

Growing Into Herself

By Dragonien

"You're quitting the team? Why?!"

The female fox had paused halfway through pulling her bra back on, staring over at the cheetah girl getting dressed beside her.

"I've just... been going through some things and I just don't think it's a fit for me right now." the cheetah replied, clearly making an effort to force a smile and lack of disappointment into her voice.

"It's not because of the league thing is it? Just because you have to compete in the affinity league with the other cheetahs and horses and such doesn't mean you can't still come to practice with us!" The vixen insisted.

"Yeah!" interjected the voice of her other friend; a gunpowder gray wolf girl who was already back in her street clothes. "They alternate the weeks they hold matches between the affinity league and the regular league so we can still come see you compete!"

Xilimyth couldn't help but smile at the support her friends were offering. She would have never joined the track team in the first place if it hadn't been for their encouragement.

"I promise it's not that. I totally understand why they need different leagues for those with a heightened affinity for track and field like mine. It doesn't bother me at all, I promise!" The cheetah girl tried to assure her friends, hoping they would drop it. Unfortunately, they didn't.

"Then why are you quitting?" the vixen asked, her words slightly muffled as her head was briefly obscured by the shirt she was pulling onto herself. "I thought you were having fun! Besides, you were already kicking the crap out of the other affinity players on our team. I was half expecting you to set a new school record for the hundred-meter sprint by the end of the year."

For a long moment, Xili was silent. She busied herself with finishing getting dressed in an attempt to mask her hesitation to answer.

"I just... I don't think it's for me anymore. I thought I'd try something different. Try something, you know, that I'm not genetically guaranteed to be good at." She explained reluctantly.

Thankfully her friends, if begrudgingly, seemed to accept the answer though she was sure they were going to try to convince her to change her mind at least a few more times over the next couple of weeks. She just couldn't bring herself to tell them the real reason she was quitting the team. She knew they wouldn't actually hold it against her, but that didn't make her condition any less embarrassing even if she knew they wouldn't make fun of her about it. Her condition still allowed her to run. Hell, it probably was part of the reason why she was such a good runner even for her species. The problem was the most recent manifestation of it that finally made her decide she couldn't run track anymore. These were the kind of decision she was going to have to make as a cheetah dragon hybrid now that her dragon side was starting to manifest.

The changes have been small at first, things she really hadn't even noticed as anything out of the ordinary. She started steadily eating more and more at each meal and she had found that she didn't get tired quite as quickly when she was exerting herself. That have been part of the reason she had decided to go for the track team. Then the physical changes started. The first one she had been able to hide for a few days, the little inch-long nubs of bone that had rather painfully grown out of her head over the course of a couple of minutes one night that she had eventually recognized as budding horns. Thankfully she kept her hair long enough that it hadn't been too difficult to style it in a way to hide them for a while. When she had come home one day when it has been raining, not realizing the rain had matted down her hair and fur and expose the little nubs, her mother had caught her immediately which led to a lengthy and emotional discussion about the father she had never known or really been told about that apparently had been a dragon.

The big change that was forcing her to quit the track team, though, wasn't something as vain as a pair of horns. One weekend during her morning run when she had been pushing herself particularly hard she had felt a sudden stabbing pain in her toes. She stumbled mid-run, nearly knocking herself out cold as she fell face first into the dirt. When she had recovered her senses enough to look down at her feet she had seen the front of her sneakers had been torn open by the claws on her feet which had more than tripled in size; growing so large that her feline heritage no longer allowed them to retract all the way even when she made an effort to do so. Even that though had only felt like another annoying cosmetic change to her, until she had tried to squeeze into a new pair of shoes. It hadn't been hard to maneuver the razor-sharp talons into her fresh shoes but now whenever she ran with any effort or force behind her movement the claws would rake and shred front of her shoes every time she leaned forward and put her weight on the balls of her feet. She had completely shredded the front and bottom of two more pairs of shoes before she finally gave up, realizing there was no way to run like this unless she ran barefoot or didn't mind destroying a pair of shoes. And, of course, the track team wouldn't let you run barefoot.

Xilimyth waited by the locker room door for the rest of her friends to finish gathering up their things so they could head home together. Thankfully the teenage thought process was fleeting and self-centered and they had already shifted topics away from her suspicious behavior to their plans for the weekend. She couldn't bring herself to engage very thoroughly in the conversation as her mind kept wandering to the doctor's appointment she had that weekend they would certainly have to plan around. It's not like she expected any bad news, or at least nothing worse than what I already was going on. Dragon hybridization, while uncommon, wasn't dangerous can or unheard of. She was sure the doctor was just going to tell her all kinds of things to expect, completely oblivious to the horror stories he was planting in her head of abrupt mutations in the middle of class as if it were normal to be sitting in the middle of a history lecture only to suddenly start sprouting new appendages or belching up fireballs.

As the cluster of girls made their way out of the locker room they passed by the school's swimming pool. For a brief moment she idly wondered if maybe that would be a better team for her to try out for. She always enjoyed swimming as a kid and she wouldn't even have to join the affinity team since cheetah's weren't exactly known for their affinity for water. As they passed by, something caught her eye. Or, more specifically someone caught her eye in a way that made her stumble and nearly fall over.

It was a dragon.

Now, dragons weren't exactly unusual, but they were rare. In fact, as far as she knew there was only one family of dragons in the whole town and only one dragon that went to their school. She'd never really given him much thought as she was pretty sure that they didn't have any classes together. Now that she was seeing him relatively up close, though, she was absolutely positive that they didn't have classes together. If they had, there was no way she would have missed him. The damn guy was tall! She was positive he a sophomore like her but

he towered over everyone else around him, including the swim team's coach. He had to be at least seven-foot-tall if not more. Surprisingly he didn't seem to have any scales but rather was covered head-to-toe in hairless bright crimson hide that, just from looking at it when it was still damp from the pool water, she could tell would be smooth and supple to the touch. His light black hair was matted down to his head with two darker obsidian horns jutting out of the back of his head and making certain that wearing any kind of head cap while swimming would have been out of the question. Then there were his eyes. As he glanced around, he spotted her looking at him and locking eyes for the barest of instants, giving her a perfect view of the glittering blue sapphires that were his eyes. She remembered reading somewhere that one of the distinguishing traits of all dragon subspecies was that all of them collectively shared a genetic predisposition towards incredibly bright, almost gem-like eye coloration. It had only been recently that she discovered that was the reason for her own rich purple eye coloration. It had seemed so much more fitting when she thought about it now considering how many times her eyes had been compared to an amethyst.

It was only when one of her friends started shaking her shoulder and calling her name that she realized she had been spaced out and staring at him. Quickly she turned her head away and returned her attention to her friends; trying and failing to jump back into their conversation despite having lost track of what they had actually been talking about. Of course, they all had collectively taken the wrong impression of why she had been spacing out and immediately had switched from planning their weekend to teasing and gossiping.

"Oooh, checking someone out, Xili?"

"I thought miss priss was above all that, how did you say it? Eyeing boys like pieces of meat?"

"Hey can you blame her? There's some prime beef on that swim team that I wouldn't mind getting a slice of."

This set off another course of giggles through the rest of the girls while Xilimyth's cheeks burned in embarrassment. Despite the more pressing worries she had on her mind she still couldn't help but agree with the rest of her friends. There was more than a little bit of appealing eye candy on the swim team, that dragon included. As the girls continued gossiping amongst one another, sneaking glances as they walked much slower than necessary past the pool, a few of the other guys on the swim team started to notice them as well. Eventually one of the other guys, an athletically built rabbit, walked up to the other guys waiting for their next turn of the pool. He said something to them that the girls couldn't hear and then nodded his head in the direction of Xilimyth and her friends before calling out to them in an overly forced attempt at a suave voice.

"Hey girls! See something you like?"

Several of the other guys around him suddenly looked embarrassed, a couple shying away a bit and seeming to lean away from the cocky rabbit as if not wanted to get associated with him. He wasn't bad to look at, by any means, but he clearly thought more of himself than he probably deserved which sent another course of giggles through the girls; this time at his expense. One of Xilimyth's friends was even bold enough to call out a response, one that got a fresh round of laughter from her friends and a wave of mocking catcalls from the suddenly embarrassed rabbit's friends

"Yeah actually! Can you move a few feet to the left? You're blocking the view of the good-looking guys!"

While most of the rabbit's teammates were relentlessly mocking him in that good-natured way only teenage boys could manage without being malicious, the girls resumed walking away. Xilimyth gave one last

look at them over her shoulder and found herself locking eyes once more with the dragon amongst them. Suddenly she found her cheeks inexplicably flushing as a wave of embarrassment welled up within her. Somehow, she resisted the urge to turn her head away and pretend like they hadn't seen each other. Instead she nervously brushed a few strands of hair from in front of her face to buy her a second to make up her mind before finally coming to a decision. Nervously, she raised one of her arms up and gave a shy little wave to the dragon. This sparked a new wave of cat calls from the dragons team mates when they saw the gesture even as he waved back with plenty of shy reluctance in his own actions. Afraid that her head would catch on fire from how much she was blushing, Xili quickly turned away and started speed walking away from the practice fields, forcing her friends quickly speed up to keep pace so they could shower her with their own combination of teasing cat calls and encouraging praise for her boldness.

"Uh... Tilly, right?" a deep voice called out from behind her.

Interrupted in her deliberation of the lunch room's menu by the voice, Xili turned around only to find herself staring straight ahead at an expanse of navy-blue cotton pulled taut across a torso that loomed taller than her head did. Before she even looked up she felt her cheeks heating up as she quickly realized who was standing in front of her. She wasn't exactly short for her age, a perfectly respectable five-foot-six. The only person that she knew of in school, including the teachers, that could tower over her like that was...

"Er... Hello? Anyone home?" the voice asked as a broad, red hand waved in front of her face. "My face is up here."

Suddenly realizing that she had been staring at his, if lean, impressively defined pectorals Xilimyth jerked her head upwards sharply enough she nearly gave herself whiplash.

"Oh, uh. Sorry." She stammered, trying to come up with an excuse that didn't make her sound like an idiot. "I, um... sorry I was distracted. And it's Xilimyth actually, but everyone just calls me Xili."

"Oh, sorry! Xili it is! I've seen you around before but I don't think we've actually talked. I'm Dragonien" He replied with a chuckle, nervously rubbing the back of his head. After a moment of awkward silence where he was clearly searching for a topic to prolong the conversation he asked "So. Erm... mom or dad?"

Xili spaced out for a moment, brain seizing up as it tried to make sense of his question. When she looked up at him with expression of confusion, he continued.

"Your dragon parent. Mom or dad?"

The moment the words left his mouth her whole body went rigid, her pulse quickening to the point she thought her heart was going to burst out of her chest. Her ears went straight up and her nostrils flared as she frantically glanced around trying to gauge if anyone around had heard what he said. Thankfully no one nearby seemed to have noticed. Quickly reaching an arm out, she grabbed the looming dragon by one of his wrists and began to forcefully tug him around the corner down one of the nearby hallways and into one of the deserted classrooms. Thankfully he didn't resist as she doubted she could have forcibly made him so much as budge if he had. More out of shock than anything else he simply followed along after her. When they were both inside she all-but slammed the door closed and flipped the lock, sealing them both inside.

"How did you know?" She asked in an accusatory tone as she whirled on him.

Immediately he raised his hands up in a defensive gesture, taking a half step back. He clearly hadn't expected such a violent response to what he had seen as an innocent question. If she hadn't been in such a panic she might have found it amusing that someone so large and naturally intimidating was being cowed into a defensive posture by someone comparatively tiny like her.

"Whoa calm down calm down. I'm sorry if I struck a nerve, I didn't know it was a touchy subject." he tried to placate.

"How. Did. You. Know?" She repeated more forcefully, each word accentuated by a finger jabbing at his chest.

"I saw your horns. Well, mostly it was the eyes. Dragons can tell other dragons apart by their eyes. I mean, it's not always a perfect indicator with hybrids but when I saw yours I started looking closer. When you do that hair brushing thing with your fingers it pulls your hair back a bit and I saw the horn nubs."

He did his best to explain, and even looked thoroughly abashed though it was clear he didn't know why he was supposedly in trouble. For a guy that was big enough to pick up even a fully grown adult and throw them across the room if he didn't like them, the dragon was surprisingly non-confrontational.

"So what? You saw them and you wanted to come out me in front of everyone?" She accused again. That time the accusation got him a little fired up in response.

"Hey, now! I didn't even know it was some big secret. I don't even know why you would want to keep it a secret. How was I supposed to know?" He challenged back, heat rising in his voice.

"Then why did you just jump on me and call it out for the whole room to hear?!"

"I didn't! If you haven't noticed I'm a dragon. I'm kind of big, I have big lungs and big vocal cords! My voice is kind of loud and I don't modulate at that well when I'm nervous!" he growled back, unintentionally demonstrating by the volume of his voice raising a couple of notches as well as his words taking on a bit more of an animalistic growl to them. Then his voice softened into a more normal, unless feral modulation; becoming less of an angry snarl and more of a disgruntled pouting. "I've never met a hybrid before. Hell, I've met less than a half-dozen other dragons that I wasn't related to in my whole life so I thought I'd come by and introduce myself. I didn't know it was some kind of state secret and you were going to attack me over it."

With that he crossed his arms over his chest, leaning against the white board behind him. For all her panic, something about the sight of someone who had to be at least Seven feet tall and who she knew could probably punch through a brick wall pouting like a kid who just got chastised for sneaking into the cookie jar amused her to no end. When a disgruntled huff rolled up from his throat and puffed out of his nostrils, sending small curls of smoke coming out of the openings, the remains of her animosity melted away and she lost it. She started laughing.

Her laughter only made the dragon glare that much harder at her which just made her laugh that much harder. When her laughter finally began to die down, she reached up to wipe a tear from her eye even as the dragon continued to stare her down.

"What's so funny?" he demanded.

"It's just... pfft." Xili had to bite her lip for a second to suppress another bout of giggles before continuing. " when you get all huffy like that smoke comes out of your nostrils and it was just so adorable and I just..."

As she back slid into another bout of giggles Dragonien's expression softened slightly. His cheeks flushed a bit at being called adorable and a lot of the aggression in his posture melted away. Finally, when she had gotten it all out of her system and her whole body had seemed to deflate from how much tension left her, she apologized to him.

"I'm sorry. It wasn't fair of me to snap at you. I just been having a lot of trouble with this. Mom knows and she's supportive but she doesn't really know what to do or what's going on and I never knew my dad. Hell I didn't even know I was a hybrid until all this started. Mom hid it from me. And then on top of that I had to quit the track team because of it and-"

Before she could continue, Dragonien cut her off.

"Quit the track team? Why?" he asked.

"Oh. uh." Xili stammered, squirming nervously in place.

Finally making her decision she decided to show him. She already opened up about everything else so she may as well go all the way. Reluctantly she knelt down and started unlacing her shoes, pulling each off along with her socks and exposing her feet to him. The disproportionate size of her claws was obvious even for someone not particularly familiar with cheetah paws. It was pretty common knowledge that felines have retractable claws but hers were so massive they look more like they belong on a velociraptor rather than a feline and the idea of them retracting into her toes was laughable considering each claw was nearly the size of one of her toes.

"It was the first manifestation. It happened when I was jogging one day. They tore right to the front of my shoes. They're so big I have to wear a shoe a full size bigger than I need to give them room. When I start running, I reflexively put all my weight on the front of my feet and these things are so sharp they just shred through the soles of my shoes. I even tried filing them down but they're so hard I can't do it with anything short of a belt sander and even when I borrowed my neighbor's and tried they had grown back by the next day!"

By the end of her explanation she was staring down at her feet almost accusingly as if they were somehow sentient and doing this to her on purpose. To her shock, Dragonien let out a short bark of laughter. Before she could speak up to chastise him for laughing at her vulnerability, he spoke first.

"Oh God I know how you feel." He raised one of his hands and showed off the claws on his own fingers. " these things grow like weeds you could chop one off and it would be grown back almost entirely by the next day. It's just a puberty thing though. Once we get older they won't grow nearly as fast and we can trim them all we like."

She was left staring at him, dumbfounded for a moment. Somehow her brain head hadn't connected the dots that, as a dragon, he might actually know what she was going through. The realization that he could actually sympathize instead of just offer platitudes brought an unexpected smile to her face.

"So... Um...how do you uh..." she started to ask nervously, a tiny bit of Hope welling up in her. " how do you run without shredding your shoes?"

For just an instant she wondered if maybe there actually was a solution. Maybe just some simple trick to moving with them or maybe a special pair of shoes or something that he might know about, being a dragon and all. Maybe she didn't have to quit the track team.

"Oh god I don't." He replied off-handedly, clearly not understanding the importance of her question. "I would shred my shoes just as well as you do yours. I mean they have special shoes you can buy that have like a steel plate or something in the sole so your claws can't just rip through them but I hate wearing those things. They're so uncomfortably heavy and it feels weird having my claws skittering around where they can't get purchase. If I have to run I just take off my shoes first."

The hope that had been building in Xili quickly deflated at his offhanded declaration. For a moment there she had hoped that maybe all she needed was something as simple as a special pair of shoes and she could go back to her old life. Unfortunately, as she was slowly coming to realize, there was no going back. This was her new life. Dragonien caught on to her souring hope, though he didn't quite understand it at first. When it clicked in his head that he had just unintentionally taken a baseball bat to her hopes, he winced and nervously reached out to rest a hand on her shoulder.

"Look. Uh... I mean, I don't know EXACTLY what you're going through but I at least get some of it. So, you know... if you ever need to, like, talk or anything about stuff you can come to me. My lips are sealed. And, heck. If it's sports you want. If you're good enough to be on the track team I'm sure you're good enough to be on the swim team. Don't have to worry about claws tearing anything up when you're swimming through the water! I could put in a good word with the coach for you." he offered in hopes of reassuring her. When she didn't immediately react he smiled a bit and added "And when you grow your second head I promise I'll be just as friendly to them as I am to you. I won't play favorites just because you came first. Though we might have to get you two color-coded hairpins or something so I don't accidentally mix you two up."

That finally got a rise out of her. For a moment she turned her head up to scowl at him at making light of the situation. The ridiculousness of his words and the goofy smirk he kept firmly in place on his face finally broke through her scowl and an unwilling snicker escaped her. For a moment she reached up to rest her hand on top of the one he left on her shoulder in silent thanks before carefully pushing it away; trying to signal to him that she was ok. She would just have to deal with these problems as they came but, admittedly, having someone she could talk to about them that not just would listen to her but even could understand a bit would be appreciative. As that thought settled in her head she let herself mull over the other part of his offer for a moment; finding the idea surprisingly appealing. Despite the stereotype of cats not liking the water she actually did enjoy swimming. Having something to replace track would be a good way to keep herself busy and not feel like she was just missing out. Not to mention, though the thought brought a blush to her face and was something she would never admit out loud, maybe spending more time with this smart-ass dragon might not be so bad either.

Yea, the swim team might be just what she needed.

The swim team had been a terrible mistake. At least, that's what Xilimyth had thought to herself that first time she had walked out onto the pool grounds in nothing but the snug one-piece team swimsuit. It had taken nearly ten minutes of Dragonien's encouragement and prodding through the door of the women's locker room to convince her to finally come outside and introduce herself to the rest of the team. It had also been the first time she had ever stood barefoot in front of a crowd since her 'changes' had first started.

At first, no one seemed to notice. Inevitably, though, one of the other swimmers saw the unnaturally large claws on her feet and made some joke about her needing a pedicure. To no one's surprise it had been that now-familiar rabbit, the one from before that had made the provocative advances towards her and her friends when she had first seen Dragonien. She didn't shy away, though. After Dragonien placed a supportive hand on her shoulder she mustered up her courage and responded in the way Dragonien had made her practice to best respond to the rabbit's lurid, dude-bro personality.

"Yea, so you better behave or when I inevitably kick you make sure you didn't give me a reason to aim between the legs or I might tear some of you off. You wouldn't want to lose what little you have to work with."

The moment the words were out of her mouth her face was all but on fire from the embarrassment she felt having said something so obnoxious, lewd, and aggressive out loud. It seemed to have the desired effect, though, as the rabbit began to stammer ineffectively; unable to form a coherent response through his mix of outrage, confusion, and embarrassment. The rest of the swim team, including the other girls on the team, swarmed around her with every last one of them laughing their asses off. They all patted her arms and shoulders in support and greeting, various compliments and whoops of approval to her comeback helping to allay her nerves a bit and make her feel welcome. The group was definitely a bit crasser than her girl friends on the track team, but she quickly found herself enjoying the blunter and open atmosphere.

The next few weeks flew by pretty fast for her. She quickly found herself enjoying swimming almost as much as she had running. Sure she was still not as comfortable running around in a swimsuit quite so often but she was slowly getting over her bashfulness. To her benefit, her embarrassment at being on display so much helped to draw her attention away from the more acute sensitivity she had about her hybridization. Despite the situation not having gotten any worse recently she still wasn't comfortable enough to talk about her condition with her other friends. Thankfully, when they came out to support her during practice they never seemed to notice her feet with her spending most of the time in the water.

Dragonien had continued to be a constant source of encouragement. Beneath the imposing exterior she had found that, at heart, he was little more than an oversized nerd. For all his athletic prowess he was just as likely to be at home playing video games or reading nerdy sci fi or fantasy books as he was to be playing sports with his friends. She found it almost adorable that a guy big enough that he could have bulldozed half of the football team over would rather spend time in a dark basement playing tabletop games and pretending to be a wizard. He had a nerdy sense of humor that relied heavily on references which, while difficult to catch on to for outsiders, made one feel particularly close to him once they started to understand and appreciate the references. Xilimyth increasingly found herself blushing whenever he got close but never seemed inclined to try to pull away. He had started out as a fast friend, bonding with her over something he had been uniquely positioned to help her through. It didn't hurt that even she could admit to herself that the dragon wasn't exactly hard on the eyes. But as they spent more time together she found herself more and more attracted to his personality on top of the appealing body that still towered well over a foot taller than her own. Unfortunately, all good things eventually must come to an end.

It happened just shy of two months after she had joined the swim team. It was the final practice before the first big swim meet that she would be participating in. She had been pushing herself extra hard the last few days trying to show what she could do. When her turn came up for the last round of practice laps Xilimyth had eagerly leapt into the water, intent on pushing herself as hard as she could to show the rest of the team what she was made of. Her arms and legs pumped furiously to propel her through the water, beginning to burn from the exertion almost immediately as she strained against her limits. Her chest heaved with each quick breath she gulped in between strokes as her lungs strained to provide enough oxygen to her body. She strained every muscle in her body to their limit until, soon, she suddenly found herself straining additional muscles as well.

The sudden stab of pain shooting along her shoulder-blades was the first sign of trouble and what made her falter mid-stroke.

At first, no one recognized what was going on. To everyone outside the pool, amidst the churning waters, it looked like she had simply lost her rhythm. But then she stopped moving forward and people started to get worried. The other swimmers in the pool were oblivious to her plight, but everyone else around the pool went dead silent and stared with wide eyes as they watched Xilimyth begin to change right before their eyes. Through the haze of water they watched the muscle and skin beneath the fur of her back roil and abruptly bulge outwards. It was only thanks to the sound-muffling effect of the water that no one heard the rather unpleasant chorus of cracks and pops of newly-forming and re-shaping bone as new limbs sprouted seemingly out of nowhere along her back. The skin and fur of her back stretched and thankfully kept everything covered in flesh even as what appeared to be two new arms pulled themselves from her back, distorting the back of her one-piece bathing suit as it rolled up in back into the narrow space between the new appendages. The 'elbows' of the new appendages bent inwards briefly, then stretched out and broke the surface of the water with the extended end of each 'arm' as a thin yet tough membrane of semi-transparent skin rapidly began to extend out from the bottom of the appendages and fill out the space beneath them. In the span of less than ten seconds, Xilimyth had sprouted a pair of leathery, draconic wings!

No one save for Dragonien seemed to realize that she had stopped moving well before the sudden eruption of her new limbs and still had yet to so much as twitch beyond the clearly-reactive movements of her newly-grown wings. When he looked around and saw no one else was moving, the dragon cursed under his breath and dove into the pool after her. Firm, red arms scooped their way carefully underneath the cheetah to lift her head above the water as he quickly half-swam and half-flailed his way back towards the edge of the pool. He was a bit surprised how much effort it took for him to haul her up out of the water and onto the concrete beside the pool, wondering how much water her fur must be retaining to make her weigh that much. Not that he'd ever say anything about how much she weighed, damp or not, lest he wanted to get punched. As soon as he had her securely on land he hefted himself out of the water and knelt down by her side to inspect her.

Thankfully by now the rest of the team had broken from their stupor and rushed over to encircle the cheetah and dragon trying to figure out what to do to help. For a moment, they all stared down at the cheetah hybrid, terrified that she was no longer breathing. Then, just as one of them was about to suggest they try CPR, Xili sputtered and coughed up a mouthful of water. Harsh, hacking coughs expelled a bit more liquid from her lungs as she rolled over onto her side; the crowd of people around her widening to give her plenty of room. Finally free of the water in her lungs, Xili pushed herself up to her hands and knees and looked around in a daze. Her new wings twitched and shuddered briefly, a look of confused concentration replacing the dazed look as her brain tried to catch up with her situation and take stock of new muscles that it hadn't been aware of just minutes before. When she finally turned to look over her shoulder, seeing the leathery appendages her eyes went wide and quickly snapped around to the crowd of people silently staring down at her, unsure how to react. Before any of them could say anything she jerked to her feet and shoved her way through the encircling crowd, not even seeming to notice as her half-unfurled wings knocked two of her smaller teammates to the ground as she made a frantic dash straight towards the locker room. After only a quick glance at everyone else, Dragonien stood and hurried after her.

He got through the door only seconds after Xili did and reached out a hand to catch her shoulder before she got too far inside. For a moment Dragonien felt her whole body tense and he found himself concerned that in her panicked state she might actually turn and take a swing at him. She turned towards him, alright. Instead of barring tooth and claw at him, however, she all but leapt against him with her arms around his torso and her face burying itself into his damp pectorals. She wasn't crying, not quite, and he took that as a good sign. He felt her shudder for a moment as a single, silent, sob rattled through her before she went all-but limp against him

and used his body for support. carefully, the dragon placed a hand on her head and back, cradling her against him for the several long moments it took her to pull herself together. She'd come a long way in her confidence in being a hybrid, but clearly she hadn't been ready for this kind of abrupt outing of her condition yet. Before she had a chance to say anything or react further, Dragonien took the initiative.

"If you say that you're a freak and start crying I'm going to pick you up and carry you back outside to throw you back in the pool." he threatened with humor.

The joke, as ill-timed and inappropriate as it was endearing elicited a snort of muffled mirth from where her face was still firmly pressed into his chest. Weakly, she knocked the knuckles of a closed fist against his shoulder in a half-hearted pantomime of punching his shoulder like she usually did when he started telling bad jokes. Finally after a few more moments of the two simply holding each other in silence she was willing to pull back enough to expose her head and look him in the face. Her wings shuddered again, half-folding inwards as if they were trying to retreat back against her sides but didn't quite know how to fold properly yet. the struggle elicited another look of consternation on her face, followed by concentration, as she looked back over her shoulder and tried to will them to fold up like she knew they should be able too. Suddenly her eyes went wide and she snapped her attention back to Dragonien, staring at him in a mix of accusation and confusion.

"Hey, wait a minute! You're a dragon too. Where the hell are your wings?!" She demanded.

The realization that he didn't have any had struck her like a hammer. On top of that the realization that not only had she never noticed until now but never even thought to question it much less ask him about it left her feeling embarrassed and stupid. Thankfully he didn't seem to mind, instead giving her a nudge backwards so he could step away and turn around. When he did she noticed the two scars, each roughly the size of her palm, along the inside of his shoulder blades where she would have guessed his wings would have grown out of.

"A genetic defect runs in my family. Gives us a real high chance of our wings growing in deformed. Can cause all kinds of health problems so my families just had them amputated shortly after birth for the last couple generations." he explained. When he saw the potential for her to have another freak-out he quickly added, with a jokingly accusatory tone to his own words as if chastising her for thoughts she hadn't yet had. "And no I highly doubt it's something you'll need to worry about. if you can't tell yours already have grown in full and healthy from the looks of them."

The last comment brought her attention back to her own wings again. her ears drooped and she looked over shoulder again as she tried to control them once more. The muscles were completely new to her and kept moving in weird ways. they were almost like her arms but just different enough in their range of motion that she couldn't quite get the hang of it. After a few more moments of her own experimentation she turned back to him with a pleading look in her eyes. Dragonien took pity on her and walked over beside her, resting one hand on her shoulder and the other reaching out to gently touch the still-tender fur-covered flesh of her left wing.

"Now, carefully, flex right here." He ordered, fingers brushing along the upper joint of her wing-arm. "Think of this like your elbow but it goes sideways instead of inwards. Slowly..." he directed, giving just the tiniest bits of pressure with his fingers to guide which direction she should be moving the limb in. After a few twitchy movements she followed his direction and had them folded up neatly against her back, not even having noticed the other wing moving in sync with the one he guided.

"There we go! Just keep them tucked nice and tight like that, it should become reflexive with a bit of practice."

Smiling silently up at Dragonien in thanks, Xilimyth experimentally spread her wings a bit... then spread them further and further still until they stretched more than half the width of the entire locker room at their full extension. Her eyes were glittering with amazement as she looked over first one shoulder, then the other, admiring her new impressive wingspan. Then, carefully, she repeated the movements he had guided her through. With only a bit of fumbling without his fingers guiding her she had them folded up tight against her back just like they had been! A beaming grin of accomplishment split her muzzle and she turned back to him to thank him. When her mouth opened to speak, though, her words caught in her throat as she started to catch on to something else. Something was off about him. Actually, now that she had calmed down, something was off with the entire room. Confusion returned to her face as she looked around trying to figure out what it was that was making the whole room look slightly off before finally turning to Dragonien. Staring straight ahead at his collarbone before looking up at the growing smile on his face it finally hit her.

"There it is, I was wondering how long it would take you to notice." He chuckled.

"Holy crap. I'm... bigger?" Xilimyth said aloud. "

"Yep. I'd say probably at least four or five inches if I had to eyeball it. I was wondering at first why when I pulled you out of the pool you felt so hea-" Dragonien started to explain, only to cut off mid-word when a sharp glare from the cheetah-dragon hybrid forced him to switch words mid-sentence. "err... hard to maneuver." He completed with a nervous smile. "How's that for a growth spurt, right?"

The realization made Xili re-evaluate everything around her. Suddenly she was seeing the whole room from a higher vantage point. Doorknobs were lower, the tops of the lockers were closer and...

The moment the realization hit her, her cheeks practically burst into flames from the intensity of the blush she felt. Looking down at herself she finally caught on to part of why she had felt so uncomfortable since she had ran in here. It had been her clothes; they were now skin-tight. the back of her swimsuit was riding so far up her butt crack that it wasn't much more covering than a thong. the front hadn't fared much better. She was pretty sure she had grown a bit up top in addition to her height and her bosom looked ready to all-but burst out of the top of her swimsuit if she breathed in too deeply. She suddenly realized the spectacle she must be for the dragon at the moment, followed by the added realization that he was in the WOMEN'S locker room, alone with her! Glaring at him in an attempt to hide some of her embarrassment, she pointed towards the door with an assertive motion.

"Clearly I need to change. So get out, you perv." She demanded.

Suddenly realizing the compromising situation he had found himself in with Xilimyth, Dragonien abruptly averted his gaze. Doing his best to make a show of not looking at her, despite having gotten more than an eyeful already, the dragon shuffled his way towards the exit. Before exiting the locker room he gave a brief glance over his shoulder much to the ire of the flustered cheetah-hybrid. He found himself unable to stop from looking her over with a critical eye, not so much admiring her compromised appearance (though like any red-blooded male he certainly noticed it) as cementing certain feelings in his head by firming up his perception of her in his mind. He decided right then and there that, after things had calmed down with her current situation, he was going to ask her out. With butterflies in his stomach the dragon mustered up a wave of bravado to smother his own embarrassment and nervousness. A playful smirk spread across his muzzle as he forced out the flirting words past the lump in his throat.

"And no more mutating. I don't think your clothes will survive another transformation, not that I'd complain about the view."

The locker room door closed just in time to block a thrown shoe that impacted right where the dragon's head had been a split second before.

"What do you mean you're leaving?" Dragonien demanded, moving to stand between Xilimyth and the suitcase sitting atop her bed she was in the process of packing.

"The hospital out in Denton has one of the best research branches for dragon hybridization. They've agreed to get me a full scholarship through the local university if I agree to let them run some tests. Besides, we both know I'm not exactly exhibiting typical hybrid puberty. That's why they've got me on those hormone suppressant pills." She explained.

To emphasize her point, Xili reached up to hook a finger into the left side of her lips. Pulling the flesh back to expose her teeth she showed off the long, wicked-looking fang that jutted out a good inch longer than all the others asymmetrically from the matching fang on the opposite side of her lips. It was like she was Saber-toothed but only on one side. Then, to further emphasize her point she moved that same hand down and hefted one side of her ample bosom. The heavy sphere of flesh wobbled and jostled under the contact: visibly straining against the wire-mesh bra struggling to contain the nearly watermelon-sized mammary. It had been barely a year since the incident at the swimming pool that had outed her hybrid status to everyone and ever since then the changes, while not as drastic as her transformation in the pool, had been constantly piling up. Most notably being the fact that she seemed to outgrow the cup size of her bra monthly now. Even if he tried to ignore the fang issue, there was no way he would ignore that. At least not from the way she kept catching him staring and then had to listen to his stammering excuses or apologies afterwards. If it wasn't so cute how flustered the normally confident dragon got whenever she directly teased him about things like that she might have been annoyed at the staring. But that's what she liked about him, and part of why she had agreed to date him.

"My mom feels, and I don't necessarily disagree, that it might be a good idea to have someone more experienced medically in what I'm going through easily on hand in case any... issues occur. You know as well as I do there's always a chance for complications with hybrids like me." Xili continued, forcefully nudging the dragon out of her way so she could continue packing.

Halfway through placing another pair of folded pants in her suitcase, Xili found her hands being pulled away by Dragonien's own. With a light tug on her hands and arms, the larger dragon turned her to face him. Their eyes locked on each other, gazes lingering for several seconds in total silence as he interlocked his fingers with her own. The message was clear even if he didn't speak it. He didn't want her to go, but also didn't want to cause a fuss and make her second-guess the decision. She was glad she had gotten so good at reading him as, while he could be so eloquent, open and thoughtful when texting or emailing her, saying important or weighty things aloud was like pulling teeth with him. Despite her already having done her best to steel herself against the inevitable tide of remorse that leaving entailed, she felt her eyes starting to moisten in the beginnings of tears. Then, of course, Dragonien beat her to the punch.

His eyes went wider as his head angled down to best accentuate his large, suddenly overly-sad eyes. His jaw jutted outward to puff out his lower lip, even beginning to tremble a bit, in the most professional pout that she had ever seen. He even began keening; a low, sad whine resonating up from deep within his chest that instantly brought mental imagery of a kicked puppy or sad dog sitting at the door watching its owner drive away. The display would have wracked her with guilt at leaving if it hadn't been so over-blown as to parody the whole situation. The welling sadness in her chest mixed with mirth and a brief, sobbing laugh escaped her mouth right at the moment she pulled one of her hands free from his and punched him in the arm.

"Ow!" he complained, smiling all the while as he let her go to reach up and rub where she had hit him. "I know you're supposed to give someone something to remember them by when you leave but I don't think bruises are appropriate!"

"Jerk." She replied simply, wiping a tear from her eye.

"Fine" he huffed, throwing up his hands and acting as if he was making some grand concession. "I GUESS its OK for you to go off to some other college without me. But no boys!" he demanded, wagging a finger at her insistently. "In fact, you aren't even allowed to look at other guys while you're there. No dating, no talking, nothing. Girls you can date all you want. But only if you send pictures."

This earned him another punch on the arm, in the same spot, this time hard enough to actually make him wince.

"Aaah, domestic abuse someone call 911!" he mock-shrieked, back of one hand pressed to his forehead in distress.

After a few more minutes of such over the top antics, Xili clearly recognizing them as his own way of coping with his feelings and trying to alleviate hers at the same time, he finally settled down. After a few moments of silently sitting on the edge of her bed Dragonien turned to look at her again.

"I'll miss you." he said quietly.

The words brought a smile to her face. After taking a moment to zip up her now-packed suitcase, Xili walked over to sit down beside the dragon. She reached an arm around his waist, pulling herself in tight against him and leaned in to rest her head against his shoulder.

"I know. I'll miss you too." She replied softly.

"And, Xili?" he asked.

"Yeah?"

"About those pictures..."

The punch to his arm that followed definitely was going to leave a mark. She made it up to him pretty quick. A hand against his chest gently pushed him down onto his back as she crawled her way atop him. Bracing her hands against his shoulders the cheetah-hybrid slowly lowered herself down and pressed her lips against his own in their first real kiss. While she was excited about a new chapter of her life opening up before her, she was still sad that she was going to be leaving the big dumb nerd behind. So Xilimyth didn't just stop at a kiss. When their kiss broke, she rose up into a sitting position, straddling his stomach, and reached down to grab the hem of her shirt and peel it up over her torso. Xili was going to make sure Dragonien didn't forget about their last night together for a long, long time.

Dragonien and Xilimyth did everything they could to keep in touch after she went off to college. For the first few weeks they texted almost non-stop and talked to each other on the phone ever single night. Eventually they settled into their new routines and their communications became less desperate. Xilimyth quickly found

herself bogged down beneath an avalanche of classwork while Dragonien hopped around various jobs in their hometown while pursuing his own myriad personal projects. But, through less frequent texting, social media, and the occasional phone call, they still stayed close as the years passed. Unfortunately Dragonien wasn't able to entirely hide how much he missed having her around and, sharing his sentiment, Xili found herself wrapped up in hypothetical discussions of "when I get back we're totally gonna-" with increasing regularity. Which is why he all but exploded in excitement when she told him she was going to be skipping a summer semester and coming back home for the first time in years. When her Uber finally pulled up in front of his house after driving her in from the airport, she had barely gotten herself out of the car before she'd been lifted clear off the ground by the bearhug of a pair of powerful, red arms.

"There's my kitten!" He exclaimed happily, squeezing her tight enough she let out a squeak of protest.

"Grk! Drago! Too tight! Too tight!" She complained.

Her frantic beating of a palm on his back eventually got his attention enough that he let go and let her slide back to the ground. That didn't stop his excitement, though, and she swore she could practically see him vibrating with barely restrained enthusiasm. He was acting like a kid just unwrapping the Christmas present he'd been wanting all year and the sight both amused her and made her feel the slightest bit guilty for being gone so long. Eventually he calmed down enough to have a more normal conversation with her, though she didn't think anything short of being struck by lightning at that moment could have wiped the grin off of his face.

"It's so good to finally see you again!" He cheered; resting a hand on her shoulder. "I see you haven't changed much. Still as cute as ever, at least for a monster."

Even with the playful mocking of his words the comment still brought a blush to her face. That didn't stop her from punching him in the arm just like old times. To his credit, he barely winced at the impact. Hell if anything Xili felt like her knuckles stung a bit from the impact. Taking a moment to get a better look at Dragonien she understood why.

"Damn. You changed, though." She commented, more to herself than to him.

Unlike her, Dragonien had sprouted up like a weed and filled out even more than before. Those same dragon genes rolling around in her having clearly paid service to his development. She was a tall girl, especially after her changes, at nearly seven feet tall. Yet despite that Dragonien still towered over her just as much as he had when they first met. That meant he had to be over eight foot tall now! And it wasn't just his height. His whole body had fleshed out. The lean, athletic muscle he had built from swimming had thickened noticeably. He wasn't going to be winning any bodybuilder contests or anything like that but he was cut and well defined with hardly an ounce of body fat on him; definitely looking like someone that had spent some time in the gym. When she realized she had been staring a bit too long and wistfully at the way his muscular arms filled out the sleeves of his bright blue polo shirt she quickly averted her gaze, much to Dragonien's amusement.

"I saw that! See something you like, kitten?" he teased, casually lifting one arm and flexing his bicep for her. "If you ask nicely, I'll let you touch them."

That last part brought a snort of laughter out of the cheetah-hybrid, one that left Dragonien suddenly looking a bit abashed. For all of that cocky, confident persona he tried to put on he was still just as much of a shy nerd as ever. In response, she lowered her head and batted her eyelashes at him shyly. She reached up to cross one arm underneath her ample bosom; hefting it higher until it visibly strained against the clear outline of her bra through her black T-shirt. Doing her best to put on as much of a persona both reluctant and seductive,

she reached her other arm out to tenderly brush a fingertip down the front of his chest; trailing her claw tip through the crevice between his pectorals.

"What if I wanted to do more than just touch?..." she cooed in a quiet, sweet voice.

The expression on the dragon's face was utterly priceless; His eyes bugging out and mouth hanging half open in shock. She could see his jaw twitching and moving slightly as if he was trying to speak but the muscles in his face weren't responding properly and that was all she could stand before she dropped her own act and started laughing uncontrollably. For all his bluster and portrayed confidence; for all his encouragement and support of others Dragonien was completely incapable of both taking a compliment and reacting well to flirting directed at him. He could dish it out all day long but the moment someone batted their eyes at him and told him he was pretty he melted into a puddle.

"Haha, oh god. Drago. Jeeze, hahaha. The look... hah... on your face." She stammered between gasping giggles, doubling over and resting one hand on her knee. "I swear I... haha... Saw your face actually turn a brighter shade of red!"

The entire time she was giggling he just stood there, glaring at her. He clearly wanted to say something but was torn between still being flustered by her come-on and annoyed at her using it against him like that. Eventually she calmed down though and apologized.

"Ok, ok. I'm sorry." She said, wiping a tear from her eye. "You're just so cute when you get derailed like that."

"Yea yea, make fun of the shy guy." he grumbled.

"I still don't understand how you can be as tall as a house, built like an underwear model, portray such an outgoing personality and still somehow be the shyest person I know." Xili commented.

"Its a secret Introvert skill; we are excellent in pretending to be extroverts so they stop trying to drag us outside when we don't want to be." He responded with a huff.

Still struggling to keep residual giggles from escaping her, Xili reached over to hook her arm around Dragonien's own. Giving a light tug to his arm she smiled up at him expectantly. Unable to keep a mild smirk off his face the dragon took the hint and led her inside; plucking up her duffel bag for her with his tail on the way. Once inside, immediately unhooked herself from him and all-but leapt across the room to flop across his living room couch; claiming it as her own. With an imperious gesture and tone of voice she 'allowed' him to take her bag back to his guest bedroom for her. With his own mocking bow in return to her joke he disappeared down the hall only to reappear a few moments later.

"Your baggage has been left in your sleeping chambers, My Lady." He responded with a poorly-imitated British accent.

When he approached the couch, Xilimyth made no sign she intended to make room on the couch for him. Even when he stood there, glaring at her expectantly for a solid twenty seconds she only smiled innocently up at him as if she had no idea what might be the matter. It was only with great reluctance that Dragonien's nudging hands against her legs eventually got her to sit upright properly and give him enough space on the piece of furniture to join her.

"Glad to see that hasn't changed." Dragonien commented offhandedly, smirking down at the feline hybrid. "Still as much of a couch hog as ever."

"Hey, I'll have you know I've changed a lot!" Xili huffed back. "Just cause I have to take those stupid hormonal suppressants to keep me from-oh shit!"

Her sentence broke off halfway through speaking when a thought struck her. She looked half-ready to leap up off the couch when his voice pulled her from her momentary panic.

"Forget something?" Dragonien asked, a note of concern in his voice.

"Yea... It's why I'm pretty much just as I was when I left, actually. That specialist I've been seeing has had me on hormonal suppressants for quite a while now. They keep any more of... well, this from happening." She paused, jostling her wings to emphasize her point. "They were concerned such sudden, violent transformations could be detrimental to my health. But I was distracted getting packed and ready the other day and was running late to catch the plane this morning and I don't think I've actually taken one since the day before yesterday."

For a moment, both were silent as they mulled that over. Then, with her reluctance to leave the comfort of the couch and the dragon's presence, Xili clamored her way back up into her position on the couch beside Dragonien.

"Screw it. I've been taking them for over a year now, can't hurt to go just a couple days without em, right? Sure I've got whatever is in them built up in my system by now."

Dragonien arched a single eyebrow skeptically at her comment. He wasn't quite sure medication was supposed to work like that. When the cheetah hybrid leaned in against his side and rested her head against his shoulder, though, Dragonien found he suddenly didn't have much motivation to argue with her. Instead, he wrapped an arm around her shoulders and held her against him as he flicked on the television to the corny giant monster movie they both had been eagerly waiting to see each other again to watch together.

After nearly an hour of the two of them joking and making fun of the awful plot, even going as far as to boo and hiss whenever one of the incredibly uninteresting non-giant-monster characters was on screen, the two had finally settled into a more relaxed state of mind for the latter half of the movie. Without realizing it, Xili had scooted herself right up against Dragonien's side to get more comfortable. One of her hands had ended up on his thigh and eventually had found his own hand on top of it; thick fingers interlocking with her own. It was only after ten minutes or so of laying like that watching their movie that Xili started to realize how intimate of a position the two of them were in. She did her best not to react and pull away, though. She was far too comfortable and, frankly, just liked the closeness and attention she was getting. That didn't stop her from feeling supremely embarrassed, though, and she felt her cheeks rapidly heating up with an intense blush.

Not willing to let even her embarrassment keep her from enjoying the moment Xili eventually fully dove in to her clinging against the larger dragon. her arms moved to encircle him around the middle and her head ducked itself down lower to nestle its way underneath his arm. her whole body stretched out across the lions share of the couch she still claimed and half-laid herself out while clinging to his torso. Dragonien didn't seem to mind at all. through her entire repositioning he stayed silent; not even turning to look at her as his arms shifted and adjusted against her touch to help her get comfortable. The two stayed like that for a few more minutes, both lapsing into silence even as the movie rolled towards its climax. both of them became

increasingly engaged in what was happening on the screen that neither of them realized what was happening to Xilimyth until they heard the sharp rip of a seam bursting open.

Xilimyth noticed it first, finding it impossible to ignore the sudden tightness of all of her clothing now that she was paying attention. her eyes went wide and she reflexively pulled away from the dragon as she felt her shirt pulling tight around her body. her legs strained against the now skin-tight confines of denim surrounding them as they flexed with her movement; splitting more seams and exposing tufts of her golden fur. Her shirt rapidly pulled up to expose her stomach as it struggled to contain both the overall mass of her upper body and the increasing girth of her already ample bosom. The sharp, twin pops of her bra straps snapping sounded like gunshots through the room as her shirt strained to take its place as a makeshift sports bra in supporting her now watermelon sized breasts. In the few seconds it had taken her to stand up off the couch her clothing had gone from a stylish, if simple T shirt and jeans to a straining sports bra and torn jean-shorts. But it wasn't the sudden heaviness of her breasts or the half-exposed state she suddenly found herself in that surprised both of them the most. That award went to what they both saw when Dragonien stood up to help her.

He had to look up at her face.

The shock left both of them standing there in stunned silence for several seconds even as Xilimyth continued to transform right before their eyes. It wasn't much, maybe only an inch or two of height difference between them. However, considering that just an hour ago he had been more than a head taller than her, the change was drastic and concerning for both of them. Thankfully the changes slowed to a stop as quickly as they had started and Xilimyth hadn't found herself with any new limbs or organs. As she turned back and forth, looking down over her shoulders and shifting her wings about to take stock of herself, she found that most of the changes had simply been an overall increase in her size. She had grown well over a foot in height and, though she still held the lean musculature of a runner she definitely could feel that she'd gained at least a couple dozen pounds of raw muscle from the way her muscles strained wire-taut against her skin as if eager for use. Then, of course, there was the most obvious change. Her breasts had practically exploded in size! Before they had already been near the upper limit of what was reasonable for her build but now they were clearly disproportionately large. Each one easily out-sized her own head in sheer mass. Dozens upon dozens of pounds of supple feminine flesh jostled and jiggled inside the straining confines of her shirt-turned-sports-bra with each slight movement she made. Her cheeks flaming with a blush so intense Dragonien could see it through her facial fur Xilimyth turned and ran her half-naked self down the hall and into the guest bedroom; slamming the door closed behind her.

Dragonien stood there for a few moments, trying to process what had just happened and how best to react too it. Eventually he decided to check on Xili. Carefully, he tiptoed his way up to the door and gently knocked on it. When he got what he hoped was a grunt of acknowledgement from inside, he gently pushed the door open.

"God, I'm such a freak." Xili muttered dejectedly before he'd even made it into the room. "And it's my fault too for not taking the damn pills."

She was sitting with her back to him on the bed, staring at the closed curtains of the window. Even from this vantage point, though, he could easily see the width of her enhanced bosom was actually wider than her torso now. With her arms raised to comb her fingers through her hair in frustration Dragonien couldn't help but notice, despite the dower atmosphere, the rather appealing visual this created. For as attractive as he still found her, though, her new appearance didn't distract him from reassuring her.

"Hey." Dragonien growled out, jumping to her defense out of reflex. "I wouldn't put up with anyone else calling you a freak what makes you think I'll put up with it from you."

That earned him a sharp laugh that may have had just the edges of a sob laced into it as well. When she finally turned to look over her shoulder at him she had a sad smile on her face.

"What? Gonna beat me up?" She challenged in a weak attempt at her own humor to override her otherwise bad mood.

"Na. Might stuff you in a locker though. You might be too heavy for me to lift up and give a swirly, now." He retorted without missing a beat.

"Lucky me." Xili scoffed again.

Rather than continue the banter though, she slowly stood herself up to her new, full height. A bit more careful about her new weight and size, Xili slowly walked her way around the bed to stand in front of Dragonien once more. She stood fully upright, keeping her back as straight as she could to maximize the height difference between them now. She certainly didn't tower over him like he had once done to her, but even an inch or two higher than the dragon meant she was well and deep into the eight-foot height range. Even though his body's build was roughly the same as hers if she added in the weight of her newly enhanced chest-borne assets she certainly had him outweighed by a significant margin.

"I mean, Look at me. How am I not a freak?" She asked. "I'm a hybrid, not even a full dragon, and I'm taller than you! aren't you, like, big for dragons?"

"Well I mean, yea I kinda am... I mean my parents are both, like, a foot shorter than me." He replied uncomfortably. "But so what? You know what they say. Bigger is better, right?"

"There is such a thing as too big." She huffed.

Thankfully, though, the encouragement seemed to be working a bit. Her expression came off less as about to burst into tears and more of a pout at not having her self-deprecating thoughts externally validated. Nervously, she crossed her arms under her chest as if trying to hug herself. Unfortunately this had the unintended side effect of bracing up the underside of her enhanced bosom, hefting them upwards and inevitably drawing Dragonien's attention. When he stared a solid three seconds at her cleavage before finally pulling his eyes away he returned his attention to her face only to find her smirking wryly at him.

"Bigger is better, huh?" She mocked.

"Well I mean, uh... Not that there was anything wrong before. I mean, not that you were small before either just you I um." Dragonien stammered.

From the way his expression became more panicked the longer he talked it was clear he was well aware of the hole he was digging himself into with each word he spoke. Despite this, he simply couldn't seem to get himself to stop talking. Finally Xili took the initiative to silence him; reaching up to wrap one of her hands firmly around his muzzle and holding it shut until he took the hint.

"That trick isn't fair, by the way." She accused with a smile after releasing her hold on him.

"What trick?" he asked, eye ridge raised.

"Making me console you for your awkwardness to make me forget about my own problems." Xili responded.

"Why, Kitten. it's almost as if you're accusing me of having some evil, master plan." came Dragonien's mock-insulted reply.

"No, you're not smart enough for that. But sometimes you stumble upon good ideas." Xili shot right back with a shameless grin on her face.

The last comment left Dragonien the one pouting this time before sticking his tongue out at the cheetah-hybrid. Taking a moment of silence between the two to reset, Dragonien let out a soft breath before approaching her. Suddenly he was directly in front of her; one arm wrapped around the small of her back to hold her against him while the other was clasping his hand with her own. Their fingers interlocked together as he held their combined fist up beside them. Staring straight into her brilliantly colored eyes, their lips barely inches apart, Dragonien smiled affectionately at the now slightly-larger-than-him cheetah.

"Well I guess being your friend was one of those good ideas I stumbled upon, eh?" He asked softly. Before she could respond he spoke again in a more playful, coy tone. "Besides. maybe I think I'm developing a thing for tall girls..."

Then, he kissed her.

The kiss was simple and brief, just a moment or two of his lips brushing against her own. When the moment was over he pulled back, only an inch or so, still smiling at her all the while. The second that the two stared each other down after that kiss seemed to drag on for an eternity; leaving the two of them with their faces hovering less than an inch away from each other. Then, finally, their feelings for one another exploded out of them in a rush.

Xilimyth suddenly felt her back hitting the bedroom wall as Dragonien pushed against her, lightly pinning her in place as he stretched his head up to press his lips against hers once more. Their kiss this time was filled not with a gentle, loving affection. Instead it burned with an intense passion that had been smoldering between the two of them for years. Xili's arms wrapped around Dragonien out of reflex; one of her hands gripping at the small of his back for support while the other combed her fingers through his hair and pushed on the back of his head as if trying to push him deeper into the kiss. Their tongues intertwined with one another in the joint space of their interlocked muzzles; his prehensile draconic one wrestling with the stronger, if less flexible, feline tongue of Xilimyth. Dragonien's own hands wandered their way down Xilimyth's body as well. One of them stayed pressed against her shoulder to keep her pressed up against the wall while the other slid its way down her side to cup the side of her impressively ample hip.

Their breaths came out in hot, heavy pants through their nostrils as the two made out with one another. They were lost in their own joint release of the sexual tension that had been building between them and didn't even notice the subtle changes going on right in front of them. The sound of tearing fabric fluttered through the air and caused the two to pause their frantic kissing for a split second. The pause quickly faded as the two shrugged off the sound and went right back in on each other. They wanted to feel each other, experience each other and lose themselves in their feelings, affection, and physical presence of each other and shut out the outside world to everything that wasn't the two of them pressed together and kissing. Which is why the only thing that finally pulled the two out of their mutual indulgence was their eventual inability to kiss one another

anymore. When they realized why, both of their eyes went wide. Though, at this point the two were so riled up that the realization of what had happened only further riled them up and promised escalation rather than any sobering of their moods.

Xilimyth had grown again.

During their kissing she had once more begun to enlarge; the already straining and makeshift clothing that had struggled to contain her finally giving up the ghost and ripping apart entirely. Too lost in their kissing, however, neither had noticed. They hadn't even noticed as Dragonien had been forced to slowly stretch himself higher and higher to keep his lips pressed against hers. He had been forced to crane his head upwards, straighten his back, and even stand up on the tips of his toes until even that hadn't been enough to shorten the distance between them. Now that they could no longer reach without her crouching down, she finally noticed the pressure pushing down on the back of her head. The ceiling.

Her head was pressing against the ceiling.

Suddenly Dragonien was the one being shoved up against the wall. The look of surprise on his face quickly turned into a blush of embarrassment as he found one of Xili's now-larger hands pushing against his shoulder much the same way he had on hers. He watched her lips slowly twist into a coy grin, clearly broadcasting how much she enjoyed turning the tables on him like that. Then, slowly, languidly, she made a production of bending herself downwards until her face was within range of his own again and resumed their kiss. She was toying with him. Not that Dragonien was going to complain.

Their kiss only lasted another minute or so before the two of them decided to move things to the bed. This decision came in the form of Xilimyth, shamelessly enjoying her further enlarged size and associated improved strength, to literally lift the dragon that had once carried her around with ease and casually toss him onto the bed. The sound of the bed-springs audibly groaning and creaking their protest when she got down on all fours and crawled onto it above him was music to her ears; a music that she never thought she would enjoy as much as she did in that moment. There was something cathartic about the shamelessly indulgence of her new size; something different about now being the bigger of the two of them that made it less anxiety-inducing for her... at least in the heat of the moment. For that instant between the two of them she didn't have to worry about the ramifications of what her new size and proportions would bring to her day to day life. Instead, all she had to concern herself with was how she could use that new size with Dragonien, her best friend. Maybe even, if she played her cards right... her boyfriend.

That thought sent a giddy thrill through her that had her once more diving in for a kiss on the flustered, overwhelmed dragon. She actually missed the first time; stopping just a couple of inches short when she felt the heavy weight of her immense bosom squash down onto the dragon's upper body. The sheer mass of her now nearly beach ball-sized breasts had actually kept her from being able to fully bend down towards him> She had to take a moment to readjust her position and arch herself further forward before she was able to once more lock lips with him; movements that Dragonien neither was ignorant of nor complained about as he took those moments to stare down a deep canyon of dragon-cheetah hybrid cleavage that probably could have engulfed an entire 2-liter bottle of soda with ease.

Unfortunately for the two of them, they didn't get much farther than this with each other. Between the stress of the afternoon, the late hour, and Xilimyth's jetlag their passion quickly burned down into exhaustion. the bed creaked and groaned beneath the combined weight of the two as they settled more comfortably together, side by side. They didn't say a word to each other, neither willing to break the silence for fear of ruining the mood between the two of them. So, instead, they just snuggled up together; Dragonien getting to experience

being the little spoon for the first time in his life. After a few more minutes of just quietly basking in each other's company the weight of their eyelids became too much and both finally drifted off to a sleep filled with happy, contented dreams.

A cool, early morning breeze tickled across Xilimyth's bare skin and sent a shiver down her spine. She felt her nipples hardening in response to the chill and reflexively tried to raise one of her arms to wrap it around her chest and ward off the cold. As she moved her arm, though, she felt the briefest catch of resistance against the movement followed by a sharp crackle of snapping wood and crumbling stone. The strange sound made her sleepy mind snap wide awake and her eyes shoot open as she turned her head to look down at the offending abnormality. What she saw confused her. It took her brain several seconds to make sense of the pile of rubble laying around her arm, the little shrub by her elbow, and the faint smell of drywall dust and fresh lumber in the air. Eventually, though, she put two and two together.

She was huge!

Not even huge by her standards, which her having been tall enough last night to bump her head against the ceiling would easily have qualified for. No, she was monster huge now! Swinging her head back and forth she saw that she was laying down in the half-destroyed remains of Dragonien's house! She clearly had grown in her sleep and her arm must have grown through the wall into the garage, so when she tried to raise her arm it had simply smashed its way through the garage's roof and collapsed it. Her legs had stretched out through the back yard, bulldozing the chain-link fence and leaving one foot on the side of the back neighbor's house while the other foot had simply plowed straight through their back wall and into their kitchen.

Her elation morphed into concern when she suddenly thought about Dragonien. Frantically she looked down trying to spot him, fearful that he might have been injured during her apparent outgrowing of his home. As if responding to her concern her fears were immediately alleviated by a sudden twinge of pleasure that sent a shiver down her spine. A firm, if small, pressure pushing in on her left nipple forced her to bite on her lower lip to stifle a quiet moan from the unexpected stimulation. When she looked down to find the now comparatively tiny dragon sprawled out across her left breast; the single mass of feminine flesh easily the size of a small hill to the dragon. The dragon currently had his arms hugging around the now easily two-foot-wide areola of her left nipple, squeezing into it just enough to stimulate her and get her attention. The grin he shot up at her when he noticed her attention told her he knew damn well what he was doing to her. Before she had a chance to react, though, the stimulation spiked again as he slid out his easily foot-long tongue and slowly dragged it across the thick nub of flesh. This time Xilimyth was unable to completely suppress the gasp of pleasure that the stimulation elicited; struggling to restrain her writhing to a light shudder lest she further destroy the already damaged homes surrounding her. She probably should have been a lot more concerned about the precarious situation her new size put her and those around her in. It's a bit hard to think that clearly just after waking up and with a cute guy nursing at one of her breasts to get her squirming.

With her new size, came new confidence. Rather than simply lay there and let the dragon tease and play with her like she might have done beforehand she now felt emboldened enough to return some of the teasing. A dark shadow fell upon the dragon and distracted him from his teasing movements as the giant cheetah-dragon hybrid raised a hand ominously above him. All he had time for was a muffled 'oof' of a grunt before he found himself completely smothered beneath Xilimyth's hand, pushed down into the malleable flesh below. The giantess sighed blissfully as she slowly squeezed and kneaded her fingers into the flesh of her own breast, letting her palm dig in on top of Dragonien and the nipple now pinned beneath him. For a moment she forgot about the rest of the world around her, her attention even to Dragonien fading briefly, as she simply lost herself

in the self-indulgence of her own self-pleasure. It wasn't until she heard the sound of splintering wood and shattering glass that her attention was drawn back to the world around her.

Her eyes flung wide from where they had lidded mostly shut just in time to see the tree in Dragonien's front yard slowly being knocked over and uprooted by the growing mass of her hip bulldozing it out of place. In front of her she could see the foot already lodged in the back-neighbor's home slowly crashing its way through the remainder of the house and collapsing it entirely around her ankle and lower calf. The moment she realized she was growing again her hand paused its squeezing on her breast and, barely a moment later, her growth stopped as well. As she took stock of her surroundings she guessed that in the less-than-a-minute of time she had lost herself in her own amusements she had swollen nearly half again her previous size, easily more than a hundred and fifty feet tall! It wasn't hard to put two and two together for her as to what had caused her most recent growth spurt, though the idea of her own pleasure causing her to grow was embarrassing enough she found herself blushing. Somewhere in the back of her head she found it amusing that the idea of being gigantic and naked in the middle of the neighborhood wasn't nearly as embarrassing to her as the idea that playing with herself could make her even bigger.

When she finally moved her hand off of the little dragon she could hear him gasp in relief. It took him a few moments to catch his breath, having been all-but suffocating in the sandwich of her hand and breast. When he did though, rather than give some witty, lurid or teasing challenge up to her like she expected he instead returned his attention right back to the now-fatter nub of flesh that was her nipple. Already riled up, the giantess had little inclination to resist his stimulation this time. Rather, she simply laid herself back across the rest of the front yard and adjacent street and simply basked in the attention. Maybe she was still too drowsy to get freaked out, or maybe she'd just pushed past her breaking point and simply couldn't manage to care anymore but at the moment she was perfectly content to enjoy her newfound size.

She never would have admitted it out loud before but she secretly liked most of the changes she had gone through. They had made her feel special, powerful, even sexy in a way. Its hard not to feel powerful when you're the tallest girl in any room; more so when you outgrow the tallest person you'd ever met right in front of their eyes. Its even harder not to feel sexy when you've got hips curvy enough to brush door frames whenever you walk through them, not that she could fit through any door now, and breasts big enough they could have smothered a man even if she were a normal size. Now, though? As she lay there, shivering in delight at the feeling of the formerly 'huge' dragon's arms, hands, and tongue working away at her nipple she couldn't help but imagine comparing his height to her when she stood up. She squirmed at the mental image of him barely being taller than her ankle even when he stood up on her tiptoes. She chewed on her lower lip as she imagined herself trying to walk through a crowded city street, hips brushing against the buildings to either side of her. Forget too wide for doors, she would be too wide for highways at this point! And then, of course, there were her breasts.

As she thought about them she stroked one of her hands along the underside of her massive, even to her, left tit. Her fingers gently dug into the malleable flesh and hefted up a small portion of it. A soft groan of lust welled up in her throat as she hefted that bit of her chest and realized that they, too, had grown disproportionately with the rest of her during her latest growth spurt. Not to mention the fact that the 'little' handful she had cupped in her fingers of just a portion of her own breast probably needed to be weighed in tons now rather than pounds. Each breast alone was nearly the size of her own torso, and together they probably encompassed nearly a third of her overall mass! The longer she thought about these things the more she delved into her own self-indulgence. Her other hand joined the first on her opposite breast and both sets of fingers dug and kneaded deep into the malleable flesh. She was sorely tempted to slide her hands up to rub her palms over her sensitive nipples but didn't think she had the self control at the moment to do so without risking harming the little dragon still dutifully attending her. All the while as she let herself delve into the more subdued, drawn out lusts she felt her body slowly expanding and enlarging as if it, too, were too lazy to do more than bask in her

own passive enlargement. It led to a slower, more powerful rise in her lusts and pleasures like her urges were being pressurized inside of her chest. at least, that's what she thought it was at first. But as she continued her self-fondling faltered when she realized it was becoming an actual, tangible pressure rather than a metaphorical one.

The pressure built up within each of her breasts, making them feel like they were pulling the fur-covered flesh around them uncomfortably tight. It almost felt like they were inflating. Not the same expansion of newly added mass she felt during her growth spurts, but rather the more literal feeling like something was filling them up from the inside as if they were little more than glorified fleshy balloons! While strange, the sensation wasn't exactly unpleasant. If anything it seemed to be making her more sensitive. Soon even the lightest tickle of Dragonien's tongue against her nipple felt like an electric shock of pleasure that left her literally writhing beneath him. This, of course, forced him to cling tighter to the fleshy nub that, now, was probably big enough for him to sit on like a chair. That tighter pressure to keep him in place in turn further stimulated her, creating a vicious cycle that soon had her clawing at the ground to keep her hands from reaching up to 'help' the situation. The pressure built and built, seeming to center around her nipple as if it were the plastic valve on a beach ball being inflated beyond its capacity and the air was straining to pop the valve open. Just as she felt like something was about to burst she felt Dragonien's arms squeeze tighter around her nipple trying to get enough of a grip to climb back up from where he dangled and the floodgates opened.

The sudden wave of relief Xilimyth felt was accompanied by a thick stream of glistening breastmilk freely flowing from the pinched nipple. The fur along her breast and her stomach were instantly soaked in the sweet-smelling liquid, not to mention the now white-washed red dragon struggling to maintain his grip with the added 'lubrication'. She should have been shocked at the sudden explosive lactation, even if the rest of her impossible situation hadn't been shocking enough. Any concerns or confusions about her new milky assets were quickly overshadowed by what was happening to the sputtering red dragon who must have gotten a mouthful or two of the liquid as it flowed from her.

He was growing.

She had felt it before she had seen it, feeling the weight of him hanging down from her breast increasing as his body began to cover more of her breast flesh. Within a couple of seconds he must have at least doubled in size from the way his pajamas had practically exploded off of him, and showed no signs of stopping. Before long he was big enough his feet actually dangled off the edge of the hill that was her breast and he could once more palm her nipple in a single hand. It was still like palming a baseball too him, but in less than thirty seconds he had gone from little more than a plastic army man in size to her to the size of a teddy bear. For his part, Dragonien looked just as confused as she was. An experimental lick to some of the liquid still soaking into her fur around him sent another shudder of growth through the dragon and dispelled any confusion as to where his growth spurt had come from. Had she been less shocked about her sudden lactation and the growth-inducing effect her milk had, Xilimyth might have been more concerned or confused about the whole ordeal. The sudden overwhelming stimulation to her nipple that had her shuddering and letting out an involuntary moan easily silenced her latest attempt to try to think out her current predicament.

Dragonien had wasted no time latching on to her the moment he realized what her milk could do. His lips pressed to the end of her nipple, teeth grazing against the sensitive flesh ever so slightly and sending an electric shock of pleasure down her spine. The following powerful suction of his slow, drawn out suckles on her breast left the poor cheetah hybrid literally shaking the ground with her squirming. Whatever had grown her breasts so abnormally large and filled them with this mutagenic milk had also ratcheted her sensitivity up to eleven. Each draw left her gasping and panting, fingers tearing even deeper gouges into the ground as she clawed at it for purchase. Her own growth had started up with a vengeance once more; egged on by Dragonien's

stimulation. But when she reached a hand up to grab at the back of Dragonien's head and needily press it harder against her, demanding further stimulation, she was surprised to find that it easily filled her palm. Even as she had begun growing once again from her own pleasure, her milk had left the red dragon growing much, much faster.

Within seconds he had swollen large enough to slide off of her breast and down between them, still clinging on to keep a firm grip at the source of his growth-inducing nectar. Seconds after that his legs were stretching out between her own, spreading them apart as his lower body made room for itself. Only with great reluctance did he finally pull himself from his gluttonous drinking and turn his attention up towards his patron milk-maiden. His grin grew even as he stopped drinking, the last remnants of the milk working its way through his system until it finally slowed to a stop. When all was said and done, the now easily nearly three-hundred foot-tall cheetah-hybrid found herself being smothered into the ground by a dragon a third larger than her; all four hundred feet of Dragonien now on hands and knees above her.

There was no teasing comment or playful banter from the dragon this time, though. They had grown beyond that, literally in this case. Instead, she found her lips being invaded by the dragons own with the same fiery fervor from the night before. The thought that the tongue she was now nearly choking on was big enough to lick up entire parking lots full of cars and the hands wandering their way across her bare breast and hip were big enough to crush buses like tin foil only added to the lustful frenzy between the two. Fingers thicker around than trucks combed through the fur along her thigh while her own fingers stroked through strands of Dragonien's hair that, each alone, were as thick as ropes to any normal sized person. Every casual movement they made caused the ground to crack and crumble beneath them. More than once they felt some small hollow area beneath them like a basement or storm drain collapse under them like when you step on dried dirt over a small hole. As they made out, though, Xili's growth continued while Dragonien's had stalled without more of her growth-inducing nectar. before long, Dragonien was once more being lifted up off the ground as the growing giantess grew up from underneath him.

At this point neither was willing to let the other outdo them, whether it be from a sense of real competitiveness or simply a desire to keep their sizes relative enough that they could continue enjoying one another. Even as Dragonien broke the kiss to slide down and latch onto Xilimyth's nipple again the cat grinned smugly down at him and hefted her other breast up; carefully maneuvering the massive breast until she could wrap her own lips around the opposite tit. The two fell into a rhythm, taking turns nursing at her growth-milk factories then making out a bit more; the taste of her sweet nectar filling both of their mouths. As soon as the growth effect faded from their last mouthfuls they'd break the kiss to drink more. The rest of the world didn't matter to either of them; all that mattered was their single minded indulgence in each other.

As they made out with one another, though, the world beneath them was in utter chaos. Their growth seemed to build exponentially upon itself and with every added foot of height more damage was done to their surroundings. Houses were smashed into rubble beneath expanding limbs that bulldozed through them without even seeming to notice. Cars were flattened underneath wandering hands, legs, tails or simply by being engulfed by the tide of flesh spreading out across the landscape. Trees and telephone poles were uprooted, lamp posts were bent into the ground like protruding staples and soon even the ground itself began to give way beneath the two. The concrete cracked and crumbled beneath their growing weight as fingers bigger than backhoes clawed at the ground for purchase at random and displaced first dozens then soon hundreds of tons of dirt and concrete. Yet still the two didn't seem to notice, or at least didn't seem to care. Too absorbed in their own mutual enjoyment of one another to pay attention to their growth or the damage it was causing.

Dozens of feet transitioned into hundreds, then soon thousands as the two growing behemoths sped their way towards being measured in miles rather than feet. At one point they had grown so large that their bodies,

even laying down, neared the cloud line and even idle shifts of position displaced enough air to blow the clouds apart for miles. Helicopters and airplanes desperately flew in every direction to escape the destruction, only to find they soon were being overtaken. The two titans weren't even coming for the vehicles themselves, their growth was simply becoming so rapid they were actually growing faster than the aircraft could fly! Even when they were slammed into from behind by a wall of red flesh or spotted fur and turned into a fiery explosion that could have decimated an entire city block, neither Dragonien nor Xilimyth noticed. The detonations didn't even register as mosquito bites to them at this point.

Eventually, though, the two began to calm. It wasn't so much that they weren't willing to take the next step as it was that when they decided to take a moment to recover they were so confused by their surroundings it distracted them from the demanding signals their libidos were sending to them. When they finally looked out across the miniaturized world they didn't even recognize it; struggling to see some of the ground from below the cloud cover that didn't even come halfway up their bodies even when laying down! Forget a few miles tall, they had to be at least a hundred miles tall each if not more! Curiously, Xilimyth reached out and waved her hand over the cloud cover like it were nothing more than steam coming from a boiling pot she needed to clear. She didn't even notice as several more airplanes in the air were swept away by the displaced air as well and sent flying through the sky at terminal speeds. With the atmosphere cleared she actually started to recognize some of the land masses. She didn't recognize them from personal experience, mind you, but rather from memories of topographical maps... both her and Dragonien were easily as big as the entire state they were currently lounging on like it were a plot of sand at the beach.

Strangely, she didn't freak out at the revelation. Instead, she squeezed the similarly titanic dragon tighter against him, happily snuggling up against his side as she surveyed her surroundings. By now she was pretty sure that this wasn't real; some vivid dream tapping into perverse, extreme ideas from her subconscious. It was the only reason she could think of that this wasn't freaking her out at least a little bit, or that she didn't seem to have any issue with things she assumed would be problematic at sizes like this. Breathing when your head was literally above the atmosphere, for example. Then again, maybe it was real and she was simply in too much shock to concern herself with the details.

With a smile she buried her muzzle into the dragon's neck, eliciting a soft sigh of contentment from him as he pressed back against her. Dream or not, she had Dragonien here with her. It didn't matter if they were in his house, out at the park, or a thousand miles tall lounging on top of the planet. As long as she had him here with her she didn't really care if this was a dream or not. She was content to simply lay here and bask in the dragon's presence... at least until she decided to see just how big the two could get together. If it wasn't a dream then she could enjoy fantasizing about exploring the rest of the solar system with Dragonien when they were both as big as planets, themselves. And if it was a dream? Well... at least she'd have a hell of a story to tell Dragonien when she woke up. Either way, she was in no hurry to wake herself up. Instead, she shuffled herself tighter against Dragonien's back. Her lips pulled back, exposing just a bit of teeth the next time she nibbled at Dragonien's neck to get him riled up.

She had better things to do than try to end this little fantasy prematurely... Like Her favorite dragon, for example.

