

## **Dark Descent**

By Jethro

A white van rolled to a stop in the deserted alleyway. Two figures emerged from within, slamming the van's doors behind them. A white furred rat, her golden blonde hair tied in a ponytail, stood by the driver's side. Whiskers twitching, her pink button nose sniffed the foul odors that emerged from the numerous green dumpsters lining either side of the alley. Reaching into one of the many pockets of her tan coveralls, the albino rat removed a tin of vapor rub. The work uniform hung loosely from her thin frame, obscuring modest breasts, a narrow waist and toned hips. A pair of thick coke bottle glasses perched on the bridge of her muzzle, giving her a bookish look.

"Ugh. Hey Michelle, what is that horrible smell," asked the van's second occupant as she rounded the front of the work truck. She was a brown furred doe wearing an identical outfit, a white patch covering her right breast with the name of their company, MegaCast Cable, emblazoned across it in red letters. Unlike Michelle, the young brown furred deer filled out her clothes in all the right ways. Her ample breasts and rear strained the coarse fabric and complimented her curvaceous hips.

"It's probably coming from the grease trap over there," grumbled Michelle, scooping a claw tip into the tin and dabbing the clear gel below her nose. "Or that Indian restaurant. You might want to use some of this Red, it's going to get a lot worse where we're going." Red shook her head as Michelle offered her the tin, causing the doe's messy red hair to flop over her eyes. Michelle shrugged and screwed the cap back onto the vapor rub. "Your loss, but don't say I didn't warn you. These tunnels can get pretty foul, especially after it rains."

Red followed Michelle to the back of the van and watched her open the double doors and remove a bulky tool belt from within. Here, this is my spare," she said, shoving the belt into Red's arms. "MegaCast should issue you one eventually, so take good care of this cause I'll be wanting it back." Red thanked her and took the belt, strapping it across her waist while Michelle checked the flashlights on their hard hats. Once they were fully geared the albino rat motioned for Red to follow her, and together they started walking down the alley.

This was Red's first day on the job, and she was understandably nervous. The doe didn't know anything about electrical repair. She had graduated from college with a degree in graphic arts. Work in her field was tough to come by however, and after a run of lousy jobs her father had pulled some strings with a friend of his who worked for the cable company, and here she was.

Most of her first day had been surprisingly easy. Dispatch hadn't given them a single assignment all morning. Red had sat in the repair van, watching Michelle sip her iced coffee, play scratch tickets and read the paper. The albino rat seemed rather disinterested in her job, content to sit around and let the hours fly by. When the van's radio had finally crackled to life and issued them a job, Red was slightly relieved to have a break from the boredom. Michelle, on the other hand, wasn't very pleased.

"They always do this! Every time I'm about to punch out for lunch, suddenly, they have a job. I'm beginning to think that dispatcher has it in for me." Red nodded her head in fake sympathy.

Michelle knelt before a manhole cover and sighed. "Well, here we are. Let's get this over with."

Red eyed the metal cover warily as Michelle removed a prybar from her belt. Visions of creepy crawly things lurking in the tunnels below filling her with Dred. "So, um, not that I care or anything," she said, hoping it sounded believable, "but are there lots of bugs down there?"

Michelle stopped wrenching her pry bar into the cover and looked up at Red with a mix of curiosity and annoyance on her face. "Well yeah, of course there are. Water bugs and spiders mostly. Oh, and a few rats of course."

Red felt a shiver run up her spine. "Rats! Eww, I hate rats! Greasy little things all full of ---- diseases--." Red gulped nervously, realizing all too late that she had really put her foot in her mouth.

Michelle's eyes narrowed, a scowl beginning to form on her ruby red lips.

"That came out wrong, I didn't mean you. I ---."

"Then what did you mean?" There was a hint of repressed anger in Michelle's voice, and Red gulped nervously as she stood up, her eyes never leaving the flustered doe's.

"You know, ----- regular rats, the little ones -----."

"What are you, a specieist or something? Am I just some disgusting rodent to you, is that it!?"

"No, no, I love all species, I mean I --- I--." Red sputtered to a stop as Michelle broke into a fit of laughter.

"Hehehe, oh man. That was too good, you should have seen the look on your face."

Red stood there, her confusion turning to embarrassment as Michelle fought to regain her composure.

"Oh, Haha. Very funny," she grumbled, crossing her arms with a huff of annoyance. Michelle wiped a tear from her eye and smiled at Red, giving her a pat on the back.

"I'm sorry Red, I just couldn't help myself. Don't worry, I hate those little four legged twerps just as much as you do. They give us anthros a bad name, all those rat stereotypes about carrying diseases and being covered in lice, it drives me nuts sometimes. No hard feelings, right?"

Red eyed Michelle grumpily for a moment, before a bashful smile began to creep across her lips. "Alright, I guess it was pretty funny," she giggled. "You really had me going there for a minute."

"You gotta have a sense of humor with this job, otherwise the boredom will kill ya. Now come on, help me with this cover. The sooner we get this over with, the sooner we can eat."

Getting back on her knees, Michelle resumed her work with the pry bar, and after a few tries the cover shifted upwards. The scraping of rusty metal as they dragged it away from the hole echoed through the tunnels below and bounced off of the high walls around them. It reminded Red of the sound claws make when dragged across a chalkboard.

Red peered into the inky darkness below, steeling herself for their descent while Michelle switched on her helmet light, illuminating the first few rungs of an iron ladder. Looking up at Red with a reassuring smile, she slipped her legs into the hole.

"Don't worry rookie. Just remember, the critters down there are more afraid of us than we are of them," and with a thumbs up, she disappeared into the darkness below.

Red switched on her own light and followed hesitantly. Carefully she searched with her feet until they found a perch on the ladder, and with her paws gripped tightly on the rungs, slowly started to climb down.

The temperature seemed to instantly drop at least ten degrees, the damp cool easily penetrating her fur. The light revealed the curved brick walls of the tunnel, lined with rows of pipes and bundles of wires. Droplets of water fell from the crumbling mortar above her head. The overpowering stench of rotting leaves, sewage and stagnant rain water assaulted her nose. She immediately regretted her decision to pass on Michelle's vapor rub. Reaching the floor, Red looked about her, and easily spotted the bobbing light on Michelle's helmet in the distance. The tunnel was eerily quiet. The thump of her boots on the concrete floor thundered around her as she approached Michelle, who was studying a thick black cable that rested above a series of pipes.

"Ya see that," she said, pointing to the cable. "That's our service line. They all look the same, so whenever you're on a job like this just look for that."

Together they walked further into the tunnel, passing numerous side passages. Their dark gaping maws made Red's imagination conjure up all manner of monsters that might be watching them, ready to pounce. She shook her head, attempting to clear her overactive mind. Michelle continued to talk, and Red tried her best to focus on what she was saying.

"Whenever service goes down it's usually one of two things. Sometimes it's a severed cable, which is a pain in the ass to fix, but most times it's just moisture tripping the breakers."

Michelle stopped in front of a large metal box mounted on the wall. Numerous black cables like the one they had been following stuck out of its sides and snaked away in every direction.

"I'm guessing this is the breaker box then?"

"Bingo, I'll make a service technician out of you yet girl," said Michelle with a grin as she pulled off the lid. "Let's see here, what street did dispatch say lost service again?"

Red removed a notebook from her breast pocket and flipped through the pages. "Um, It waaas ---- ah, here we go. Beakman Street,"

"Right, Beakman. So, all you have to do is look for the switch labeled with the street name and flip it back on." Michelle pointed her finger at the rows of switches and slowly moved her paw down the list of street names until she found the right one. "Aww Crap," she exclaimed.

"What, what's wrong with it," asked Red, peering into the breaker box as Michelle angrily stomped away.

"Absolutely nothing, that's what. The breaker isn't switched off, which means there's a tear somewhere in the wire. We'll be down here for hours trying to find it," groaned Michelle, slumping her back against the wall of the tunnel in defeat.

“Hours! It can’t be that bad ---- can it?” The thought of being stuck in these tunnels for hours made Red’s skin crawl. The mold covered bricks and barrel vaulted ceilings reminded her of some ancient dungeon. Dark, dank, and full of danger.

Michelle pushed herself away from the wall and began replacing the panel on the breaker box. “Some of these tunnels are over one hundred years old, which means there’s no accurate maps. So yeah, were going to be here awhile.”

Red groaned under her breath and looked down the narrow brick passage. The light on her helmet was no match against the darkness that surrounded them. Its dull glow only illuminated some twelve feet in front of her before the faint rays were swallowed by the overwhelming inky blackness. (It’s going to be fine,) she thought. (Don’t let your mind play tricks on you. There’s nothing down here but us.) Red repeated that last part to herself over and over. (There’s nothing down here but us, there’s nothing down here but us.) The noise she heard in the distance, however, shattered her mantra into a thousand pieces.

At first she ignored it. A faint sound, like white noise from a TV. Red dismissed it as another trick of her mind, but as she listened it grew steadily louder.

Michelle slammed the panel back into place with the palm of her paw, creating a deep booming echo that slowly faded into the distance. Removing her helmet, she scratched at a spot where the liner dug uncomfortably into her scalp, and turned to face Red.

The sight of her trainee standing ramrod straight, eyes staring intensely, unblinking, at something far off in the distance took her by surprise. “Hey, what are you ----”

“Sssssh! Listen. Don’t you hear that?”

Michelle was caught off guard, unused to being shushed by a trainee. She would have gotten angry at Red, but now that she mentioned it, there was a noise. The hurried scraping and shuffling of something, something that was quickly approaching. Just beyond the reach of Red’s light, Michelle thought she saw movement. The floor seemed to undulate and wave in the darkness, and there was a new sound. Faint high pitched screeching.

From the darkness beyond rose a tidal wave of sleek, furry bodies that completely covered the floor.

“Oh God, its rats,” cried Red hysterically.

They rushed towards the horrified technicians at an unbelievable speed, frantically scrambling and jumping over each other, their beady eyes bulging madly. They didn’t have any time to react before the hoard was upon them, scurrying over and past their feet. The deafening sound of squeals and squeaks almost drowned out the screams of the two horrified women as they shuffled from foot to foot, slapping their paws at the small, frenzied creatures that desperately tried to climb their legs.

Then, just as quickly as they had come, the sea of terrified rodents disappeared back into the darkness. Red spun around, checking for any stragglers still clinging to her legs while Michelle panted heavily, her helmet clutched tightly in her paw as she tried to regain her composure.

“What the hell was that, oh fuck, what the fuck,” shrieked Red, her eyes wide with fear. “We need to leave, we have to leave. I can’t stay here!!”

Michelle moved to Red's side and hugged the terrified doe, an action that surprised Red and silenced her panicked cries.

"It's alright, were alright. Take a deep breath for me ok," she said, looking into Red's eyes. Red nodded her head and began taking big gulps of stale air into her mouth. "That's it, deep breaths."

Michelle felt the frightened doe's body tremble against her own, her breaths coming out in ragged sobs, but soon she began to regain some of her composure. "Why did they attack us like that," she asked in a trembling voice.

Michelle thought for a moment, breaking their embrace to look up and down the dripping, moldy passage. "I don't think they were attacking us. It looked like they were running away from something."

Red shuddered and looked about her. "This isn't right Michelle. We need to go, I can't stay down here, I just can't, what if they come back, what if ---."

Placing her paws on Red's shoulders, Michelle shook the panicked doe "Hey, HEY! Listen to me. You gotta calm down, ok?"

"Ok ----- yeah, ok."

"Good. So here's what we're going to do. I'm going to check the service line until the end of this tunnel. Then I'm going to have dispatch send out another van. I'll tell them I sprained my ankle or something. You can go back to the van now if you want to, but I could really use some company right now."

Red could hear the slight tremble of fear in Michelle's voice. She was doing her best to hold it together, but it was obvious that her mask was beginning to crack.

"Can't we just go back now, tell them we checked some of the line, and be done with this?"

"Sure, and what do we tell them if they find the problem right where we said it wasn't? I have to make it look like I at least tried to do my job. So what do you say, will you help me out here?"

Red lowered her head in thought. She desperately wanted to leave, to see the sunlight again and breathe fresh air, but she couldn't leave Michelle down here alone. Raising her head the doe sighed and nodded. "Yeah. But let's make it quick."

They set off again, this time at a faster pace. Michelle trained the beam of her light on the cable, wrapping a paw around it, and feeling for any tears in its rubber coating. She never stopped, unwilling to take any more time than necessary.

Red stared straight ahead, scanning the tunnel for any signs of movement, ears and eyes struggling to focus in on every sound, every shape that emerged from the pitch black until finally, after what seemed an eternity, they reached the end.

Their lights pushed back the veil of gloom to reveal a brick wall before them. At this point the tunnel turned towards the left, its arched entrance just ahead. Red stopped dead in her tracks, her feet refusing to go one step further.

Michelle hurried past her, paw still wrapped around the cable. Reaching the end of the tunnel she released her grip and turned towards the opening, letting loose a startled squeak. Red could see the shock in her eyes, her mouth dropping open.

“Michelle, what is it?”

She didn’t answer, instead disappearing from view around the corner. Red didn’t want to follow her. They were done, they should be heading back. Her mind practically screamed at her to start walking away, but she couldn’t. Slowly Red began to walk towards the entrance. Her feet felt like they were encased in lead. Each step a struggle, a fight against her own body.

“Michelle,” she whispered. “What the hell are you doing? Let’s get out of here.”

She could see the soft light from Michelle’s helmet bouncing off the walls of the tunnel, casting her warped shadow across the floor. Peering around the corner, Michelle came into view, back to the doe as she surveyed the destruction before her.

A large, gaping hole dominated one side of the tunnel, reaching from floor to ceiling. It bulged outwards at each jagged edge, where loose bricks dangled like crooked teeth. The pipes that once lined the wall had been snapped like twigs, their twisted remains scattered among the piles of dirt and rubble that covered the floor. Wires dangled from the wall, where they occasionally snapped and hissed like venomous snakes.

“Hey, I think I found the source of our problem.”

Red moved forward to inspect the gaping hole in the wall, her flashlight unable to penetrate the darkness that loomed beyond it. “Yeah, no shit. It looks like a subway train came through here.”

Whatever happened, it’s too big for us to handle. The City’s going to have to take over for us.” The sound of plastic dropping to the ground startled the rat, and spinning on her heels she turned to face Red. She was gone. Her helmet lay upturned on the floor, bobbing and spinning. Its light drunkenly casting a dull beam across the walls.

Michelle approached the helmet cautiously as it slowly wobbled to a stop. Her eyes darted about, searching for any sign of the brown furred doe. Something moved within the cavernous hole, shifting in the darkness. “What happened Red, did ya fall in?”

There was no answer, only the deafening silence of the tunnels, and the tingling feeling of something slithering around her leg. Looking down, Michelle tried to kick what she thought was a severed cable from around her boot, but with a forceful tug it pulled her towards the hole. Balance gone, Michelle felt the ground rushing up to meet her. Arms outstretched, pin wheeling as she fought to regain equilibrium. With a heavy thud she landed on her back, knocking the wind from her lungs. As she struggled to take a deep breath she could feel herself being dragged closer and closer to the jagged opening. Her paws clawed at the debris, desperately searching for something to hang on to. Gasping and moaning at the intense pain in her back and lungs, she watched her legs disappear into the opening, then her waist. Focusing all of her energy Michelle grasped the corner of the wall with both paws, her arms straining as whatever held her leg tugged harder and harder, until the loose bricks she clung to gave way, and the world descended into darkness. Her body bumped and banged into invisible walls as she was pulled deeper and deeper with increasing speed. Her paws dug uselessly into the dirt, chipping

claws and skinning finger tips. Her screams pierced the all-consuming blackness, until a sharp blow to the back of her head filled her eyes with blinding flashes of light, followed by a weightless black void.

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Pain. Deep throbbing pain coursed through Red's skull. It was the first sensation she was able to register. For what seemed like ages she just existed, unmoving. Unaware of the world around her.

(Wha --- what happened?)

The thought squeezed its way through the blockade of pain within her skull. Red couldn't remember anything, her mind was a blank slate. (Did I drink too much last night? Was I in some kind of accident,) she wondered. Images began to take shape, disjointed and vague at first. Slowly falling into place like the pieces of a puzzle.

(Work. I was starting a new job.) She remembered punching her timecard at the MegaCast building, meeting her boss, being introduced to ----. (Michelle!!) That name came rushing at her, and with it the rest of her memories. The tunnel, the rats, that translucent tentacle emerging from the deep dark hole in the wall, pulling her in headfirst.

Her eyes shot open, instantly assaulted by blinding light. Instinctively Red tried to shield them with her arms, but they refused to budge. Something cold and wet enveloped her paws and wrists, pinning them above her head. Red's heart was racing now, pounding at her ribcage as she tried to move. All she could do was arch her back, twist her torso and head. No amount of straining or flexing could free her. Craning her neck back as far as she could, eyes squinting as they tried to adjust to the harsh light, Red could see that her paws were encased in large globs of green ooze that ran down to her elbows. They looked so wet and viscus, yet they were hard as cement. The blinding glare came from circular lights that hung far above her, their metal cone shaped shades covered in rust. She was pinned to a metal wall, streaks of corrosion and green ooze covering its surface. Lowering her head the frightened doe took in her surroundings. She found herself in a circular chamber, its grimy metal walls studded with rivets. Evenly spaced around the walls were grated drains that deposited a steady flow of green sludge into the room. Looking down Red let loose a gasp of fear that faded into a whimper. The floor seemed so far away, her fear of heights making the ten foot drop seem like ten stories. A sea of green covered its surface, at least six feet deep, undulating and shimmering in the harsh glare from above. Wet squelching sounds filled the room as more and more of the strange substance flowed through the drains to splatter on the floor below, but there was another, much fainter noise.

Something bulged out, white and round in the corner of her eye, emitting a constant gurgling, slurping sound. Red turned her head, body shivering in terror at the site before her. Michelle, it was definitely her. Pinned to the wall just next to the doe. The rat was unconscious, and she had changed since Red last saw her.

A translucent green tentacle pistoned in and out of her mouth, pushing her limp head back against the wall, coating the white fur around her muzzle with glistening slime. Michelle's throat bulged with each thrust, struggling to handle the pulsing flood of liquid being pumped into her. Red followed the thick lumps down, past her small, braless breasts to their final destination.

The zipper of Michelle's uniform had split apart, pushed aside to make way for the white furred ball that erupted from her coveralls. The rat could pass for a woman entering her third trimester, her belly easily the size of a large watermelon. Red watched, horrified, stomach churning with revulsion as the tightly packed orb would emit low, wailing groans. The surface shivering and fur bristling, before bulging outwards ever so slightly. Shuddering to a stop, only to be repeated again and again.

"Michelle! ----MICHELLE!!! You gotta wake up, wake up! Please ----- fight it," shouted Red, her voice quivering, breaking into sobs as the words spilled out. There was no response, only the soft slurping of the tentacle that slid past her lips.

Red tried again to free herself, flexing and twisting with all her might, clenching each muscle, but still she made no progress. Finally she collapsed, weak and panting, her head hung low in defeat. That's when she saw it. A tendril pushing itself up out of the sea of green ooze far below her, snaking its way upwards. It seemed to be looking for her, almost like it was sniffing the air. Zeroing in on her sent. It swayed from side to side, always coming closer. Red held her breath, trying not to make even the slightest noise. Hoping against hope that it would just go away. Finally it stopped, hovering just in front of her face. She couldn't see any eyes, or mouth. It was just an extension of the jello like ooze that covered the ground below, but it was alive. Studying her.

For what seemed like an eternity it remained motionless before her. Red licked her dry lips, trying desperately to hold herself together. Suddenly the tentacle moved towards her, stopping just inches from the frightened doe's face, and Red lost herself.

"Eeeeeeeagh, STAY AWAY FROM ME! STAY AWAY," she shrieked, her screams amplified by the metal walls. The translucent tentacle seemed startled by her outburst, shrinking back, stiffening itself for a moment. A burbling roar welled up from the green slime below, its surface rippling and lapping at the metal walls. Red realized all too late that her screaming had angered the sentient slime, and sealed her fate.

The pillar of goo rushed at her face, enveloping Red's muzzle and blocking her nose. Clamping her mouth tight, she could feel it prying at her lips with incredible force. Red resisted for as long as she could. Her lungs were burning, screaming for oxygen. Her body eventually gave in, mouth opening with a muffled gasp for air that was met instead with a flood of cold, gelatinous liquid. Red did her best to breathe through her nose, and desperately tried to bite down on the tentacle. It was like trying to chew through a thick rubber hose, and eventually she gave up. Her gums and teeth too sore to continue. The doe's stomach groaned and churned as it was invaded, beginning to puff out from her waist. She watched her coveralls begin to tent outwards, stomach rising like bread dough. Pulsing ever so slightly, bigger and bigger with each new gush of liquid that erupted down her throat.

Turning her tear filled eyes to Michelle once more, the doe let loose a gurgle of primal fear. The closest she could manage to a scream. The albino rat was now a mockery of the pregnant form. Her stomach an oval monstrosity that jutted outwards and downwards until its vast smooth surface was interrupted by a thick, pink, golf ball sized nub. Michelle's belly button, forced to retreat outwards by the internal pressure within, visibly throbbed upon the peak of her quadruplet sized girth like an erection. Growing before her eyes as the poor rat's skin desperately fought to contain her ballooning stomach. Her once snowy white belly fur had thinned considerably, unable to cover the flushed pink flesh any longer. The



terrified doe could easily see snaking blue veins, valiantly struggling to pump blood across the rat's ever increasing abdomen.

Red was afraid to look down at her own swelling bloat. She felt full. The kind of full that brings a dull throb, the beginning of a true stomachache. The zipper of her coveralls was beginning to bite into sensitive skin, the coarse tan cloth stretched tightly around her girth. Unable to give any more room to the steadily swelling basketball sized orb. With a metallic snap the zippers teeth began to separate. Slowly working down from her ample breasts, revealing the light blue bra that contained them. Popping apart faster and faster as her belly surged forward, taking advantage of its new found freedom. She could feel her skin tightening with each gulp. The pressure intensified as her stomach continued to balloon. Red's belly button was growing shallow, stretching flat like a drum head far beyond her eye sight. It was an alien feeling, a painful feeling. She imagined it was how canvas felt when stretched across a wooden frame.

She gave in when her bellybutton was finally stretched flat and looked down, past the undulating green mass that filled her mouth, to the dappled tan fur of her full term swell. Her skin burned, like a sun burn. (No, she thought. Not a sunburn, a first degree burn.) Throbbing hardest at the outermost curve of her belly, hidden from view. The pain grew in intensity until Red was certain that what she felt was a weak spot about to rupture. Squeezing her eyes shut against the mounting pressure, she awaited the inevitable piercing stab of her stomach bursting apart. Instead a sudden thud vibrated through the bloated swell, followed by sudden relief. The white hot pain dissolving back into the aching throb that permeated her stretched hide. Opening her eyes, Red could see a pink nub shooting outwards just into view at the edge of her vision. She stared in shocked disbelief at the thumb sized protrusion that had become her belly button, watching it slowly disappear from view behind the turgid sphere jutting from her middle.

Red's throat ached from the endless stream of thick green slime. Her nostrils flared, desperately struggling to draw in enough air as her stomach began to press into her lungs. She was becoming lightheaded, overwhelmed by the searing pain that wracked her body. (Is this how it ends,) she thought. (Filled until I pop like a balloon?) Red couldn't see any way out of this, she was becoming resigned to her fate. Vision blurring, unconsciousness creeping closer and closer.

Then the tentacle stopped. Motionless, it hung from her stretched apart jaws. Out of the corner of her eye Red watched the green tendril invading Michele's mouth slither backwards. Wriggling free with a wet plop as it broke the suction of her lips, the rat's head flopping forward limply. Red prayed for the slimy tube that filled her mouth to leave, but immediately regretted her prayer when it came true. As it began to retreat backwards her throat burned, the sensitive flesh rubbed raw by the invading tentacle. It felt like sandpaper scraping along her insides, fresh tears streaming from the tortured doe's red, puffy eyes. When it finally broke free from her mouth she let loose a horse, grating gag. Her stomach contracted around the gallons upon gallons of ooze, stomach bouncing painfully as the doe dry heaved again and again. Her jaws shot forth a mix of spittle and slime with each croaking cough, but the ooze refused to leave its new home.

Her throat and lungs were on fire now. The simple act of breathing sent shooting pain down into her chest. Head slumped forward, exhausted and spent, she surveyed the impossible bloat before her. The mottled tan belly fur was distorted and warped across the oval mass, stretched thin to reveal aching, flushed pink skin. Slick with sweat and shiny taugth, it rumbled and churned angrily before her. A

tormented strip of darkened skin that felt ready to rip apart ran down the center of her belly, interrupted by the grapefruit sized navel that afforded her painfully packed stomach a few precious centimeters of space. Her back ached, forced to arch away from the wall, pulled into an outrageous curve by the weight of her sextuplet sized swell. It felt ready to split from her body, her haunches stretched paper thin and striped with wide red stretchmarks where Red's belly erupted from her midriff.

Her head felt weighted, like it was made of cement. She didn't want to move it, didn't want to do anything, but curiosity forced her to look at her comatose companion. Her neck ached with the effort it took to raise her head, and once turned it slumped to the side, nestling into the crook of her arm. Red was big, bigger than any pregnant woman she had ever seen, but Michelle was bigger.

Her thin, frail body was dwarfed by the giant zeppelin that hung from her frame like an over-ripe fruit. It reached her knees, but didn't hang heavily, instead bulging outwards from under her boobs in a vast, convex sphere. Her white pelt was nothing now, reduced to individual hairs spaced far apart along her titanic swell. Pale, shimmering flesh met Red's eyes. Marbled with streaks of red and pink, covered in a road map of thick, pulsing blue veins. Her belly button looked like a hemorrhage upon the distant peak of her gut. Distorted, angry red where it emerged from a circular depression, turning a dark dangerous purple as it narrowed to its rounded tip. It pointed downwards on the lower slope of her girth. Like an accusing finger it stabbed out at the green slime below. Through half lidded eyes Red watched as something slithered beneath the surface, long and thin. Easily seen as it pushed against paper thin skin. It left a trail of broken blood vessels in its wake, a stripe of angry purple and red that blossomed on the side of her bulbous orb like a brush stroke. It was quickly followed by another near her belly button, and then another up by her ribs. Red looked on as Michelle's stretch mark riddled gut began to reel and judder with increasing motion. The turmoil distending her belly in all directions until it failed to look even remotely round. Michelle's body twitched, her back arching impossibly forward until Red feared it would snap. Long, blonde hair cascaded down around her face. Only Michelle's muzzle visible through the golden veil. She seemed so peaceful, completely unaware of the terrible monstrosity churning within her.

Red felt the beginnings of movement within her own massive swell, like butterflies in her stomach at first. Growing steadily until she winced in pain, feeling the sting of new stretchmarks peeling across the distended sides of the heaving orb. Her passengers tumbled into each other and struck out against the living walls around them. Belly skin shuddering with pressure as blood vessels broke across its striped red surface. She cried out in pain as the seething mass of kicks distorted her orb like tummy into a series of lumps. Red could feel her mind slipping, breaking, draining away as the pain and fear took hold completely. She focused her eyes on Michelle, on the beautiful silken strands of her hair and the almost serenely tranquil expression upon her lips. (Don't ever wake up Michelle, it's better that you just keep dreaming. Please just keep dreaming.)

