

The sun crept over a flat horizon at a leisurely pace, bringing forth beautiful day to vanquish the horrible night. Its rays illuminated the softly shifting waves of an open sea, and a decently-sized island that happened to dot the surface. Sandy shores lined the island's outer radius, and lush foliage encompassed a rocky, mountainous center. A small harbor town along the northern beach slowly whirled to life as the sun's glow crawled further across the land. Lights came on in small cubical condos, motor cars began to produce their processed moans and the earliest sailors began to roam the marina.

Most of this early activity was rather sleepy and lethargic, but one dock moved at a brisk pace not unlike a vast commercial barge... with all of the action done by one man.

Or rather, one woman; Marine the Raccoon dashed and danced along the east most dock with a particularly jovial energy, hauling dozens of air tanks from the nearby shed to the sleek, azure boat at the end. Sometimes she dragged them behind her the typical way, sometimes she simply kicked the tanks along the planks, but the tanks all flew towards the boat at a breakneck pace, at least compared to most diving trips.

As soon as the boat was fully loaded, Marine rushed back to the shed, sitting down on the nearby crate with a bouncy giddiness not unlike a kid in a candy shop. She was going to rock the crate back and forth in her glee, but she managed to stop herself to look over her bags. Her personal diving bag contained the typical personal equipment one brings; the mask, the snorkel, the fins, the boots, the works. But the second bag, taller and boxier the tube beside it, Marine reached for with more energy, gleefully prying it open to reveal some very special contents.

Stacked vertically and neatly folded into quaint squares, a set of BCDs sat in this bag. These were a different breed from standard commercial vests; they were constructed from a smooth, glossy silver material that shined softly in the morning sunlight. The pockets and folds required for the tubes and pressure gauge were dull and rubbery across the surrounding surface, and the inflation mechanism was a sleek metallic shaft designed like a joystick. The most curious feature they had were peculiar holes that dotted the vest's sides symmetrically, tied to a circular remote tied to a strap-like belt.

Ever since Tails showed actual technical competence to her many years ago, Marine was itching to learn his craft. These beauties were her latest experiment in mechanical engineering, and she was sure that they'd be the greatest. Designed for prolonged dives, the BCDs were meant to extract oxygen from the surrounding water through those convenient side-holes, with the remote-belt serving as a simple switch to turn the feature on and off. The possibilities were endless to her; this piece of genius could allow for longer dives, provide extra air in an emergency and, potentially, allow one person to give extra air to their partner!

She and Tails were going to go on a practice dive as a field test for these wonderful inventions, specifically a wreck dive along the sunken Diamondback Galleon. The anticipation for this was overwhelming to her, and she could barely wait for him to-

"Hey!"

...come over himself. Hearing his voice brought her energy to its peak, and she whirled her wide-eyed, smiling head around to face her partner with welcome...

...and felt her energy drop significantly when she saw what was *actually* approaching her.

Tails himself didn't set her off; he was the same slim, admittedly cute fox he always was, clad in those funky tiki trunks and basic grey rash guard. No, it was the unexpected guest *following* him that was so upsetting; the very person she had dreaded since the day they met, and dreaded for the last three months. That vapid, doe-eyed attention sponge of a rabbit who made Marine question Tails's very social health and safety.

"Yeah, I brought Cream along today."

"Hey," the rabbit added. "We met a couple of months back! It's nice to see you again! I hope I won't be too much trouble..."

"Oh no mate, you won't be a bother at all..." Marine managed to force that response while maintaining her smile, but she was dubious as to how well she was actually keeping it up.

Cream the Rabbit was Tails's girlfriend. And boy did Tails want Marine to *know* that she was his girlfriend. For three months straight he would bring worthwhile conversations about geography and studies to a screeching halt, just to wax his poetic about how wonderful she was, and Marine could not see it at all. Looking at her, she just looked like an unblemished, well-pampered mannequin who hasn't seen a day of adversity. *Listening* to her, and she sounded like no one had ever *frowned* at her before, with a soft, bubbly and chirpy voice that grated on the sailor's ears. It genuinely concerned Marine that Tails was putting her into his life; she hasn't shown any grit, wit or brains, so what did Tails *see* in her that warrants time that could be used for more substantial matters?

"I see we actually have the BCDs this time!" Tails joked aloud as he reached for their particular bag. He had the courtesy to hand the first one he pulled out to Marine, before heaving one out for himself and giving a third (which Marine began to regret making) over to Cream.

"I assume that's our boat?" The rabbit asked with a saccharine squeak, nodding to the craft at the end of the dock.

"Yes it is!" Tails answered with a smile, beginning to escort her towards it. "Something Marine and I made ourselves actually, with a set of..."

"*Actually* Tails, I think the two of us should talk over the diving plan one last time."

"Hm?" Tails turned his head back to Marine, same smile on her face and body language relaxed and inviting. "If you say so, I guess. You gonna go ahead, Cream?"

"Can do!" The rabbit woman happily proceeded to strut along to the boat alone, while Tails and Marine soon faced each other entirely.

"So, we remember to start off on the shallow ree-?!" Tails began to recite their plan only to be caught off guard by Marine suddenly pulling him towards her.

“*Mate*,” She began through gritted teeth, her face twisting into a fierce scowl of frustration and her posture straightening in aggression. “We’ve gone over this *twice* now; if you plan to bring your lady friend along for the ride, you bloody tell me before we start actually doing it.”

“*I’m sorry!* She agreed to come along yesterday and I just... forgot!” Tails was visibly freaking out, clearly regretting crossing Marine again. “I-I promise you she won’t be a hassle this time, i-it’ll be like she isn’t thei-”

“Is she even bloody certified?! We’ll be putting ourselves in pretty damn hot water if we throw an untrained civilian into the water with no idea of what to do-”

“*She is!* Last month, even!” Tails’s face collapsed from panic to pleading, his eyes quivering with sincere upset. “Just... let this slide one last time, please? This is really important to me...”

At those words, Marine was unable to hold up her anger, her own face and posture shifting to a slouch of concern. “I’m...I’m just worried for you, mate. It feels like Cream’s a priority in *everything* you do now...”

“I...I would be lying if I said I didn’t know where you were coming from.” Tails admitted, rubbing the back of his head in vulnerability. “How about this; after this, I make sure to keep our tests and expeditions to just the two of us- just one more time, okay-?”

“*You two okay back there?*” Cream suddenly interrupted from the boat.

“We’re fine!” Marine answered aloud before turning back to Tails. “Alright Tails, one last time...”

Without saying anything else, the two grabbed their bags and moved on to join Cream on the boat, Marine’s grimace still lingering across her face.

The morning sun was now shining fully as Marine’s diving boat skated across the eastern shore, giving the trio a nice salty shower as they were splashed by the broken waves.

“So yeah, the last dive we did was a night dive back along the main reef...” Cream continued, talking to Marine about her diving training. “I was naturally on edge at first, but the shining egg beads were just *beautiful!* I was also apparently the lucky one; my buddy and a few others were complaining about being stung by jellies, but I for some reason felt nothing!”

“Heh, that *is* pretty funny...” Marine commented flatly, paying little attention to Cream’s words as she was locked in her own thoughts. Cream was undressing as she spoke (because of course she didn’t suit up before leaving...), though taking off her orange t-shirt and khaki short-shorts didn’t reveal much new; the hot-pink frilly bikini she wore underneath her clothes did little to change the shape of her voluptuous hourglass figure, with smooth f-cups and rotund upper legs that seemed a tad unfit for someone of her disposition. Looking between that and her own flatter, tomboyish physique, Marine’s worry only deepened; Tails, in all of his intelligence and integrity, wasn’t hanging out with a woman purely for her *looks*, was he?

“Alright ladies, we’ll be there in another ten minutes.” Tails announced as he jumped down to the deck to join the others, motioning the others to grab one of the wetsuits in the middle for themselves.

“Well, *this* has easily been the longest boat ride I’ve been on! This Diamondback must be really somethi-wait...” Cream commented somewhat inanely, before coming to a revelation at the site of her hubby. “If both you and Marine are down here, then who’s driving-?”

“Boat itself, mate.” Marine said, cutting off Tails’s attempt to answer himself. “This boy’s fully automated, with GPS access and these remote control computers.” She raised her left arm to Cream, showing off a blue wrist-mounted device that mirrored the diving computer on her opposite arm. “This remote’ll bring this beast to ya no matter the situation.”

Cream’s eyes somehow widened even further than before at this fact. “Wow... I knew you and Tails were smart, but that’s *amazing*! You guys *always* find ways to blow my mind!”

Marine simply rolled her eyes and muttered under her breath. “Obviously...”

By the time they reached their destination, everyone was fully suited up, in rash guards, wetsuits, flippers, masks, all of the necessities. With all of that, the boat tied in place and their tanks set and loaded, the trio rolled into the water one by one, feeling the sting of cool early autumn seawater before reconvening at the bow.

“Alright guys, one last check-” Tails barked over the chorus of the waves. “Everyone good as gold on their setups? I’m good.”

“I think I’m okay!” Cream answered. “Wetsuit fits perfectly, BCD’s on right, have enough air-”

“Not me!” Marine interrupted. “*Pretty* low on air over here... but I won’t be for long!” Getting an irritated look from Tails, she placed her hands around the device in the BCD’s front and pressed down on all of its sides. The machine responded immediately, giving off a loud buzz before the ports on the vest’s sides began sucking in water around it. Marine made sure the others had a good view of her pressure gauge as the air needle swung to the right, going from 500 to 2000 in three seconds flat. “Perhaps my finest work yet, if I say so myself...” The sailor girl looked between her accomplices with a confident smirk, even when Tails’s looked screamed ‘you really didn’t need to show off like that...’ to her.

“Let’s just submerge, alright?” Tails asked flatly.

“Yup!” Marine answered with a hint of upset, the trio finally deflating their air sacks to sink down into the world bellow.

The Creaky Reef was among the few healthy reefs left around the island, complete with all of the variety of coral shapes and decoration of other immobile lifeforms. The landscape was a labyrinth of arches and crevices, which often reached straight to the sand. Swimming in and across the reef were a decent variety of small fish, large fish and predatory fish, along with the occasional small squid and decently sized sea cucumber.

The thirty-minute journey to the Diamondback itself was a rather eventful and obnoxious trek, with highlights including Cream stopping to gush at every semi-cuddly thing they came across, Marine herself developing a back itch which required her to squeeze her arm under her tank, and *everyone* having to make a detour when they stumbled into a wall of jellies. Suffice to say, Marine was relieved to see the half rotted galleon over the reef's horizon; disregarding the holes and coral patches, the ship was impressively intact, the only major blemish being the broken mast hanging off of the left side.

Having managed to keep the lead for the entire journey thus far, Marine gestured the others to follow her down the reef's technicolor ravine and into the sandy clearing holding the ship itself. The raccoon's excitement began to slowly regain vigor as she grew ever closer to the wooden ruins, having heard many things about a slew of treasures held within and getting eager to see them for herself. Her excitement even managed to reach a new giddiness, her goggles growing ever rosier as she came closer, and closer...

-And before she knew it, she was already inside.

And all around her, the ship's dull green, moldy lower hull tantalized her eyes. The rumors did not lie; broken chairs and rusty kitchenware were strewn across the moldy floor, and two *different* crusty chandeliers hung softly from the ceiling.

Marine couldn't help but dance about the ship with glee, successfully pulling off rolls and dives while messing around with surroundings. One particularly hefty knife eventually caught her eye, covered in just enough protective iron oxide to give her an idea. Grabbing the cleaver handle first, she carefully calculated its weight and trajectory... before flinging the blade over her shoulder. Confident in amount of time she had, she proceeded to summersault in place while reaching out... getting the knife back in her hand, handle first.

This accomplishment only added to Marine's escapist glee, and she quickly looked around to see Tails and Cream, who were... not there.

Marine's heart sank like a lime in a bottle at the revelation of how alone she was. Under any other circumstance, she'd be glad to see Cream gone, but being completely alone is the *worst* possible situation a diver can face. Unable to speak through her standard-issue regulator and thus unable to call out, Marine simply began to flail back and forth in panic as her imagination began to go rogue.

Anything could've happened to them; what if they simply haven't caught up to her? What if they didn't see her go inside and are still outside looking for her? *What if they were attack by a great white and she isn't there to save them?! What if-*

Marine's train of thought was broken when a sudden strike to her shoulder nearly gave her a heart attack. It was now *her* turn to be met with ire, as she was forcefully turned to face Tails's eyes, visibly furious behind his rose-tinted goggles. He only let go to gesticulate in anger, saying something along the lines of '*what were you thinking?!*' with the motions of his arms.

‘*You were supposed to follow me!*’ was Marine’s attempted response, still confused as to what they were actually doing. She could even see Cream right behind Tails, and the best she could give was a simple *shrug!*

‘*We’re heading back now*’ was Tails’s next message, followed by a motion for Marine to follow him. Marine couldn’t help but pout slightly at this, crossing her arms and rolling her eyes. Tails audibly groaned at this, and once again asked for her to follow...

...only for the three to pause at the start of a strange noise.

It was muffled, continuous buzz that was too high pitched to be the motor of a boat. It was also too clear to be that far away, so it was clear that they were sharing the room with the source. While Tails and Cream looked around in confusion, Marine knew exactly where the noise was coming from.

The controller of her BCD was emitting the activation sound of its own accord, even though it was clear that no foreign objects were pressing any of the buttons. A quick glance showed that *all* of their controllers were acting up this way, with Cream beginning to dart her gaze around in panic.

Just as bewildered as the others, Marine began to press down on the controller again, with increasing speed as her patience faltered, but no amount of mashing shut the noise off.

Cream jumped where she floated as the extraction mechanisms began sucking furiously in a delayed reaction, another bit of behavior that wasn’t supposed to happen. Tails and Marine exchanged glances as their pressure gauges went ballistic, going from 1000 to 3000 in a matter of seconds. Both of them knew that excess air could damage the tanks, Tails once again gave the sign that they needed to surface-

Only for *everyone* to jump as their *regulators* seemingly gained sentience, spewing air down their throats and into the water with terrifying force. Now *all* panicking, the groups frantically reached for their backup regulators, only to find *them* in free-blow as well. With all potential options now exhausted, the three could only exchange fearful glances between each other over the noise of their gear.

Marine *had* devise a plan for how to handle a possibility like this, but she had sloppily forgot to go over it back on the surface. Her mind raced as she tried to figure out how express it in gestures... only to be halted by the feeling of air welling up in her stomach. Her thoughts became hazy as her gut became her point of attention, her hands caressing her belly in the vain hope that it would quell the pit-like bloating sensation. Unfortunately, the feeling only worsened with time, eventually consuming her entire lower torso.

And before she even knew it, it was happening. Marine’s eyes shrank to specks as she felt her stomach begin to *expand* beneath her hands. It started off very slowly, little more than a centimeter over five seconds, but even then she knew the process was accelerating, *and* accumulating. Within ten seconds, she was feeling over a soup bowl. Five seconds later, she had a watermelon for a stomach.

Marine's attention couldn't stay there, of course; with her eyes and hands were now rapidly flailing across her midriff, she quickly realized that her sides, once flat along her torso, were also burgeoning outwards at an increasing rate. Moving her hands further showed that her buttocks had begun expanding as well, also typically flat but now rapidly swelling out like balloons. She didn't even *need* her hands to realize her breasts and back were doing the same; she felt the strain on her BCD almost immediately, and saw her breasts gain size and curve right before her eyes. Even though her dull green wetsuit was rather loose over her typical slim form, she was already feeling it strain at the seams from her fattening frame, and her BCD only served to squeeze her even further.

All of these sensations had the sailor raccoon's eyes zipping around her frame, before managing to lock glances with Tails, his own terrified look telling her he was inflating too. His own torso was nearly spherical, with his belly, back and buttocks pushing out and gaining curve in the same way Marine's were, and his typically flat pectorals very rapidly swelling out into hefty, firm man-boobs.

The two tried to swim away from each other to make more space, but only twenty seconds in, the air began to force its way into the rest of their bodies. They could now feel their arms and legs start inflating, biceps and thighs swelling outward first before being followed by calves and forearms. Their vain attempts to stroke away became increasingly labored as their limbs grew less articulate, eventually forcing them to stop entirely from exhaustion.

Marine's mind was forced back to her BCD; the thing *refused* to give way for her swelling frame, cutting right into her torso and threatening to cleave her into gassy quarters. She was deeply regretting not taking it off while she still could; the pressure the vest was applying was growing excruciatingly painful, and the thing was clearly not giving up any time soon. Between squeezing her eyes shut from the agony, she could see Tails was suffering the same way, his own vest forcing his body outward like a massive German sausage. Marine couldn't see for long before closing her eyes shut, however; the pain was just too horrible. The distortion of flesh, the pressure of cloth, the prodding of rubber, she just didn't know how much more of this torture she could *take*...

...and twenty-five seconds in, she had to no longer. A roar of hideous ripping sounds signaled the two's BCDs prying themselves apart in various locations, splaying across their forms and allowing them to swell freely of their confines. Of course, neither liked what they saw; the two were now outright obese in proportions, nearly three feet taller than they were at the start, just as wide, and *still* growing.

Marine could now see her controller floating freely in front of her, hanging precariously from its ruined strap and still beeping wildly. She *tried* grasping frantically at the device, but her swelling made such a task completely fruitless; as her torso became larger and rounder, her limbs became shorter and fatter, eventually freezing solid from the internal pressure.

Thirty-two seconds in, and the two could now only pathetically bounce their hands and feet around as they began to grow ever further into their tumefying spherical bodies and yet, be pulled apart from each other as their frames grew ever wider. They were now around nine feet in

diameter and counting, and the ship's space grew increasingly scarce; Marine felt her massive hips brushing aside the rotted chairs around her, feeling like little more than bowling pins against her. She also felt her skyrocketing buoyancy get at her, feeling her back press against the hard ceiling as she felt herself slowly rolling forward.

Thirty-seven seconds in, and their wetsuits were just about at the end of their rope; Tails's was giving way first, with bits of his sides, his exposed belly button and horribly stretched rash guard plainly visible along growing tears in the fabric. Marine's showed less wear and tear, but it was cracking cleanly along the entirety of its central seam, revealing a clean line of her own lardy fuzz. Either way, they both shattered off two seconds later, coating the floor in thick confetti and showing their swelling forms in full. The white of Tails's belly, chest and inner thighs showed clearly, trunks stretched tightly around his enormous underside, and rash guard was now little more than a too-small sports bra. Marine's on matching white spots showed loudly and proudly across her citrus-colored form, but barely had any rash guard left at all. The thing was being eviscerated by her surging breasts and leaving only her stretched-thin yellow bandeaukini for the bare minimum of modesty.

It was getting nearly impossible for her to see Tails through the flurry of bubbles, her puffed-out cheeks and her burgeoning bust, but forty-five seconds in Marine could see him rolling backwards against his will. Even with the inflating sensations clouding her mind, she still blushed madly at the swelling junk pressing against his aqua boxers. She felt a guilty thrill wash over her as she realized that the thing was advancing towards her; they were now a solid twelve feet, and had just exhausted their supply of fresh expansion space; Marine felt her belly begin to flatten out along the floor, cringing as she felt the rusty metal of forks and knives gaze against her exposed skin.

Among the pain and misery, a horrible new dread encompassed Marine's head; this wasn't it, was it? This couldn't be how she and Tails died, right? Blowing up like big, bubbly bloody balloons until they ruptured into gory shreds, all at the hands of her own invention, wasn't how it all ended, was it? They weren't going to bloomin' explode, were they? They weren't going to die alone and underwater, not even able to say anything through their regulators, were they?! No ability to express their terror, no needed consolation for each other, no touching last words!? A million and one fears and scenarios competed in Marine's mind, but she ultimately came back to the massive genitalia zooming in on her face. She couldn't help but find humor in the sight, in the most bonkers and perverted way imaginable; she *had* made more than one sex joke around the poor guy, but she always valued Tails for his mind. There was a pretty awful irony that her last sight would be her best friend's crotch, but she very quickly grew to except it. She just stared at the thing as its Polynesian patterns ever approached, the perfect sight as she felt more and more of herself press against the boat's walls. It just grew closer and closer and closer...

Until it suddenly began to rapidly shift upwards, fifty-seven seconds in. Marine quirked a brow at this change of direction, clueless as to what kind of catalyst it could've had. From what she could see, it looked like something was forcing it was underneath Tails's frame, forcing him upwards and outwards like a sentient stress ball. Marine couldn't help but wince imagining Tails's pain from the experience, but she soon grimaced instead when she was the true culprit.

Cream. That sugar-witted, fairy-eyed reptile of a rabbit. Marine almost forgot about her amidst all of the mayhem, and she would've died a much happier woman if she had, but Cream, whether in an earlier attempt to escape gone bad or just a frantic panic attack, was forcing her way underneath her hubby face-first. She was no less naked and massive than the others were. Marine couldn't see the largest behind and thighs of them all behind both lovebirds' flesh, but she quickly got a solid view of her panicking eyes, stubby arms and stall-sized breasts as they replaced Tails's form, which rapidly vanished behind the rabbit. Marine managed a glower at what little of Cream she could actually see; they just couldn't share the guy in their final moments, could they? Oh no, Cream is the *only* one of them deserving of the spotlight, the *only one* worthy of the center of attention-

And one minute and eight seconds in, she *was* the center of attention. Marine audibly screamed through her regulator as Cream's form suddenly rushed her breasts first, flooding what remained of her vision with pink fabric and blinding white underbelly fur. Marine began clenching and groaning in pain as she found herself between a Cream and hard place; they were now all about fifteen feet and rising, and had just about filled out every possible ounce of space.

Even though all of the available holes in the ship's hull were rapidly occupied by a warm-color gallery of flesh, the pressure they were getting from the ship and each other was reaching a horrible apex. By this point, the waters were ringing with a cacophonous roar of squeaks and moans, not unlike thick rubber being stretched to its limit.

One minute and nineteen seconds in, and cut off from all possible senses, Marine simply whimpered against the noises and clenched her eyes as they watered under her mask. This couldn't have been how their saga concludes; not now, not like this-!

A deafening boom resounded throughout Creaky Reef, felt by everything in a half-a-mile radius. Within said radius an aquatic shockwave barreled through the open water, smacking around everything that stood in its path. Exactly one-hundred-thousand-fifty-thousand-one-thousand-eight-hundred and seventy six fish immediately vanished in shock, and anything that wasn't was quickly taken for a ride against their wishes. In the starting point of this explosion and the center of the back blast? Three massive balloons that were once college-age mobians, swiftly drifting up and away from what was left of a Spanish galleon.

Still stunned by the pain from the pressure, the three thought little as they shot towards the surface. What little expansion they could endure now was accelerated by the dropping pressure, and they were soon blimping at frighteningly fast rates. The three's heads were beginning to sink into their frames, and just when it felt like they were at their *peak*...

They tore through the surface and settled along the waves.

It took Marine a few seconds, and the cool breeze along her freezing skin, to realize that she was still alive, and a few more seconds to realize her BCD had stopped inflating her. She gracelessly spat out her regulator in the hopes that she'd start deflating somehow, but no such whoosh of air exited her open jaws. It took a rare moment of emotional preparation to face whatever was in front of her, but she slowly managed to pry her eyes open to the briefly blinding rays of the sun.

She didn't really *know* what to expect when the rays died down, but she didn't exactly approve of what sat in front of her.

The three of them were easily twenty feet in diameter, with Tails possibly reaching twenty-one feet. They weren't so much completely spherical so much as completely spherical with a bunch of other spheres stacked on top. Their torsos of course were the central mass, but they had something of a counterweight in their massive buttocks, which protruded outward like mountain ranges on a globe. Their limbs by this point were little more than conical stumps that sat sorta in front and protruded out the back, topped with swollen appendages that could do little more than wiggle around uselessly. Their bellies were their biggest curves, but they moved slightly inward to make way for their chest mass; Tails's pecs were table-sized plateaus of round flesh that barley reached over a fourth of his stomach mass, while the girls had full, absurd orbs that at most managed *three* fourths. Last but not least were their comparatively miniscule noggins, sinking into their taught frames with no necks and comically pudgy cheeks that perfectly capped off their farcical predicament.

In terms of clothing, they had very little left; anything left of their wetsuits, rash guards and even BCDs had snapped clean off by now, leaving them all in nothing more than their stretched, distorted and creaking swimwear.

Tails's once slim and semi-athletic build gave way to the most completely spherical of the three, with his massive moobs and large buttocks being more of a compliment to his frame than extensions. What was once Marine's aforementioned tomboy form had a (relatively) flatter caboose but the second largest breasts. And Cream, having been an hourglass already, was the most extravagant and in-your-face in terms of build, with breasts comparable to mini cars, a butt bigger than a minivan and lower torso that somehow had remains of her former hip curves.

Not that Marine could see anything that was behind her, or the others for that matter. She had the luxury of having Tails's line of sight line up with her own, and to have Cream sitting between them both, but her lack of motion in her missing neck and the limitations placed by her cheeks anchored her head dead in place, only allowing her eyes to move freely. Eagle-eyed observation showed that they weren't quite out of their funk yet; they still had their eyes closed, biting tightly on their regulators for dear life, with what was left of their BCDs deflated and dangling beneath them. Marine knew she'd have to really raise her voice to get to them over the distance *and* the lull of the waves, but she wasn't entirely sure if a deep breath would be entirely safe; the pressure wasn't nearly as agonizing as before, but it was still felt throughout her form. She didn't *want* to risk wracking herself with pain again, but she nevertheless took a deep, long breath.

"Guys," She started, as loudly and clearly as her pudgy cheeks could allow. "*It's stopped! The regulators aren't working anymore! You can spit 'em out, we're still alive!*"

Marine saw the two perk up almost immediately, going through more or less the same motions of freaking out and spitting out. The two exchanged glances with Marine, each other, and the scene around them for a good while, Tails in particular seemingly paying close attention to the situation before locking gazes with Marine. The two actually managed to look into their eyes for

a long time, simply allowing the madness to simmer somewhat. The good news was that they were alive and (hopefully) safe...

“MARINE...”

The bad news was, Tails had some *very* specific words to say.

“...WHAT THE *HELL*?!”

“*How the bloody blue ballsack am I supposed to know?!*” Marine barked back, gesticulating with what little her limbs allowed her. “I specifically designed those BCDs to suck in air in increments!! *How could I have known that this could’ve happened-?!*”

“Ok...” Tails snapped in interruption, eyes closed in frustration. “I’m *not* going to ask “how many tests did you run before this”. I’m gonna ask “*did you test these things at all*”! That was a *natural landmark* we just destroyed, Marine! We could’ve died at least *THREE DIFFERENT TIMES*! *I know you meant for them to extract in increments, I’m just asking if you actually ran any TESTS!!!*”

“I DID RUN BLOODY TESTS!!!” Marine screamed in self-defense, having to pause for breath... breath which happened to calm her somewhat. “I *did* run tests. I set up the current controller-belt *specifically because* one of the test models’ suction-drives went crazy. The thing was *meant* to have an automatic shutdown in the case thing lost its shit again, but that *obviously didn’t* work...”

“Wait, wait, **wait**...” A certain high-pitched voice suddenly squeaked. “A shutdown for what?! Were those BCDs supposed to blow us up like balloons?!?”

Cream was obviously quite terrified of her current situation and wasn’t quite into the conversation from the start, but that didn’t stop Marine from managing a long, solid glare at the bloated rabbit.

“Yes.” The sailor girl started flatly. “They were absolutely intended to do this to the user’s body. It was a very intricate design process, much like how Thomas Edison intended the light bulb to be used to raise the dead- THE BLOODY HELL DO YOU THINK?!?”

“DON’T **YELL AT HER**!!!” Tails yelled in retaliation. “**YOUR** BCDS COULD’VE GOTTEN HER **KILLED**!”

“AND *WHO’S FAULT WAS THAT?!?!?*” Marine screamed once again. “SHE’D PROBABLY BE OKAY IF YOU DIDN’T **SHOEHORN** HER INTO EVERYTHING WHILE SAYING ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO-”

“STOP!!!”

Neither Tails nor Marine were expecting the fight to end soon, but they both found themselves paralyzed by a different outburst. Cream’s usually sugary voice cracked like a whip, freezing Tails where he floated and, more impressively, stopping Marine in her tracks. They both found

their faces collapsing from rage to dread, as if they were children in for a vicious round of scolding. It took some effort, but after a brief beat of silence, the two agreed to force themselves around to face Cream directly.

“Listen to what you two are saying!!” The rabbit started, her eyes as steely as her pudgy face could get away with. “You two are supposed to be friends?! I’ve seen *bitter enemies scream less than this!*” She proceeded to force herself over to face Tails, at least enough to get better eye contact. “Tails... I love you, but just leaving Marine in the dark like this was **really** underhanded! Do you pull this *every time we come together like this?!?*”

Tails was silent for a moment, eyes wide and shifting with guilt. Having no real way out, he knew he ultimately had to respond. “Heh heh heh... y-y...y-yes?”

“**Miles!!**” Tails visibly winced as Cream snapped in genuine disgust. He absolutely *despised* when she called him that...

“Our dates are something special, yes, but that is no excuse to go around messing with people like that!” Cream continued, her voice only softening slightly. “Just focusing on me all day long is super unhealthy! There *has to be balance!!*”

Neither Tails nor Marine were able to believe what they were (just about) hearing, but Miles was hit especially hard. He *did* muster the strength to look Cream back in the eyes, but it was especially hard to speak while being heard. “I-I’m s-s-sorry...”

Marine couldn’t help but smirk at this display. “Bloody better-”

“**Oh no, Marine.**” Cream cut Marine off, grunting all the way as she moved to face in her direction. “I saw you barely paying attention back on the boat; ***I know I can seem stupid to you.*** So I *have to ask...*” Her eyes loosened somewhat, but that simply meant she went from anger to disappointment. “...why haven’t you ***just told me*** what the matter was before now? It would’ve spared **you** the frustration, and **all** of us all of this drama!!”

Marine found herself at a loss for words for a brief moment. It may have just been from her helpless state, but for the first time in a long time she didn’t immediately have an answer. She, in all of her intelligence and integrity, didn’t just brush someone off for months based purely on her *looks*, did she?

“...I...” Of course, the raccoon would find her words soon enough. “I-I honestly didn’t think you’d listen. I’m gonna admit, I just thought you were a hollow flapper...” Her eyes and ears went downward in shame, and she gazed into her massive bust before sucking up to face Cream again. “I guess I owe you an apology... I’m sorry.”

Cream’s expression softened again, now being little more than a flat-line. “That’s very sweet... but I think you and Tails owe each other apologies more.” She moved herself back to her original position, shooting glances between her two subjects. “C’mon you two! *Say it loudly and honestly!*”

The fox and raccoon shot quick glances at each other before slowly floating around to face directly across again. All of the bitterness and ferocity from before had died off, with shame and genuine sympathy in its place. The two simply gazed into their eyes in another long period of silence, but Marine was the one to break the silence.

“I’m... sorry, Tails. You *really* worry me sometimes and... I just want to see to it that you’re okay.”

“I-I’m sorry too, Marine, I...” Tails replied timidly, with a miserable stutter. “...I just got so *enraptured* in my dates that I... I just got *addicted*. I should’ve actually kept you up to date on what I’ve been doing and... I’m sorry I didn’t.”

“Now...” Cream began. “*Do we feel better now? Are we actually good now?*” A beat of silence. “*Good.*”

Silence once again claimed the three as they bobbed along the waves, none of them entirely sure of what they *could* say that would actually add anything. A good five minutes rolled by without any events, before Cream once again rose her voice with a raised brow. “So... what exactly are we going to do about... *this?*”

“Sad to say, we seem to be stuck with it.” Tails announced in response, eyes sagging in defeat. “This area isn’t particularly popular in Fall, and we’re *far* away from our own boat-”

“Our boat!!” Marine suddenly beamed at a revelation. “*We still have the remote control!* I’ll bet ten bucks that it’s *right!*” She managed to work her head around in a way that she could see her arm... and her smile soured completely when she saw that it was completely bare. “...at the bottom of the ocean. *Welp, that’s it then!*” She managed to fake a new smile as she looked back to the others. “Unless one of us has a gas attack or... I dunno, a *condor* dies midflight and manages to stab one of us with its beak, we can expect to be *sitting here for another!*!”

“*Chao chao CHAO!?!?*”

Everyone was caught off guard by a voice that was none of their own. It was high, infantile voice that managed to surpass Cream’s, but was also somewhat... *ethereal* in nature, which was especially bizarre to Marine. And yet, Cream’s eyes widened as she recognized the voice...

“*Cheese?!?*”

“*Cheese?*” Marine inquired with a quirked brow. “Can we *not* focus on food and instead o-*what the hell...*” Marine couldn’t even *describe* the thing she saw land on the Cream’s left breast. The best she could’ve come up with would be “winged angel teddy-sperm with blue spray paint highlights... and a bowtie”, but that was about as off as it could get.

“He’s my *chao*, Marine!” Cream answered, not specifying that he was an angelic “hero” chao. “Cheese, what’re you *doing here?! I told you* I’d be back in a few-AH-ha-ha!!” She couldn’t help but burst out laughing as her loyal pet dived right into her cleavage out of the blue, tickling her in a very particular space and finding the perfect spot to grind on Marine.

“You can call him *off now*, whatever he is...” Marine groaned while between rolling her eyes.

Tails, on the other hand, came to his own epiphany as he saw Cheese peak out of Cream's... shall we say, "northern crevice". "Cream, I think Cheese may be our way out of here!" He announced loudly. "Tell me, how much strength training have you've given him this month?"

"Not OH-HO-! Much..." Cream answered, still giggly from her chao's squeezing antics. "Ch-Cheese is a toy breed and I-AH! Don't usually train him to- Cheese? *Where are you going?!*" Her giggling smile turned to concerned confusion as Cheese suddenly began to fly out of her sight and around to her side. "You have to *tell me where you're go-OH!*" She yelped in surprise as she was suddenly pushed sideways by a tiny, yet robust force. "**CHEESE, WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?!**"

"Off to the shore!" Marine answered, just managing to see the island behind Tails's bloated mass. "Tell your cream-blob he's making himself useful!!"

"**HE'S A CHAO!!! TAILS, MARINE, I'LL MAKE SURE THAT CHEESE COMES FOR YOU TWO AFTER MEEEEEEEEE...**" Cream screamed as loudly as she could as she was slowly but surely pushed away from the others, soon vanishing behind their line of sight and falling silent among the crashing waves. Tails was going to yell something in response, but he wasn't sure *what* to yell. Now, it was just him and Marine, gazing right at each other with little means of changing scenery. Even with their bloated feelings and the water against their stomachs and undersides stimulating them, they both knew this was going to be a long, uneventful afternoon.

"So, uh..." Marine began to inquire, brows quirked. "...how've your other mates been? You and Sonic get up to anything, or...?"

Sunset was just beginning along the island's west most beach, which was rather bare due to its jagged backdrop. Marine simply sighed to herself as she was the last of them to touch the sand, its warm, coarse texture a relief from the cool waves.

"Thank god for sandy beaches, eh guys?" Marine snarked as she was pushed and rolled up to be decently close to the others, who were facing sideways from and at each other. "You two missed me while I was away?"

"We *managed* to keep each other sane while you were gone..." Tails answered loudly, his head *just* managing to be visible to Marine on his globular body. "We were chatting... you know."

"Oh, I **ngh** know..." Cream intervened, grunting as she slowly and forcefully rolled herself closer to her hubby, gazing up at him with soulful bedroom eyes. "I just want to know if *you* know that I still love you... come down here. Let me see you face to face."

"U-u-uh, o-okay-AY?!" Tails yelped in surprise as he felt Cheese roll him over quickly, his head soon centimeters away from Cream's. They both felt a surge of pleasure as huge, squishy pecs collided with massive, plush breasts, and they soon found themselves blushing and gazing.

"Let's be more careful next time, ok~?" Cream asked, glazy eyes slowly advancing to Tails's.

“Y-yeah, lets-” Tails’s eyes widened when she felt Cream somehow lock lips with him, but he quickly closed them softly as he felt her caresses. It felt surreal, kissing while smooshing huge cheeks together, but their smooching kept Tails’s eyes relaxed... right before they shot open again at an all too familiar sensation.

Marine’s jaw dropped as she bore witness to what happened next. Cream was somehow forcing her own air into Tails, forcing him to expand *even further*. His belly, behind and moobs grew ever larger and rounder, while his limbs shrank down to little more than pudgy rings on his form. There was very little alteration left for his body to take, so he just kept tumefying in size. His trunks were now only *barely* hanging on, his inner thighs now fully visible as his pant legs snapped off from the pressure. In seven brief seconds, he went from twenty-one feet to *thirty-one* feet, once again emitting godless creaks and groans.

Cream, now a full ten feet smaller, broke her kiss with Tails, bouncing a bit on the ground as she allowed him to teeter back and forth slightly. She could hear him producing muffled cries from up above, and looked up to his sunken head with a devious grin. “**Consider *that* your punishment for getting me into this mess!!**” She shouted, earning her another ‘mmm’ of despair.

Marine was helpless as she saw Cream turn her to gaze to her; now deflated by half, she had regained the use of her limbs. She was still hopelessly bloated and looked like little more than a sumo-facsimile of herself, but she nonetheless was able to waddle over to the bloated raccoon and, with a lift from Cheese, jump herself up on top of her. “And you...” She started maliciously, rolling herself over to meet Marine’s head. “Aren’t getting away Scott-free either!”

“No! C-Cream, WAI-MMMMPH?!” Was all Marine could manage before she felt her lips be invaded by Cream’s. She didn’t meander around this time; she started blow-kissing as soon as they locked lips. Marine moaned in displeasure as she too began to inflate a second time, her frame doing little more than grow bigger, rounder and tighter than before. There was little she could add at this point; only thing new was that her bikini became comparable to a G-string, now only covering the bare essentials for modesty. Another seven, long, agonizing seconds later, and she was a good ten feet wider, while Cream sat on her completely back to normal size.

“There!” She squeaked in contentment with a smile on her lips. “I think I’ve made my point!”

Marine could only growl pathetically as she saw Cream roll off her frame and out of her sight. The busty rabbit jumped acrobatically off of the raccoon balloon before splaying her ears out and wide, flapping them like wings to ease her descent. She couldn’t help but strike a pose as she touched the ground, before looking back to the blimps she had made.

“I HOPE THIS WILL BE AN IMPORTANT EXERCISE IN APPRECIATING YOUR FRIENDS!” She started at the top of her lungs. “I THINK IT’S BEST I LEAVE YOU HERE TO THINK OVER WHAT YOU’VE DONE! SEE YOU BOTH IN FIFTEEN HOURS!!”

Marine joined Tails’s chorus of muffled screams as she saw that manipulative, poison-jawed harpy of a rabbit strut away with a song on her lips, chao flapping right behind her as she vanished down the shore and into the night.

Fin