylor felt the first wash, that moment when she knew that her release was coming and then it was if the top of her head expanded and as if she’d been taken over by a vesuvian arc of pleasure that rushed through her whole body. She trembled with it first, shaking, and then the eruption kicked in and she screamed with the passion and pleasure of it. The heavy musk joined and filled what was already the air as her pheromones popped and burst with each spurt. She poured over him and those around her, like icing over cake and her eruption, seemed never-ending. Her cum was pearl white and just as shimmery. She spouted and flowed as her inner being wrapped itself around him, tried to pull him further in. “Dad,” was her guttural cry. “Oh, Daddy.”

He moved forward, not quite a thrust, but she felt the second round pulsate, and push back and eke past his thick length. The heat of his cum on her inner thighs was overwhelmingly sensual. She couldn’t buck into him, but everything was pulsing around him.

“Oh,” he rumbled. He had gone completely still, eyes rolled back up in his head. “I’m still cumming.” He sounded worried, “Don’t want to hurt Taylor.”

At that point, Taylor wasn’t worried about hurt at all. She was in a bliss that kept sparking along.

“Go ahead and pull out honey, just go slow,” Zoe said, “I’ll take care of the rest,” she promised.
He grunted and physically braced himself, moving back in very slow motion. For a moment, Taylor’s body just followed with him, but Zoe and Kasumi and Annette’s grasps were firm. The release from each other was audible and abundantly messy. But, true to her word, Zoe’s tentacles were there. She sheathed Taylor’s cock, which was still spurting and she ‘cleaned’ up the aftermath of Danny’s careful exit thoroughly and with a heady little moan of pleasure. “I don’t think I’ve ever been this delightfully full. You all taste marvelous.”

Annette, no longer needing to hold Taylor in a particular way, had begun caress and comfort her daughter, kissing her softly, whispering comfort in her ear. “Such a good girl, such a beautiful, wonderful girl.”

“What a way to bring in the morning, yes,” Kasumi said with some humor and awe. She sculpted her hand along Taylor’s body.

“Yeah,” Taylor cuddled in, returning the kisses given to her in slow motion, as she was as near to spent as she had ever been; and this was after the potions. “That was… incredibly intense.”

She hesitated to look but thought she better at least have someone check. “Uhm, speaking of intense, how is it … uhm…”

Annette tapped Danny’s front lightly. “Back it up, big guy. Someone douse your father, please. He’s looking anxious.”

Which was true, as he was nuzzling and whiffling at them in concern, but his hovering was a little in the way, given proportions of things.

Zoe, because she could, formed tentacles with eyes. Then she said, very reassuringly, to Taylor. “You look lovely, honey. Stretched and open, which is … ungh, my dear. I already want to take you again.” Taylor chuckled. “But I can already see your natural range returning. No blood at all. You took him like a champ, sweetie.”

“Thanks to you… and mom and everyone.” Taylor said. Then she shimmied back a little, luxuriating in their caresses. “But give me a minute. I’m not quite ready for another round.”

Annette’s warm chuckle was comforting. “I can definitely understand that.”

Taylor heard, more than saw, a large sploosh of water. Changing back was always faster than changing into something. Soon her father was before her, naked and proud. He crawled up the bed, settling beside his wife, whom he then held while he reached out to caress Taylor’s face. He gazed searchingly at her. “How are you?”

Taylor’s grin was tired, but one of triumph. “I’m great Dad. Perfect.” She rose up enough to kiss him, and he met her halfway. “Thank you for taking such care with me. And thank you, for indulging me in this.”

He smoothed her hair, kissed her cheek. “It makes me happy that you’re happy.” He exhaled sharply. “I’m just glad everything went well.”

“Me too,” Taylor grinned. “So, it’s way too soon to try that once more. But, maybe, like for a birthday or something, you think you’d be game to try again?”

Despite himself, or more realistically, feeling an incredible and relieved blaze of happiness, Danny grinned back. “I’m sure that can be arranged.”

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Eventually, as fun as they are, all celebrations must have an end and there were still obligations and things to do before the weekend fully passed. Taylor had to review what she was supposed to do for homework, specifically, because she’d been gone so long. Lisa was very helpful in getting her caught up again and the actual homework wasn’t so much of a chore because of some the aspects of mastery she’d acquired while in the other universe.

During the celebration, Neo had alerted her that the gills testing had been finished while she’d been in the other universe. She’d spent so much time underwater, fighting off sharks, searching for treasure, battling undersea monsters, that the punishment series had been considered complete and the option for deep water diving had become a series of quests a long time ago. She felt oddly disappointed. Then she realized that there was nothing keeping her from spending time in her tank when she just wanted to or when a quest popped up and felt immediately happier.

Technically this also meant she had long ago met her punishment for lactation, but for some reason, she still woke up with leaky breasts sometimes. But by the time she had realized what was happening, she was used to it. She knew though, it was just a matter of figuring out what the toggle was and applying it. She just hadn’t yet, partly because she actually liked how it felt to get milked. She did remember to make sure that Zoe was included in the permissions for warehouse access and had pointed out where the milk was stored, specifically so they could make sure that her cousin would stay a well fed and happy kid.

In the meantime, once she had her homework done, she had some things and projects she wanted to explore.

She went back to her warehouse, leaving the portal door in her room open. The only people who had access to the warehouse from there were her family and people she trusted. Master Happosai might get lost in her closet, but he wouldn’t do anything to harm anyone in their group.

She wasn’t sure where she’d find the portals to the three Terrarian dimensions, but she supposed it made sense when she found them located near the medical bay; three spotless brand new doors, crafted from her favorite metal. She knew how dangerous they could be; not that anything would be coming out of those doors, except herself and whoever might join her from the outside. She understood that anyone local was currently bound the plane. Not only that, but she could quit that plane and pull up a fresh new one, should the resources be expired or she found the world irksome. She fully expected that the hazards of the worlds existed. After all, with the risk came the rewards and that included the types of wood and metals that might only be available in certain worlds at certain stages.

She discovered a digital panel situated by each door, providing settings, mods, and choices that would affect the demiplane. She read through the options, made some selections and a label displayed on the door itself, declaring it a Crimson World, No Mods, Open for Exploration.

Well then. She now had some interesting options, didn’t she?
Taylor didn’t stay overlong in the world she’d dubbed “Supplyville”. It wasn’t a creative name, but it would do for now and it was indicative of her plans more than anything. She did not intend to keep this world, so had not built anything that might act as a lure to any locals. She wasn’t sure how she knew there would be people living in her demiplane if she allowed it, but that information was there in her HUD when she asked the question.

However, she did use the opportunity to dig, dive and explore, going down enough to get a feel for things - but no further. She had no temptation to chance an early crisis to what was supposed to be a quick exploration when she already had oodles of metal bars to work with already. She was satisfied that her metal senses were on task, though she knew it would be much easier to feed Rocket now. She still fit on her shoulder, but her shell had become a thing of beauty, sparkling and awesome to look at. She also seemed to love being with Taylor as they dug in if her happy little hum was something to go by. Either that or she was just happy Taylor was back.

Taylor had been a little worried about time, but when she stepped back out into the warehouse, it was as if the time had sped by within the demiplane, as an hour only resulted in a minute’s passing, if that much.

Taylor’s grin spread wide as fed rocket another gem and she contemplated what this meant.

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The family’s entertainment room had another room across from it, which had remained somewhat empty except for acting as a point of storage for various things like Crystal’s craft items or some of Vicky’s collection of miniatures which had yet to be painted. Taylor rearranged the items in the room, storing them in new shelves and sturdy cabinets, so she could make room for the two “chairs.” They were expensive learning units, designed to fully implant information and actual physical memory into an individual up to the point of complete mastery. For safety’s sake, the units could only be used once every forty-eight hours, alternating skills, but otherwise, the selection of possible skills to learn was quite impressive and could be left up to the individual.

Lisa watched as the specialized units appeared and then gasped. “NO way!”


Lisa began to cackle like a mad scientist with full on hand motions of glee. “Me first!”

“Of course. I wouldn’t have it any other way. But Lisa, we have to be careful.” That’s when Taylor told her the time limitations and why; because death was only the first worst consequence. In “real” sim life, there could be others and she liked that her sisters were intelligent and awesome.

“Right back at you,” Lisa quipped, but she slid into the seat as if she had no worries at all and started playing with the controls, reading off the various options available. “Ooh, Vicky’s going to love the painting one and Amy will definitely run the gardening one, though she really doesn’t need it. Hmm. I think I’ll take the logic learning session and see if my game improves.”

“I am sure you will be terrifying.”

Lisa grinned. “Thank you!”

“I’ll be here when you wake up,” Taylor promised. She wanted to make sure everything went well, after all, this was the first time trying the machine in this universe.

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The only reason Taylor didn’t pace was that she had confidence in the machines. As she waited, she repainted the walls and set up some decorations. Also, she put up the rules and a massive warning sign above both learning enhancers. She would run an informal training for her whole family, just to be sure everyone knew how it worked.

Exactly thirty minutes later, Lisa awakened with an expression of glee and understanding. “That’s a rush!”

“I know right?” Taylor replied as she helped her sister out of the seat and grinned. “Want to try out what you learned?” She waved at the chess set that she’d set up while waiting. She really did appreciate the build and buy modes. They simplified so many things.

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Taylor knocked respectfully on the greenhouse door, unsure as to whether Amy was within or not. Sometimes her younger sister, the plant and biomancer, would sequester herself within so she could harmonize herself with the natural world. The garden of the greenhouse had expanded since their original start and was quite expansive just as a place of greenery. Taylor had a proposal of sorts to offer her sister.

The door swung open, guided by a strong looking vine. Taylor grinned in spite of herself. She was always impressed with what Amy could do. She stepped in, watching for her sister’s less than subtle hints about what direction to go in. The flowers guided her with their bowed heads and the vines with straight up pointing, until she found her sister kneeling on a plush looking field of clover, eyes closed and the tips of her brown hair green.

Taylor deliberately knelt in front of her sister, hands on her thighs and expression relaxed. She said, “Amy, I need to speak with you.” Then she waited.

A few moments later, Amy’s eyes opened. The bright green seeped away quickly. She leaned forward and grasped Taylor to her, kissing her cheek before letting her go again. “Hi, Taylor. What did you want to talk about?”

Taylor exhaled and then relaxed from the kneeling position, letting her legs slide more casually under her for a seated position. “I was wondering how you might feel if I added a few levels to the greenhouse. I have these plants and seeds, you see, that need particular kinds of care, so I was thinking of creating biomes for them. I can build them someplace else, but I thought you might get a kick out of being able to be near them. Plus, I can’t think of a better guardian for the life-fruit than yourself.”

Amy raised her hand, “You had me at plants, but tell me what they are and what you mean by biomes.”

Taylor grinned. “Okay, so it works this way…”

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Taylor and Amy stared into the desert “room,” a large space filled with sand and cacti and an impossible dry heat. Also, something that was possibly a sun and blue, blue sky. “Wow,” the plant master said. “That is… that’s a desert.”

“Yep,” Taylor said, very slowly. Awed.

“I think it was that last spell you did. The pleasant environment spell. We planted the ground and the seeds and then you overpowered as you do. And Bwoomph.” Amy’s arms and hands spread out
extravagantly.

“I wasn’t trying to do that,” admitted Taylor. “I just wanted a good place to grow a few needs-less-water seeds.” She exhaled. “I didn’t even know this was possible. I mean, I’m pretty sure that isn’t an actual sun, but the glowlights all came together and then,” she waved her hand at the space. “This.”

“Well, you got results and, I can feel the plants growing here. I think I’m going to do some special orders online because we could probably grow some other kinds of desert flowers in here now. Might make for a nice chunk of change if we get some rare ones going. Which brings me to mind, where did you get all that sand?!”

“You would not believe the amount of digging I did in that other world,” Taylor replied. “I got all sorts of stuff, sand, dirt, mud, clay, stone… oodles of stone…and different kinds of it. I planned on using it for crafting, mostly, but some of the seeds I have require different environments. At first, I was going to dedicate a space to it in my terraria demiplanes.”

“Wait, come back to that. What Terraria demiplanes? And isn’t that some sort of game?”

“Oh, didn’t I mention? I have three demiplanes that are based on Terraria in my warehouse.”

“Taylor!” Amy exclaimed. Then she grinned. “You gotta let me see them.”

“I plan on everyone having a chance to see them, but they’re not exactly safe places. They might make great training grounds though. I want to talk to the Masters about them too.”

“I know it’s silly to remind you, and safety might be a consideration, but really…,” Amy waved her hand. One of the cacti uprooted itself and started “walking,” its needles bristling.

Taylor considered, again, that her sister might be a little terrifying. “Right. Powers.”

Amy just grinned.

==**==

“Has anyone seen Millie?” Taylor asked as she entered the entertainment room.

“Who’s Millie?” inquired Vicky, who had been watching one of the many, many soaps they had for viewing. She held a pint of ice cream in one hand and spoon in the other. She dug the spoon into the ice cream and gathered another scoop.

“My pet Magic Lantern,” explained Taylor. “She usually follows me everywhere, but I let her roam around home when, I mean, before, normally. I didn’t take into account that she might not be familiar with our home when we got here, so I’m worried she’s done a walkabout.” She planted her hands on her hips and considered. “Though I could just do another summons and she’ll appear. But I don’t want to hassle her about it.”

“Oh, well,” Vicky said, easily. “If you’re looking for Millie…” she extended the name so it seemed stretched, but was grinning while she did so, “You might try looking for Beth too.” She ate the ice cream, savoring it, and watching Taylor’s gaze follow the way her tongue slipped over the spoon.

“Beth?” Taylor blinked away from where her mind had roamed and realized she hadn’t seen the toddler either. “Wait, were we in charge of watching Beth?”

Vicky laughed from where she was seated, leg casually over the armrest of an overstuffed chair. She
set the ice cream container to the side and dropped the spoon in the empty container. “No. Bonehilda and Parker have that well in hand. I’m just saying that Millie has been following Beth around like a puppy and if you want to know where your floating light is, you just need to know where our tentacle-baby is; and where they are, is with the skelemoid and the ninja. They’re fine.” Vicky’s grin was impish and she floated off her seat, moving into an upright position.

She glided over to Taylor, her feet just hovering above the ground. She reached and caressed Taylor’s earlobe, letting her fingers play with the curls in the ice mage’s hair. “We can go look for them if you want. But I can think of better ways to use our time.” Her smokey gaze lingered on Taylor’s lips, then rose to her catch her eyes. “Much better ways.” She leaned in and Taylor met her more than half-way.

==**==

Taylor held still as Crystal moved around her, adding finishing touches to a costume that - from Taylor’s point of view - they had started years ago. It was a dark outfit, almost all black - from a thin black shirt with darkly dangerous leather boot stacked pants, including the really nice stomping boots and a black duster. Dark sunglasses acted as the mask, while pistol holsters rode Taylor’s thighs and a belt acted as a bandolier. She only lacked the cowboy hat, which was stacked on a dummy’s head.

“I’m just saying that Revocs’ CEO has some excellent designers. Their spring collection for next year is amazing. And it seems like they’re open all sorts of ideas. Vogue said they were going to offer internships starting sometime late next year.”

“That could be fun for you. You do realize that Revocs is covers spelled backward.”

“Yeah,” Crystal said breathlessly. “Can you imagine all the things I’d learn with an internship? And what we could do then?”

“Well, if you need moral or immoral support, you know I’m here for you,” Taylor offered, seriously. If she’d had any compunction about killing bad things, that was long gone. Fortunately for both worlds, her ethics training had held strong during her long stay away and so, she wasn’t compromised. And she wasn’t prone to randomly sticking sharp objects in people’s faces for no reason.

Crystal beamed at her. “I know. Right back at you.” She stood up from her crouch and looked over her creation. “Oh yeah, we’re going to knock them dead at the con, next month.”

Taylor glanced at herself and nodded. “Hopefully not too literally, but yeah, I think this costume is a winner. Not that they aren’t always.”

Crystal tugged on the jacket collar and pulled Taylor close. “Now for the fun part,” she said.

“Oh?”

“Taking it off.”

==**==

On the news, the saber rattling eased back between the U.S., U.S.S.R, and China as the United Nations provided an impetus for neutral negotiation. The president of the U.S. certainly seemed open to talks. Generally, people breathed a sigh of relief, thinking that the worst was over.

More hero teams were popping up around the world, but the Royal Police were still the only group permitted to out and out arrest villains. People thought that Taylor’s family when they were in their
other forms, were a special team put together to deal with the more monstrous rogues and villains via legal means. The Royal Police did not make any effort to deny this.

The weather was scheduled to remain fall like for the next few weeks, but people were informed that they should expect things to start cooling down rapidly in the next few weeks.

The Hebert family had a really, really good weekend. But lo, Monday was soon upon them.

==**==
Chapter 39

Worm: Joyride: Chapter 39

Akane gave her friend, Taylor, a whimsical leer. “I hear your weekend was quite exciting,” she said as she sat beside then laid her hand on the other girl’s skirt covered thigh. Fortunately for Taylor, she had ten years of control behind her. Yes, her body was back to her “proper,” high school age and that was absolutely a factor, but her will was grounded in years of control. That self-control wasn’t helping as much as she thought it should, but then memories of just how much pheromonal oomph had passed in that time too.

She’d been forcefully reminded when she’d stepped into the building. Maybe she could talk to Crystal about setting up a chemical shield in her buttons or something because that had been quite the physical and emotional wallop. But Taylor was definitely in control for the moment and it caused her to smirk a bit at Akane’s comment. “You could say that,” she riposted.

Akane’s hand felt very, very enticing, however, it wasn’t just a matter of self-control at the moment. Taylor still felt pretty relaxed and good. It had, after all, been a very satisfying weekend. The youngest Tendo sister’s hand moved. Taylor knew what she was checking for and so she winked. Akane’s pout was cute and had they been in a less public space than their homeroom, Taylor might have gone for a kiss. Instead, she leaned forward and rested her hand on Akane’s searching grasp. “It was very nice,” she said. “I hear your weekend was interesting too.”

Akane shrugged. Then let go of Taylor’s thigh as she acted as if she were smoothing Taylor’s skirt down and patted her knee before leaning back in her own seat. She then grinned, “It had its moments.” She glanced up at the same time as Taylor did, and both saw Ranma squint at Akane as he passed by them and sat by Ukyo.

“What was that about?” Taylor asked.

Akane turned around and faced the board, “We decided a misdirection would keep things interesting.”

==**==

Taylor actually looked forward to lunch. For once she had a good sense of control and her passions were, if not dulled, at least not rolling her over in a tumble. She thought she could eat without rushing. Naturally, that’s when a student holding an open water bottle tripped and flung their arm out. The water bottle flipped, flying end over end, splashing water everywhere - specifically on Taylor.

The transitioning young woman rolled her eyes, leaped up and to a darker corner. Then she put on her disguise ballcap and started making her way to the showers. Again.

==**==

Principal Kuno was known to be heavily eccentric, even by the standards of Furikan. Yet despite his issues, he managed to be a fairly good principal on most days. It was his bad days that caused trouble. Thus, Taylor was concerned when, a week or so after the Halloween weekend, he waved her down from the ceiling.
Hesitantly, as she had been very careful to obey the school hall rules ever since that first encounter, she stepped down onto the floor. She expected screams or dismay or something, but instead - except for the usual observers of hallway upsets - the student traffic merely slowed and then flowed around herself and the principal.

“Ah, yes. Miss Weaver. I had been hoping to get a hold of you.”

“You had?” Taylor glanced around, noting the students who had stopped. She had a sudden realization that not a single one of them had a camera out or a cell phone. She cheered up, despite the oddity of the situation. She then brought her attention back to the Principal, whom she was much taller than. He had his hair in a top-tail, so hit scrunched out a bit like a flower and disguised the tiny bald spot he had going at the back. “How may I help you, Principal Kuno?”

He beamed. “I am very glad you asked.” Then he turned away from her, using a hand to wave her forward. “Walk with me, please. How are your grades?”

“Um, so far so good?” Taylor ventured, reckoning she might have to have Neo or Lisa or Crystal or all of the above do some hacking. Or she could. She totally could now. “I mean, I haven’t really paid attention to them. I’ve just been,” she waved one of her hands around, off the cuffing. “Doing school.”

“Hmph. Grades are important young lady, though I am sure you are doing fine. However, that is not why I’ve asked you to walk with me.” Students glanced at them, then continued flowing around them to wherever they were going. The principal clasped his hands behind his back as he worked up to asking whatever it was he was going to ask. He cleared his throat. “You are one of a handful of, shall we say, non-traditional students that attend this school,” he started.

Taylor blinked, wondering if her sisters had been discovered. She knew that he knew about herself, but she hadn’t thought he was that observant. Needing to learn more, she didn’t interrupt him.

“And we have a few every year, though some are not quite so…” He glanced up at her and then turned his gaze at the other students, “tall.” He nodded to himself, “And every year, schools such as ours are given the opportunity to host guests from other schools. Furinkan has been passed up for this opportunity several times, for various reasons.” He looked irked at that point, “None one which has had to do with our excellent academics, but rather they thought we were not tolerant enough.” He literally growled. “Looking back, I probably should have put a stop to the challenge fights happening around the school.”

Taylor cocked an eyebrow at him but realized that was all he was going to say on that particular topic for the moment. Personally, she was a little shocked he’d been allowed to remain a principal, given the issues. But, different cultures, she supposed. He continued, “This past Halloween, after all the excitement, I was approached by a representative of one of our sister schools. They had noted that we have several students of…” He waggled his hand, “alternative origins and that theses co-mingled successfully with the humans of our school.”

“Oh,” said Taylor. “So they’ve been watching us?”

“Only in their usual ways. Nothing too invasive, I am sure,” said Principal Kuno. Taylor did not find this exactly comforting. He smiled at her. “More specifically, they have been quite impressed with you. Not only have you shown your ability to co-exist with our students, but you have also acted to defend them in crisis.”
Taylor started to speak.

“Now, now. I know you aren’t one to boast. But you are one of the few recognizable heroines. We all know it, Ms. Weaver. Your shape, after all, is not exactly one you can hide.” He smirked at her, “Even with that fancy visor. However, your heroic bent is not in question. I see you at school every day, regardless of how late or dangerous your night has been. You may not be confident in your grades, but I am confident you are a good student.”

Taylor clutched her books to her chest. “I try to be sir, but I still don’t understand.”

“Oh, right,” he said and he stopped walking, so Taylor did too. “Ms. Weaver, I’d like you to act as our representative to our sister school. You may nominate two other students to accompany you. I’d like for at least one of them to be human, but… uh… they must be open minded. However, I am sure that any human friend of yours will be so. They must, obviously, also be a student in this school. If you can get the names to me by tomorrow morning, that would be appreciated. Then we can work out arrangements for your visit. How does that sound?”

“It sounds very unexpected sir. Is it okay if I talk to my Mom about this?” Actually, Taylor was feeling an odd sense of relief. If he was only speaking to her, then perhaps her sisters had not been compromised. But she expected her parents might be having a talk with the principal at some point.

He beamed. “Of course.”

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Much later, Taylor was glad she was able to handle her impulses better, but she knew there had to be a better way of addressing her inevitable needs. While her will was strong, her body was also back to its more youthful state and so she struggled; though less obviously. She definitely moderated her internal settings as much as possible, which meant she continued to be able to actually concentrate on her courses, which was both nice and frustrating at the same time, as she was essentially reviewing material for several of them now. Her stay in the Simverse had allowed her to gather expertise in a variety of topics. Math and Chemistry were twice as easy as before. And now all she wanted to do, when she saw the computer lab, was find out if the mixes she made in the sim-verse would work in this universe as well.

That reminded her that she fully intended to set up that workshop and lab out past the plaza. She just hadn’t had the time. She was only one person after all.

However, now that she had her warehouse back, she was aware that she also had new options. During one of the breaks between classes, after lunch and after being pulled over by the principal, she deliberately stepped into an available open closet and then into her warehouse; where she did some quick rearranging.

The warehouse space was huge, quite roomy enough for her to build a house or two or ten or maybe an apartment complex. True, anything she made right this minute wouldn’t be as fancy as a mansion, but the warehouse was set up with utilities and she could connect, but more importantly, she realized she could make a dedicated space just for getting her groove on with her family and trusted friends in privacy.

True, no one had brought up this particular issue, but if Principal Kuno was calling on her because she spidered out, she suspected she hadn’t been as subtle as she hoped. So. The simplest and best
solution was simply not to be in school at all when it came to fooling around.

It was after she set up the small, but very useful building that she remembered she had the Terrarian worlds too.

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She had watched Akane, Ukyo, and Ranma dance around each other during the week, hinting at a sort of high school romance drama that had the other girls in their classes tittering and gossiping and the young men flexing and trying to impress. It had been entertaining to watch, given she knew what they were up to. Nabiki had been randomly showing up and taking pictures, claiming it was for the school yearbook. And, for the first time in a long while, Taylor really felt like she was in a high school and not some weird torture-filled environment that required a lot of sitting while suffering.

Still, after cheerleading practice and a whole day without once trying to find one of the pre-planned spaces, she was feeling a little squirrelly and the randiness had caught up with her. It took everything she had to stay mostly focused through their routines, but she caught herself more than once looking up skirts, down tops and struggling to keep her hands from roving inappropriately. She would have welcomed a straight up run as a distraction, but their coach kept them otherwise occupied with syncopated movements and tumbles and enough personal contact that it was driving her a little nuts.

But it was so, so fun.

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“So I wanted to show you something,” Taylor said to Lisa as they walked through a neighborhood near the school. The sun was shining, the sky very blue, and the trees were a myriad of fall colors. It was Vicky and Amy’s turn to walk Akane and Nabiki to the Tendos and they liked to shake up their routes, so they were taking them in a more circuitous way. Crystal and Cherry had some cleaning to do at the school since it was their day. Annette had a meeting to attend. She had no idea where Ranma and Ukyo were. They’d gone home or somewhere earlier. It was very possible they were at Ukyo’s restaurant.

Taylor still hadn’t had a chance to talk to anyone about the principal's proposal. She was also considering who to take with her if what she suspected was true. On the other hand, this was an excellent opportunity to try something she’d not trusted anyone enough to attempt while in that other universe and if she were going to trust anyone…

Lisa grinned impishly, as she leaned in and snagged Taylor’s collar. “Are we finally going someplace… quiet?”

“Well,” Taylor said, “That is an option, and it could be, but…” She stopped walking and drew in a breath. She didn’t actually need to close her eyes for this, but she did for just a second so she could center herself. “I actually wanted to try this.” She made some non-verbal choices.

Lisa startled back. She raised her hand to something that was likely invisible to the eye to anyone else. “What’s this?”

“Well, Taylor grinned. “It’s a join party request. I was wondering if you’d like to help me test out a theory.”

Lisa couldn’t help herself and her smile teased as she made a choice. “I’m game.” Then, suddenly,
Lisa’s expression changed as a HUD and Inventory displayed for her. “Holy…” Lisa turned about, “This is so weird.” Then she grinned at Taylor, “But so cool.”

‘Can you read this?’ Taylor sent the text to the team screen.

Lisa verbally answered. “Yep.”

“I’d test out the team verbal chat option, but you’re right there. But I expect it would be the same as when we wear our gear anyway.”

Lisa laughed. “We can try it later. If nothing else, we can test the distance on it.”

“Yeah,” Taylor agreed, then got busy by transferring some objects from her inventory into their shared inventory, mostly potions; healing, mana, speed, strength, etc. The boosting potions weren’t permanent, but they had some cool effects. She actually really liked the shine potion a lot. It caused a person to glow and wasn’t just something that worked on the eyes. She thought Lisa might get some good use out of it, given her abilities with light. She also added in some food, just so Lisa could see it could be done.

“Move that all to your personal inventory,” Taylor commanded, though she tried to moderate the tone so it wasn’t bossy.

Lisa cast a doubtful glance at her sister, but moments later, the items disappeared from the party inventory. “Wow. I got a secret hiding space.”

“I may have to do this for everyone. I mean, invite them to the party. But technically, all of us… at least our family should have a HUD and inventory now. I don’t know if it will work for the Tendos. I haven’t officially companioned them yet; at least according to my menu.” Taylor rambled, as she pushed over some gold to the shared inventory and then added the basics, by adding a chest full of survival gear. They’d have to take the chest out to use it, but it would be there.

She continued. “But because of how I ended up in the other universe, I had points to spend and I remember that part, so you should get them. Oh, and the HUD/Inventory will keep track of your personal money too. I mean any money you have on you. Anything you bank elsewhere, you might have to check the old fashioned way. There should be some auto-settings you can play within the HUD, which might change that though. Neo basically took mine over at my request.”

“You’re taking this surprisingly well,” Taylor said as she grabbed her sister in a quick side hug, before letting her go. Lisa was still staring around. The brunette suspected she was playing with the observe options. “You can turn off the HUD, by the way, so you can sleep or walk around without it constantly on. Oh, and the map isn’t instant. Places have to be discovered, but Neo figured out how to match maps if you have a physical or digital one, so that’s fixable. I think the HUD can be transferred to your visor when you need it to be. You’ll have to play with your settings. The HUD and inventory should stick because that came with a different perk set, so don’t put anything important in, until we test that. But some of the STAT and Observe info may only be available while we’re partied up. We’ll have to play around with it to find out. So, think this will be useful?”

Lisa’s grin turned shark-like. “Oh yes, it will be.” Her power was already making the Observe function run through its paces, but she didn’t think she needed to prove anything to her sister so did not mention it. She’d already known that Taylor was special, but the list of accomplishments alone was amazing. However, she also knew if she said anything, Taylor would likely close up and she did not want that. So she kept what she learned to herself. She smiled at her sister. “This is really cool.”
Taylor started walking again and said, quite cheesily, “But wait, there’s more!”

Then she began to explain the Instant Dungeon.

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Taylor was about to demonstrate a blank version of her Instant Dungeons (ID) when a blonde teen, popped out in front of them from an alley. It was obvious she had money, given how well she dressed. Her whole body language reminded Taylor of some of the richer kids she’d met. The girl’s glare could probably light something on fire, if that had been her power. Taylor observed her, gaining some insight, but before she could say anything, Lisa spoke.

“Ms. Kuno. Fancy seeing you here. You’re pretty far from your school.”

“I am looking for my fiance, Ranma Saotome. You have heard of him, haven’t you.”

“You could say,” Lisa said, casually. “Any particular reason you’re looking for him now?”

“I heard from a reliable source he was two-timing me.”

“Two-timing you,” Taylor repeated skeptically. “I don’t think he thinks you’re involved with him at all.”

“He should know better. I told him we were affianced,” the blonde said with a scoff.

“Ah, well, that’s not actually the same as being so,” Taylor pointed out. “However, if you want, we can let him know we saw you.” She considered. “That is, if we seem him. He did leave school pretty early today.”

The blonde’s gaze shifted between them. “And why would you expect to see him at all?”

“We’re being trained at the Tendo dojo,” Lisa supplied. “Our whole family is learning how to…” Lisa fumbled a martial stance. “Whoops! As I said, we’re learning how to do that sort of thing. Ranma’s one of the teachers.”

Taylor offered her most innocent smile but wrapped her arm around her sister, as if helping into an upright position. “Yep, just a couple of novices. That’s us.”

The blonde sniffed and humphed. “Fine. If you see him, let him know I’m looking for him and he better come to see me if he knows what is good for him.”

“Of course,” Lisa said through a fake smile. “Would be glad to.”

The young woman disappeared in a puff of black roses.

Taylor waited a moment to be sure she was gone. “That girl is trouble.”

“She’s dangerous,” Lisa replied. But then she gave her sister a cat-like grin. “But not as dangerous as us.” She took Taylor’s hand and began walking. “Not nearly.”

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Worm: Joyride: Chapter 40

After Kodachi disappeared via her ninja flowers, Taylor and Lisa decided to head straight for the dojo rather than try for a demo of power in the open. It wasn’t that the spot they’d chosen was unsafe, so much as people had come out to see what the excitement was when Kodachi had arrived, spoiling the opportunity. So, they tabled their discussion until Taylor could bring up the topic again later.

It wasn’t that long of a wait, as they hadn’t been that far from the dojo and it wasn’t long before those who had reason to be there all had assembled.

Soon Taylor was explaining - again - that she had options in creating magical spaces, neighborhoods, locales, whatever you wanted to call them. Her inner menu called them dungeons, regardless of whether she created them upstairs, downstairs, in space or underground. These dungeon spaces changed how the world operated within them. Like her protected space, it kept the objects and buildings within from actually breaking once the dungeon was dismissed. Unlike the protected space, the dungeons had levels and monsters and loot.

Taylor explained to a rapt audience how she leveled up several different types of dungeons, but at a certain point had to cool things off, because the reality she was in was sufficiently challenging that she had to prioritize. Around that time, her HUD provided an option for forming a group, but she never had a real chance to try that, until she’d done so with Lisa that very afternoon.

The silence as she spoke had been a bit unnerving, especially as, the more she spoke, the more still everyone had gotten, even Cherry, who sometimes jittered her leg when she got too bored with something. Taylor’s voice had gotten quieter too, as she began to wonder if maybe Lisa had been wrong. But she pushed through, forcing herself to look at them all out of pure Warlord of Brockton Bay habit. “So I was wondering, would any of you want to try joining my party and then go through one of my lower-power dungeons? That way we can just go in willy-nilly and have fun. We can choose from a handful. I got the basic ghoul and zombie, which are the lowest. But the levels above are just a shade tougher and have goblins and then the pirates.”

“Wait. You can summon pirates?” Amy said in shock.

“Well, not really the real thing. More like representations of the thing.” Taylor acknowledged.

“They’re not just projections though. They’re… what? NPCs? I’m not sure I understand how it all works yet; only that it does.”

“But they say Arr, like pirates?” Vicky asked teasingly from where she’d settled into a comfortable position by Amy.

“And Matey?” offered Ranma, joining in. After years of stress, the difference in his body language was amazing. He had always acted as if he were relaxed in the face of danger, but now that he really was, everyone could tell the difference.

“And have a skull and crossbones flag?” Crystal jested. She was already planning out a whole outfit for a potential next time, but there would be nothing stopping her from joining now.

Taylor pointed at Crystal as if she’d hit the mark. “That’s sometimes one of the loot pieces. They were actually pretty popular at the local farmer’s market. I think they ended up on walls as
“What kid doesn’t want a pirate flag at least once in their life?” her father quipped. “I seem to recall a time when you and …,” he paused and rephrased, “your childhood friend wore superhero capes at the same time you wore makeshift eye patches. I believe a lesson was learned in depth perception?”

Despite herself, Taylor laughed. She had enough distance and therapy now to appreciate her past a bit more. The grief was still there sometimes, but it was never as terrible as it had been. “Yeah, good times.”

“And there’s gold?” Nabiki queried. She obviously knew what was most important here.

“Oh yeah. Actually, of the four, the pirate dungeon has the most gold for a lower level; oh, and treasure chests. Though my HUD says that label for the one I’m thinking of is actually Pirate Dungeon Level One. That’s one I haven’t pushed higher, as I ended up having to practice for aliens a bit more. Those are definitely tougher dungeons. But maybe with us all here, we can work on leveling up the pirate dungeon and see if there be a Pirate Dungeon Level Two, arr.”

“Wait, so every instant dungeon has gold?” Nabiki’s grin was shark-like.

Taylor nodded firmly. “Or some form of cash or jewel or other items of worth, like a crafting item or potion. So, yes as part of the reward there are goods of the tangible spendable kind. If we go in as a party, the loot will add itself to the team inventory. It can then be split up or we can use it to purchase group items; something I’ve never had the opportunity to do. When I store the gold in my inventory, I can pull it out in various kinds of denominations. So the purchasing isn’t just limited to the build/buy menu or the Abyss Auction. We can actually go grocery shopping with this. I know, because I did that more than a few times when the fridge got low.”

“I’ve seen your Build/Buy in action, but what is the Abyss Auction?” asked Annette. She, like the others, was casually situated, leaning on her husband comfortably.

“The auction is basically…” Taylor considered how to answer. “You remember when Toybox started up that online store that got super popular and expanded its catalog because of it? It’s kind of like a mix of that and e-warehouse. We can visit the site at home on the pc, either buy straight from the catalog or participate in the auctions and then the purchased items from that will then be delivered to our house or wherever we ask them to deliver. Usually, though, I just tell Neo what I want and she procures it.” She paused a bit and then added, soberly. “One caveat, the auction is… I don’t know if I’d call it morally gray, but in the other world, when they said anything was for sale, they meant it. Neo spent a good portion of her time and awards outbidding assassination or capture orders. Those have disappeared now, but Neo is still watching that board, but now she’s including all of our names just to be safe.”

Suddenly Nabiki was at Taylor’s shoulder, hugging her. “You are now one of my favorite people.”

Taylor grinned and bumped Nabiki away, gently. “You only want me for my nifty toys and the burgeoning sense of security you gain from knowing we got your backs; oh and money. Also, I think you might be part dragon, given that I think you’d sleep more comfortably a bit of gold under your bed.”

Lisa sat up abruptly, her gaze snapping. “That makes so much sense. Taylor, when we’re done with this can we borrow some gold pieces?”

“When we’re done with this, you won’t have to ask. It’ll be in the communal pot to grab. Just, maybe, we should have our AI’s managing some of the money pool. Not all of it. I like the notion of
just having some for a grab bag all the time. But we can designate the percentages and they can keep track of the deductions and additions and put that in an easy to review format.” She glanced at Nabiki. “For those of us who need that kind of visual aid.”

River spun into view in front of Annette, wearing a glorious gown of black sequins. “I volunteer.”

Neo popped in front of Taylor in her denim short-shorts and tank top. She held what looked like a big wrench over one of her shoulders. “I’ll make the connections.”

Ben floated forward from Danny, dressed in jeans and white collar shirt and tie, “Hey, don’t forget me! Leave some of the main pot for investing and we can grow it. Any opposed?”

Taylor glanced around and Soun asked, “This would be for all of us?”

“Sure thing. We can even separate it out so the Dojo gets a percentage off the top. Though I know that the department has already paid for the year. Still, it wouldn’t hurt to have money to buy improvements, if you wanted.”

Always a sensitive man, tears started sliding on the elder Tendo’s face. “If you would help us this way, we would be honored to participate in this endeavor.” He smiled at his middle daughter. “I know Nabiki has had difficulty with the oaths I’ve kept for honor, but now we see the benefit, do we not? I will say now that my daughters may keep what they earn. Ranma, of course, may also as he wishes. But you may take fifty percent from my share to add to the Dojo funds. From there, we will invest and save for our dojo’s future.” He put his fist against his mouth and cleared his throat. "I would give it all, but every man needs a little spending money."

Nabiki flung herself at her father and hugged him hard, not quite able to articulate how she felt. She clung a little harder when he hugged her back, then gently set her aside. “Perhaps you will tell the Hebert’s Management Spirits what you would like the Dojo to invest in after we are done.”

Nabiki’s face lit up. “You would trust me with that?”

“I know it is not so easy to be the middle daughter, but I trust you, Nabiki, to do that which will bring this family honor in our finances.”

While they prepared themselves, Taylor summoned her lantern, which rushed up to her and wiggled like an expectant puppy. The lantern had been through a lot with her and the heroine pet it on the cap, which was always warm, but never too hot. “Who’s a good Bobbing. You’re a good Bobbing, yes you are and we’re going on a small adventure. Excited?”

The lantern started wiggling, even more, its bottom shifting rapidly from side to side as its little light brightened.

“Wait, I thought your lantern’s name was Millie,” Vicky said in confusion.

“It is,” Taylor confirmed, nodding and smiling wistfully at her pet. With a few careful movements, she adjusted its light and settings.
“I thought it was Bobbing,” Crystal said, adding to the confusion.

“It is,” Taylor explained. “Bobbing is her hero name and Millie is her given name.” She then stage-whispered, “No one tell her she can’t fight. She doesn’t have that ability in theory, but she loves trying to bang on the bad guys. She’s actually managed to conk a few good ones now and then.”

As if to prove her point, Millie shifted behind Ranma and brushed up, hard, against his head. The surprised martial artist palmed his scalp as he yelped.

The lantern seemed to puff out proudly before bouncing around like someone waving champion arms and then moved back by Taylor.

Lisa guffawed and then punched Taylor lightly in the shoulder.

==**==

When people had their weapons and gear ready, Taylor sent out the invitations. She could see the starting menus appear, then disappear as they accepted the invitation. From then on, the menus would likely be handled mostly invisible. “Check your stats, you might already have some points to use if you want to. You also might have a title or two that might give you an advantage. I have Neo managing mine, so I don’t have to look at it much, but I gave her my priorities a while ago.”

She was surprised to see that, aside from Soun and Happosai, that everyone was pretty close to each other on levels. She had been a bit concerned about the balance and how it might affect things. “Okay, so Soun and Happosai have more technical levels than we do. Happosai because he’s been a Martial Artist forever, and Soun, because he’s been teaching so long, I think. But this may or may not swerve how points are distributed. If so, we’ll run separate dungeons next time. This one is just for fun, right?”

"Right!" the others cheered! Those in the cheer team somehow managed to have cheer puffs to shake in their hands when they shouted.

"Everyone ready?!" Taylor called out, before taking a stance in preparation to call up the dungeon.

“Ready!” The sound echoed through the family dojo’s yard and with a clap of her hands, the world went silent.

For a moment nothing moved, then there was firecracker-like noise, then a whistling whoosh noise high sliding through the air. It was like a giant pistol had been shot. “Cannon fire!” Taylor half-shouted. “They’re on the way!”

The ball landed explosively a short distance away, dirt and rubble went flying. Another shot sounded. Taylor crouched, then zoomed forward, letting her ki and her boots handle the speed. Cherry caught up with her easily, not needing any special gear. “Slowpoke!” the redhead called and then she passed her.

Taylor stuck her tongue out. Then she laughed when Cherry called back, “Promises, promises! I’ll make you use it in public if you keep that up.”

The ship hove into view, sailing high in the air. Pirates were dropping to the ground, sliding and swinging on sturdy ropes. The sound of their excited, nasty shouts rolled forward like a wave. More cannons went off.

Taylor could hear her family and friends shouting back, nothing quite so filthy, but at the same time, the taunts were pretty good. She couldn’t help the grin that bubbled up, as she called her weapon into
her hands. This was another thing she had been missing; family and friends to fight at her side. She flung the sword down and three powerful fireballs went whipping down the road, decimating a group of pirates.

They died dramatically of fire, then disappeared in a scattering of blue light. Coins flew towards the closest person, Cherry.

“Whoa! I’m being spammed by gold!” She giggled. “It tickles!”

“What?!” Nabiki could be heard from the back. “I want to be tickled like that!” Taylor, despite herself, looked back and saw Nabiki abruptly charging forward, gaining an amazing momentum. Taylor fell back, laughing.

==**==

It was, of course, mayhem. The inner chat blipped with text and sound as the team knocked a variety of pirates back into the dream. It had gotten worse after Ranma had asked, “Can we try to save the ship?”

Taylor had answered, “Wouldn’t work. The ship will disappear. But, if you manage to get it crash and burn, sometimes it leaves a really small one - about the size of a car. It moves like this one does, though it has a bit of a learning curve on figuring out how to drive it.”

Ranma’s blue eyes had gleamed as he stared up at the floating ship. Then he made a prodigious leap. Pirates and ruffians started falling from the ship like really heavy and ugly rain. Blood splattered everywhere, then dissipated rapidly in sparkles. “Ranma! Leave some experience points for the rest of us!”

Taylor thought that might have been Amy, but she’d lost track of the biokinetic in the field of violent green whips that had whirled about like a tornado.

The insect queen was pretty sure that the points would be evenly distributed among the group, but rather than say so, she whispered Mellifera Attackum three times, each addition to the swarm of gaining strength as she pushed her power and the magic she’d learned, until the final swarm contained massive amounts of creatures that stung and burned, of all sorts of sizes from small to gargantuan. The ground moved and lightening swept through the air in frenzy of terror as a sense of DOOM filled the air.

Taylor considered that she might have overdone it a little when the main mast on the ship was struck by lightening from the effects of the spell and tumbled down in flames.

“What the hell was that?!” Akane shouted as she tossed a pirate to Vicky, who finished him.

Lisa called out. “A storm of Bees! All the Bees!”

“Well, not all of them!” Taylor laughed. “I haven’t even put on my Bee Armor.”

“What? You have Bee Armor?” Crystal somehow seemed to transport herself directly to Taylor. “That would have been hilarious! Why aren’t you wearing it?”

“It’s not my strongest armor and I was saving it for a special occasion.”

Crystal contemplated that, then nodded. “Okay, that passes. This time. But I want to see it!”

Taylor grinned, as she felt a warmth of love and appreciation for her sister fill her chest. "I'll be
happy to show it! And let you take it off me."

Crystal clapped her hands in happy anticipation. "Can hardly wait."

==**==

The pirates had dwindled rapidly and the ship was a wreck on the ground, but Taylor heard the call of, “Harr, Harr, Harr!” She suddenly remembered that while she’d described the dungeons, she’d forgotten to mention the big bosses. Whoops!

“It’s Captain Hook!” Akane half shouted and half squeed! Look at that mustache! It’s glorious!

The captain shouted back, “Missy, you wait until I finish with these others and we’ll have a fine time! I’ll treat you right, and you can be my pirate lass!”

“Sorry, Captain, she’s already got a guy!”

“And a gal. And another guy!”

“A floozy then!”

Akane gasped and then her face turned red as her anger gained focus. “You’ll pay for that!” The air actually crackled around her. Taylor wisely stepped out of the way, just in time to see Akane bum rush the particularly tall captain.

His mustache did not save him. Taylor watched as Captain Hook, a Boss that had given her trouble, went down under the force of Akane’s rage and pummelling. As she gaped in honest amazement, Taylor had to consider that Ranma’s durability had to be actually legendary in caliber.

==**==

The dungeon magic fell with a feeling of glass shattering, but without the sound. Though the battle had raged through the neighborhood, they’d trecked back to the dojo just to be sure they didn’t suddenly appear in the middle of the road somewhere. Everything was as they’d left it, pristine in condition - comparatively speaking; there was still that one hinge that stuck in the door of the house. But other than that, perfect.

Then the silence was cracked wide open when Akane shouted. "I got a new title! Pirate Pummeler! Ooh, and it gives me a ten percent boost to fighting without a weapon. Nice!"

After that, everyone was a bit busy looking at their menus and figuring out what they'd gained from the experience.
Disclaimers

Chapter Summary

These are the disclaimers that copy/pasted from chapter 1. It's not really a new chapter. As a reward for looking, I will post a new chapter right before this one. My intent is that this chapter should end up being at the very, very end. So the long disclaimers are officially moving to the last chapter.

TL;DR Disclaimer

Do not complain to author about ANYTHING, see long disclaimers. Story contains smut, taboo experiences, mayhem, magic, and sundry very good/very bad happenings. Story is AU. Yes there is story in chapter 1. No, the sex doesn't happen right away. Plot Ahead. Story origins are: Worm/SlutLife/Jumpchain. Expect abrupt changes in scenes. Age of consent=16. Why? Main cast is way older than that but may appear younger due to Jumpchain. Porn Logic/Psychology Ahead. Compersion, Communication and Polyamory ahead.

Long Disclaimer:

Warning: I write long disclaimers and author notes to make sure we’re all on the same page. If you don’t read the warning and something comes up in the comments that I warned about, well, I don’t know what to say.

Disclaimer: Books, movies, and games owned by other entities and people = yes. No specific list, because the jumps will be clarified in the chapter it is offered. But this is whole work is not for profit, is a little bit of parody and a lot of self-indulgence and is definitely a work of fan fiction. This work is meant for enjoyment, personal and otherwise. Any money I personally have is either from a “real job,” or, if fictional, jump generated and not from the fanfic being read by audiences in this temporal and spatial/universal location.

Beta Readers: I have one beta reader of a sort, but its more a peek over my shoulder, rather than edit kind of thing.

I didn't use the Archive Warnings Because I Want You to Read MY Warnings and make up your own mind about things.

A/N - I am going to ask a major favor from the reader. It would really help me if readers would avoid outright demands to continue this. It’s not that I don’t want to. It’s that I get a serious case of performance anxiety when demands or even mildly forceful requests get made. I’m weirdly okay with, “I look forward to more” statements, but I get flat out strange and clutch up with, “When are you going to update?!” or, even worse, declarations of, “This fic is obviously dead!”

It’s awful. I feel terrible when I read those and I don’t respond well. I don’t suddenly feel compelled to finish things when those declarations happen. Instead, I suddenly don’t *want* to write anymore and then… I don’t; for months and years. So please, please do not do this.

I would usually not even bring this up, but I *want* to write - for the first time in a long time. Please let me have this.
Also, if something isn’t updated, there are reasons. It can be as simple as I broke my leg and had to have surgery, which knocked me out of the muse-land for quite a while when it happened a few years ago. Or it can be as complex as I’ve scared myself with the direction a story is taking and I’m not sure where or if I can roll with it, but I don’t want to back up, because things are good so far so let’s just leave it right here a moment.

This does mean that there will be unfinished stories. Asking me to update those stories hurts when I'm obviously working on something else and when I got a good roll going, can be non-helpful. Therefore, I'd like to request that such not be done. I am super aware of what is and is not complete. I wish I could say there were always good reasons for why the muse peters out, but no. It’s just… I’ve somewhat accommodated myself to the idea that writing for me is an awful lot like tuning a dial to a good reception on a universe. When it’s good, it’s great. When it’s not a good reception, it’ll trickle off and, well, another channel comes up and I go with that in the hopes I’ll be near that other signal some day. I no longer promise to finish fics and have found personal enjoyment in the unfinished works of others, because I recognize what is happening and I’m not alone in this. I say we all cut each other slack and just enjoy the signal while we got them. But if unfinished works are difficult for you… maybe don’t start this one. I say this with love. *stamp* Incomplete Work Ahead *endstamp*

More Disclaimers:

A/N - Slut Life is based on a CYOA, which can be found on the internet, but I didn’t use the original CYOA.

I used this:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet…gYdQqYNWV95tnNS87IWUqVAwY/edit#gid=791704778

However, this document requires that there be at least some story made when used. This is that qualifying story. This document will apply in some way through the whole work, so I won’t be showing the link again (except in chapter 1).

That said because this story is at least part Slut Life expect *stamp* Porn Logic!/Porn Action! *endstamp* as opposed to rational decision making or universe relativity in regards to “how things really work.” *stamp* Artistic License *endstamp* is heavily in play here. Go with it.

Also, Slut Life has slutty options. This includes gender switches of varying kinds, sex with creatures biological or mechanical, and excessive biological responses. The document is about being Slutty (in this case, I'm defining it as openly, sometimes hyperly, sexual) in all kinds of ways. If this sort of things doesn't work for you on specific levels, you probably should *not* be reading this fic. *stamp* Slut Life has an extensive contract that covers a lot of things, tasteful and not *endstamp*

Not all possible things will happen in this story. This is an actual story, not just plot what plot. I have been thinking a lot about how much *time* it would take to constantly be rolling from one sexual scene to another and how society would literally crumble if everything was all sex, all the time. So, no. That won't happen here. I am envisioning a world and reality set that is hedonistic, but not to the point of self or cultural or personal destruction.

A/N - Jumpchains are not exactly CYOAs. They’re a personal ongoing game of fictional possibilities based on points and dice and the multiverse of fiction/games/etc. And the documents and talk about them can be found in a couple of places online. Chains can be told in a variety of ways, usually via snippets or just rundowns of builds. Most runs usually go 10-20 jumps, but some go a lot longer.

I don’t know how long or short this will be. It could just be the five chapters. But, hopefully, it will
be fun and there will be more.

That said, should this story keep going it will be the more traditional chapter driven type and several chapters could cover a single jump, while one chapter could also contain multiple jumps - depending. Also, while it is somewhat traditional to share builds, I will not be doing that or sharing numbers and/or drop a lot of statistical information related to chosen perks/items, etc, unless it applies in the chapter. I’m skeptical of sharing builds, to begin with - even if I enjoy viewing them. I will, however, share links to the documents if I have them, so you can make mighty guesses. You’ll probably rock it real close because all of you are smart people.

My reasoning is this, my goal is to try to describe the effect versus the data that may fill a spreadsheet. Also, I want to avoid information overload. The reason for this is that my chains tend to be built on a lot of spreadsheets with a lot of pages. I track all sorts of information - from spell lists to companions to vital statistics to money to … just… it’s too much to post and, as I noted in another unfinished story: You don’t need my OCD here. *stamp* Jumpchain is Fun! Enjoy the mystery! *endstamp*

A/N - This fiction will draw from several sources for inspiration - This specifically includes Wildbow’s Web Serial: Worm and related topics. It will also reference Fanfiction versions, which I have found much easier to read and consider writing resources. So if Taylor or anyone else seems OoC, there’s your reason. I sometimes like fanfic versions of characters more than the original. But I’ll try a little not to tromp too hard over canon. But alterations in some realities are going to be inevitable. So for that reason, this story is most definitely *stamp* AU! *endstamp*

Also, I’m not an expert in all the universes that will be visited. I’ll do my best to imagine, but if I haven’t even played the game and only have a wiki stub and the information provided in a jump to refer to,... it’s just going to be the way it is. If it’s wrong, well… I did my best with what I knew. I try to keep the flavors right, but if all the ingredients aren’t there… *shrugs* Think of it like painting. I’ll do my best to keep the fic “feeling” true vs absolute realism because usually, that’s what matters anyway. *stamp* AU double-down! *endstamp*

A/N - This story involves appendages and physical transformations and happy bits connecting. If phalli or yoni or a mix of both offend, perhaps this story is not for you. *stamp* Bits and Pieces Ahoy! *endstamp* Which brings me to this: if sex and erotica bother you; if you can’t deal with the idea of non-culturally approved relationships; if incest implied or actual is a trigger - Do Not Read This Fiction. Don’t. It’s going there. It’s going there a lot. There will be messes made and aggressive and non-aggressive suggestive and sexual acts. *stamp* Much sex and related shenanigans *endtamp*

That said, if there is tying down and spankings, it’s going to be light or at least not super hostile/pushing - mostly because Taylor has trust issues and it’d be a long, long, long time before she just went “Yay!” for anything heavy. And, this is not a story about her soul or anyone’s soul (except the bad guys’) getting stomped on by those she/they love(s). That said, do expect some spankings, emotional and otherwise, ahead. She’s been fairly naughty (and not in the happy-fun times kind of way) in her life and some things need addressing. *stamp* BDSM-lite *endstamp*

Of course, given what I intend to do with this story, maybe I should call it a Humpchain. *considers* Nah! *ends consideration*

A/N - This story goes beyond hints of naughtiness that may involve surprises of an erotic nature. It is likely to involve very, very, very close and erotic family relationships. Respect the TAGS, if I figure out how to put them up there!

Consent is given, but because of when and how it was given, it is likely to appear Dubious
sometimes/often.

That said, I’m pretty much all about consent these days and the Slut Life version that we’re going with here is definitely about that, so if anything “triggery” happens, it was all agreed to before-hand. On the other hand, there is the situation in being a Magical Girl that means that there are threats of non-con/rape as part of the job description. And likely, there will be jumps where other such events are likely to occur because life is risk. I intend to avoid being too blunt about things but still, the only safe Universe is “Heaven” and there is some question about that. Still, this is your warning that such things might occur, but I’ll make sure to label them clearly in their particular chapter if I recognize it is happening. And remember the Porn Psychology applies. *stamp* Trigger Warning! *endstamp*

That said, this story is also protected by the she-will-never-go-there-clause. I have a personal age limit. It’s actually higher than what I’ve set here, but author limitations are not character limitations. This is not a story about me, but a story about them. Thus, I know teens and young people have hormones and that results in things happening. But sixteen, which in general is the most common age of consent most places, is where I’ve set it when it comes to persons interacting on a sexual level. I've considered lifting it to 17 or 18, because of my own levels of comfort, but it's not realistic with a jumpchain.

That said, things are starting out at a higher range than that anyhow. Taylor is 21 and her friends are all above 18 as it stands right now.

The thing is, in most jumps, age often will not have much to do with appearance, because jumps can last thousands and thousands of years and age appearance changes with any given scenario. That said, in jumps, I tend to write that a person generally will “act” the age of the in-jump appearance, at least until the point of their return to jumper-consciousness; and partly because acting the part in a jump is kind of important to the feel of things, unless you’re all about stompfic (not that those aren't fun too).

However, again, appearance is not age. If someone happens to be of age and simply appears younger because of body shape and or transhumanism, there’s nothing wrong with being that way. (A good example of this is Honor Harrington, wherein the aging process has been slowed due to the advance of technology, but the person is still of age at “x” years.) *stamp* Age of Consent Enforced (16) *endstamp* *stamp* Some people just appear that way *endstamp*

A/N - Plural/Poly relationships happen to be one of my favorite playgrounds. This fiction enters that territory and really gets digging in it. *stamp* POLYAMORY *endstamp* I am a firm believer that honest and meaningful communication reduces unnecessary interpersonal friction *stamp* Communication Ahead *endstamp*

Slut Life uses the concept of Ownership. This is not about establishing points of jealousy, so much as points of who occupies time with whom. Owners have the privilege of spending time with Taylor. They have the right to do what they want with Taylor, so long as it is not overly injurious. This is part of the contract agreement. They do not have the right to interfere with other Owners, nor to keep Taylor from developing other relationships of her own. Nor does Taylor have the right to stop them from forming relationships of their own, nor to interfere with them or other Owners. *stamp* Ownership has limits *endstamp* *stamp* Low Jealousy Zone *endstamp*

A/N - This story uses a heroic-world, magical, technological setting, and common adventuring and mayhemic scenarios, which means that some events are darker and more dangerous and possibly unfriendly. Remember, this is based on characters from Worm! This could result in the stuff that needed warning above. Or it could result in a simple fist-fight. It all depends. Plan on violence and blood now and then. *stamp* MAYHEM! *endstamp*
Wow, that’s a long, long disclaimer. But I felt it was important to be clear about things from the very start. I may have to just post this as a separate index/chapter because it ended up being five pages long. However, the implication is this: If I’ve missed something and you think I should have mentioned it, consider it disclaimed here. This is as good and thorough as I can do.

Thank you.

Final Note (Aug 3, 2018): I'm posting this one chapter a day or so, until I reach the most current. Then I'll post as I post. However, today I'm posting Chapters 1 - 3

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!