

A few months passed, and the little woman lived behind the base's walls, scavenging for items to aid her in her adventures and finding food to eat.

There were usually small plates of food purposely left out for her, so she gathered those types of food and ran back to where she was hiding.

Sometimes she would avoid people walking down the hallways whenever they were heading in the same direction as she was or listen to their conversations from behind the walls.

As she was living in the RED base over the weeks, she took notice of her body after finding a shard of mirror.

She saw that the bruise on the side of her head had healed over time but still stung a few times whenever she put her fingers against it, but it did not stop her from doing what she had to do to survive.

She even notices that her eye color has changed to azure instead of her natural hazelnut brown, and her ears are pointed elf ears, which confuses her.

There had been no other changes to her body except for the eye color change and her height, but she was still confused about how it happened.

Throughout the week, she wanted to trust them because she met them for the first time, saw how nice they were to her, and talked to them even though she was with them rather than alone.

However, she is still not ready to talk to them, and she is still not confident enough to trust them after witnessing their battles on the battlefield.

She did not want to be mistaken for being one of the BLU team members and get herself killed by the RED.

So she continued hiding behind the walls, avoiding people whenever they came near where she was and continued to listen to their conversations.

She also learned which day was which for it to begin, even hiding from wandering out on the scary grounds, not daring herself to go out there.

The woman can now tell each person apart by hearing their accents, quirks, and even the languages they speak after listening to their conversations.

She also overheard names and nicknames they called each other after the battle had ended, or sometimes, if the battle sort of dies, she can hear the taunts they give each other.

Listening to their conversations behind the walls, she knows some of their names but not all since she does not know which nicknames belong to which team member.

She had even learned a handful of things about the place she was inside, knowing that it was called the 'RED' base, as there was another one called the 'BLU' base that was not far away.

The names 'RED' and 'BLU' confused her about why there were two different colors and what the two names represented.

But she decided to figure it out later once she knew what the two names meant and what the whole battle was about for her.

As night falls, she sleeps in the area where she had come to a stop after her search, waiting for dawn to continue her journey.

However, she did not feel like continuing her search since mice and rats lived behind the walls, and she did not want to be caught by one and get herself harmed by one.

Sometimes, she would even see wild *raccoons* roaming the area, scurrying around to search through trash to eat whatever was edible.

She wonders how the raccoons got into New Mexico in the first place but decides to shrug it off, knowing that animals have their own ways of adventure.

Other animals and bugs were roaming around the bases, so Stephanie stayed away from them to keep herself from being attacked by them.

In the morning, she would wake up with a jolt after hearing the Soldier blow his military horn to wake people up at dawn.

It irritated the team members, and she would hear them yell at the Soldier for doing this in the early morning, as some are not morning people.

But it does not bother her because it reminds her of home, especially when she hears the military horn outside her window.

It even serves as an alarm clock for her to wake up in the morning to continue searching for leftover food for breakfast or use the food she had packed in her backpack.

But now, she is in a tight dilemma.

She was adventuring in the massive garage at the RED base, wondering what she could see instead of hiding behind walls or getting around large objects.

In her mind, she felt like she was in a massive museum filled with various and enormous objects to look at, even understanding the differences between what she was used to and what they used.

She even noticed the difference between the technology back at her home and what they had at the RED base.

Everything looked like it was from the 20th century, as there were still outdated computers, phones, and even some devices that seemed to perk her curiosity.

It all seemed outdated and different, making her feel out of place in the world and technology.

Suddenly, she heard something come into the garage after the door opened that snapped her out of her thoughts, and she started to glance around to look for somewhere to hide, only to notice a space between two crates.

She chose to hide between the crates and ran over, checking if it was wide enough for her to fit through.

She decided not to take a long time to determine if she would or would not fit, so she twisted her body and inched herself inside.

As she squeezed through the narrow gap, she hid in between the crates and hid from the person entering the garage.

When the person entered the garage, she looked around the corner of the crate she was hiding behind and saw that it was the Scout.

After walking into the huge garage, the Scout paused for a moment, looking around for any other spies lurking around.

She hid in between the crates to avoid being discovered, still fearful of what would happen if she was found out.

When the coast was clear, he sighed and reached into his pants pocket, pulling something from his pocket.

He had a baseball in his right hand, and the fabric on it was old and faded with some faint rips and tears, even with traces of bloodstains.

His baseball bat and the bag on his back were missing, which seemed odd because he did not carry those two with him.

But she was lucky that he did not carry those with him after walking into the garage, not wanting to think about what could have happened.

She watched him while peeking out slightly from her hiding spot as he started heading towards the crates, thinking he would sit on one of them as she was underneath them.

Instead, the Scout walked past the crates where she hid and went to the couch, lying down on his back.

He put his legs on top of the couch's arm to the left as his head rested on the other couch's arm to the right.

His left hand was resting on his stomach, while his other hand was tossing his baseball up in the air and catching it with his hand.

She sighed in relief after seeing that the Scout did not decide that the crates were perfect for sitting on, not wanting to be underneath him.

But, ever since their first meeting in Medic Bay, she has imagined herself being caught by him and used as a ball, flinging her up in the air and grabbing her repeatedly until she becomes sick or injured.

She shivers in fear of her imagination, forcefully pushing the thought away from her mind to not scare herself anymore.

Glancing back up at the Scout, she noticed he was busier focusing on his ball than her, so she felt safe to go back to the hole she found and get out of the garage before being caught by him.

He would catch her in the corner of his eye if she tried to exit the opening since he could be suspicious of his surroundings.

She does not know if she will either move from where she is or stay put until he is gone after someone calls him or decides that he is bored.

While waiting for him to leave the garage, the summer wind from the open garage door started blowing into the room, causing the dust underneath her feet to kick up.

She sniffed some dust that made her allergies kick in slightly to make her sneeze, loud enough that he could hear it from the other side of the room.

“Achoo!” She sneezed loudly, whipping her head downward.

She gasped in fear and quickly covered her mouth and nose with both hands, realizing that she had accidentally made a loud noise.

The Scout stopped throwing his baseball in the air after he caught it in his right hand, perking a little as he glanced away from the ceiling.

Her stomach clenched in fear as she moved deeper into the darkness between the crates, trying to move away from being in his eyesight.

He had heard her sneeze!

The Scout sat up from his spot, glancing around for the source of the noise as she hid, wishing he did not see her.

Luckily, he did not see her in her hiding spot as he glanced around, his brow slightly frowning as if he wondered if there was a Spy hiding.

He shrugs after looking around and returns to his seat on the couch, tossing his baseball into the air and catching it repeatedly, just as he had before.

She was relieved that he had not heard her loud sneeze, removing her hand from her nose and mouth and deciding it was time to leave.

...Until she felt another sneeze coming.

Panicking, she tried to contain her sneeze with her hands to stop herself from doing so, but she sneezed again, louder than the first one, right into her palms.

“Achoo!” She sneezed loudly again, whipping her head downward.

The Scout heard the sneeze again, and he caught the baseball in his right hand, sat up in his spot, and glanced around the second time.

This time, he felt suspicious of the sneezes, thinking that a Spy had wandered into the garage.

He sat on the couch and turned his body around, placing his feet on the ground as he placed his baseball back into his pants pocket.

The Scout stood up to his height but slightly crouched as he glanced around with his eyes.

She hid until her backpack hit the wall behind her back as she watched him get up from the couch, hoping he would not notice her while the Scout scanned the garage for the hidden person who was also hiding there with him.

She cursed herself for her allergy to dust but was focused on making herself invisible from the Scout's eyes.

But as she moved, he noticed the sudden change in the dust between the crates on the left-hand side of the room's corner.

He frowned slightly, thinking it was a mouse or a Spy hiding between those crates... although Spies could not be *that* small... right?

Instantly, the Scout's mind went straight to the tiny human girl the Medic had found before, believing that she must have come into the garage to search for something.

The Scout walked over to the crates slowly and soundlessly jumped on the box on the left-hand side as he had his hands on the box.

He waited patiently for the mouse to appear between the boxes to catch it with his hands once it came out, but his mind was still focused on the tiny human girl, hoping it was her instead of a mouse.

As for the girl, she was busy recovering from her last sneeze and failed to notice the Scout was not on the spot where he used to be and was instead on top of one of the boxes on her left-hand side.

Frustrated about the dust, she threw caution in the wind and stepped out from among the boxes to escape the dust.

She sniffed and snorted as she felt her sinuses drain from the back of her throat, causing her to cover her third sneeze with her arm.

After she stepped out into the opening, she was about to take off her backpack to get the tissues out when she finally noticed that the Scout was not there.

She gasped softly after realizing the missing Scout when something moved in front of her, and she froze in her spot.

Even finally realized that she was out in the open, forgetting about the Scout she was trying to hide from.

A shadow loomed over her as she stopped at her spot, her right hand on her backpack strap to take her backpack off.

Her mind began racing with frantic thoughts of looking up to see who it was or running away.

So she bravely glanced up to see who or what was standing in front of her.

When she looked up, she instantly regretted looking up to see who was standing over her, seeing that it was *the Scout*.

He must have gotten near the crates while her sneezes distracted her!

He was crouching down to see her closer, with one hand on the ground and the other still on the left box with one knee down.

And it was the same Scout she had met back in the Medic Bay.

After realizing the Scout was there, she shrieked in fear and whipped around on her heels, scrambling to hide between the boxes.

The Scout took action after she shrieked, and when she ran inside, he quickly removed his right hand and went down on his knees while his left hand was flat on the ground.

He reached his right arm through the small gap between the crates and quickly grabbed her backpack on her back with his index, middle, and ring fingers.

She yelped when she felt her backpack grabbed by the Scout, tugging against her body as she was halted from her escape.

The woman tried to squirm against the Scout's strength as her feet dragged against the ground while being yanked back.

She could feel Scout's middle finger against her back as his entire palm was gently wrapped around her backpack.

He did not use too much strength to crush the objects inside her backpack, only grabbing them as if he was taking a cookie.

He cautiously and slowly started pulling her back gently to get her out from between the boxes as she dragged her feet against the concrete ground to stop herself.

She was squirming so much that he could not carefully drag her out without accidentally hurting her.

So, the Scout hoists her up from the ground to smoothly pull her out rather than dragging her.

She gasped when she was picked up, feeling the straps of her backpack on her shoulders lifted along with her as her feet left the ground.

She noticed his fingers were only attached to her backpack when she glanced over her shoulder again to see what he was doing, so she slipped out of her backpack straps.

After she slipped out of her backpack straps, she softly landed back down on the concrete ground and went deeper into the narrow hallway of the crates.

This time, she ignored the dust being kicked around, even though she was allergic to it.

She reached the end of the hallway between the crates and curled closer to the nearest corner, hoping his long thin arm would not grab her.

As the Scout carefully removed his arm from the narrow space he was reaching through, he saw only her backpack in his hand, without the girl carrying it around.

So, he put her backpack in his left hand and placed it in his pocket on the left side of his pants for safekeeping.

While his left hand was still on the floor, his right arm reached back into the middle of the crates to get her out of the hiding place.

“Come on, I’m not gonna hurt ya,” he spoke as she scooted close to the crates.

She only replied with a whimper of fear as she scrambled back into the nearest corner, moving out of the fingers’ way, terrified of getting caught by him.

The Scout’s hands were skinny with long fingers, even having the trademark bandages covering his palm, fingers, and wrist.

As she was moving around, she collected more dust on her body, and during the process, her allergies started to kick up again.

She felt another sneeze coming, so she sneezed loudly for the third time in a row as she had her head turned away.

“Achoo!” she sneezed loudly.

“Gesundheit!” the Scout remarked after she had sneezed.

He kept reaching for her, not minding his arm tired of extending out to her, so he continued extending further into the middle of the crates.

When he reached the end of the gap, he felt one of his leading digits gently touch her chest.

She felt embarrassed about the touch on her chest, so she gently slapped his first finger in the embarrassment of the direct contact.

He felt her gentle slap, but it felt more like a soft tap because he was much bigger than she was compared to him.

Thinking he might have touched an uncomfortable place, he moved his hand down slightly to make things easier while moving forward to get to her.

His face was close to the side of the crate as his arm was in between the boxes.

After he had moved forward, his first finger touched her stomach, and she gasped, clenching her stomach with her muscles to get away from his touching fingers.

But he scooted a little closer, and his fingers tapped her shoulders, finally getting close to her.

He carefully wrapped his whole right hand around her, covering her entire body with his hand, except for her head and legs, which were popping out from the top and bottom, as her arms were gently pinned to her sides.

She was caught and could not move any of her body parts to squirm right out of his hand to get to freedom.

Because there was no way out, the girl accepted her capture and let him pull her out from between the crates.

The Scout carefully held the girl in his hands as he inched himself out from between the crates, holding her as if she was like a doll.

When she was in the open, she was face to face with the Scout, as he was holding her just inches away from his face.

It was better than being dangled by her leg in front of his face with nothing to support it.

She started trembling in fear as she was in front of his face, scared to death of him, as her pupils went inward.

“I knew it!” the Scout remarked as he held her in his hand.

He slowly stood to his full height, holding the small girl in his hand, while his legs hurt slightly from crouching down and trying to reach her through the crates for some time.

After standing up, he noticed she was covered from head to toe with dust from hiding between the crates, even seeing her flushed cheeks.

The girl felt another sneeze coming, so she sneezed for the fourth time with her head turned the other way.

“Achoo!” she sneezed loudly.

“Bless ya,” he responded to her sneeze.

She jolted from his voice and started shaking like a leaf, not looking at him as she kept herself from crying, practically biting the bottom of her lip with her teeth.

Even though she was facing death, the girl tried to steel her nerves from showing fear... but was showing it anyway.

“Hey, what did I say to ya?” He asked, sounding worried when she started shaking in his hand.

She did not reply to him as she continued shaking from head to toe and sniffing a couple of times because of her allergies.

The Scout reached into his other pocket, which did not have her backpack inside, and pulled out a small white cloth from his pocket.

He gently wrapped it around his first finger with one hand and reached over to her with the finger that had the cloth covering.

She panicked when she noticed his finger through her tears, thinking the cloth was filled with sleeping liquid he had poured earlier.

So she closed her eyes, hoping this would end quickly when she felt a gentle touch from him on top of her dust-covered head.

She opened her eyes in confusion and glanced up in curiosity, noticing he was gently wiping the dust off her from hiding between the crates.

He was delicate with her as he gently cleaned the dust off her head, careful not to apply any pressure or touch anywhere that would make her feel uncomfortable.

She closed her eyes again whenever the cloth got close to her face, still nervous about moving or trying to push the handkerchief away.

When he finished cleaning her face from being covered in dust, he moved down to her body.

As she lay down in his palm, the Scout opened his hand from being wrapped around her body and tilted his hand down.

She did not move as he laid her down in his palm, feeling scared that if she stirred, she would die after falling off his hand.

She felt mildly embarrassed about him gently touching her body without her permission, so she instead let him, worried that if she gently slapped his clothed finger away, he might get furious at her for that.

He carefully flipped her on her back to get some dust off her, even though she wanted to speak up and tell him to be careful.

After the Scout had been done carefully wiping the dust off her body, the front and back, her hair was slightly static from the cloth he had, but her sinuses were still draining.

She used her arms to brush her hair down as she sat in his palm while sniffing to clear up, still shaking like a leaf and afraid of him.

As she finished brushing her hair, the Scout put the cloth back into the same pocket from which he had taken it earlier.

The Scout then gently wrapped his fingers around her body again, this time carefully changing the plane of holding her form to a ninety-degree angle, with her head and arms poking out from the top and her feet dangling down at the bottom.

She does not trust him, but she knows when to either run or say something to him to worm herself out of the trouble she has gotten herself into.

“Scout!” the Soldier’s voice suddenly yelled, startling both Scout and the girl as they flinched from the sudden noise. “Where the hell are you?!”

The Scout glanced at the door on the other side of the garage, looking at someone who might be walking in it.

The girl started to panic as she gripped the Scout’s bandages around his hand with her hands, wanting to hide away from the Soldier.

Another team member can not see her because of how humans treated borrowers in her memory, remembering stories about them from when she was a young girl.

Before she could squirm out of his hand to escape from the Scout and perhaps get a broken leg to get away from the incoming Soldier, she was suddenly shoved into a dark and loose space, but deep enough inside to prevent her from crawling out of it.

She was shoved into his pants pocket with no way out, feeling stuck like a beetle on its back.

Although the cloth underneath her body was covered in dust, it was balled up into a small ball and felt like a soft bed for her without feeling uncomfortable inside Scout's pocket.

As she thought of a plan to get out of his pocket, she heard stomping feet entering the garage and immediately froze.

Those stomping feet belong to the Soldier.

Making a wise decision to stay in the Scout's pocket instead of getting out, she curled up into the balled-up cloth beneath her and listened to their conversation.

"What is it?" she heard the Scout ask from above her body.

"Have you seen Lieutenant Bites?" she heard the Soldier demand, walking up to him.

She shrunk more into the cloth underneath her as she quietly winced to herself, worried about being caught in a fight again.

Worst of all, she was going to be revealed to another teammate by the Scout, knowing how he was curious.

"No, I have not," the Scout replied.

She perked after the Scout responded to the question, continued listening to their conversation, and felt something gently placed against her side.

The girl jolted from the sudden touch, thinking someone else was touching her from the other side of the fabric.

But she relaxed somewhat when she noticed the feeling was from the Scout because she felt the bandages covering the palm.

The girl shook a little as she continued to hear the two of them chattering as Scout's hand was removed from her.

She could see the Scout casually talking to the Soldier in front of him through the slight opening in his pants pocket.

The Scout looked 'normal,' although frowning a little as he talked with the Soldier, telling him about when he last saw 'Lieutenant Bites' and where he was.

She watched as the Scout continued to talk to the Soldier as he had his arms crossed over his chest and never looked down at her.

After a couple of minutes of talking, she imagined herself getting pulled out of the Scout's pocket and shown to the Soldier, then to the entire team, and used as a plush toy.

She shivers as she forces the memory to vanish to stop being scared by all the thoughts in her head.

The Soldier sighed, sounding like something between their conversations annoyed him.

From the conversation between the Scout and the Soldier, the Soldier asked the Scout if he had seen Lieutenant Bites, one of the pet raccoons he had in his room that had recently escaped.

As they talked to each other, sometimes snapping at each other gruffly as they were thinking about where the raccoon could be, she was still not being pulled out of his pocket and shown to the Soldier.

Was he trying to keep her a secret from being revealed or getting herself harmed by him?

“Fine, I’m going to check with the Medic if he knows where Lieutenant Bites is,” the Soldier loudly replied as she winced at the tone of his voice.

“Alright then, find your little pet,” the Scout sneered as the Soldier left.

She heard the Soldier turn his back towards the Scout, heading for a different place, as the sound of his stomping feet faded.

The girl shakily sighed and placed her hands on her chest, relieved she was not caught or shown to the Soldier.

As for the Scout, he watched as the Soldier stomped away from the garage room, entered the hallway, and marched towards the Medic Bay.

He sighed in relief after the Soldier had left before gently placing his hand back on the trembling girl in his pocket while he felt her jolt once more from the touch of his entire palm.

‘Da Doc wasn’t kiddin’ ‘bout da girl bein’ traumatized.’ he thought to himself, feeling slightly guilty for frightening her almost to death.

Half of him was also yelling at himself for picking her up by the leg in the Medic Bay, feeling stupid for doing so.

He took his gaze away from his pocket for a moment to see if the Soldier had returned after asking the Medic for Lieutenant Bites as the young woman watched him.

When the coast was clear, he glanced away from the door, thinking of a way to calm her down from her fear.

If he takes her to his room, it will feel uncomfortable having a tiny lady around, and she might also find things supposed to stay hidden.

Anywhere else would result in her being discovered by the other members, and she would be captured.

Before he could give in to taking her to his room, the Scout noticed the sun was setting slightly over the visible horizon in the distance, as there was a single tree in the light.

The scene inspired him to help calm the small woman down from being scared and may have also served as an apology.

So he reached back into the pocket with his right hand, where he had previously placed her, and hoped she would not recall the last time he held her.

Inside his pocket, she noticed he was trying once again to grab her, so she tried to move to the bottom of the pouch, so she could avoid his grasp.

But the fingers got to her and gently wrapped around her body as she gave out a small, terrified whimper, feeling a little tight in the Scout's hand.

He carefully pulled her out of his pocket, and she shook uncontrollably from head to toe, fearing he might use her like a baseball until he was bored with her.

She was shaking like a leaf as her heart raced against her chest as she stared into his eyes, worried and scared about what he might do to her and would be one of his toys.

He pressed her gently against his smooth chest, much to her startlement, and ran straight into the plain after exiting the garage with the door open.

He ran straight to the grassy hill in the distance, carefully carrying the girl against his chest without dropping her, not wanting to repeat the same incident as before.

As he ran over to the grassy plain in the distance, she gripped two handfuls of the shirt he was wearing, worried that if he tripped, she might be squashed underneath all his weight, or worse, get more harmed from anything else on the ground.

The Scout felt her grip on his shirt, so he steadily decelerated his pace, so she could feel safe without being scared of him running.

When he reached the hill, he slowed his pace to a walking speed and came closer to what looked like a blend of a tree and a bush.

It was enormous and bushy like an ash tree, but it was huge for its size, almost like a shade than a plant.

Careful as he could, he slowly and carefully sat down underneath the tree with his free hand as the other held the woman against his chest and leaned back against it.

When he was at ease, he looked down at the girl on his chest, who was now gently pressing against his chest after running.

She was still shaking slightly from her capture earlier, worried that he might be doing this so that she could be forced to believe in him, and in the future, he might torture her to death because of how small she was or make her an obedient servant to their deeds.

But she began calming down slowly, realizing he was not doing anything rash to her or anything else that she thought in her mind.

Her trembling started to slow down slightly as she began to calm down, but then she noticed his heart beating underneath her body.

It is well-built, like anybody's heart would be, but this pulse that she was hearing is rapid, like a rabbit's or a hummingbird's.

‘Whoa...’ She thought to herself in amazement as her cheeks were gently splashed with hints of pink blush. ‘Scout’s heartbeat is strong... But isn’t it dangerous for anyone’s heart to be so fast after drinking or eating sugar? Or is it because he exercised a lot?’

She was silent for a moment, listening to his heartbeat, unaware he was staring at her with confusion, wondering why she was quiet.

He thought she might have fallen asleep from the sound and feel of his heartbeat or from all the stress and fear she was experiencing, so he decided to pick her up from his chest.

She felt his fingers gently curl slightly, and she panicked, moving her head up from his chest, believing he would pick her up roughly like a child would with a plush toy.

Instead, he did not pick her up but moved his hand away from her as she lay there perfectly still.

“You’re still awake.” He softly spoke as she jumped from the sudden sound of his voice. “I thought dat you had fallen asleep or passed out.”

She only stared at him in confusion, confused about why he said that to her.

The girl expected yelling or anything that would scare her more, but this was unexpected.

He glanced up from her to the horizon and scooted up slightly as she quickly grabbed two handfuls of his shirt, worried about falling off his chest.

“Hey,” he spoke as she glanced up at him from her hands. “You’re gonna miss dis. Look behind ya.”

She gazes at him in confusion before deciding to follow his order to not make him angry.

So she slowly turned around and glanced cautiously at where he was staring as she had her back against his chest, one of her hands gripping his shirt.

Looking over her shoulder, she saw the sun slowly setting over the horizon, making the sky blend into a beautiful pink, orange, and yellow mixture in the heavens.

How the scenery looked resembles one of the pictures her grandmother colored when she was much younger.

She was silent for a moment as she gazed in awe at the gorgeous sunset, watching as it set over the horizon.

The girl calmed down a bit, feeling relieved he was not going to hurt her or do anything to cause harm to her either.

But, the other half of her mind is saying fearfully, ‘Why are you here?! He will squash you later after the sun sets over the horizon! You should run for your life right now!’

The other half of her mind told her to stay put until she found out what was going on and, hopefully, get some answers.

So she decided to stay put but was alert for sudden movements or sudden grabbing of his hands.

“Hey, what’s troublin’ ya?” the Scout quietly asked, gently tugging her away from her troubled thoughts.

His voice startled her after he asked as she looked at him from gazing at the sunset.

The girl only replied with a nervous expression, responding immediately to his question, “N-Nothing! Nothing’s wrong with me, just looking at the beautiful sunset.”

She went silent again after she had trailed off, glancing away from his gaze to the left side, feeling nervous that he might kill her later after the sunset.

He was puzzled as to why she remained silent after blurting out her words.

She nervously chews on the bottom of her lip and quietly adds, slightly ashamed of her worried outcry, “...I’m sorry. I’m just scared.”

He raised one of his eyebrows in confusion and asked, “Why are ya scared?”

She glanced back into his eyes as she flipped her body onto her front and answered, “I have not encountered a giant before in my life.”

He felt more confused about her answer, so he asked, “How didja get small and how didja get here since you’ve never seen a giant before? Aren’t you a borrower?”

“What?” the girl responded as she looked over her shoulder. “No, I’m a human, not a borrower.” She scratched her head with her fingers and explained, “I can’t remember how I shrank or came here before I met you.”

The Scout cocked his head as she continued, “Months ago, before coming here, I was escaping from a machine pursuing me in the forest, but that was all I could recall. I then fell over a tree root and slammed my head against something metallic. How your Medic noticed an injury to my head.”

She added as she nervously rubbed her left wrist, “And I’m jumpy and nervous all the time because I am also terrified of getting hurt, or worse, killed by giants. Of course, giants could be dangerous, but I don’t blame them. It’s what they choose.”

He was quiet as he stared at her, and she quickly added, worried about him thinking differently than what she was thinking.

“I don’t mean that all giants are mean, big, and scary. I meant that I’m afraid of being hurt by them in an accident and don’t know who to trust or believe in since the whole place is a battlefield,” she continued, rubbing her left arm with her hand. “Everything around me was unfamiliar, and I was abandoned in the Medic Bay with no warning. ...And I am still on edge because of the battles between the two bases.”

She sighed as she placed her right hand on the right side of her head, feeling the bruise on her head.

“I’m sorry that I’m a bit of a chatterbox, but...” she trailed off, pondering what else she could say.

But half of her feels like she is digging her own grave with her own random words she picked.

To make himself a little more comfortable than in his previous position, he raised himself just a little against the tree behind him.

She glanced up at him from looking away for a moment, slightly worried and slightly startled by the slight movement.

“So you’re afraid dat we might catch ya and use you for somethin’ against your will?” he asked, saying what she had said in his own words.

“I guess,” she nervously replied, glancing away from him again. “This is my first time here, and I still don’t remember anything that had happened.”

She looked at the sunset behind her back as the Scout thought about her words and feelings.

Her thoughts reflected on what he or his friends could do to her and her thoughts about the battleground.

Shaking the thoughts out of his head, he decided to be comfortable as his back was aching slightly.

So, taking care, he stood up from where he had earlier been lying, but before moving, he remembered her sitting on his chest as she was busy focusing on the sunset behind her back.

He stopped where he was and reached over to her with both of his hands.

She turned around in confusion when she noticed he was moving around slightly, deciding not to move as he got up.

But then he started to move his hands forward to where she was, as she flinched slightly from the sudden appearance of his hands on each side.

He gently scooped her up from his chest into the palms of his hands as he sat up slightly from where he was.

Instead of squirming from the sudden touch, she stayed still as he lifted her to his face.

He went into a sitting position, as his legs were crisscrossed, as she was still lying on her front, waiting for him to stop moving around.

She was lying in his palms when he stopped, sitting on her knees and staring at him instead of being scared.

“Listen, pally, me or mah friends won’t do any of dat to ya, and I’ll promise ya dis,” he gently huffed, sounding determined to keep her safe from any harm to her new size. “I’ll keep ya safe from any harm, and make ya feel like home, ‘til we get ya to your real home. Okay?”

She oddly felt protected with him in his hands, so she nodded her head and got up to her feet before wobbling from his soft spongy palms and landing on her bottom.

“Are ya tryin’ ta stand?” he asked, with a lack of sarcasm in his voice.

“Nope, just trying to get to my bottom, which worked,” she explained. “And that was my first time standing in someone’s hands.”

The Scout nodded his head, and she placed her right hand on his thumb as a way to tell him that she believed in him.

“I also believe in you, Scout,” she replied.

He softly chuckled as he got up on his feet, being careful with the passenger in his hands as she gently tightened her grip on his thumb, a little worried about falling to the ground.

“Please, ‘Scout’ is mah job’s nickname.” he lightly joked before pointing at himself with his thumb with a cocky grin. “Mah real name is Jeremy. What’s yours?”

She softly chuckled and replied, happy and relieved that she would not be killed by him after the sunset nor by any of his friends, “My name is Stephanie, Jeremy!”

He gently smiled a bit, and she chuckled softly, although slightly nervous about his trust in her.

“Anyway, wanna go back inside?” She asked, jabbing a thumb back at the RED base. “I’ll go into the same hole that I found earlier, and-”

She was cut off when he put her in his right hand and carefully placed her on his left shoulder, right near his neck, where she could talk into his ear.

“Nu-uh,” he replied after she was placed on his shoulder, removing his hand from her. “You’re stayin’ in mah room for da evenin’.”

Stephanie’s cheeks blushed a rosy color in embarrassment as she gripped some fabric of his shirt’s collar.

“A-Are you sure about that, Jeremy?” Stephanie stammered, feeling her cheeks heat up a bit.

“Yeah, I’m sure,” he calmly replied as he carefully stood up on his feet and walked away from the tree, heading towards the RED base. “It’s better than sleeping on da floor.”

“But I respect other people’s privacy,” she sheepishly explained.

He glanced over at her in confusion at her sheepish reply as he stopped walking for a moment.

“Can ya elaborate on dat, Steph?” the Scout asked after Stephanie explained.

“I have never slept in someone else’s room before,” Stephanie answered.

“Oh!” the Scout chuckled. “Don’t worry ‘bout it, Steph! Just think if it is like a sleepover!”

Stephanie paused as she looked away from the Scout, wondering about imagining it like a ‘sleepover,’ though nervous about staring at someone’s body behind their back.

...And Stephanie had *never* been to a sleepover before, either.

The Scout glanced away from Stephanie after she went quiet and quickly glanced around for any of his crew members heading his way.

Luckily, they were all asleep in their beds since it was almost dark outside, and he had already eaten dinner before going to the garage.

He entered his room discretely and opened the door to the room that had a symbol above the frame.

His room is not that big, but large enough for his bed and cloth dresser to be inside for him to sleep and change his clothes.

“Well, dis is mah room where I sleep.” He calmly spoke, breaking the ice between the two of them.

She glanced away from Scout after mentioning his room with a hand and noticed his room as she looked around.

At first, she did not want to sleep inside, but the warmth inside was more attractive than all the previous cold nights.

So she allowed herself to be in his room, even though the pictures on the walls looked interesting.

Even though the room was disorganized, it was not overly filthy or overrun with trash.

On the walls were posters of superheroes, comic book heroes, and even pin-ups of women in military styles, with some wearing bikinis and sexually attractive clothes.

“Nice pin-ups,” Stephanie remarked, giving Scout a gentle smirk.

“Uh, thanks?” The Scout blushed, looking up at one of the pin-ups with slight embarrassment.

He reached out with his right hand and gently but carefully lifted Stephanie off his shoulder as she wrapped her arms around his thumb.

Scout then placed her on the bedside table close to the lamp and had some cans around it.

The can's label was in yellow and red with the title 'BONK!' in bright red letters with the 'o' in the shape of a hazard sign.

The drink's flavor was 'ATOMIC FRUIT PUNCH CHERRY FISSON,' worrying Stephanie about what the soda might contain, as the ingredients were very long.

After she had been placed on top of the table, he walked away for a moment, leaving Stephanie confused, until he absent-mindedly started taking off his shirt.

Stephanie went as bright red as his shirt as she bit the bottom of her lips, grabbed the hood of her sweater, and pulled it over her head, covering her face with it.

Embarrassed that she saw him change right in front of her!

"Oh, sorry!" Stephanie heard the Scout exclaim. "Kinda forgot dat I placed you dere. Can ya keep your hood over your head?"

"S-Sure!" Stephanie muffledly stuttered from underneath her hood.

Scout turned back to what he was doing and took his shirt off, placing it on the ground where he would pick it up later.

His body was very skinny but had no bones poking from under the skin nor any hair, and instead had almost invisible muscles around his biceps.

He was about to change his pants when he paused a little, remembering another thing he had forgotten.

So, reaching into his pocket, Scout took out Stephanie's backpack he had recently taken off when they first met before turning to Stephanie, who still had her hood covering her face.

Scout placed Stephanie's backpack down next to her as she perked, turned her head away from him, and lifted the hood slightly, seeing her backpack.

"Thank you," Stephanie thanked, covering her face with her hood again after seeing it was her backpack.

"You're welcome, pally," Scout nodded before returning to what he was doing.

He took his belt off and dropped his pants with his socks after taking his shoes off, revealing his boxers and thighs, which were surprisingly muscular than the rest of his body.

Then he picked up a white baggy shirt and placed it on his body as his dog tags were placed on a hook, then a pair of baggy pants with baseballs and baseball bats decorated.

Scout's baggy shirt had the title 'Boston Red Sox' on the front in red with a pair of red socks underneath the title.

After he dressed in his pajamas, Scout walked over to Stephanie and knelt a little, gently tapping her shoulder with a finger, responding, "Hey, I'm done changin'."

Stephanie perked after hearing Scout speak and removed her hood, seeing him in his pajamas instead of being shirtless.

"Best if ya change too," he thoughtfully replied as he sat down on the bed. "Ya wouldn't be sleepin' in your clothes for da night."

Stephanie recalled what he meant, so she stood up before stopping, looking uncertain as she glanced away from Scout.

“Oh, I promise not to look at ya,” he assured after noticing her expression.

“Promise?” she asked, raising an eyebrow as she looked back at Scout.

“I promise.” The Scout assured again.

She hesitated at first as she glanced away from him but followed her thoughts as she nodded.

“Alright, can you turn around?” she asked, glancing up at him.

He nodded and glanced away from her as she changed, although he checked behind her back in case he broke her promise.

While she was changing without him looking at her, he thought about her parents.

Who were they, and where could they be?

Where could her siblings have gone to?

And who was there with her as she escaped into the forest?

And where was this forested part that she came from that she spoke of?

As he was thinking to himself, Stephanie finished changing as she put her shirt over her body, glancing back at him as he was distracted.

“Jeremy?” Stephanie’s voice gently pulled him from his thoughts.

“Hmm?” he replied gently, glancing back at Stephanie.

She was wearing a blue long-sleeved pajama shirt with light navy-colored pants that reached down to her ankles.

Her glasses, shoes, socks, sweater, and shirt were off and neatly folded to the side with her backpack, ready for the next day.

She looked cute wearing those pajamas, in his opinion.

“So, uh, where can I sleep?” she sheepishly asked, tucking a stray strand of hair behind her ear.

“In mah bed, of course,” he answered, standing up fully from kneeling slightly to her height.

Her cheeks went rosy again, like the last time he talked about staying in his room.

“Y-Yours?!” she softly exclaimed in shock and embarrassment.

He nodded, answering her question as Stephanie looked away from him, her cheeks flushed with embarrassment.

“Are you sure about that?” she nervously asked.

He nodded his head again as he gently placed his right hand on the table for her to climb on top.

Stephanie hesitated for a moment before carefully climbing into his palm, slowly getting used to being carried around.

As she sat down in the middle of his palm, which was still bandaged, he carefully lifted Stephanie from the table, careful not to accidentally drop her to the ground.

Just to be safe, she placed her right hand on his thumb as he gently curled his fingers inward to be protected.

“Of course!” he remarked, lifting her to his face. “I don’t wanna see ya uncomfortable on da bedside.”

And maybe be the first time sleeping with someone in his bed too.

“True.” she agreed, sounding nervous. “It can be uncomfortable for me to be on the table.”

He then placed her gently against his chest as a barrier for her to be protected.

When she was near his chest, she absent-mindedly gently leaned her head into his chest to be comfortable, causing him to be caught off guard when she did it.

She felt normal but slightly nervous and shy about sleeping in his bed and with him as a pillow.

Not only that, she feels safe now that she is protected by him instead of having to sleep on the rough ground where rats wander.

In the distance of her thoughts, she could hear his heartbeat gently pounding from underneath her through his chest.

It felt like a lullaby for her to automatically fall asleep during these restless nights.

He cautiously walked over to his bed and sat down carefully with the passenger against his chest as his hand covered her back as a protective barrier.

When he sat down on the bed, he moved his legs into the bedsheets, and with his left hand, he pulled the covers up to his waist.

After getting into his bed, he carefully laid on his back, his right hand still on Stephanie as she winced, grabbing two handfuls of his shirt.

Then, he pulled the cover over his front, slightly covering Stephanie and half his chest.

Stephanie felt a little nervous, confused, and calm now that she was sleeping on someone's chest and in bed!

With Scout, he was careful with Stephanie from accidentally hurting her or doing something stupid, although he was also nervous.

He hoped he would not move around too much or lay on her in his sleep.

But the lullaby of his heartbeat made her feel sleepy and relaxed, so she fell asleep on his chest, distantly listening to his pulse.

He felt puzzled about why she was silent during the night.

Worried, he was going to ask her a question when he heard soft and quiet snoring from his front.

He glanced down at his chest, noticing Stephanie was curled up tightly beneath his palm, covered in a large blanket except for her head, curled up against his shirt.

She was sleeping peacefully on his chest, her hands placed underneath her head, acting as a pillow for her to sleep comfortably.

Instead of feeling flustered, he instead gently smiled at her, feeling proud of himself for being able to let her trust him slowly.

With the tip of his thumb, he gently massages her back in a circular motion while his other hand is still wrapped around her body.

He placed his head back on his pillow after checking with Stephanie if she was okay.

After a while of sitting in silence in the room, he began to doze off as well.

He then fell asleep with her, being careful with Stephanie on his chest and peacefully sleeping throughout the night with him.