

Silver Goes To The Pool

Please don't break. Please don't break. Please don't break.

This plea repeated itself over and over in Silver's mind as she approached the pool locker room, plasticky fabric bag containing her swimsuit dangling from one hand. There had been 'incidents' – too many to count if she was being honest – with doors in the past and this was surely going to be yet another trial.

Reaching this particular gateway the otter paused, hands on hips, staring her challenger down. This time there were to be no breakages, splintering, getting wedged, picking pieces of wood out of her fur like shrapnel from a wound; no, everything was going to go smoothly today, of this she was determined. She'd had to deal with enough nonsense of late without adding a repair bill from this 'fitness centre' to the list. She was here for a nice, relaxing swim and nothing was-

"Umm...excuse me?"

Silver jumped at the unexpected voice coming from her left. Turning she saw a sable, his crisp uniform of white polo shirt, shorts, socks, and sneakers contrasting wildly with his eponymous coat. Of course, the reason for him getting her attention was that he wanted to get by, so, ever the courteous lass, Silver shuffled forward to make room.

The sable, however, looked less than impressed by this attempt at accommodation, but the sliver of space between the otter's posterior and the whitewashed concrete of the wall was all he was getting. If truth be told Silver was *not* a petite gal: her hair brushed the eight-foot ceiling (how many times had her locks got caught up in light fittings and the like?), her rump stuck out behind her like someone had tied a sideboard to her lower back, and her hips were at least half as wide again as the barrier that had been so distracting her in the first place.

Being in somewhat of a hurry and seeing no alternative the sable took what little room Silver could offer and slid himself into the gap. Little by little he shimmied right, acres of purple fur sliding across his chest as he made his laborious progress. It was yet another warm day and Silver was dressed appropriately, at least nominally: the fabric of her shorts - which had begun the day covering her hips and reaching her mid-thighs – had all but been consumed by the cleft between those continental cheeks, while her shirt - sufficient covering when she was tugging on the hem – had ridden halfway up her back to act more like a crop-top.

Having internally refused to use his hands to help him along (for doing so would have meant actively touching his fellow mustelid's derrière) it was several minutes before the sable came to a stop, but only for a rest at the more spacious mid-point of his journey to regain his breath; who knew pushing through several hundred pounds of adipose was such hard work? Silver's tail twitched embarrassedly, thudding across the sable's head.

"S-Sorry," the otter whispered, even her voice blushing.

Heaving a deep sigh the sable set off on the second leg of his journey, his hands still resolutely held at his sides.

Several more minutes later he popped out from being trapped between a rock and a soft place, stumbling several steps as he returned to moving through the medium of air. He didn't look back as Silver apologised again, instead muttering to himself as he strode away while smoothing his

rumpled shirt as flat as he could: his supervisor would never believe that he was late because of someone's butt.

A casual observer might have pointed out that the more expedient method to make room for the sable was for Silver to actually go through the door, especially since she was planning on doing so anyway. There was, however, a snag to that suggestion: as she was significantly taller and wider than the doorway Silver needed all the room she could get her paws on in which to manoeuvre, and who knows what might have befallen the sable had he been in her substantial wiggle room. So, although letting him by had delayed them both, at least neither had got themselves into any trouble over the incident.

Anyway, back to business.

Pushing the door ajar Silver discovered that, not only did it have an unobliging proclivity to swing shut of its own accord, it was also a fire door and so rather heavier than the combatants she usually faced – understandable for a locker room but decidedly irksome for the otter. Given these unforeseen variables the burning question was one of strategy: would she be best served getting her well-endowed upper half into the room first, or would it be better to get the real challenge of fitting those mighty hips through out of the way? A brief consideration of the situation brought her to the conclusion that the former would be best.

Bending at the waist, lower and lower until her torso was all but parallel with the floor, she shoved the door open and ducked beneath the lintel: a smooth entry if one overlooked her considerable bosom scraping the most recent coat of paint off the plywood. Anyone else of her stature could now have simply straightened up and gone about traditional locker room business but not this otter, for more than half of her was still back in the hallway.

There was, of course, not a hope in heaven, hell, or any other plane of existence of Silver getting her hips through the door in the usual front-on fashion. She therefore had to get creative, something to which she was, fortunately, accustomed. One at a time was surely the way to go, left leg first.

Initially it seemed all would go swimmingly – fitting, considering why she was there – as her spine made no complain about how it was being asked to twist and her left foot moved from linoleum to tile without incident. The, however, came the awful feeling of wood first scraping over opposite sides of her thigh, then wedging itself in the flesh of her rump. Placing her hands on the wall either side of the doorway she attempted to push her thunderous lower half through the too-small gap, but merely progressed another inch or so before coming to a halt again. A second attempt yielded no results; more alarmingly, trying to withdraw from the locker room was just as unsuccessful. The fitness centre now had a new feature: a living sculpture one might simply call 'Doorstuck'.

A little moan of despair escaped the enormous otter's mouth as she realised she was faced with one of two choices: wait until someone came to help her out of this most undignified and embarrassing of predicaments or try what some might call 'a little too hard' to escape. Though the former option may have been the sensible one there was no way she was going to be remembered as the girl who had to be rescued from a door.

With nothing else within reach Silver took a firm hold on the doorway itself, took a breath, then counted down from three, tensing her fingers on each number. Much though she was

embarrassed to admit it, the sounds of cracking wood and screeching metal that followed brought the tiniest of amused smiles to the otter's face: being so large was simultaneously at absolute nightmare and an utter joy.

Shutting the door with great care so as to make it look like all its hinges were still attached to the frame, she crossed to a bench and set down her bag while the clang that came when her hip encountered one of the lockers rang around the stark, echoey room. Removing her street clothing, Silver briefly wondered how long it would take someone to notice the finger-shaped holes in the drywall above the door; hopefully long enough for her to flee the scene.

Just like the rest of her wardrobe Silver's swimsuit had been perfectly adequate to make her decent...a couple of hundred pounds ago. Now, however, the black and white stripes of her bikini top were stretched taut across the swell of her chest, the fabric positioned so as to cover the most taboo areas while the straps clung on for dear life. As for her lower half, but for a dash of black around the base of her tail, there really wasn't any sign of a garment thanks to her prodigious overhang and the all-consuming cleft behind her. Still, she had made an effort and no one could see anything untoward, so in her book she ticked the required boxes to attend a public pool.

Swapping out her glasses for prescription goggles she stuffed her bag full of clothes and valuables into a free locker, then followed the scent of chlorine.

Fortunately there were no more doors between the locker room and the pool proper, though Silver did have to duck her head along the low-ceilinged passage while her hips scraped both walls simultaneously. She emerged with a slight stumble, caught off-guard by the sudden lack of friction, and looked around with a hint of a smile on her face: after the rigmarole she'd just been through it was time to relax and have a nice time.

She took a moment to consider her options. Kids and adults alike were plunging from diving boards – springboard and platform – into the deepest part of the pool but joining them seemed unwise, not least because the stairwells leading up to the different levels were narrow and steep. To the left of these a ramp led up to where she knew were the mouths of the various slides, yet this choice she also dismissed: getting stuck in a fifty-metre long tube just once was enough for a lifetime. No, the sensible and most pleasant option was surely to do a few casual lengths, then go and relax in a spa pool.

Strolling to the edge of the Olympic-size expanse of pale blue tiles, she stepped out into nothingness and, a split second later, plopped into the comfortably mild water. It wasn't deep at this point – merely reaching her lower thighs – so there was some distance yet for the otter to topple before she could slip into her well-practiced breaststroke.

Proceeding down the length of the pool at a leisurely pace, Silver's ears picked up the normal sounds of a public swimming pool: people splashing around, older kids shouting, younger kids crying, a lifeguard blowing their whistle; all noises best tuned out if one was to enjoy oneself. The mustelid went as far as closing her eyes, focusing instead on the steady movements of her arms and legs as they swept the water ahead of her aside and kicked against that which was behind.

It was only when she had almost reached the opposite end that she registered a distinct voice close at hand: "Hey! Hey, lady! You gotta stop!"

Opening her eyes she glimpsed a lithe leopard in a red lifeguard uniform staring at her.

“Stop what?” Silver asked in innocent bewilderment, a few strokes away from the opposite end.

“You’ve half-emptied the pool and nearly drowned some people!” the feline exclaimed, looking rather astonished that the otter was unaware of these facts.

“Huh? How?” was Silver’s still bemused response. Then she looked over her shoulder. “Oh...”

Her far from inconsiderable butt was sticking up a good two or three feet into the air behind her, creating a substantial wave in its wake which was still washing over the edge of the pool and drenching the floor around it. On top of that, a woman was standing back where Silver had started, sopping wet from head to toe and glaring furiously at her.

“Did I...” the otter asked, turning her attention back to the leopard.

“When you jumped in, yes.”

Much though she hated to admit it Silver could see only one reasonable course of action in this situation. “I’ll go apologise-” she said, heaving first a sigh, then herself out of the water, “-then I’ll leave.”

Maybe the beach was the better option after all...