

Pass or Pop!, Part 3 (Inflation, Popping, Various Series)

The crowd roared as Fusen spun back onto the stage. “Welcome back to *Pass or Pop!*, everyone! For those of nyou just tuning in, nyou’re just in time for the final round! Let’s have a little chat with our contestants before we begin.”

Giggling, she snapped her fingers, and the lights illuminated the podiums behind her, revealing the puffed up bodies and faces of Haruko Haruhara and Erika Furudo. Fusen darted towards them, her microphone raised. “How do nyou feel, nya? Enjoying the show? Ready for the finale?”

Erika glared daggers, but Haruko simply laughed. “Ready to win!”

Fusen seemed a little taken aback by this, but she soon recovered her poise. “Well, okay then! Let’s get started then, nya!” She snapped her fingers.

At once, the previous round’s obstacle course dropped out of the theater, disappearing into the pit below the stage. What rose to replace it was even more sinister: a giant arena, like the Roman Colosseum, its floor coated in a fine layer of sand. The only thing it was missing were some lions.

“The rules of this round are very simple, nya.” Fusen snapped her fingers, and with a pair of little flashes, the contestants vanished from their podiums and reappeared in the arena, one on each side. “It’s a fight to the finish! Whoever pops their opponent first wiiiiins!”

She snapped her fingers, and from above rained an assortment of weapons. Spears and swords and bows and javelins and lances. The only thing they shared in common was that they were *pointy*. Haruko snatched up a spear with a laugh, while Erika toed a bow, looking horrified.

“Of course, there are a couple of catches, nya.” Giggling, Fusen snapped again, and with a hissing sound, a wispy pink smoke started to spill into the arena. “We’re pumping the arena full of bloating gas, so the longer our contestants are in there, the bigger they’re going to get! If someone doesn’t finish someone else off quickly, they’re *both* going to—” She made a popping motion. “Also, the arena’s full of spike traps. Whichever way nyou look at it, this contest’s going to end with a *bang*, nya!” She laughed. “On the count of three, everyone! One... Two... Aaaaaannd—!”

She dropped her arm. A buzzer blared. And as the crowd roared in excitement, the forcefield separating the two halves of the arena fizzled out of existence.

For a second or two, the contestants simply stood there, staring at each other. Then, with a laugh, Haruko raised her spear and charged, her swollen body audibly squeaking as she flew across the field.

Hissing, Erika hurried to snatch up an arrow and nock her bow. Drawing it tight, she took aim and loose it, but Haruko had seen her coming: the missile pinged off her spear’s blade, and

just like that, Haruko was at her, stabbing and stabbing. Erika threw herself back, scurrying out of range, but Haruko followed her with a laugh, still thrusting wildly.

Just as it seemed Haruko would catch her prey, she took another step and the ground beneath her beeped. With a great *thwump*, the floor dropped, revealing a pit full of spikes. If Haruko hadn't been so buoyant, she would have tumbled straight into it. As it was, she managed to stab her spear into the far side and vault over.

Scarcely a second after she'd landed, a javelin flew over her head. Snapping upright, her swollen boobs jiggling, she laughed to see Erika picking up another. Grinning, Haruko raised her spear and flung herself forward, forcing Erika to drop to the ground with a squeak from her bloated belly.

She was back on her feet by the time Haruko had grabbed another weapon: a trident with three menacingly sharp points. Panting for breath, her swollen body feeling a little larger with the second, Erika snatched up a rapier and aimed its point at Haruko's breast.

She'd expected the weapon to intimidate her rival at least a little, but she was mistaken. Grinning, Haruko raised her trident's tip to her lips and gave it a smug little kiss before aiming its tip at her opponent.

Erika swallowed. Clearly melee wasn't going to be a winning strategy. But what was she supposed to do instead...? Maybe she could lead her over some traps, or...?

A sudden tightness in her chest drew her attention away from strategy. Looking down, she shivered to see her boobs were twice as big as they'd been at the beginning of the match. The rest of her body wasn't doing much better. If she stayed in this awful gas much longer...

She had no options left. Her grip tightened on her rapier. It all came down to this...! *Charge!*

With a high-pitched, helium-addled warcry, Erika thrust her blade forward and rushed her opponent.

Haruko wasn't thrown off. With a laugh, she aimed her own weapon at Erika and charged her in turn. Together, the two swollen women rushed across the sand like a pair of giant, ambulatory beachballs, their weapons raised ahead of them, their tips growing closer and closer and closer, until at last—

In the stands, the crowd went silent.

—they finally made contact.

Unfortunately for Erika, Haruko's weapon was just that slightest bit longer.

There was no pain as it sank into her flesh, only a strange tension as her rubbery skin struggled to resist it. At last, the blade penetrated her defenses—she had a brief instant to see the hole and feel the air rushing out of her. Just the slightest instant to despair, and then—

With a tremendous bang, Erika Furudo popped, launching scraps of rubbery flesh all over the arena.

Haruko dropped her trident and wobbled backward with a laugh. “Few!” she said, putting her hands on her swollen hips, “I really thought I was in trouble for a second there!”

In a flash, she was returned to the stage.

“Congratulations! Nyou’re our victor!” cried Fusen, rushing towards her. She threw a crown onto Haruko’s head, a sash over her shoulders, and pressed a bouquet of flowers into her hands. “Congratulations! Is there anything nyou’d like to say, nya?”

Haruko laughed. “Thanks for having me, I guess! This whole thing has been a blast.” She smirked. “Eh, get it? Eh?”

Fusen laughed too. “Oh, that reminds me,” she said. “I almost forgot nyour rosette, nya.” She produced a big blue rosette with a #1 on it, and made to pin it to Haruko’s breast. “Hold still, nya, nyou don’t want me to—”

POP.

“--nyou. Oops.”