

BLACK MARKET CLINIC***GOUHIN, 2:23 PM***

When Gouhin had taken on the role of doctor in a place as dangerous as the Black Market, he knew what it meant. The old panda kept two medical logs in his dealings with meat-sick carnivores, claws and all—one in a book, and the other his body. Ink for one, blood the other. There would be good days, and bad.

Again, he knew this.

Less expected were the *crazy* days, and this one was shaping up without permission.

“So, they’re getting worse, for you?” Gouhin said, plain and clear, a crystal chime within a burly bear body. “Consistently?”

“Yes.”

“For how long, you think? As accurate as you can.”

“On and off for a few weeks, but now. Ah. At least a month.”

Hmm.

“Hmm.”

“I swear, it’s the suppressants,” the other bear sighed, half desperate, half irritated at having to explain it. “We’re not supposed to—”

“Be over a certain size, I know, heh. I certainly do know. It’s hard for bears. Tanks have the hardest time tiptoeing everywhere, it gets exhausting. They aren’t built for meekness, yet here we all are.”

The brown bear was even larger than Gouhin, by a few. Maybe several of them. Yet, his eyes were just gentle black beads, calm, undisturbed. Still, even.

“Mmm. Well, it’s not like I can just stop taking them.”

“But you must have given it thought,” Gouhin began, quickly adding: “I sure would.”

“I just need something to counteract the headaches and fatigue. Anything you might have. Nothing at any pharmacy helps, and I’ve tried.”

“For a while, now?”

“*Months.*”

“Right, sorry. You did say.”

It was offered more as a courtesy than admission. Really, big as the brown was, the panda knew he could manage him okay, if things got ugly. Brotherhood be damned; this was *bears*.

“Okay,” he continued, clearing his throat as he readied a cigarette. “Here’s what. I do have something, maximum strength. It’s a painkiller and steroid, highly potent mix. You just take a very, very controlled amount, one a day, after a meal, preferably dinner. If it is just a chemical response to your suppressants on hypersensitive nociceptors, it should get you right again.”

“T-thank you,” he huffed, wincing as he spoke, tensing up into a furred ball of muscle on Gouhin’s couch.

“Even now, huh?”

“Like I said, I uh, j-just want it to stop,” the brown seethed, his huge teeth grit.

Gouhin’s confidence faltered a few unwilling inches as the brown swelled out, visibly, power roaring off his tightening bulk. *Holy hell, this kid was **strong**.*

“I’ve got you, try to get as much of that tension off you as you can. Don’t feel worse if it’s difficult, because it’s not meant to be easy. Let me finish this thing off, then I’ll get you what you need.”

He took a large drag on the cigarette, adding some needed context. The brown bear hardly seemed equipped to be patient.

“Can’t you just—”

“Flammable stuff, back there, sorry,” Gouhin rumbled. “I can kill one of these in ten, you won’t notice the gap. Be right back.”

With that, Gouhin stole to the apartment portion of his clinic, to the window, and opened it up to the sounds of the city. The brown snorted unhappily at the noise, clenching again all over, the tension bulging his muscles even larger against his school uniform.

“Must be a bit calmer at Cherryton, I take it,” Gouhin chuckled, taking another long drag.

“Mmmnf.”

“Right, smoke. I do apologize—”

THM

One black ear wobbled as some half-perceived tremor tickled his small clinic, then him.

“Hmm.”

RIZ, 2:28 PM

Whatever landed outside of the clinic was of such a magnitude that everything within shook from it; the overhead lamp swung feral, spotlighting everything as dust coughed loose from above. At the back, jars of all dimensions rattled around, bumping others loose as kitchen plates rattled and the windows hummed with alien vibrations.

“What was that?” Riz asked. “Did you feel that?”

The brown bear opened an eye, watching from across the clinic. There was no seeing through the bamboo-adorned partition between the seating area and the apartment section, so sound was all the bear had to work with.

A boombox or megaphone had to have been put up against the entire clinic, because what answered was too big for any living body to manage.

Raw sound shook the interior, making even Riz tumble off of the cushions as words more or less formed, yet had trouble fitting into the bear’s ears. Compounded with the headache, he relented to slapping both huge hands over his ears, even removing the couch seats and pressing them in on his head to stop the sound.

For a few chaotic minutes this continued on, Riz's body absorbing speech through sheer vibration, styming his best efforts to quell the migraine.

"Stop it, stop it," the bear hissed, his bulk swelling even bigger, until his sleeves nearly ripped open. "*Stopstopstopstopstop*—"

Mercifully, it did stop, at long last. All that echoed out was a manageable voice, completely different, calmer, farther away:

"Please, everyone downtown, evacuate. Remain calm, and evacuate down to the nearest underground bunkers, immediately. Please, cease all work and report down below in an orderly fashion. Military aide is en route..."

"You okay?" Gouhin asked, wobbling weakly as he reentered the waiting room.

"What on Earth was that!?" Riz gasped, reluctantly removing the cushions from his ears. "An earthquake?"

"Worse," Gouhin sighed, slumping against the partition. "The worst thing I could possibly have seen or known. We're in trouble."

The brown bear gulped, looking all over, despite staying cautiously still.

"T-they know I came here? Cherryton?"

"Forget school, kid," Gouhin mumbled, shakily lighting up a new smoke. "I meant, we're *all* in trouble. Big trouble."

"What..."

"I'll...I'll get your medicine. Uh. Yeah. Hold on."

Sheer confusion overpowered the migraine as Riz watched Gouhin stumble by, heading into the back room and its many shelves. There was much clinking, mostly from toppled jars brushed by his feet as he moved to the far corner, grabbed a jar next to a large, color-tape covered section in red, and exited with it.

"Ah, erm. Remember, just take a bit a day, and you'll be fine. Assuming you like the rations at the emergency bunkers."

“What?” Riz mumbled, taking the jar as Gouhin numbly handed it over. “What bunkers?”

“Military’s coming,” the panda sighed, gathering things up in a bag very, very quickly. “Like, right now. You’d best just head out, unless you want to be escorted below the city. They still have the old bunkers for emergencies, far as I hear from the old-timers around. Dollars to donuts, that’s where they want everyone to head.”

“Okay, what was that, out there?” Riz finally demanded, blinking. “What could possibly—”

The knock at the door made even Gouhin start, before his shoulders slumped.

“Shit.”

“Open up, in there!” a loud voice commanded, surely military. “Mandatory evacuation!”

Riz hid the medicine away in his school bag, just as Gouhin grudgingly opened the door to four full-gear officers.

“Is this is, sir?” a bulky cat asked Gouhin, instantly recognizing him as the owner. “The two of you, this is it?”

“Yeah, yeah,” Gouhin groaned, zipping the bag. “We’re going, just take us.”

“Both of you, come along quickly, this is for your own good.”

Three officers broke off wordlessly, all moving to the bigger brown bear. Their guns were ready, but not aimed. Not at them.

“Would anybody here just say what’s going on, please?” Riz half-growled, wincing as his headache surged again. “Gah!”

“Is he alright?” the cat asked.

“Headaches,” Gouhin quickly muttered. “Herbal remedies, my clinic is certified—”

“Someone!” Riz boomed, making everyone step back.

“We have reports of,” the cat began, when Gouhin did the courtesy of better:

“Giants, kid.”

Riz stopped, his bear muzzle scrunching in.

“G...giants.”

“Yeah.”

“Actual, giant-giants?”

Gouhin sighed bitterly, slinging his bag over his shoulders.

“*Legoshi.*”

SITE OMEGA TRANSIT TUNNEL

YAHYA, 6:55 PM

Animal intuition, something no amount of civilization could extinguish, informed the weary horse that it was getting dark outside. The end of a very long day had come too soon. Now, even the giants could hide, somewhat—a thought nearly as relieving as it was terrifying.

Even with the vast tunnel walls around them, even sealed in a stretching sarcophagus of cement and pavement and mountain rock, he knew. And it was miles to go, yet.

“Sir?” a polite voice soft-*boomed*, high up above.

“Yahya, kid,” the horse shouted, as casually as possible. “Just call me Yahya. It’s too weird being talked *up to* by something that big.”

Without the benefit of words, the horse knew it was Jack. When one had a 900-foot tall mountain of canine muscle and body heat looming overhead, crouched low enough that its pecs bulge down tight between two column-arms and thudding, house-sized palms, one tended to have a hard time mistaking it for anything else.

“Oh, yes, of course, sir! Yahya, sir!” Jack rumbled warmly, his thick back muscles brushing against light fixtures and denting their steel meshes as he crawled. “Ah, well, if Site

Delta can manage a cure for us, as good as that sounds...shouldn't we anticipate more growth spurts, in the time it takes to reach it? I don't mean to be negative, but--

"Time's ticking, and the growth spurts keep rolling in, I get it," Yahya sighed. "I do. But until such time as it kicks in, even if that blows us out into the mountainside that this tunnel was cut from...well, it's still best to take advantage of the interior cover for as long as we can."

"Plus, it's not like we can just exit any other way, right?" Pina added, the 520-foot sheep thudding along ahead of them both, Gosha's 648-foot body leading the way. Honestly, the only reason Yahya could hear any of them was because the size of their voices outmatched the crashing impacts of their feet and palms.

"Er, that's true," Jack groaned, not caring for the knowledge. "Wouldn't they have to make the cure all the stronger, if we're still getting bigger? I mean, we could be so much more powerful by the time it was ready, so if it was made to reverse five hundred feet, would it work as well against a thousand?"

"No way to know," Yahya shouted, his voice cracking again. "Ugh."

"You okay, sir?" Operative T asked, the capybara beside him.

"Oh, don't you keep on with that," the horse corrected, still stoic. "Just Yahya."

"Seems a bit casual. Are we off duty?"

"Never."

Yahya glanced ahead into the relative darkness of the tunnel, seeing Gosha's massive form as it hunched to avoid the ceiling. The komodo said nothing, but was stealing glances back at him left and right. His unbelievably thick tail swished, dog-like, the edge of a sad old smile pushing at his reptilian eye.

Yahya said even less as they went, continuing to withhold. It wasn't like he could dress down a walking skyscraper that easily. *Maybe* back at morning, in the old world, but not now.

"How will we administer the cure, once we're all back to normal size?"

Jack's musings cut through again, making the horse roll his head back in annoyance.

"You do know I don't know, right?"

Jack suppressed a slight whine, the labrador reeling from the unparalleled torment of gentle admonishment.

“I wonder how the cure’ll know what our natural size is, our limit,” Pina mused, the strain of thought suddenly contagious. “Like, wouldn’t we keep shrinking further down?”

“I don’t think it would work out, countering perpetual growth rates with perpetual shrinking rates,” Jack answered, his huge voice like a cotton tsunami as he kept it soft. “That wouldn’t really fix anything.”

“Okay, but in cartoons, when they shrink someone back down,” Pina countered, just tall enough that he could stay upright and not quite thump the ceiling, “they go back to normal size. I just wonder how they’ll pull it off, if we’re still getting bigger. Like you said, what if they create a dose meant for a certain height, but you or I become like a mile tall by then? Wouldn’t that just subtract that set amount from the overall height?”

“Well, it would at least halt the process, in theory...”

“Right, but even if we don’t resume growing, that would leave one of us like...four thousand feet tall, still. We couldn’t live normal lives at all, goodness.”

“We shouldn’t even be able to stand up to our own weight, for starters,” Jack huffed, though he was openly wagging a storm behind himself and the group. “Somehow, we’re either counteracting gravity, to an extent, or negating it outright.”

“No, we’d go flying up like balloons,” Pina chuckled.

“No, no, heh, I mean, specific gravity. Mine and yours.”

“The heck is that? Gravity is gravity, isn’t it?”

“Well see, that’s interesting, because—”

“Okay, stop,” Yahya groaned, turning to T as she hauled several cases behind them on a delivery cart that had been abandoned to Site Omega. “Tell me you have earplugs in there, somewhere. Please.”

“Just the samples, and some water and rations.”

“Ugh.”

“That’s another thing,” Jack continued, his ears up with the thrill of intellectual pursuits. “I haven’t been hungry this entire time! Have you Pina?”

“Oh...you know, actually, I haven’t! Huh.”

For all the sheep’s massive brawn and bulging wool, his eyelashes kept their femininity as they batted, the sheep lost in thought. He was over 400 feet wide, nearly a square of bulk, and yet he seemed so light and soft.

“And you, Gosha? Are you hungry or thirsty at all?”

“Hmm,” the old reptile hummed, cocking his head on his thick neck. “I can’t say as I am. Isn’t that interesting! In all this time, I hadn’t thought of it yet!”

“Right! Hehe, see, I have something of a theory here...”

“Gosha, for crying out loud, don’t encourage this,” Yahya replied, his voice giving out again. “I’m not hosting some nerd theorycrafting party. This is all for the scientists at Delta to toil over, I don’t need to hear the rough draft!”

“Wouldn’t that make you a draft horse?” Pina joked.

Jack and Gosha exploded, while Yahya did not. T wisely held it in.

“Okay! No more talking! That’s time!” Yahya ordered, though it was drowned entirely out by tunnel-blasting laughter. “Hey! I know you heard me, up there!”

“Go easy on them, Yahya,” Gosha rumbled, twisting around to face the tiny little horse properly, revealing great cliffs of thick, over-tight muscle and gleaming scales. His pectorals blotted most of his lizard muzzle as his tongue lashed out, as if prodding his old partner for sympathy. “This is all crazy enough as it is, let them feel a little normal—”

“This is *not* normal, Gosha, dammit,” Yahya yelled back, sourly.

“You used to be able to laugh at least a little,” the reptile sighed.

“I can laugh fine, when we’re not in a crisis. I didn’t change.”

Gosha softened a bit, yet his stare remained as piercing as ever.

“I didn’t say you did.”

“You’re the one who changed,” the horse muttered, quietly. “Go projecting on me, after all this. Who do you think you are, just because you’re big as a building—”

Operative T stayed so far out of it, she was in space.

“What if this can’t be reversed?” Pina abruptly asked.

“Well,” Jack murmured, having to work up to it, “it’s pretty straightforward. We’ll keep growing, in that case.”

“But, for how long?” Pina pressed, the sheep’s inability to pull back still going strong.

“Either it burns out on its own, or it...or it’s indefinite. Perpetual. It depends on the rate of growth, and duration. Classic growth chart. If it’s perpetual, we’ll all enlarge at either a fixed or variable rate—and from what I see so far, we all hit different sizes, and grow at individual rates. We have to be prepared for a reality where none of us stop getting bigger. For our entire lives.”

Yahya got his wish—the tunnel went dead quiet.

“Until we die, you mean,” Pina muttered.

“Which could be years and years of growth, given our ages. Er! W-well, yours and mine and the rabbit, and you mentioned Bill. No offense, Yahya or Gosha—”

“I mean, *until we grow into space and die* from suffocation.”

“...Oh.”

“We’re not going to let things get that far, you two,” Yahya chided, after finishing a long drink of water from a bottle T handed him. “Thanks. You all listen: this surprised us. It would blindside anyone. We don’t have time or resources to properly combat it, but we have the means to build up a counterattack, to stomp it out fast, so let’s focus on what we can still do. I know we lost a moment of control here—”

“Good grief. What control?” Pina drawled, shrugging his massive shoulders. “Our entire society was precarious enough, before gigantism was introduced, and now that it is—”

“Okay, I know,” Yahya growled, rubbing his head angrily, “but we can’t abandon civility, here, can we? Of all the times to go wild, this is not it. You all saw Melon back there.”

“He’s still growing, isn’t he?” Jack gulped, so big it could be heard all throughout the tunnel. “Melon? He was still all trembly and rumbling, down in the pit...”

“All the more reason we need this cure,” Yahya knickered, nodding firmly. “He’s the first one that needs shrinking, for sure.”

“Do you think Site Delta will work with us, without Ogma around?” Jack asked.

“I know what you’re getting at, up there,” the horse replied, knitting his dark brow low. “But they’ll follow my orders. And you all heard Ogma, the regret in his voice as he went full-huge. He said he wasn’t ready for it. Something tells me he’ll agree with our course—”

The rumbling was sudden and swift, so powerful that the pavement cracked beneath them. In seconds the entire tunnel rattled into a mess of shaking rock and crumbling cement.

“Who is it?” Yahya roared, his vast eyesight covering everything except—

“Pina!” Gosha spoke, the huge komodo pointing back at the shuddering Dall Sheep’s throbbing bulk. “It’s Pina! Quick, everyone get ahead of him, as fast as you can!”

Yahya’s ears perked, understanding right after.

“Do what he says, go, go! We can’t get trapped behind him, however big he grows!”

“B-but I can’t!” Jack moaned, looking his impossibly huge bulk over. “I’m too big to get around him, as it is! I f-fill up most of the tunnel already!”

“Then back up, go! Scoot!”

“Huh,” Pina snorted, gulping helplessly as his soft wool blew up around his body, aching for it, begging to explode forth once again. “Huhah, I...I’m sorry! I, hah, duh-don’t think I can s-stop it from happ-puh-*p-nnnnnng*—”

T was already ahead, trundling along, Yahya catching up in seconds and helping her to pull the cart faster. The cracks spread and webbed throughout, breaking the paved roadway into

segments—segments upon which the cart wheels snagged, making one case tumble off and roll in place as they fled.

“Hah, huh, hggggh,” Pina groaned, his woolly neck bloating under his jawline as his body clenched tighter, and tighter, and *tighter*. “G-get away!”

Jack bit his lip, trying to auger his muscle and thigh-consuming shaft backwards, the dog’s orbs fumbling and bobbling about as the breaking pavement juttied and sunk against its warm fur.

“O-okay, okay, go with the curve,” Jack mumbled, coaching himself frantically.

“HAAAH,” Pina bleated, the quivering sheep spasming a bit bigger, and bigger still, his soft phallus expanding into a full, throbbing pole of heat as his erection reformed. His hands balled into useless fists as they nearly touched its growing bounds, pulling back as his pectorals heaved forward, ballooning so suddenly that he had to pull back to keep from falling onto his own pulsing shaft. “I...CAAAAAAAN’T...B...BUH...”

His head and horns lurched higher, the male a colossal muscle tensing so hard, desperate to contain the uncontainable as his sacs swelled out over his knees and upper calves, inflating loudly. His thighs burst to absurd width as his back and shoulders pumped larger, pockets of growth slipping through his efforts and strain.

Gosha’s massive hands found Yahya and T as soon as they were close enough, and the komodo had the two little up and against his monstrous chest in a blink.

“Ah, p-put me back down,” the horse fumed, snuggled in too hot, too tight, walled against the face of Gosha’s stretched scale. “You hear me! Gosha! Stop!”

“Sorry!” Gosha huffed, the lizard slamming down onto threes, keeping one huge palm on them both. “Be mad, if it keeps you focused on staying put!”

“GOSHA!”

“We’re going to be going very fast, miss,” the old lizard gently said, before his massive scaled calves tightened, bulging even bigger.

Before any further objections could be made Gosha tore off, keeping just low enough that his bulbous pecs slapped the cracked road here and there as he fled. Unthinkable strength

asserted itself again as the reptile's muscles bulged, so incredibly oversized that, to the two passengers, there was only a storm of shifting bulk and rubbing scales.

Jack's dutiful retreat only got him so far as Pina rumbled to a horrible crescendo; the sheep's control slipped, and he *detonated* in size. A torrent of expanding wool slammed the dog without mercy, hammering into his muzzle and shoving his yellow brawn back as Pina's head rammed through the ceiling, blasting it open. More and more of his neck, shoulders and back muscles punched through, digging the opening wider and wider as he rocketed larger.

His erection plowed ahead, the tip swelling heavier and hotter as it blew up against the walls, the shaft pinching into cracking concrete on both sides, the undercarriage swelling down against heaving sacs, which blasted down through the splintering pavement as Pina literally grew through the mountain itself.

His legs and feet crashed South through cracking stone as his bashing head tore higher and higher North, his bulk swelling twice as vast all around with too much power.

His sheep-cries reverberated through the mountainside as the evening skies burned away outside, indifferent to the way the mountain began to rumble from within, more and more.

Jack spluttered and struggled, all 900 feet rapidly becoming unfit to the task of stopping or even withstanding that much sheep. Pina's full rump and boofy tail consumed more of the dog's body as he tumbled back over himself, his head shearing the ceiling and snapping lights into nothing.

"H-hol-d on, w-aaaaai-it!"

Only supple male cheeks dared to reply as Pina grew, and grew, and grew, and grew.

The sheep's chest barrelled relentlessly into the rock and stone, bullying eons of geographic progress away as he surged with pure growth. His erection boomed uncontrollably bigger, so fat and bloated that the tunnel walls caved out, instead of in, spreading wider against his erupting girth.

Jack's battered mind could only guess (to pass the time) as he was forced further back down the way: if he was 900 feet tall, and his grasp only covered a portion of Pina's booming rear, then the sheep had to have been, conservatively, well over 2,000 feet tall.

And the rumbling was getting *worse*.

All was panic and noise as Gosha bashed his way forward, demolishing row after row of traffic stop cones and military-fashioned high walls (which only reached his wrists, at the most). The old dragon didn't even notice as his eyes focused into dots, the bulky male taking corners like nothing, only bashing painlessly into broken cement here and there as he handled the tunnel's many curves.

"A-are we almost there?" T shouted over it all.

"How would I even know!?" Yahya shot back, his disposition thoroughly unchanged.

"He-he's moving so fast! It can't be that much farther!"

Yet again, some sort of twisted envy filled the horse, until it felt ready to burst from it.

Why that much power? Why him? Why Gosha!?

*He's the one who quit, not me, some darker, deeper part of Yahya 'volunteered'. I stayed on, fought the long fight. I'm **still** fighting. Why not give it to the one doing the actual fighting!?*

WHY NOT ME!?

The evening had already descended, lowering the lid of the day's eye to a burning slit over the ocean. As such, no one flying by would have noticed the mountainside as it twitched like a living being, then cracked in the darkness. A swath of unlucky flora and stone blew open as a terrible mass pummeled through into the free air, thick, massive horns throwing dot-sized trees to the wind as Pina's head breached the surface.

A mighty bleat erupted as his boulding-sized head swelled bigger still, pushing higher, wider, his muzzle and beautiful eyes rising over the mountainside as his long locks tumbled over them. His overgrown neck forced itself up after, pushing his head further out as it swelled into a stubborn bulge, then blew more rock away as he grew and grew, passing 2,300 feet, then 2,600.

"GGG-GHHH-HHHGGGH~"

Some unanswerable pleasure roared up through it all, booming out of his open muzzle as he trembled and burst even larger, his neck widening tremendously as his shoulders broke the surface even farther apart. Both pinched pectorals billowed up greedily, blowing into his chin as they crept up his overshadowed neck. His huge thighs and calves and feet bore down through the inside, feeling rock and dirt all submit to his boundless growth as he passed half a mile in height,

and still, *still* kept growing. At 2,800 feet tall and 2,100' wide, he could have rested a shoulder on a single city intersection, and filled it. 1,600' from chest-tip to shoulder blade, Pina's thickness from the side could still be measured in office buildings and sidewalks, spanning well the length of well over 5 blocks. A raised arm could have been a skyscraper, even without accounting for so much fulminating wool.

Horns big enough to fill a football stadium pulled the ram's head down, planting his huge chin against surging pectoral cleavage, massive ears flattened as a furious blush stole over his face. The makings of a great cry stifled and staggered there in his maw as he clenched his growing teeth, blew steam, shook, and bulged past 3,000 feet, his brawn blasting out everywhere as he hatched from the mountain like some birthed god.

Jack, moments ago the largest by a wide margin, was suddenly a kid in comparison, at best. He shoved up against the looming span of Pina's tail, his own orbs and shaft flat up against the sheep's gluteal cleft, mashing tighter with every loud throb of his growing body.

"S-should it be th-this bad!?" Jack stammered, the once clean pavement shattering as his enormity shoved down, down through it, into the bedrock itself. "I cuh-can't get away quick enough! H-help!"

At that, Jack's panicked body stirred, something building from within, opposite of the fury and force without. Greater and greater pulsations *thoom-thoomed* inside, riding the drum beat of his heart, and just as the ram-duff and ruined rock buried him, the labrador began to swell larger, stronger, warmer...

LUPO VERDE MOUNTAIN RANGE, WEST

PINA, 7:12 PM

"W-why is it this...baaaaah-d!?"

Pina couldn't get much else out as he screamed bigger, biceps as big as small islands blowing up out of the rock as he helplessly flexed. The 3,300-foot tall sheep's growth poured on and on, too long contained, angry at its restraint, the mountainside parting for his surging girth as he broke through.

From out the topside it emerged, a singular, massive thing, an entity its own; the face divided, entire swaths of forest and boulder and shrub parting ways as a ruddy-pink mass pushed, bullied and bulged loose, the ram's vast erection swinging out with a slow, corrective sway.

A phallus over 2,000 feet long steadied over the remainder of the slope, rocks and trees cascading off like grains of pepper as it throbbed, paused, then heaved larger, and larger, and larger yet. Hands big enough to cup whole ponds descended on instinct, clapping down over the hulking sex as it bloated fatter, pushed up by the needy inflation of his sacs as they burst free underneath.

3,500' ... 3,700' ... 3,900' ...

Thoughts of a thousand screaming females swarming his physique, covering his erection raced by, mental bandages trying to wrap around something uncontrollable. Even the aloof male's greatest coping mechanisms fell shorter and shorter, however, as another bulge of raw growth swelled his mass up and out, his muscles gorging so big that they began to smother against him, his body sagging heavier even as his wool bounced higher.

4,100 feet rumbled and burst to 4,400, the colossal sheep hiccupping bigger in uglier, harsher spurts, his lats outpacing his huge arms, forcing them vertically as his rump exploded out the mountain next, then his heaving thighs.

All those screaming girls were screaming for another reason, in his mind, each and all fleeing the scene as his shadow spilled down the face, darker than the evening, spreading wider and wider with him.

Hah, i-it figures, Pina told himself, desperate to distance himself from it all. *Of course, I would b-become too incredible to stop. Good grief, why me?*

At four-thousand, eight hundred feet, at long, long last, it slowed. Then...stopped.

A small hurricane exited as Pina finally breathed out, his monstrous chest swelled out, instead of in, even on exhale. For a moment the sheep stayed still, letting his heartbeat slow back down as it thrummed chaos down his bulk, vibrating through the split mountainside, so that the remaining forestry shook with each one.

"G...good g-grief, haha," Pina gasped, licking his muzzle over dryly. "What the hell...was all that? Can't you behave at all?"

In response, his bulk twitched, rather happily.

“No, huh?”

The absolute tonnage of his own arm registered for real as Pina lifted it, incalculable muscles peaking and bursting out from the mere effort of running a street-sized hand through his locks, before finally feeling himself over. And over. And over.

“Wow. Okay, I suppose that is pretty impressive. Goodness, now I’ll have to deal with everyone’s jealousy—oh! OH, NO!”

He froze, still as the mountain itself, scouring the area below his huge hips and bobbing shaft. His big, soft eyes darted all over, back and forth, before looking skyward.

“D-don’t tell me, I...no way. H-hey. Hey, down there. Anyone? Doggy? Horse?”

Silence.

“I blew clear out of the tunnel,” Pina murmured, gulping. “Don’t tell me I crushed...hello? *Anyone?* Anybody in there? Move around if you are, okay? Yeah?”

“INTERESTING.”

A third time, Pina went still. Call it a herbivorous directive, but no amount of size and power was strong enough to undo biology as his body contracted into a fearful statue.

The voice was so big that even the ram shook for it, aftershocks tickling down the mountain and across the range beyond it. What it even could belong to was anyone’s guess—as in, anyone *else* was free to guess.

“YOU WERE WITH THE OTHERS DURING THE...UPSET, BACK THERE. I SAW YOU FOR A MOMENT. YOU’VE GROWN EVEN LARGER, AS WELL.”

It was entirely true that Pina didn’t want to know anything more. It was even more true that he was turning around anyway. It was no lie that the sheep, nearly a mile tall, almost fainted at the sight that beckoned him.

“You’re...” Pina huffed, looking back to the mountain range behind him—then *up over* it.

The red deer from Omega was there, standing behind him.

No...no. *Behind the entire mountain.*

“O-Ogma.”

The deer was beyond gigantic. The sheep put that much together on his own.

The 26,400-foot male was so tall that the mountain range stretched past him the same way a neighbor’s picket fence might—a small one. Peaks over 2 miles tall proved laughable to him, his monstrous shaft and orbs cradling dominantly down over them as he stood, impossibly big arms crossed thoughtfully as Ogma stared down, down, down at him. Even his 2-mile wide chest seemed to be peeking up at what the fuss was about, over his muzzle. Antlers hundreds of feet thick rose into the night sky, vanishing, implicitly endless and all-consuming.

His orbs hung closer to home as they sagged over the mountain, luxuriating carelessly at a full mile in width, cushioning a 2.5-mile long member, a throbbing river of reddish-pink sex that tapered and tapped at the thin sheet of forests below, the tip tapping here and there as he stood and breathed pure, godly might.

The math refused to come to him properly, but the overall message was clear. The big picture remained intact: Ogma *was* the big picture.

The 5-mile buck snorted coolly, shoving entire cloud banks away. His head, somewhat opaque from the upper atmosphere in which he stood, still bore an unmistakable smirk.

“HOW FASCINATING. I TRULY HAD NO IDEA ANY OF YOU COULD CONTAIN THAT MUCH POWER...OR, BY CONTRAST, MYSELF.”

“Ah.”

“YOU WILL HAVE TO SPEAK UP.”

Pina eventually willed himself to nod, suddenly meek.

“H...how did you get out?”

Ogma blinked, and so help him God, Pina *heard* it.

“HMM. RUDE AS IT IS, YOU’LL HAVE TO PARDON ME, LITTLE ONE. I REALLY CAN’T STAY. I HAVE BUSINESS AHEAD, EXCUSE ME.”

“W-wait! Stop!”

Ogma strode along behind the mountain range, his colossal stride such that he was already passing along beside Pina in an instant. Had the sheep’s own growth masked the incoming steps?

“W-where are you going, though!?” Pina shouted, trying to pull himself up from the crumbling slope.

Are you crazy!? The sheep told himself, meaning it. *Let him go! Don’t get any further involved, you’re in deep enough—literally! Let it pass, it’s not your problem! Even if it was...look at him! He’s a monster!*

At that, surprisingly enough, the towering cervine did stop. He glanced back over his bulky neck, massive eyes remote and calm—a far cry from his earlier panic in the pit.

“ACTUALLY, I DO WONDER. TELL ME. WHERE IS YAHYA? IF YOU SAW HIM ESCAPE, COULD YOU KINDLY DISCLOSE WHICH DIRECTION HE’S GONE OFF IN?”

“E-er, well,” Pina stammered. “Why do you want to know?”

“I’M INCLINED TO PROTECT MY INVESTMENT, LITTLE ONE. TELL ME, DID HE GO THE SAME WAY I’M GOING? TO SITE DELTA?”

“Why do you want—”

“A CURE, I IMAGINE. YES? THAT SMALL-MINDED EQUINE WANTS TO STOP THIS, CORRECT?”

“Y-you don’t!?” Pina balked, throwing his massive sheep arms up.

“SO HE DOES. HMM. AS I SUPPOSED.”

Not one bit of Ogma’s tone comforted Pina. This math, he could do.

“Don’t hurt them! Hey! Stop!”

For crying out loud, let him go, stupid! He’ll flatten you!

“HURT THEM?” Ogma chuckled, shaking the world around Pina. **“I DOUBT FORCE WILL BE NECESSARY. I OWN SITES OMEGA AND DELTA. JUST STAY WHERE YOU ARE, AND DON’T INTERFERE. I’M ONLY GOING THERE TO MAKE SURE THIS CURE IS HANDLED CORRECTLY, SHOULD IT EVEN BE POSSIBLE TO CREATE.”**

“Wait!”

“I REALLY CAN’T STAY.”

Tectonic muscles shifted as Ogma gave a polite nod, turned, and thundered off behind the range, step after blasting, reverberating, seismic step. Well, it was *business-polite*.

Thank goodness, he’s going.

Surely, it wouldn’t get violent. Ogma was a stuffy CEO type, not some bruiser.

Right. Exactly.

He would just take away the only chance to get things back under control. Yahya would surely resist, and likely be battered away like a speck.

Er. Well.

“Good grief, what,” Pina muttered, rubbing his gorgeous hair anxiously. “W-what am I supposed to do, here? I-I mean, I can’t stop him. So, what?”

Ogma was miles away now, and still easily in view; he was simply that big. The deer had to have been over five times Pina’s size, at least, and almost as comparatively musclebound. The male’s shaft would have beaten him in a fight, forget the rest of him.

“Ah...I...ahh, damned carnivores! And herbivores! Good grief, why me—”

At that, the mountain shook again, even with Ogma storming off in the distance. Pina’s ears perked out as confusion wound up into a new terror, the sheep suddenly all too aware that something was moving inside the collapsed tunnel within the mountain. In fact, it was getting *bigger*, and fast.

“Oh, no, no—”

The rest of that section of the mountain, that entire chunk of the range blew open behind him. Great clusters of rock and plant blasted high as a yellow mass gushed higher and higher behind Pina, shoving him forward so hard that his legs broke through, his huge body ejected from the mountainside as Jack grew against him.

A monumental howl tore loose as the labrador ballooned more and more, his bulk easily as large as the sheep's. Thick, furry pectorals rose and swelled out against the back of the sheep's head, pushing against his horns as Pina crawled forward over the mountain, feeling his own body begin to tremble even more, again.

"G-good g...g..gggriiiiiieee--"

To his horror and excitement, Pina too began to billow larger, even as Jack boomed into him, pushing him forward, his bulk exploding back into Jack's as it happened. The vast canine grew and grew, his muzzle huffing steam over his expanding chest as his biceps erupted into miniature mountains on either side.

"GUH"

"HAH"

Jack's exhale married Pina's sharp, hissing inhale as the sheep inflated to a full mile in size, Jack pumping to 1.25 behind him. Over 5,500 feet of woolly, nude mass collided and pressed, stroked and rumbled and rolled and bulged against Jack's 6,100', the debris from the exhumed tunnel riding his growth as he moaned into the night, shook, and billowed violently bigger.

Jack's horrendous weight tugged him back down, his chest and abs crashing atop Pina, only for the huffing dog to be flung back as Pina boomed to 7,000 feet tall/a mile wide, only for Jack to growl-boom helplessly as he hugged Pina's growing body tight, throbbing and swelling even bigger than he! 8,300' tall/7,000' wide, Jack's body consumed all sight of Pina's, even as the Dall sheep blossomed to ever-larger scopes, the bleating male suddenly 8,000' tall and 6,000' wide—only for Jack to crush the mountain inward as he rose over it, rocketing to a staggering 11,000 tall/12,000' wide, his bulk finally wider than he stood, in height!

The poor mountainside collapsed more, and more, and more, struggling for the first time in its existence with such speed-up erosion. When the spurts both halted, nearly half of that section was rubble and smoke, cratered and caking around the behemoths as they panted and twitched, then finally settled to quiet.

“That,” Pina groaned, once more atop Jack’s huge body, though less dwarfed this time. “That was...a lot. Oh, goodness.”

“A-are you okay, Pina?” Jack finally moaned, a pink tongue big enough to land fighter jets one flopping out of his maw as he caught his breath, his chest rising warmly under the sheep.

“Not...as such, no. Ah! Ah, Jack, no, wait!”

The 8,600-foot (1.5-mile) tall sheep wobbled as he turned on all fours, resting on Jack’s even thicker, stronger, larger, 11,100-foot (2.1-mile) form. His shaft rested so large and of such length that it thumped against Jack’s thick neck and cheek, the tip bobbing just past his floppy ears. Jack’s own mass rose like a cannon behind the sheep, so that Pina’s shifting wool-tickled against it, his rump pressing in without really meaning to as he continued:

“Ogma!”

“H-w-what?” Jack whined, shaking the growth off as he rested in his own crater. “W-what about him? What happened? Where’s Mister Yahya and Grandpa Gosha?”

“I think they went ahead to the site,” Pina hurriedly rambled, “but that’s the thing! That deer, Ogma, he got way bigger! He must have climbed out of the site, because he dwarfs the mountains now! H-he said he was going on to Delta, he figured Yahya wants a cure, and he—”

Jack straightened up, his massive girth rising like a fluffed-up doomsday.

“He’ll *take* it if he feels he has to,” Jack figured, understanding quickly. “Not good! Gosha wouldn’t stand a chance if Ogma’s that huge.”

“W-well, I mean, he said he wasn’t planning on any violence,” Pina mumbled.

“Doesn’t matter, at that size range, anything Ogma does could be a disaster! Mister Yahya is practically a germ compared to him, he wouldn’t stand a chance of anything!”

Oh, no

Jack was already up, his far bulkier body settling as the mountain beneath him pleaded for relief from that much untellable weight. Pina had become a hulk, a woolen tank, but damned if Jack wasn’t that much more amazing. Even the sheep blushed, though his fleece blocked it out.

“Come on, Pina, quick! We have to catch up!”

Oh no, no, no, damnit

“A-and do what?” he balked, shrugging his huge shoulders. “I just told you, he’s colossal! He makes us look silly! I mean, sillier than this already is!”

For the first time, Jack cut Pina a look the sheep didn’t think the canine could make.

“So what?” Jack fussed, his bulk swelling tight as he tensed. “Pina, they’ll be crushed!”

Tell him no. Run. He’ll chase after Ogma, not you, he’s a good guy

“W-well...”

He’s a good guy

“Just come on!” Jack boomed, the dog leaping forward ahead of him. Feet the size of skyscrapers bashed the cracking mountain as Jack ran down it in slow motion, as though it were a dirt pile or ridge to be balanced on.

*He’s **good***

To his own astonishment, Pina was running too. The sheep was just behind as they both thudded catastrophically down the way, half-flattening more and more of the thankfully abandoned slopes.

...Goddammit.

SITE DELTA
FRONT GATE ENTRANCE

GOSHA, 7:30 PM

Gosha hadn’t broken so much as a sweat, from an on-three sprint to the finish. Ten miles, like nothing at all. If anything, he felt stronger and stronger, like the running had given more power than taken. As he came to a stop past the last pitiful barricade and huffed just once, the komodo was positive: his muscles were even bigger.

“That wasn’t so bad, then, heh,” the elder dragon offered, grinning wide.

He had the smile ready on purpose, because he knew what was coming, the moment he set them and the cart down on the pavement, just outside the compound gate:

“Stupid!” Yahya bellowed, swatting up pointlessly at the looming reptile. “You could have smothered us flat! Think, next time!”

Operative T silently fanned herself, flustered beyond all hope. Thoughts of Gosha holding her tight for all eternity refused to leave.

“Haha, sorry, sorry,” Gosha relented, nudging the angered horse with a gentle, massive finger. “Try not to be too mad.”

“Just because you’re so big, it doesn’t,” Yahya snorted, collecting himself. “Er. Just be more careful, at least.”

We’re too fragile, compared to you

Yahya’s muzzle formed a low scowl as the truth kept cutting in, so rather than belabor it any further, he turned and marched towards the gate, a badge out and waving over his head.

“Open up! Hey! This is Yahya, we’re coming in!”

Operative T bowed up at Gosha, who graciously nodded back as the front gate creaked, then opened wide, mechanically grinding as several guards and a scientist all rushed out to greet them.

“T-thank you, sir,” T said, still flush.

“Oh, any time, haha,” the immense reptile chirped, all intensity gone. “Call me Gosha. It sits a bit easier, doesn’t it?”

“I uh, bet you picked up girls all the time, even before this.”

Something inside T screeched in dismay at the line, but it was done.

Gosha turned and covered his muzzle with a thick, huge forearm, snerking cutely.

“I had my moments, haha.”

Was someone this sweet-natured really Yahya's partner? Ever?

SITE DELTA

YAHYA, 7:36 PM

"So, you're positive, then?"

"We stopped receiving anything from Omega earlier," the owl scientist said, more brusque than concerned. "We feared the worst."

"That's pretty close to what I have to offer," Yahya grumbled, snapping his fingers for T, who trundled over with the broken cart, its wheels squeaking as she approached. "But one upside: all Omega's research on all subjects up to the time of its...destruction...is here in this drive. Do everything you can with it. We need that cure."

The owl's face drooped as the guards opened the compound door for them.

"Destruction? An outbreak, then?"

"And how?"

"And the meteor samples?"

"Right here, thankfully."

"Ah, Yahya," T muttered, pointing them both toward the cart. "About that. I count one of the crates ah...missing."

"What?"

"It must have fallen off when we escaped Pina's growth spurt..."

"Then, it's with Pina?"

"O-or Jack."

"Who?" the owl hooted, unintentionally.

Yahya took a moment, though he needed roughly ten or twenty.

“Mm. Hmm. Okay. Several subjects outgrew Omega, and I took custody of several who were cooperative. On our way here, one suffered another growth spurt and collapsed the tunnel.”

“Gosha here got us to the gate safely, though,” T added.

The Owl peered through the door, seeing Gosha loom over the gates, so big that he just managed to squeeze out of the mountain tunnel exit, out into the night and the front gate lot. Forests abounded around the entirety of the mountain peak on which Delta sat, making it the end of the line in all possible meanings.

The old komodo saw them and nodded calmly, before turning about to guard the exit.

“Incredible,” he cooed, nodding. “One of the giants, here. To think any animal can successfully grow so large, and still function...”

“Specific gravity, yes,” Yahya sighed, not looking out with them. “All that stuff. Doctor, the cure.”

“O-of course, yes. Come with me.”

The guards were already tapping in the combination for the door connecting the lobby to R&D as Yahya followed along, T in tow.

“He did save us,” she whispered.

Yahya closed his eyes, flaring his nostrils quietly. He let it out, but that was all.

“As to the uncooperative giants,” the owl began, when Yahya leapt in:

“Melon grew too large to contain, on site. And Ogma was exposed and increased rapidly in size. Both are still buried under rubble at Omega, at the moment.”

“Good Lord, Ogma? A giant, as well?”

The owl remained stunned for a beat, his plumage ruffling out.

“Unfortunately. Like I said, this cure is all we can count on right now.”

“And the other giants?”

“Likely still en route, if I can count on them worth a damn.”

“Should Ogma or Melon get out, tough—”

“No one on our side would be big enough to stop them.”

“And you’re certain they’re both buried deep?”

A rolling boom rattled the facility, the mountain peak itself just after. Yahya, the owl, T and the guards all remained in place, unmoving, before another, bigger impact tore through, putting them into a wobble.

“...”

“*Sir,*” a guard barked over the hallway intercom. “*We have something sighted off the Eastern range! Something m...massive! It’s coming this way! Holy hell, HE’S coming this way!*”

“Melon!” Yahya growled, clenching both fists. “How did he get out so fast!?”

“*It’s...Ogma, sir!*”

Yahya blinked, lurching back.

“What!?”

A third impact blasted the compound, sirens pinging to life as everything went red.

“*All stations, prepare for imp—*”

BOOOOOOM

This time, sparks flew from loosened vents, cracks forming in the hall.

“Dammit,” Yahya fumed, leaning on a wall. “Get in there, and make that cure! As fast as you can! We need it ready to go, for any kind of contingency—especially against that deer! I can’t say what Ogma’s going to do, for sure, but until that cure is ready. all we can do is leave whatever’s coming to Gosha!”

SITE DELTA
FRONT GATE ENTRANCE

GOSHA, 7:37 PM

“Gracious.”

The lizard could only stand there, tall and thick and proud, running a scaled hand over his head as he watched Ogma arrive. The deer was so much bigger than him that it was actually kind of funny. A building was one thing, he had almost adjusted to the idea...but this was an entire town he was looking at.

As it happens, that town was looking down at him.

“GOOD,” Ogma thunder-spoke, his stadium-sized hands resting at his bulky hips, his shaft looming all the way down to the mountain, filling most of Gosha’s view. **“GLAD TO SEE THE PLACE IS IN ORDER, STILL. WHAT A RELIEF.”**

“Glad you’re alright, as well!” Gosha roared, large and loud as he could, watching as Ogma’s ears eventually twitched. “It sure looked like you were lost to the pit, back there!”

Twitch, twitch.

“...HAHA,” Ogma boomed, nodding into the deep cleft of his chest. **“IT WAS A BIT MUCH AT THE MOMENT, I SUPPOSE THERE’S NO SENSE IN LYING. YES, I WAS OVERWHELMED, INITIALLY. LACK OF COMPOSURE, INDEED. I’VE...GATHERED MYSELF SINCE, THANK YOU. YOUR NAME?”**

“Gosha.”

Twitch

“OH! YAHYA’S OLD PARTNER, THEN? A PLEASURE. GLAD HE HAD THE GOOD SENSE TO KEEP YOU ON AS A PERIMETER GUARD. SMART. PLEASE, CONTINUE THE GOOD WORK, WHILE I PARLAY WITH THE STAFF.”

Ogma leaned in, and it was beyond terrifying, even to Gosha. Gigantic or not, he still had never seen something moving like that. The horizon might as well have gotten up and leaned in to whisper to him. It was no less unsettling.

“Ah, one moment, sir,” Gosha stammered, raising both thick arms in a ‘stop’ gesture.

“**YES?**” Ogma started, his slightest voice so big that it still shoved Gosha back over the compound lot. “**WHAT IS IT?**”

That fear redoubled, but the old-timer persisted—*carefully*.

“I don’t think they’ll be inclined to obey anything other than orders to make the cure.”

Ogma blinked, then smiled slightly.

“**NATURALLY. I WANT A CURE, TOO. IT’S RATHER IMPERATIVE THAT IT EXIST, LEST COMPETITION GET TOO GREAT. WHAT FOOL WOULD LET THIS KIND OF POWER GO UNCHECKED?**”

“THAT’S GOOD TO HEAR, OGMA” Yahya’s voice blared from every single speaker on the site. “WE INTEND TO HAVE IT READY ASAP, SO KINDLY BE PATIENT WITH US INSIDE. WE’RE ALREADY ON IT.”

...*twitch*.

Gosha could only wait, given the deer was easily forty times his size now. He wouldn’t have even taken up one of Ogma’s huge fingers in height. At best, he could only hope to stop Ogma if he got stuck on the giant’s eye and annoyed him to death.

“**REALLY,**” the immense buck huffed, lowering his eyes. “**YOU MEAN TO HELP.**”

“**ABSOLUTELY.**”

Ogma’s eyes closed, up in the clouds, and they stayed shut.

“**HOW FASCINATING, CONSIDERING YOU WERE SO AGAINST MY CONTROLLING THIS SIZE AND STATUS, AND ALL.**”

“HMPH. I JUST THOUGHT BETTER OF IT, ONCE I UNDERSTOOD YOU WERE STILL GETTING BIGGER BY THE MINUTE. ANY IDIOT WOULD PUT IT TOGETHER AFTER THAT. NOW, I REALIZE THAT MELON NEEDS SHRINKING, IMMEDIATELY.”

“MM, SO HE DOES,” Ogma conceded, looking back over his considerable shoulders.
**“STILL, YOUR PRESENCE IN THERE...I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE YOU
WOULD STOP AT THAT. I WONDER THAT I WOULDN’T BE TARGETED, NEXT.”**

A pause. Gosha scooted back slowly across the lot, tensed, ready, listening.

**“I CONSIDERED IT. THEN I SAW YOU ON THE SITE CAMERAS, HOW BIG
YOU’VE GROWN. THERE’S NO POINT IN RESISTING, EVEN IF I DON’T KNOW WHAT
POINT THERE IS TO BEING THAT BIG. MELON WAS—”**

**“I’D APPRECIATE YOU NOT LUMPING ME IN WITH THAT MENTAL
LANDFILL OF A MANIAC. HE WENT COMPLETELY UNHINGED DOWN IN THE
PIT. I ONLY MANAGED TO KNOCK HIM OUT FROM DUMB LUCK, WHEN MY
GROWTH INCREASED SO DRAMATICALLY THAT I BLOCKED HIS MOUTH OFF,
AND HE EVENTUALLY WENT UNCONSCIOUS. FOR HOW LONG, I HAVE NO
IDEA. BUT I’M VERY GLAD YOU UNDERSTAND: I WAS IN CHARGE BEFORE
THIS, AND I REMAIN IN CHARGE. HOWEVER LARGE I CHOOSE TO BECOME
ISN’T YOURS OR ANYONE’S CONCERN, WHATSOEVER.”**

“...U-UNDERSTOOD. PLEASE WAIT, THEN. I’LL UPDATE YOU SHORTLY.”

“VERY GOOD. I APPRECIATE YOUR JUDICIOUSNESS, YAHYA.”

Gosha’s battle stance lessened, his scaly bulk relaxing, when the towering deer glanced back down at him from on high, measuring the dragon calmly.

“HMM.”

An utterly enormous deer hand opened from above, hovering just over Gosha, before clutching down with terrible results. Fingers thicker than office buildings crushed into the entire lot like it was tin as he scooped it and Gosha up. Up, up and up it went, until it reopened, the startled komodo finding himself in the small of a gargantuan, warm, stretching palm. Far, far beyond, in the haze of evening, was Ogma’s muzzle.

**“WHY DON’T YOU KEEP ME COMPANY, UNTIL I KNOW THE DEAL IS
STRUCK PROPER.”**

“A-ah, t-that really isn’t uh, necessary,” the dragon coughed, adjusting to the air change that far up. **“I’m sure he meant what he said, already...”**

SITE DELTA

YAHYA, 7:39 PM

Yahya's hand went off the *speak* button as he threw a folding chair across the R&D room.

"Stupid, stupid!" he wheezed, his black hair tumbling over his brow. "Not Gosha!"

"Do we have any armaments on site, sir?" T asked, the capybara stepping in between the startled owl and Yahya. "Anything to defend ourselves with?"

"Plenty, missile-wise," the owl croaked. "But at his size, I...I don't know what it would do. Helicopters or tanks, they could wipe out...but look at the monitors! He's...he's a god!"

"He's just flesh!" Yahya seethed. "Cover him with missiles, all you have! I don't care if they're just ant bites against that much mass, do it!"

"But Yahya, sir, he'll retaliate," the scientist replied.

"He won't crush this place, he wants the cure just as bad as we do, even if it's for his own selfish reasons! That's our *one* saving grace here, you understand!?"

"But he has Gosha," T began.

"I KN—I know," Yahya roared, only to bring it back down at the last moment. "I get that. Regardless, Ogma doesn't believe me. He's overpowered *and* smart, it's a bad scenario. If we don't deliver, he can just crush Gosha."

"So...do we just give him what he wants?" the owl pressed. "For now, at least?"

"Even if we did, Gosha would try to stop him from getting it," Yahya muttered. "I know him. He'd fight until Ogma just smashed him flat. The deer doesn't have to be some trained fighter, when he's that insanely huge."

"So either way," T supposed, "he could still get killed."

"If he's going to sacrifice himself, then we can't ignore that," the owl sighed, resolved. "If it's happening no matter what, then we need to honor it, and keep the cure ourselves!"

"But he doesn't deserve that!" T argued, as the sirens blared on.

The shaking thread of Yahya's control split a little deeper, fraying openly as he thought.

"I'm sick of this."

"Sir?"

Yahya snorted hard, popping his thick neck. By the time T, the guards and the owl looked back, the horse already had the crate off of the busted cart, had opened it, and removed the entire meteor fragment.

"I'm sick and tired of this back and forth. If I can't protect anyone, what good am I?"

"Oh my gosh, Yahya, wait," T began, as her superior walked out the exit door, back towards the lobby.

"Just make sure to shrink me, after!" the equine ordered as the door shut behind him.

"Stop him!" the owl shouted. "He's snapped!"

"No, let him," Operative T ordered, making the guards pause. "If he sees you try, he'll eat it right away. Just let him go outside first, for all our sakes."

She turned back to the scientist, pointing.

"And you! Get on that stupid cure!"

7:36 PM

Ogma was so large that there was no fuss or fanfare when Yahya stepped out onto the devastated front lot. A being that size would never have noticed.

"Bigger than the law, my eye," Yahya growled, the horse taking the armful of meteor, and bringing it up to his muzzle, nearly kissing it. "No one's bigger than the law!"

His heartbeat had been booming the entire way outside as every dark thought from the day, every temptation surged back up in his thoughts. Every urge to loom over all the evildoers, all the creeps and villains—every shouting desire to be the *biggest* of all returned, in full force.

That's not why, he thought, as he opened his mouth and bit into the fragment, feeling it crumble like old, strange malt against his teeth. *That's not why I'm doing this!*

He gulped more and more down, his heart racing in apprehension and some unspoken, deep joy as he felt it slide down, felt it go in, finished it all, and waited for it to happen.

What would it even be like? Would it hurt? How bad? Was he really going—

“GHK.”

Yahya's entire body caught itself in a kind of massive hiccup, his horse muscles flexing painfully tight as pure heat flooded his veins. His eyes widened as he pulsed, his entire body having a muscle spasm that kept tightening, the pressure rising and rising, building and burning, until all at once he exploded upward, and *grew*.

Finally, achingly, it happened. Yahya was really doing it. *He was getting bigger.*

And it was good.

His feet slid over the ruined lot as his shoes bulged and creaked, seams given no time to adjust as they popped apart. His toes and heel burst out in unison as his soles smothered the undersides flat, his calves blowing up too big, pulling, then ripping his tightening pants to shreds as he heaved to 10 feet, shuddered deep, and heaved again, passing 20 feet in a second.

The burning increased, and he let it, welcoming every fibrous bulge of every muscle as his shirt snapped open, his chest spilling out like a wave of dark-brown mass. His view of the lot leapt higher, wavered, then leapt again, and again, as Yahya passed 40 feet, then 80, his 350-degree sight taking almost everything in as it all shrank around him.

His underwear stretched out into a vast mound, which jutted into a tent formation as his erection plowing bigger, thicker, the tip forcing its definition onto the fabric as it pulled, pulled, *pulled*—then snapped away in defeat.

Scraps of clothing hugged needily into swelling shoulders as his bulk began to escalate beyond his height, raging out larger, stronger, heavier across his frame. His neck ballooned into a pillar as his biceps roared higher, his thighs obliterating his leggings as he bit his lip and surged past one hundred feet tall, then two hundred, head growing head rising back up toward the windows of the R&D wing, those within watching the horse ascend.

“S-should it be that fast?” Operative T whispered, only to gasp as Yahya billowed bigger outside, even faster, more and more frantically.

“He didn’t have to consume the whole mass, that fool!” the owl groaned, even as he plugged the drive into a console, and ran the remaining equations. “Who knows how large he’ll become now!?”

“He has to close a major gap, doctor!”

“Watch out,” a guard hollered, as Yahya’s growing rear brushed up past the windows, shaking the building as the horse towered taller and taller still.

“GHHHHHGHK,” Yahya sputtered, straining to get anything out as the climbing pressure and heat choked everything else, melting all other thoughts or concerns to nothing in the face of such overwhelming sensation.

His eyes bulged as he stomped forward, leaning in over himself, letting his dark pectorals bump down over the rising swell of his erection as he huffed, quaked deeper, flexed tighter, and roared in spiking bliss and total, complete terror.

Every nerve was alive, drinking in every tickling tingle, every raging blast of size as he pumped to 500 feet, shook angrily, then *boomed* to 1,000 feet instantly! The mighty base that was Site Delta sank lower in comparison to his body, his massive thighs flexing bigger and bigger as they surpassed its rooftop.

His feet snapped through every barricade, the high gate a mere joke as they knocked it over. His huge heels cracked the lot further apart as he surrendered to his own weight and crashed onto his growing knees, letting his erection swell into the opening of the tunnel exit as he vibrated from more and more quaking growth.

Every imagining the horse had almost humored, every lidded desire he’d been teased with all throughout the day...all of it paled, against what actually *was*.

His eyes rolled back as his pectorals blasting bigger, straining out beyond his grasping, growing hands, his back muscles gushing bigger behind him as he poured over everything, larger, stronger, wider. 1,500’ *b-boomed* to 3,000 in one thrilling push, his vision blurring as too much pleasure battered his mind at once.

More

What was anyone supposed to do, against this? How could anyone fight back?

Yahya's body inflated faster, his rear bumping the site compound as he snarled in pleasure and expanded even more, and more. His erection plunged into the cracking tunnel as his chest surged over its outer slopes, the horse hugging into splitting rock as he felt his back and traps blow up over his quivering bulk, the colossus bursting to a full mile in size, in less than a minute's time.

MORE

Every biological imperative bellowed together for it, as Yahya surged with power, his hide stretching too tight as muscle upon muscle blew up in size. The tunnel bulged out, so overstuffed with his pride that the mountainside itself began to split open, his massive dark orbs puffing behind him as he moaned into his own male cleavage, shuddered again, and *grew*.

"YAHYA, YOU HAVE TO"

MOOOOOOOORE

"SAVE...GOSHA!"

Just like that, he was back. Through all the storm and fury of abandon, the horse's eyes rolled back to place, blinked, and focused.

That's...not...why

A titanic blast of air blew out as Yahya snorted, shook his head, then rose to a looming stand over the entire site. In so doing, the half-shattered mountain blew apart entirely, his pendulous shaft rising with him until it angled all the way down, the tip still swelling as it rested on the debris below.

The growth slowed to a stop as the equine flexed deep, feeling himself tighten into steel. Even condensed to the fullest, Yahya's muscle remained enormous, full and smooth and taut. He stood just over 18,500 feet, in one single spurt—just over 3.5 miles tall, and 3 miles wide at the arms and thighs. His member rested like a club, 1 mile long, half-sunken into the mountainside far beyond as it throbbed away.

"R...right," he boomed, rolling his shoulders. For the first time in ages, Yahya was beaming wide.

Ogma finally deigned to peek down over his own chest at the crumbling of the mountain nearby. Still, with his bulk, getting a full view proved a challenge.

“HMM?” he started, only to stumble back as something very big slammed into his stomach, big enough to make the vast deer stomp back down over the open space between the neighboring mountain ranges around them. “MMN! WHAT—”

The red deer leaned out, finally seeing Yahya as he *thoomed* closer, clearing their side of the mountain with only a little trouble. Rather than outright anger, of all things, Ogma chuckled.

“FASCINATING,” he thundered, cocking his head. “HOW IRRESISTIBLY FASCINATING!”

“KINDLY UNHAND MY PARTNER.”

There, within the cage of Ogma’s hand, Gosha watched and heard, more stunned now than he had been, seeing Ogma.

“I KNEW YOU WERE STALLING,” Ogma sighed, brushing his gargantuan muscles casually. “AN UNDERSTANDABLE TACK. HAH. DO YOU REALLY WANT TO SHRINK ME AS WELL, THAT BADLY? WOULD I BE SUCH AN UNFIT BOSS?”

“NOBODY GETS THAT LEVEL OF CONTROL, OGMA,” Yahya replied, trying to ignore the thrill of how strong and huge his own speech was, the way it tingled his thick throat.

“HMM. NOT EVEN YOU, YAHYA? YOU’RE REALLY GOING TO LECTURE ME ON THE FOLLY OF TOTAL CONTROL? WHOSE IDEA WAS THIS TO BEGIN WITH?”

The horse jerked in place, but faltered no further.

“I...REGRET THAT EARLIER DECISION.”

“OH?” Ogma hummed, nodding at the horse’s oversized, over-enthused erection.

“YOU HAVE ONE TOO. LET’S BE ADULTS ABOUT THIS.”

“AGREED, SORRY. THAT *WAS* UNPROFESSIONAL. BUT MY POINT REMAINS. BETWEEN ANY OF US, WHY NOT I? I KNOW HOW TO RUN THINGS PROPERLY. IMAGINE, THE HORNS CORPORATION, EXPANDING INFINITELY! THAT’S BUSINESS,

IN AND OF ITSELF. YOU WERE QUITE ALRIGHT WITH IT AT EARLIER SIZE, WEREN'T YOU? YOU AND THE POLICE EVEN DEFENDED IT. WHY NOT LET THIS TURN TAKE THE WISEST COURSE? OR ARE YOU JUST HELLBENT ON CONTROLLING IT ALL, YOURSELF? AS IF YOU REALLY COULD?"

Yahya's bulk swelled out as the horse took up a fighting stance. Even Gosha was in awe as a million great memories surged, his scaly tail whipping gladly.

"Go...get him," Gosha whispered, smiling all over.

"I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU."

Ogma lidded his eyes even lower.

"RIGHT. THERE *WON'T* BE A FIGHT. SUCH MORONIC EXPLOITS WON'T HELP. LIKE IT OR NOT, AS I SAID IN THE CAR...IT'S A NEW WORLD. ANY BUSINESS, ANY ENTITY THAT CANNOT ADAPT WILL PERISH. MY LOUIS WILL THRIVE. HE WILL GROW, SURPASSING EVEN I, IF HE SO CHOOSES. BUT HE'S YOUNG, YET. FARBEIT FOR ME TO STIFLE HIM SO SOON. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS HE FEELS UP TO IT, HERBIVORES WILL RULE. I AM THE PROPER REPRESENTATIVE, AND YOU KNOW IT, SO STOP THESE THEATRICALS, AND ALLOW ME MY DUES."

"...*LAST WARNING.*"

Ogma's polite demeanor dropped one important rung.

"REALLY, YAHYA. DON'T BE STUPID."

"THERE'S NOTHING STUPID ABOUT STALLING."

The titanic deer took the words in as though they were covered in castor oil, making a confused, unpleasant face.

Twitch

"WHY WOULD YOU EVER--"

Jack and Pina were on Ogma's bulk in a heartbeat, just in time to clutch his huge arms and weigh them down as best they could.

“Mister Yahya, quick, knock him out!” Jack barked, the 2.1-mile canine not even half Ogma’s great size. “Before he can shake us off! It stunts the growth spurts!”

“Ahhh, just hurry, please!” Pina whined, the huge sheep not even a third the deer’s height, leaving him to hang from Ogma’s thick arm like a wooly drape.

“Right! Good boy!”

Yahya leaned in low, took up a gut-check stance, and bolted forward, only for Ogma’s tangle of antlers to intercept as the deer threw his head forth, catching him. The horse’s immense arms went up last-second, narrowly catching them back before they gored, shaking despite all his strength as the bigger deer pushed. His massive feet shook the firmament as he stepped forth, forcing Yahya back over the mountain range, toward the neighboring peak and Site Delta.

Yahya pushed back, slowing Ogma more and more, as Jack pulled the deer’s arm, and Pina leapt onto his head, covering his sight in fluff.

“REALLY, NOW,” Ogma roared, pushing back with growing success, threatening the trembling stalemate between them all. “BAD FORM, ALL OF YOU. THIS...IS NOT...HOW YOU NEGOTIATE...”

More and more, Yahya lost ground, until his thick backside bumped the whole mountainside, shaking it on impact. Feet as big as parks dug into the woodlands below as the equine held fast, his arms ballooning even larger as he struggled and pushed back.

“I...DETEST VIOLENCE,” Ogma boom-spoke, trying to shake Pina off as the sheep clung tight. “BUT DON’T IMAGINE I’LL CONDONE THIS! IF I NEED TO BRUSH YOU ALL AWAY...THEN I WI—”

The elder buck’s arm pulled back in a firm, hard yank, tugging him away from the site by several relative feet. Both Pina and Jack were rumbling again, the two younger giants swelling even larger as they resisted.

Ogma’s grunts only deepened as Pina blew up against his muzzle and face, spilling off of it as he tremble-burst to two miles, nearly Jack’s size, only for Jack to strain and swell to three at the same moment!

“P-push him...back, Yahya!”

The voice wasn’t Jack’s or Pina’s; it was that of his one and only. *His partner.*

Big as Ogma's antlers were, there was plenty to grab at, and that's exactly what Gosha did as he grew and grew, bulging up into Yahya's sights at his side.

The horse blinked just once, then furrowed his brow.

"You don't have to tell me!"

The old reptile groaned all over, pulsing up bigger and thicker, his scales stretching loudly as more and more muscles pulled them tight. He was already half a mile tall, then a full mile, his growth accelerating as heat poured off of his bulk, radiating out into the surprised horse.

"Haha, I know!" Gosha rumbled, stopping as he huffed and ballooned to 6,900 feet (1.3 miles), pushing even harder still, his muscles outpacing even Yahya's. "I just like talking to you, I guess! Takes me back!"

"Agh, back to what?" Yahya growled, his muscles stretching even bigger as he pushed, making Ogma snort in frustration as they started to shove him back a little more. "All those good times you abandoned?"

"P-please, sirs, don't fight!" Jack pleaded, the growing canine's body rumbling even thicker as the more he fought, the larger they seemed to sympathetically swell. "Not now!"

"I didn't leave you," Gosha calmly explained, between ballooning bursts of growth, blowing him up to 10,200 (~2 miles), then 15,400 (2.9 miles). "We had our time together, and it was incredible...nngh, but I found the one for me, for life, and she...if I couldn't fight for her, what makes you think I'd be fit to fight alongside you?"

Pina fell from Ogma's muzzle with a dull thump, the growing sheep bouncing off the deer's flared member. Now Yahya's size, he fell back, stood up, and snatched Ogma's other arm, pulling along with Jack as he boomed to 19,500' (~3.7 miles), getting closer and closer to the great buck's scope.

Again, Ogma stumbled back, a bit further.

"UGH, NONE OF YOU CAN EVEN FUNCTION!" he grunted, flexing even thicker as he began to pull Jack and Pina in with both hulking arms. "THIS IS RIDICULOUS, ALL OF YOU ARE. YOU SEE WHY...NNH, IT'S BETTER LEFT TO ME?"

“And where’d that get you, Gosha?” Yahya groused, looking to the growing lizard beside him, watching him even out with him (despite his physique being a decent stretch bigger, overall). “Hmm? You live in a dump! You lowered yourself! What have you even got left?”

“My grandson,” Gosha said, firmly. “Everything I lost in between then and now...I’d lose it over and over again, if I had to. I don’t have control over that. But I have a wonderful boy left to me, and I’d do crazier than this anyday, if it kept him safe!”

“I’ve never even seen you with him!”

“So you do keep tabs,” Gosha chuckled, *choosing* to. “I won’t fight you on that, because I don’t need to. I don’t have to fight the world, Yahya. My world is happy, with or without me. And if he ever wants to see me, I’ll be right there. Like I’m here, now.”

“OH, PLEASE,” both Yahya and Ogma bellowed.

“Say what you want,” the old dragon said, grinning on, even as he pushed. “It’s no trouble for those I love.”

Yahya had something in the chamber, but lost it as he looked away.

“I didn’t leave you. You didn’t follow me into happiness. You could have. I would have been there, just like now.”

“God,” Yahya laughed. It was the last thing he thought he would do. “Ahah. Just stop. What the hell kind of nonsense is that? Haha.”

“You think so?” Gosha laughed, joining him, even as the two colossi pushed against doom. “I think it sounds okay.”

“You would.”

Both parties grabbed more of Ogma’s outer horns, and pulled.

Jack and Pina caught on, scooped their arms under Ogma’s bigger bulk, and all four pushed and pulled in unison.

Even Ogma’s eyes finally widened as the behemoth’s form left the valley between mountains, flipped up, and *flew*.

A creature five miles in size left the Earth, twisted on itself, then found it again, as Ogma slammed clear over the range, crashing so hard that the web of ridges between cities and lakes reformed in an unwanted instant.

ZEBUTH CITY

7:48 PM

A single crash rocked the terrain from afar.

Fifteen seconds later, the entire city shook, entire grids stuttering out as the lines on all city and residential streets whipped and wavered like strings on an instrument. Every possible kind of alarm sounded at once, a cacophonous mess that echoed in every frantic news report on every flickering TV set.

Windows cracked and shattered across half of downtown as reporters scrambled to worriedly connect the impact with more tales of the day's giants. Night vision-equipped choppers fed info to stunned audiences as none other than the Horns Corporation's own CEO lying prostrate between entire mountains, the male so big and thick that they didn't even succeed in rising above his bulk.

Around it were four smaller giants...but not by much. In fact, two of them were still growing, right there on screen...

LUPO VERDE MOUNTAIN RANGES

JACK, 7:48 PM

"W-we did it!" the mighty labrador cheered, only to wince as he shook all over one last time, clenched, and billowed up even larger, finishing out at just over 27,100 feet—over 5.1 miles tall, and an overloaded 5 miles wide, from sheer muscle alone. "That was amazing!"

"Speaking of," Yahya sighed, dusting his bulk off as he nodded to the monster-sized dog, bigger now than even Ogma, if slightly. "You're sure you're done growing, kid? That's...er, that's crazy-dangerous, being that large, so just...stay still, okay?"

"Oh! Ah, y-yessir!" Jack nodded, wagging all over, then stopping that too. "Sorry!"

“For what?” Gosha asked, sincerely.

“Yeah, seriously, kid,” Yahya relented, folding his massive arms noisily. “You two didn’t have to come back and help, but you did anyway. Even after I wasn’t around to keep the reigns. You boys are alright.”

“Haha, well, a party just feels off without a chaperone, as much as some might complain,” Pina added, the sheep having stopped at an impressive 21,100’ (~4 miles), putting him a head or so taller than either the horse or the lizard.

It was well past surreal, having a boy’s club adjourn in the bowl of entire mountain ranges, but it was what it was. Four whole ‘towns’ of muscle all commiserating together, mostly obscured by the deepening evening skies.

“Even now, the youngsters talk down to us,” Gosha sighed, slapping a huge arm over Yahya’s bulging backside. “There’s no escaping it.”

“They can have the cure before we do, if it makes you feel better,” the horse offered.

“I already feel better,” the old dragon said, patting the horse happily. “This will do.”

“Hmm. I’m definitely staying bigger than you.”

“Actually, Mister Yahya,” Jack broke in, “how’d you get so huge, so fast? You caught up with Gosha in no time, and he was growing throughout the day. Ah, if I can pry...the cargo from earlier...”

“Yeah, I ate it,” Yahya said, flatly. “Whole chunk. Had to bridge the gap to be any use.”

Jack gulped.

“W-won’t that become a little problematic, soon? You outgrew everyone with your first spurt...t-the next one might be super-colossal!”

The equine flicked an ear, struggling against an unbidden eruption of excitement. That wasn’t how he was going to act. No way. Not in front of the youths, at least.

“No, no, they’re on the cure as we speak. Relax, kid.”

“But we don’t know how long it’s going to take, if they even do manage it...”

“He knows, Jack,” Gosha replied, side-hugging a shocked Yahya in close. “He’s crafty like that! Hehe, it’ll work out, have a little faith.”

Jack was wincing overtly, without realizing.

“O...okay,” he groaned, through his flashing teeth.

“You alright there, doggy?” Pina asked, looking closer, his disrespect for boundaries back in full force. “You got something in there?”

“Oh, no, no, was I...was I grimacing?” the labrador gasped, blushing all over darkly. “That’s so rude! Pardon me, so-sorry!”

“No, actually, there is something in there,” Pina muttered, prompting Jack to feel around with his tongue. “Bunch of specks.”

“Probably debris from the tunnel,” Jack mused, working it out with his tongue and swallowing it all down. “That do it?”

“It’s done,” Pina chuckled, nodding. “So, what now? We’re so big, we can’t...well, we can’t really go anywhere that’s populated, can we?”

“Like it or not, we’re staying put here,” Yahya ordered. “Until the cure is confirmed through the site speakers. Plus if Ogma wakes up, we need to be ready. So let’s keep our ears perked, alright?”

They all nodded, going silent for a moment.

“Hehe,” Gosha started, thumping his huge tail down over the woods below.

“What?” Yahya huffed, his annoyance softly returning.

“Jack,” the reptile chuckled, “if Legoshi could see you now—”

A wild, terrible rumble answered, and all ears (sans Gosha’s) perked right up.

“Uh,” Jack gulped, looking all over. “What’s that?”

Everyone looked to Jack, making the labrador blink nervously.

“W-what!?”

The rumbling worsened, before a set of antlers rose up overhead, thickening like crazed things, a jungle of cartilage grasping through the clouds as a huge muzzle followed.

Then, an ever-widening neck.

Then, an oceanic burst of brown-red pectorals.

The mountains crumbled loose from the force of Ogma’s growth as his body exploded in size, behind them, ballooning bigger all over. Thickening follicles of fur brushed and swelled over the ridges of the range, the deer flattening it all as his shadow spilled over the four giants, making them all stumble back in awe.

“WELL,” Ogma rumbled, the great stag blowing up so loudly that it almost overpowered his creaking muscles and pulling hide, “THAT ACCOMPLISHED ABSOLUTELY NOTHING. CONGRATULATIONS. TO THINK, I RESPECTED YOU, YAHYA. ABSURD.”

A cervine erection blew clear through the range nearest them, decimating the mountain into a flattened wad of ruin as Ogma sat upright on a fantastically huge rump, crushing the farther ranges into dust under its growing heft.

By the time he was done huffing out his criticism, Ogma was already 10 miles tall—over 53,000 feet, and 45,500’ wide across. Even Jack was only even with the deer a moment, and that’s because the deer was sitting down over the landscape. If anything, the growth was escalating, as Ogma dusted his overgrown pectorals and shook even taller, wider, his orbs ballooning until they spilled up out of his growing lap.

“SINCE YOU CAN’T BE REASONABLE, WE HAVE NO BUSINESS TO CONDUCT. STILL, I AT LEAST ENJOYED YOUR RESISTANCE. I WILL ADMIT TO A CERTAIN APPEAL. I...NNNNMPH, W-WAS NEVER ONE TO THROW A PUNCH...SO I DO FIND...A FASCINATION...TO SUCH BEHAVIOR. BUT IT’S NO WAY TO RUN A PLANET. NO WAY AT ALL...”

Ogma groaned hotly as uncontrolled eruptions of bulk blew up across his form, amplifying his muscles to the point where he finally eclipsed the four males below. Yet, they only inflated more as the god-stag loomed over the countryside and mountains, all at once, surging past 15 miles, then 18, well over 95,000 feet tall, and still shuddering *bigger*.

“Get back, everyone! Beat it!” Gosha roared, shoving them all away as Ogma’s raging thighs and furred deer orbs overtook their valley.

“WHO WERE YOU TO TALK ABOUT YOUTH? YOU’RE ALL CHILDREN, TO ME. YOU DESERVE TO BE LOOMED OVER BY AN ADULT. I CAN PROTECT YOU. I CAN STEER EVERYONE THAT’S SMART ENOUGH TO ACCEPT EXPERIENCE.”

“H-he’s still getting bigger!” Pina yelped, staggering back up the other side of the bordering mountain, as Ogma’s hand thudded down, smashing the sheep back-first into Jack, cracking the mountain in two.

The impact blasted through Pina’s wool, and far back, near Jack’s snout, something miniscule smashed open.

“H-heavy!” Jack groaned, as Ogma’s growing hand pinned he and Pina down to the land, the deer shaking his head as it swelled into the upper atmosphere, higher and higher.

“THIS REALLY WAS A DISAPPOINTMENT, OVERALL, DESPITE THE AMUSEMENTS IN BETWEEN. YOU’RE BARELY BETTER THAN MELON, I FEEL.”

Jack coughed and wheezed as Pina was ground against him, the tiny cloud of smashed particulates being inhaled directly as the dog breathed the crushed remains of the other crate’s meteor in.

At 19 miles Ogma passed the 100,000-foot mark, and *still* he grew. Gosha and Yahya both attacked, slashing the colossus’ arms wherever they generously presented themselves; however, being only a fifth as big as the stag, there proved no stopping him as he continued to expand, on and on.

Feet the size of lakes rolled over hill and dale, mountain and river alike, soft soles bullying into the clay as his heels crushed the geography under him into nothing.

At 21 miles in height, nearly 111,000’, Ogma was as big as a city, and still growing.

Yahya and Gosha pulled with unbelievable strength, yet could hardly lift one of Ogma’s vast fingers in their attempts to get Pina or Jack free.

The missiles from Site Delta were less than party poppers to the booming deer as they peppered his muscles, dozens and dozens of tiny blips of light illuminating swaths of bulging brawn and ruffling red-brown fur, before dying off uselessly into the dark once again.

“HMM,” Ogma quake-hummed, raising one indifferent brow as he blew up through the highest clouds, out toward the reach of the stars, watching the dots pop around his surging rear. ***“I SUPPOSE IN ALL THIS FUSS, THEY FORGOT WHO THEY WORK FOR. WELL. SO LONG AS THEY KEEP WORKING, IT HARDLY MATTERS.”***

Even his voice was devastating now, as it exploded down over the countryside, his body greedily consuming space as he continually grew.

At 23 miles, planes had to veer around him down about his waist, controls betraying panicked alterations as his thighs surged higher than the passengers, filling countless windows as they swelled. The colossus sat still, nonetheless, eyeing the curvature of the state itself.

“BIGGER THAN I WOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED. MUCH BIGGER. I WONDER, AT THIS POINT, IF...”

24 miles

Ogma breathed, and breathed as deliberately deep as his bulk allowed—which was considerable. His chest stretched even larger, mid-spurt, outpacing the rest of him as he held it in, blinked, smiled, and blew it out. His chest not only refused to shrink back, but only billowed even larger.

“FASCINATION UPON FASCINATION. HAHA. VERY GOOD, VERY GOOD. NO ALTITUDE SICKNESS, NO SYMPTOMS OF DEPRIVATION. WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE LEGENDS WERE THIS ACCURATE! I CAN STILL BREATHE!”

“He’s lost it,” Gosha grunted, the humongous reptile straining with Yahya as the deer’s growing fingers lifted a little higher.

“No, he...he’s right,” Yahya moaned, tugging at Pina’s wool. He’s breathing!”

Jack’s entire body began to tremble as he struggled to get out from under Ogma’s hand (and, by association, poor Pina). He sneezed hard, thankfully shy of Pina’s head, but the moment the pressure ejected, his entire body *exploded*.

Pina *baahed* in shock as the dog's bulk spilled out like a high-pressure canister being popped, his yellow muscles overflowing out of Ogma's immense hand and into both Gosha and Yahya at once, bowling them over.

Wave after wave of quaking canine mass gushed, boomed and bulged, freely gorging on size as Jack roared, then sneezed again, magnifying his growth spurt instantly. Where roughly 5.1 miles of labrador had been, there were 10, then 15.

There was no time to react on anyone's part as Jack sneezed again, an echoing dog sneeze that ushered another exploding burst of growth, surging him to 20 miles...

At 25 miles, Ogma's growth came to a halt, a growth engine winding down, until the great rumbling subsided and an eerie silence retook the landscape. A 4-mile wide rump settled into its tremendous crater, scarring the terrain as Ogma crossed his bulging legs about his oversized sacs and straightened his gigantic back. A stag over 132,000 feet tall and 120,000 feet wide took a bigger breath, letting the colder hints of space flow into him, knowing he was so big that he could do it if he wanted, despite all science.

“HMM. I WAS RIGHT. GODHOOD.”

All the stoicism in the world couldn't keep the deer's erection from swelling painfully long atop his orbs, enormous veins bulging out as he closed his eyes and breathed again, his chest and back blowing up even greater, holding it, enjoying that even the elements at last had no say in the matter anymore.

“...I COULD OUTGROW EVERYTHING, AND IT WOULDN'T MATTER AT ALL. I CERTAINLY HOPE YOU CAN SEE THIS, LOUIS. IF SO, WATCH AND LEARN. YOU...”

The god-deer flexed so hard that his muscles erupted, not in any show of power, but from the absolute elation he withheld inside.

“YOU...WILL BE EVEN BIGGER.”

Then, all too suddenly, it happened.

TWITCH

Ogma's mesospheric ears bobbed, suggesting something back on the planet's humble surface. He looked down, saw only his chest, then went goggle-eyed.

"HMM?"

An equivalent mass blew up into the startled male, a vast erection and overfull pecs smashing, pressing and rolling bigger over even him as Jack sneezed and sneezed. By the time Ogma had his enormously thick arms up to shield himself, it was too late.

Jack was 50 miles tall, *twice* the deer's size, and still growing.

Gosha grasped at ever-swelling fur as he rode Jack's hips, higher and higher, as Yahya clung to his lower forearm, scooped up early and brought along for the ride. Pina wriggled up between the dog's pectoral cleft, only to feel the growing mounds erupt even larger, swallowing him up again as his chest burst up over Ogma, consuming his muzzle and head and antlers.

Mile after mile of the state dented in, the tectonic plates below suffering as Jack's weight climbed too much. His tail whipped the lower skies into a storm as his cheeks and thighs and sacs swelled bigger, bigger, smothering up into Ogma's body, filling his lap and pinching his knees between his orbs and inner thighs, giving the deer no chance to pull loose.

At 90 miles, Jack's abs rammed ceaselessly into Ogma's face, the deer not even a third his size as he struggled to get free and failed.

Jack sneezed harder, his muscles in a panic to grow as the power compounded on itself more and more aggressively, spurt spilling over spurt. His triceps swelled until they nearly swallowed up around his surging back, his neck blowing three times wider as his body width outclassed his height, making him a living wall of brawn.

At 130 miles (686,400 feet), Jack was so big that a city car would have needed about two hours to drive from his toes to his eyes. His arms bore a circumference of nearly 45 miles, so big that two cities could have filled them, side by side. Six Goshas and six Yahyas holding hands would *almost* have them covered.

That was before Jack sneezed again.

And again.

And again.

And again.

And again.

BADLANDS, NORTH AND CENTRAL

LEGOSHI, 7:44 PM

Wah-choo!

Something strange perked the wolf's ears up as he snapped to, coming out of his fear-induced paralysis. He had been steadily blowing up here and there for the past several hours, and about an hour ago the tremors of growth had mercifully ceased, leaving him at a mind-blowing 475,200 feet, 90 miles tall. He was sitting as low as he could to the firmament, however, so that shaved it down to roughly sixty, from ground to muzzle.

This, in turn, bunched all of his bulk in on itself, keeping Legoshi really quite soft and warm, despite the cold around the lower thermosphere. Now there was a joke of a name.

"So soft," Juno huffed, the 5-mile female nuzzling in against all that cascading, plush, gray wolf fur, melting her as she basked in it. "Just want to stay like this."

"Yeah, I have to admit, this part isn't so bad," Haru concurred, the 7-mile bulk rabbit massaging up at Legoshi's overblown chest. "I was kind of hoping he'd stop sooner, because, I mean, he was already so much taller than I was, back before. Now that he's this big, I do just want to cuddle in and get lost in it all."

"Feels...safe," Juno mooned, wagging faster, making her gigantic hips shake about.

"That's a good way to put it."

"AH, HARU. J-JUNO. DO YOU SEE THAT?"

Both females stopped for a moment to look. Both cried out on sight of it.

Legoshi gulped, looking out across the state.

“I thought I heard something, but...what is it?”

He squinted, then sniffed hard, gasping loudly. He sniffed again in the direction of a massive yellow wall in the distance, before his tail began to smack around in a mad wag of delighted joy.

“N...no. No way.”

Of all things, *Legoshi* looked up. And up.

“NO WAY...”

SNFF SNFF

A shadow fell over even the massive gray wolf as the monstrous mass shifted, flattening its side of the wilderness as a great, boundless yellow muzzle dipped in from far above, snuffling the clouds up, then lowering even nearer, before:

“LEGOSHI!?”

Legoshi’s entire body lit up like a furnace as he smiled uncontrollably wide. The yellow muzzle descended even closer, bumping at last into Legoshi’s thick body, then nuzzling right in with a choked sob of complete, abject relief.

“JACK!?”

The impositions of geography fell through as the 255-mile tall labrador simply leaned over five cities and hours of interstate, cuddling the spotted wolf up like a teddy bear.

“L-LEGOSHIIII!”

Not even 24 hours ago, Jack had been a runt, in his own mind. Now, the 1.3-million foot labrador hugged his oversized best friend like nothing, nearly 3 times *his* size. The huge went on, scrubbing Juno and Haru against Pina, while Yahya hung on tight to an endless yellow bicep.

Somewhere at the back hip Gosha shot up, tall and alert, like a weed in a golden field.

“L...legoshi!?”

SITE DELTA

OPERATIVE T, 7:50 PM

“So, glad as I am that there’s a deep sublevel we could escape to, and all,” Operative T said, kicking about on her seat in the bottom deck R&D satellite, “how are we supposed to get back to the topside, like this?”

Considering all the monitor feeds were from satellite footage of Jack sitting atop them, atop the mountains, valleys, woods, forests, lakes and hills, on a duff 31 miles across, it was a fair question. Underneath Jack’s unbound girth was a pinned deer head, just large enough to protrude out, looking calmly (but thoroughly) trapped as its chin rested on the turf.

“There’re trams that run to the West and North, away from here,” the owl responded, staring into a computer readout with countless equations piling up. “And we’ll be on them in a few minutes, I’m happy to report.”

“Wait...really! You mean?”

The scientist nodded, rubbing at tired eyes.

“I do. We have it. We have the foundations of a cure—well, should, at any rate, it needs as much testing as possible, in the little time we have. Then, we can send the data to get more made, from other facilities with more resources.”

“Which is to say, no time,” T sighed. “Well, still, that’s great! Thank goodness!”

“Eh, this brings us to the problem of the *moment*, I fear,” he added. “We only have so many resources here on site left, to synthesize so much of an initial *theoretical* dosage.”

The capybara pinched between her eyes, readying for it.

“Meaning.”

“Meaning, for the moment, we have enough of a cure available...for *one*.”