

Maturing Culthood

Written by Septia.

A most welcome smell of moss and clear springwater permeated the air of the lower catacombs I wondered if It came from a natural spring in the base of the mountain range, or if the water was leakage from one of the cooling basins above. My gaze ventured around the walls, respectfully nodding to the hooded carries walking pas in the sprouting tunnels. My eyes landed on one of the cloaked figures, whom I recognized as they peeked through their hood.

“Early for the ceremony again I see, Aura, but you kno-.” the fellow chimera pointed out as they joined up with me at the door.

“But being late means more time to mature, you were gonna say something like that, right?” after our greeting butt bump, she gave my shoulder a push with her clawed palm, an admittance of defeat.

“Then let get to it, we have a ritual to perform.” She said and opened to the wooden gate, a puff of steam flushing out from the sterile sluice gate.

My robes clung to my coat during decontamination, Sosha's all the more, clutching to her underlying carapace. The stark, empty air s sharp contrast to the gloomy sog of the natural tunnels.

“Sosha, think there’s a leak up above? What makes the falls wet?” I posed to the calm crustacean.

“Prolly not, or it stink of whey. Wouldn't mind that, course.”

The inner doors parted, granting us entrance to the hollowed cavity in the mountain. Brazen and umber making up all visible surfaces, shelves carved like stripes around the circumference of into the cylindrical room, right out from the rock itself. In its center, the chest-high bowl rose from the ground, chiselled from one solid outcropping in the chamber, giving a air of being melted into the rock itself. We turned to each other, and smacked our bottoms together with a respectful smile, setting off to gather bacterial cultures and oils from the higher shelves, humming partial chants and partial formulas to ourselves as the ritual commenced.

I couldn't help but let my eyes drift lower, seeing the packed bundles of tall slaps, rows and rows filled, marked with dates and cult partitioner. All sealed until the time come, least all our preparations were in vein.

A gurgle roused high above us, the reverberating chime of an elephant drinking mud through his trunk rippled through the air. Gathered around the bowl, our gaze fixed to the nozzle above. With a slick crinkle of oiled batter, the black hatch clogged in a sunflower yellow, framed by the rim of the hatch as it swelled through it, inflating with the bulk dispensed from above, engorging to a hind girthed dollop sinking from the rock-teat, a coiling in chubby ribbons in the bowl n front of us. The aroma of pasteurisation, gellating lactose, and onion fried in brine plumed into the chamber.

Sosha and I relaxed our bodies, stewing in the heated petrichor scent, before rolling up our cloak sleeves. The batch was wet of molten grease and laced with excess fluids, sloughing together in the bowl to an ice cream soup of raw yellow. Our palms sunk into the mass, the initial layer bending inwards around our grasp as motoroil, but underneath I felt the silken butter engulf my digits. After feeling out the consistency, we uncorked the measured amounts of culture and additives, drizzling it over the dairy bolus, pouring to the rhythm of our combined melodic chants. Deep tangerine bled into the doughy liquid, and we set our hands to work it in to the goop.

Grooves in the sacred cheese to be moulded along my finger's brushing, clasping into the yellow batter and kneading it between my palms. Sosha and me walking around the bowl, another

step every fourth and sixth knead, stirring the sludge to a spiral, flumes forming in the wrinkles of the twisting mass, through which the liquid forged, draining to the center away from the coalescing batch, at which point we produced our ladles.

Through our ritual, we kept the relished tar satiated on liquids, draining all excessive. The gelato consistency morphed over time, in four rotations it was pliable as molten clay still gluing and gumming to our fingers. In eight it incrassated and clot, growing elastic, bendy. We pulled droves out from the mass, bundling it between our grasps, and sinking the globules back into the clay. At fourteen rotations, the consistency was springy, the surface bouncing back to your touch, yet sloughing together when left alone. Much further, and we would end up with a pile of yellow rubber. We scooped up the dairy, - a torso bulk at a time – and distilled globs onto separate sheets, clumps stretching from the wider mass, billowing in pancake shaped dunes and settling to a garlic shape once on the wax seal.

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“Aura, I take my leave.”

‘Such as the sacred loaves mutate and alter, so must you.’ I remembered, always one at a time leaving, despite entering together. I stayed and packed up the last few bundles of dairy dough, just a armful left in the cauldron now. I stopped, vision again at the lower shelves. The ones that laid in process of maturation, ageing, but not grown up. My fingers twitched. It was not, technically, against any scriptures, to touch them... I reach out, held it, cradling it. The weight surprised me, the fluffy texture we had worked with, had become heavy as lead.

Then, a grumble rouse from above, the churning s of oily, serpentine batter. More, now? There was still cheese left in the bowl, it would contaminate the batch. I rushed to the center, seeing the globule bloating from the nozzle above, scooping and scraping up the last of the bacteria infused lumps before the avalanche meandered into the cauldron. My heart beat in my throat, cradling the dairy in my grasp, sweat pouring down my forehead... right onto the bundle I held in my grasp

‘It still ended up contaminated’, I thought, as the saline solution melted into the mound, mixing with the fresh brine pouring into the room. At least, the next batch was fine. I slipped free of my cloak, and pried open my pouch, guiding the remaining goo inside, while humming the primal mother's litany of self-cultured dairy. It was early in the month to claim my batch, but mistress Havila would understand.

My blood froze. I glance backwards. Seeing the package I had dropped in the rush of adrenaline. The sacred goods, dented halfway flat against the rocky flooring.

“Oooh...” I wished there was a chant to repair mistakes. I held the dairy in my grasp, turning, rotating it, feeling along the smudged, rugose edges and bumps left imprinted by the fall. Seeing the name Olivet on the wax marking, I had ruined her contribution...

‘I should open it... to make sure... it is still ok’ The thoughts in my mind were unreasonable, heretical, yet... circumstantially, amicable, were they not? My heart pounded, as I peeled at the wrapper. The huff of steam from the sluice outside. I huttered, shaking as I turned to the door. Decontamination, someone was cming, and I was holding a defiled hunk of the sacred produce, I scurried to slip back into my robes, panting in fraught, tempting the sanctity of my room with the ill intended hurry, but I couldn't let rumours spread, I had to come clean to Havila herself. As the door begun to open, I stuffed the wrecked hunk underneath my robes, squeezing it between my thighs, jamming it so far up I felt the warped corners of the mellow, pre-genesis glob brush against my nethers, caressing them with a touch of succulent, butter smooth bulk. Fluster painted my expression and my thighs instinctively clamping shut, sending the wheel further up, the grind of neather juices and wax hold batter squealed out like a piglet diving into their first mudbath. I was left awkwardly shuffling with the cheese wedged halfway up my crotch, as the door opened for Galatiwa and... Olivet.

“Sister Aura,” Galatiwa greeted me with a bow that pancaked her bosom to her engorged tummy.

“I thought you were neva late?” Olivet asked and flinched her head to the side, so her ears flopped like folds of plush.

“Yea, I-i mean no, of commffg... course,” I splurged out, crossing my legs under the purple and cerulean cloak, shielding the view of the wheel grinding up into my own sacred canal. “Late, just means you get more time, to mature,” I spoke carefully, Galatiwa smiling.

“Certainly does~ Our clients knows delivery is not on set times, it takes time.”

“And we have that luxury in spades,” Olivet added with a snicker, to which I awkwardly chuckled.

“In-deed, I shan't intrude on your ritual any further,” I assured and stumbled out towards the door.

“Good tidings,” Galatiwa said, and presenter her robed rum.

'Oh... right.' I gently bumped my tush to hers, sending a reverberating squelch of molten cheese grinding against polished steel through my frame. They must have heard.

“See you in communion, with your big fermenting fanny~.” Olivet stepped up and slammed her rear into mine.

-Ghrslwt- The ripples of the crotch chug crashed through my torso, the force jetting up the hunk the remaining way into me... inviting the sway, moulding outer casing to the doughy hump of dairy, my whole frame twitching at the puffing squeals from my insides, and waddling off to the sluice on shaking legs.

The decontamination glued my robe tight to my frame, letting me feel the outlines of the head sized wheel, crumbled and stoved away in my lower abdomen, distorting my tummy with its presence. Despite my strains and effort, it was slotted stuck by the force of suction. I could taste my cheer on my lips, as it vacated my mouth with a long sigh.

“This won't be easy to explain.”

