

8 - Home Again

“Dawn? You-houu~, sweetheart?” came the voice of a woman who was likely not so sweet, rather, one who was simply so saturated in it that the very word itself became toxic. In other words, Stacy had nudged Dawn’s shoulder, the girl who had been lost in thought as she stared back at her reflection trapped in a glossy wooden panel.

Stacy wasn’t worth the words, nor the iota of trust Dawn had left for Amazons, crusting at the deep dark bottom of her chest cavity. The best she could give was a blank look.

“Hm?” Stacy angled her head, moving her hand atop Dawn’s head. “What’s wrong, honey?” The sudden shift in gesture was only a mere step behind the Little’s reflex to step back. She’d been dumb enough to let two crazy hormone-driven giants that had eyes for her hold her, dress her, and parade her around like she was their property. Like hell she’d even come near a line of affection close to that ever again, especially with a complete stranger.

“Please just take me to my room...” Dawn spoke lowly, just managing to keep her breath in order.

She could hear a snigger above her ears, one from the same person that had just tried to touch her.

“Of course! Only after you give me a big smile, though?” coaxing and cheery as she was, Dawn wasn’t sharing the mood. Thus, instead of a smile, the deathly line her lips already formed arched into a soured frown.

They’re all the same... Projecting, controlling, seeing everything how they want to...!

“Maybe some tickles are what we need then. Huh? Huh?” and with each coo she inched closer and closer, faster than Dawn’s backpedaling, to the point where the woman’s wriggly fingers did just touch Dawn’s sides.

“St-- DON’T *FUCKING* TOUCH ME!” She was going to shout ‘no’, but that was before Stacy had actually crossed a line. She quite screamed, falling back on her bottom and kicking her feet. Stacy did stop, looking a slight bit surprised, even sharing a look with the woman behind the desk.

Stacy then sighed, “Maybe that’s why he didn’t want to adopt you...”

“Well, not expecting tantrums is being a bit too wishful,” the employee chimed in, chuckling a little herself.

Their small-talk existed just outside the girl’s realm of influence, who was coming to terms with her small outburst. Unlike the James and Katherine she held so much ire and disgust towards, Stacy, the just-as-worse, had absolutely no reason to be lenient with her, nor hold back. Such a crucial fact that would have made for a better forethought rather than after, had Dawn stuttering over her trembling self.

“W-wait, no--! I-I didn’t mean that...it’s just, I was...” And unlike before, now the Amazon before her shaped a smug grin on her face. She had no simple admonishment, but instead something ulterior.

“Excuses are no good, especially if they’re not going to have an apology to go with them.” Stacy leaned in a bit closer whilst the small girl had herself planted bottom-first on the floor. With each inch given, so was her composure out the window. Suddenly a sail with no wind, she could only watch as the shark swam closer.

“Now,” the lack of distance intensified the authority. She could practically see herself in the reflection of the Amazon’s glossy lips, and even more feel the whisper of warm breath on her skin. “Didn’t we talk about bad words *not* being allowed while you’re here?” Her brow was raised, and even bent over she still assumed her hands on her hips.

After today, feeling like a millenia ago, Dawn did recall some inkling of a mind-boggling briefing once they first arrived in this dimension. It was a strange list of rules and requirements, and one such oddity was the forbidden use of ‘naughty’ language.

Under no circumstances will the use of adult language be prohibited. This includes but is not limited to swear words, derogatory terms, potty words, as well as swear phrases, including disrespect toward authority figures, colloquially termed as “back-talk”.

“B-but...but I...” She had all the thought and reason she could ever need to at least say something, but the commanding stare from Stacy was enough to melt it all entirely.

“There is zero tolerance for bad behavior, Dawn,” Stacy tutted, taking the girl by the hand and standing her upright. Dawn was too frazzled to do anything. It was the thought of what was to come that petrified her the most, and it was showing.

“Honey, now,” Stacy just didn’t manage to choke down her small laugh as she patted the statue-esque Dawn’s head. “You look like you’ve seen a ghost!”

“I-I’m sorry...” Dawn murmured under the weight of her own worries.

“Hm? What was that?” Stacy with her sickly, condescending smile, leaned in just a smidge closer.

“I’m sorry...” Dawn said again, now upgrading herself to a whisper.

“Sorry for what?” Just the etches of white were starting to peek between her red lips.

“Sorry...” her eyes drifted to the skies, yet the face of a deity stared back at her, drowning the girl in its absolute shadow, blinding her for just long enough to slip her hands from the reigns and fall back off her pegasus into the depths below. Where this world deemed her to be. “Sorry for saying fu--”

“*Don’t*, repeat that?” Stacy’s voice made a sharp incision, deftly stopping Dawn’s tongue in its track. Her expression hadn’t changed, yet you couldn’t mistake the authority and annoyance masked in her tone. “I’m sorry Stacy, for breaking what rule?”

It wasn’t a cold sweat this time. A warm, bead felt as if it’d begun to accumulate at the top of Dawn’s forehead, right underneath her hair. She was feeling a new kind of warm and frustrated that was the worst complement imaginable to her reddened cheeks. Stacy’s expectant stare hadn’t left and nor did her proximity change.

Every moment felt like battering humiliation. Each encounter was another opportunity to shape her into something she so desperately didn’t want to be. “Sorry for saying a...a bad word...” And even still, what to her was a fleeting gesture or run-of-the-mill, an infraction as harsh as swearing from a Little probably held the weight of the world in measures of impurity for an Amazon. Or at the very least, Amazons forced the image and perceived significance of it.

“Awh!” The desk worker fawned, still a spectator to the public shaming, “Look at how worked up you’ve got her! She’s already in tears...”

As much as Dawn wanted to call bull, she was too busy wiping away the inklings of tears she did in fact have. “I-I’m not... Just, look, I’m sorry! I’m sorry for swearing, okay? Please! Just let me go back to my room, okay? I’ll be good! I just want to go home!”

Stacy finally leaned back some, rearing away with a thoughtful breath. “Normally, when I hear something like that, it’s an express ticket back to the hotel and you’re off the tour, you know?” As if it wasn’t clear, Stacy had been notorious for sending many-a Portal Little back to the hotel early for breaking some sort of rule on the tour. Not only that, but to drill the severity of breaking the rules even further, you essentially become a child disallowed from the class field-trip for breaking the rules. And given such harsh rules, a few offenders are naturally inevitable, hence the few Dawn did remember being sent back to the hotel. But, to finish the thought for Stacy and spare Dawn’s ears, they both knew a punishment like that didn’t hold water since they already were at the hotel and essentially on the last day of the tour.

Dawn was smart to not be wise. Speak, even, lest that be considered anything remotely close to back-talk. She was scared. Scared more than she’d been while with...those other two.

“But still, a pottymouth *is* a pottymouth...” she tapped her finger off her hip, as if trying to decipher the answer inside her head.

And the more this pointless charade went on, the more sour the feeling was in Dawn’s stomach. It made her sick knowing that something diabolical was to come. The impending doom was enough to make her cry again. She couldn’t help it. Amazons are so terrifyingly capable through both their own strength and sickly ingenuity. Was this it? A simple swear word that did her in? Next thing she’d know, Stacy would be pulling out the diaper right then...

“S-s...oap...” Dawn whimpered, sniffing.

Stacy stopped her pondering, raising a curious brow. “Hm? Soap?”

Dawn quietly nodded. “I-I’m really sorry...”

“Oh!” Stacy ‘aww’ed in some twisted form of adoration as it looked as if she’d genuinely given the tearful girl a smile. “That’s a great idea!” She snickered, sealing the deal with a fist planted in her palm. “That takes guts, little munchkin,” she chuckled, already swooping the yelping girl into the air. “But I can tell you want to show that you’re sorry.”

“Wow, I’m really impressed!” The worker nodded with just as much enthusiasm. Dawn shrunk further and further into herself. Completely bashful and utterly disgusted with her own cowardice. The only thing she could think of as salvation was to dig her own grave. Go out on her own terms. If only then, she might be able to come up with an idea that was bad, but not bad to the level of these sadistic giants...

Dawn hiccuped with a quivering frown as she nodded, meekly playing along to their “compliments.”

“There’s a bathroom down the hall by the elevators,” the worker pointed with a rosy smile. It was the first time Dawn had seen her so happy. It wasn’t corporate this time, likely because Dawn’s own demise resonated with something primal in both giantesses.

“Perfect! We’ll get that mouth of yours squeaky clean. Then we’ll apologize properly,” Stacy assured with a firm squeeze on the girl’s bottom. Surely she knew what was underneath the pants, if it wasn’t obvious already.

A horrible thump struck her chest with each step they took. Dawn knew what was to come, and assuming there were no tricks, the face value was terrible enough already.

“You know, I was thinking how to punish you, but I definitely didn’t think of an idea like this!” Stacy confided, looking almost giddy. “What-with you being such a pottymouth, I figured we might as well make you look like a potty-pants too!” She shared a laugh with herself on that, then subsided into a reminiscent sigh. “Of course, then we’d have to find you diapers... This gets to the point in its own way though! And we’ve arrived!” An outstretched hand swung open the door to a checker-tiled bathroom, one wall lined with a long counter of sinks and a matching mirror.

In its reflection Dawn could see herself, locked in the carrying arms of Stacy, who looked happy as could be in the mirror. Dawn, however, looked much more plagued with trepidation, as if about to throw up. And to think, had this, her “brilliant” idea not hatched, she’d be off to legitimate diapers instead...

It was happening a mile a minute. Suddenly she was sitting on the counter, between two sinks, and right behind her, a gargantuan soap dispenser. “Can...” she looked behind, then back at Stacy. Desperate, pleading, “can I...” her voice was thick as the reality started to sink in. Her eyes were glossy as Stacy started to look confused. “P-please! Don’t make me! I-I’m sorry! I promise I won’t do anything bad again! Don’t make me eat soap!” She started to wail as punishment itself breathed down her neck. She couldn’t do this. She couldn’t be punished. It was disgusting and beyond demeaning!

Stacy turned her head some, “Are you saying you’d rather diapers then?” she asked a genuine question, devoid of any rhetoric that might make you think otherwise.

“No!” Dawn shouted back, a mess of tears and sniffles. “J-Just...please! Forgive me this once! I’ll be good, so don’t punish me!”

“Dawn!” Stacy exclaimed, as if chiding with a good friend, “I only went along with this because I thought you *wanted* to show you were sorry!”

“I-I do!” Dawn cried, lurching forward.

“Well, how can I know that?” Stacy shrugged, easing her back. Even now, she still had something of a smirk.

“B-Because...because I...” Dawn was lost, the emptiness was in her eyes. The worth of her word meant nothing. She had to in some way show she was sorry... To apologize. To be punished...

“Because, nothing...” Stacy hushed, running a hand through Dawn’s hair. Dawn was breathing quickly, trying to keep herself intact. “Shh, shh...okay, come on now...let’s be mature about this...”

Dawn could barely react. She was suddenly being embraced, but it wasn’t soap in her mouth, so she wasn’t opposed. Anything but that felt like paradise right then. She could even feel herself starting to breath again...

“And...good...” Stacy stepped back, satisfied. “We’re a big girl, right?”

“Bi...?” Dawn only half-caught it. “I...I’m an adul...”

“Right, a big girl,” Stacy smoothly talked over her, smiling with a nod. “And big girls know how to face the music.”

“But I’m...”

“So, let’s just do a little something first...” Stacy stepped in again, taking a hold of Dawn’s waist. The Little was too afraid to kick, terrified that she might invite the sadist back into the room. Her large thumbs hooked into the waistline of her stretchy pants, pulling nice and slow as the pants came down her legs, accompanied by a gasp from Stacy.

“What? Pull-ups!” She made direct eye-contact with Dawn. “And *not* big girl panties?” Stacy shook her head with a feigned uncertainty. “I don’t know, Dawn... The only big girls I know wear panties,” she gave Dawn’s padded front a light, crinkly pat. “Not these, hun-bun.”

“Yeah, but that’s only because--!”

“Well, but they’re not diapers either...” Stacy continued, pretending to ponder, yet Dawn had become too shaken to realize it was a full-on act. “Babies definitely wear diapers, no doubt about it...” she nodded, solidifying her key logic. “But pull-ups? Hmm...well, you tell me Dawn?”

“Wha...what? But, I *am* telling you!” Dawn sat herself on her knees, pressing a hand to her chest. “I’m an adult!”

“An adult? With those?” she accusingly pointed at the underwear. “Definitely not. Big girls don’t make stuff up either... So really, I guess all that means is...”

“Big girl!”

“Huh?” Stacy asked. “One more time? What’d you say?”

“B-...” Dawn looked crestfallen, defeated. “I’m a big girl...”

“Oh! Well, I guess *that* could be true...” she considered. “You’re in pull-ups, but I guess that means you could be out of them any time soon. Diapers or panties...” she muttered a bit lower, “But, who knows? There’s more to it than just potty training...” Once more she seemed to drift, alluding to Dawn’s “bad behavior” from before, hence Dawn’s panicked input.

“I-I am though!” Stacy looked her way again. “I...I am...” She was unfortunately smart enough to know exactly where this went. “I...” she wiped her eyes again. “I can prove it.”

“Well, if you say so,” Stacy encouragingly nodded. “Big girls take the initiative, after all. So, go on,” she gestured with a hand and an eager smile. “Show me how sorry you are!”

Her hand beckoned to the beast behind Dawn, bolted into the wall. A large rectangular, plastic box with rounded corners with a faint red light projecting from underneath it. In reference to Dawn, the dispenser was massive, likely storing a whole gallon of hand soap...

She felt the knots in her stomach battle already with squeamish hiccups.

“You can’t get any soap if you’re so far away, silly!” Stacy laughed as an open palm cupped Dawn’s lightly padded rear, forcing her forward. Whether she liked it or not, she was well within arms reach of the dispenser now.

I'm actually washing out my own mouth... She was still beside herself whilst things only became worse and more jarring. Yet her hand stuck forward, as if she were preparing to wash her hands. But she wasn't. Not even close.

"I-Is...is it safe?" She turned her head back to Stacy, who seemed to lose a little glow in her smile once she could see Dawn was starting to delay the spectacle.

Stacy sighed, already turning in place. "If it's too hard, there's always diapers, you know?"

"No!" She didn't even consider the alternative. "Please! See?" and out her hand went, illuminated by the sensor light and the mechanical noise of a dispenser releasing its contents. She could feel the lukewarm, viscous substance pool into her hand. It was translucent and had a very "clean" smell, not to be confused with anything positive-sounding like "wonderful" or "lovely". Just industrially clean... It reeked of chemicals. Right then, after getting her serving size, the mere thought of putting it in her mouth made her gag.

Her palm was already filled quite well, considering it was likely more of an Amazon sizing. Despite having the shakes, her hand more or less hung there, suspended by the stress and anxiety of her own imagination.

"Hmm..." A nothing but judging mumble came from above and behind Dawn's shoulder, from an all too familiar face. "You *did* say a very bad word... We should be extra safe to keep that pretty mouth of yours clean, shouldn't we?"

"B-Bu..." there was a sunken look in her eyes as Dawn wordlessly confronted the Amazon, still holding the soapy substance in hand. Her speech was broken, and you could hear the fragments of composure left in her tone sink through the remaining pitfalls.

"Come on," Stacy urged with a matronly tone as she gently pushed Dawn's filled hand back in by the elbow. "A little more won't hurt..."

There was a painful twist in her chest and a reactionary whimper as more liquid seeped into her hand. So much that it was leaking between her fingers. Overflowing soap in hand, she'd never known how much a simple hygiene product could embody such a terrifying, skin-crawling abyss. It was incomprehensible. Somehow, all this soapy muck was going to enter her body...

"Turn around too, I need to see it. To see that you're apologizing properly?" This time she didn't do it herself, although Dawn was sluggish at best in doing so. The hand holding her demise had

practically become stone with how still it was. The entirety of her right half had gone numb, at least mentally so.

“P...” she sputtered between her lips. “P-p-lease!” It was better than diapers, but that didn’t mean this was any good either. She just...she couldn’t! The very idea of what she was about to do was inconceivable. She’d barely even prepared herself. With how quick Stacy had been, Dawn had but a minute to realize that her own spur-of-the-moment idea was manifesting at such a shocking speed. And because she wasn’t ready, all she could do was beg. Beg and grovel. Wasn’t this what Amazons liked to see, anyways? Littles crying? Belittled? Suffering? She was giving every morsel of it on a silver platter, so maybe it was enough to convince Stacy. Maybe--

A large finger quickly and forcefully shot itself between Dawn’s lips, opening her mouth just a little wider to compensate. Her tongue brushed the appendage, tasting something wet, almost gel-like, but couldn’t misplace its terrible taste, already feeling the bubbles begin to foam. She could feel it dripping down her lips as the finger slipped itself out, coated in hand soap, leaving behind a nice dressing of chemical hand product in Dawn’s mouth.

Wordlessly she looked at Stacy, seeing she was the one to have done it. She already reached for a faucet and washed her finger, sporting a somewhat annoyed look.

“Sorry, I got a little impatient,” she sighed, looking again at the bewildered girl. “See? Now you know what it tastes like. Not good, huh? Think of that taste whenever you think of using bad words, because that’s what it feels like.”

She felt violated. Never had a stranger inserted themselves into any of her orifices, especially a giant trying to force soap down her throat. Regardless, the taste was vile, just as bad as she’d expected. It was so terribly unpleasant and she tried so hard to lick all the corners of her interior mouth to somehow get rid of the sickly aftertaste. It felt like a thin layer of muck that’d bonded with her own saliva, covering the roof of her mouth, like it was permanent. Every stroke of her tongue would catch more of the everlasting suds. It was bitter, almost metallic; utterly disgusting.

Dawn tried to gag but she couldn’t throw it up. There was simply too little of it to try and she couldn’t convince her body. It was stuck inside her and she was bawling.

“You know if you swallow it while the taste is still in your mouth it’ll go by a lot faster...” Stacy whispered in a clear voice, gesturing Dawn bring the pile of soap in her hand even closer. Dawn wanted to look at her with anger and hatred, but she was too busy crying over the terrible taste and trying to fathom how she was going to consume so much more.

There was no saving grace. No last-minute interruption. In all her moments of suspense in this dimension there'd always been something to cause a surprise or complete upset. But not now. As reality had once again backed her into a corner, there wouldn't be a third party this time.

"Dawn," Stacy tapped her foot. "As much as I'd like for you to dilly-dally, the world can't stop just because you said a naughty word. Either we can do this now or skip to the diapers, *then* we move from there. Your choice, sweetheart."

Your choice. Prove yourself. It's your fault.

And more and more as the pressure grew, she watched as the soap-filled hand came closer and closer, her face grimacing the more she looked. That terrible aftertaste was still lurking in her mouth. She'd be sanding off the top layer of her taste buds just to forget this feeling. She couldn't count on Stacy making empty threats which is why she couldn't hesitate. What's more, of everything, this absolutely was the very last thing she wanted to admit, but even Stacy wasn't totally baseless saying that she'd be better off eating the soap fast...

Her mouth was smothered by it, pressed close by her palm. Her body moved faster than her own disgust could prevent it as the liquid soap was pressed against her open mouth. She could feel it hit her tongue, the back of her mouth. But it wasn't perfect. The viscous gel now coated her teeth and was dripping from her bottom lip, heavy droplets striking the countertop.

Dawn winced and her face scrunched, once again doused in that terrible, metallic taste. Her tongue tried to move it down to swallow it faster, but the substance only spread and clung to untouched surfaces. Her mouth had practically become a swamp. She was messy all over and she could barely keep herself steady.

"*Mmmm!*" Stacy cheered, burning with a fire behind her eyes. "Isn't it so yummy?" Stacy chuckled, wiping her finger underneath Dawn's dripping chin. "Native from here or not, all you Littles sure can be messy eaters," she laughed some more.

She wanted to curse. She wanted to scream. But her mouth was filled with soap and she was currently dealing with the consequences of "being bad" in the first place. New tears left her eyes, all for a new reason. This time she'd truly been put in her place. Checkmated, as she helplessly swallowed a generous helping of soap, only to find so much of it was still slowly trying to creep down her esophagus. She didn't deserve this. It was a stupid rule to begin with. This Amazon was being cruel for the sake of just because.

Then by some miraculous cause her body finally did object. Dawn had visibly seized once her gag reflex triggered, and out went a helping of her recent “food” with more foreign substance.

“Uh-oh!” Stacy mockingly cried, “guess you went a little too fast, huh?”

Dawn had been looking down with her hands planted on the counter, struggling to keep herself straight. There was a terrible burning sensation in her throat as an everlasting drip ebbed from her lips. She could feel the tiny amount of bile still sitting inside her as she coughed, yet it stayed dormant.

Her body was no longer her own once Stacy helped her sit upright. Then came the sordid act of Stacy turning Dawn around to face the mirror.

A mess would have been putting it lightly.

Beyond her reddened eyes and flushed cheeks, random strands of hair stuck to her face and the corners of her mouth, glued to her skin by an excess of soap. She couldn’t tell whether it was more soap above her mouth or snot leaking from her nose. It could’ve been both.

Her shirt had ample amounts of staining, dark splotches dotted all around, accompanied by a cold adhesive feeling to her skin. Her entire look was deranged and she was certainly feeling the part as she looked lower. Her pants were still bunched around her ankles and her underwear was a horrid spotlight in its own right.

Her pant-- no, her pull-ups, she second-guessed herself with a quiet, teary laugh, seemed to be the only part of herself that had avoided a wardrobe malfunction. And just beyond the tiny beast in the mirror was the glowing prim and proper giantess who did all of this to her.

Watching the mirror’s reflection, Stacy leaned her head in close enough that the two faces were side by side. “Tell me,” with two delicate fingers she separated one of Dawn’s hairs from her skin. “What do you see?”

Stacy continued to keep that same calm and collected look, whilst Dawn’s madness continued to bleed into reality.

“A...an--” she stopped herself short to cough, feeling as if her throat had been shortened, dried and clogged. “A-an a-adul...”

“Dawn, honey...” Stacy set a large hand on the girl’s back, visibly shocking her as she jumped, her own surprise leading to more whimpers. “I *know* we didn’t just do all this to make the same mistakes again, right?” Either it was rhetorical or Stacy stopped caring for answers, because she continued to speak. “What do you see?”

“M...me.”

“Uh-huh?” Stacy nodded on, as if there was more to the tale.

“Look...I’m sorry, so...”

“That’s right, you are sorry,” Stacy replied, not letting her finish. “Proved it, too. Who proved it, Dawn? Only little kids in baby diapers make up fibs when they break the rules. But you’re not like that, right?”

“No...”

“I agree,” she glowed, giving Dawn a pat on the rear. “So! Tell me, what are you?”

“A...” She could feel herself choking on the very phrase itself. It was another vile substance she’d either been forced to swallow or expel.

“A big girl.”

“There we go! That wasn’t so hard now, was it?” she showed the girl some physical affection then took to grabbing a wipe. “I’ll clean it up this time since I’m in a good mood, but try not to vomit in the future...”

Kill me.

Dawn felt conflicted about whether to cry tears of joy or still sulk in her own depression once she got back to the room. A large and grotesque hook she’d been hanging from since this morning had finally been freed from her flesh once the door shut. Truly, without exaggeration, she was by herself this time.

The atmosphere was refreshing, crisp and cool. She glanced at the Amazon-sized body mirror and could see her raggedy self, still covered in crusty soap, snot and tears.

“Sh...” she grimaced, looking at herself. “Shower first...”

Taking advantage of one of the room’s multiple step stools, Dawn pressed down on the door handle and leaned forward to push it open, nearly losing balance on her miniature ladder.

The hotel in all its aesthetics was impressive, but only from an objective standpoint. Those feelings started to become skewed once someone like Dawn, a Little, tried using it. Considering that independent Littles were seeming more a minority in this dimension, it made sense that public services catered to the larger masses instead. The Amazonian room had been cheaply retrofitted to service someone of a smaller size on the fly.

The only indicators of a Little staying here were the multiple step stools dotted in various spots, including the least subtle aspect, the bars lined on either side of the bed. Not crib level, but certainly guardrails to prevent you from rolling off. It made sense to avoid injury, but Dawn couldn’t shake the sinister aura they gave after being what she’d been through today.

She couldn’t have thrown her pull-up against the wall any harder if she tried. At least the shower tub had a Little-sized detachable shower head.

A downpour of hot water instantly relaxed the muscles and literally washed away her scars. Layers of grime dissipated under the downpour of warm water. Excess amounts of soap, old and new streaks of tears, snot, and even pee...

She scrubbed, and scrubbed, harder than she’d ever scrubbed before. So hard that you just might think she was trying to shed her skin. No matter how many times she’d rinse it would never fully come off. There was always something unsightly and an ugly reminder. She scrubbed, but it wouldn’t come out. No matter how hard she tried, she couldn’t fit a bar of soap in her own head to wash away the trauma. She couldn’t even look at soap the same way again.

It was after the fourth cycle she relented, figuring it was either all in her head or persistence just wouldn’t do.

She glanced at the discarded underwear with simple apathy, feeling no responsibility owed to it than someone as beaten and tortured as she was would feel. After all, it was her last night, so why nitpick over leaving a clean room behind...

All there was to do was bide her time and find some way to burn through it. Despite the prison bars on it, the bed did look inviting. She was certain to sleep well that night. But at least she

could reminisce about home for at least a little bit. It didn't get service here but at least she could browse some pictures on her...

She forgot.

Her phone was gone. Since this morning. Since that monstrous pig wrenched it from her along with her pants. It didn't offer much utility to have it considering she couldn't communicate with it, but she at least felt "equipped" to have it...

Her contacts, photos, personal information, social media accounts, conversations, all of it. All of it was gone. She at least had her freedom; a shot out of this dreaded world, but she'd be leaving this place a lesser being than when she'd first entered it... Travel is supposed to be enlightening, isn't it? The only worldly experience Dawn could attest to was supposing that it wasn't always worth looking beyond your own horizons.

Trying to compress her overwhelming grief and annoyance into a single sigh, she climbed the stool and deposited herself onto the freshly-made bed. Stark naked.

By the way the bed was clean and the footstools were orderly, Dawn could tell the maids had been through again... Unfortunately there were no "Do Not Disturb" signs in this dimension. She looked all over the room for one on the first day and even called the front desk, but to no avail...

She watched the corner formed between the painted wall and ceiling lost in her own thoughts when a flash of imagery almost caught her eye. She'd been suspicious, turning her head some, but gave it no thought until the black-screened tv wasn't so black and displayed a moving picture.

"Hi there," a disembodied voice spoke from the tv. Dawn looked at the screen with scrutiny. It was a slideshow of hotel scenery, fading from image to image. "Thank you for choosing to stay at our hotel chain Vineyard Stays. Our hotels offer a wide variety of--" The spokeswoman didn't have time to finish before the screen blinked back to black.

Dawn with the tv remote in hand muttered to herself, "Weird..." She'd taken to putting a hand between her legs, just to block out a view of her delicates, but seeing as it was only a tv...

Yet the more she stared at the blackened screen, catching the faint blurry echo of herself in the screen was enough to incite some kind of mild paranoia.

“Suitcase...” Dawn quietly muttered to herself as she crawled across the expansive bed and back over to the safety rail. Climbing down the Little-friendly steps she walked back around the bed to the other side for a change of familiar clothes. And once she did round the corner of the bed, she slowed to a stop. She blinked as she stared.

Her suitcase wasn't there. Not where she had left it. Not where it had been the entirety of this freaky wonderland vacation.

It was the disbelief, confusion and fear that gave her an awkward walk to the empty space. She was a Little in an Amazon's room, but that didn't make it easy to misplace an entire suitcase, sized for a Little or not.

Dawn's heart started to race as she turned her head, trying to figure if it'd just been moved somewhere nearby in the room.

It wasn't by the coffee table. It hadn't been somehow stuffed in a drawer. Not in a cabinet. Not in the closet. Not in the bathroom. Not in the trash bin. Not even in the mini fridge.

Dawn was making a light jog all around the room, feeling more worried with each avenue of explanation leading to a chilling dead end.

Then, a moment of brilliance struck her as she looked back at the bed. Obviously it could have been slipped under the bed! Almost instantly her pent-up worries were fastly dissipating as she near giggled at her own silliness. Walking over to the bed she lifted the cover, met with a new surprise.

Wood. Instead of the bed having any accessible bottom, the bedframe was supported by wood paneling on all three sides, save for the one obscured by the wall. Meaning, the last place where her suitcase could have been in the room'd just been ruled out.

“You've gotta be kidding...” Dawn kept her voice low, yet it trembled. She'd put herself through so much turmoil, stress and disaster trying to get back to the one pseudo safe haven she had in this dimension, and even that had been compromised. What was she supposed to do now? As much of an inconvenience it was to lose her clothes, what meant oh-so-much more was the last of her identification. Her passport. Her dimensional visa. As she tried to keep her emotions in check, sitting naked on the floor, a grave and terrifying conclusion was reaching her mind.

Without any kind of papers, who was to say she was a Portal Little and not a native?

She stumbled back into the bathroom, never thinking that she'd be glad to find her ordinary shirt, bra and worst of all, stretchy pants. The pull-up was skipped over without hesitation however, sufficing for a commando approach for as grave of a situation as this.

Dawn climbed back up the stool onto the Amazon-sized bed, crawling over to the nightstand with a phone sat atop it. She raised the phone to her ear, bothered by how large it felt compared to her size, yet pressed on the given digits for the front desk.

There was a silent hum as the phone rang for a few moments.

“Hello! This is Candace with the front desk speaking!” A rosy and chipper voice suddenly spoke from the other end of the line. The sound came off loud enough for Dawn to flinch as she held the phone an inch from her ear. “How may I be of service?”

“H-hello...” Dawn started, rubbing her ear and trying to level her anxiety. “I...uhm, my name is Dawn and I'm in room 305...I just came back to my room and I can't find my suitcase...”

“Room 305?” The employee asked to confirm. “Let me see...” She went quiet over the phone, and each moment of silence meant a unit of time had passed with Dawn's fears still yet to be squashed and for her chest to ache even more with her troubled heart.

“Oh!” The employee exclaimed. “I understand now... Yes, Dawn S. from the group that's touring from Terra? The Portal Littles?” The way she asked her question, or maybe by the way it sounded, despite being seemingly sweet and attentive, it felt...off-putting for the girl. Yet in the end, maybe it was paranoia.

“Y-yes...” Dawn slowly answered back.

“Perfect! Well, hm...losing your suitcase is a bit of an issue, huh?” She seemed to speak much more patronizingly now, as if this weren't an exchange between customer and concierge, but rather a schoolteacher and a charge without their homework.

Nevertheless, fear was a powerful agent in getting Dawn to stomach just about any passive humiliation at this point. Having the ability to get home mattered much more than seeking a dignified response for what Dawn dearly and desperately hoped was a minor issue. “I-I swear; I looked for it everywhere in the room and--!”

“Well, let's retrace our steps,” the woman said in a sing-song kind of voice, “where do you last remember having it, honey?”

“In my room!” Dawn whined over the phone. She could already tell that it was going to be like pulling teeth just to get anything close to progress with this Amazon. “Please! I’ve searched everywhere! I think one of the maids took my luggage, or something!”

“Now, Dawn, stealing is a very serious accusation,” the Amazon slowly explained over the phone. “Are you absolutely positively sure that you didn’t misplace it by accident? Why don’t you go look again just to be--”

“YES!” Dawn did shout this time. “I’m positive! Please! My bag has my passport and visa in it! I need that stuff to leave this dimension!”

There was a pause over the other end of the line. Dawn’s heart sank. Did she upset the Amazon? Was she mad now? Her heart felt ready to burst as she was already reliving the experience with Stacy in the bathroom. What if this Candace woman came up to punish her for yelling? What if it was worse than a soapy mouth? What if--?!

“I see.” The woman then spoke again, sounding still upbeat, though closer to neutral than Little-friendly peppy. “I can promise you honey that we will do the best we can to find your belongings, but I need to double-check with you. You *really* think that someone stole your things?”

“Yes!” Dawn replied, much more mindful of her volume now.

“Alrighty then,” she said, and Dawn could hear the smile from the other end. “I’ll officially log your complaint! It may take a little bit for our internal investigation to be complete, but I promise you’ll be taken care of in the meantime. Can you describe what your suitcase looks like?”

“It’s mainly turquoise, with a black trim...” Dawn said.

“Turquoise, black trim...” The woman muttered to herself, sounding as if she were writing it down. “Is there anything else I can do for you, honey?”

It was a little surprising that the woman planned to do what Dawn had hoped for. An Amazon was listening to her. Sure, maybe obligated by the responsibilities of her occupation, but cooperation nonetheless. “N-no...that’s all. Uhm...thank you.” Dawn said.

“Of course, sweetheart!” Yet she couldn’t shake that tone which talked down to her. “Thank you for staying with us, and I hope the remainder is to your satisfaction! And not to worry; I’ll inform your tour guide, Stacy, about your current situation!”

“Y-you are...?” Dawn asked, slightly surprised. Maybe she could grasp the potential formalities in place, yet the only thing she wanted from that terrible Amazon was distance. Yet if experience taught Dawn anything, direct pushback only seemed to make things worse for her in this dimension. “I...I see...okay, then. Thank you...”

And she hung up the phone, exhaling a deep sigh as she felt the need to cry. In the span of one day she’d been kidnapped, re-kidnapped by a different couple that tried seducing her into becoming their permanent baby, force-fed soap by her own tour guide, robbed of her phone, and now potentially every other thing she brought with her to this dimension.

What unnerved her the most was an extreme sense of powerlessness. Constantly, for anything to ever progress now, it seemed that her only options were to either let the Amazons around her do as they pleased or for herself to do what they demanded of her. Even now, left without the last of her belongings, she was physically incapable of taking any direct action to find her things. She called herself an adult, but what agency did she really have? All she had was this “system” to trust in, truly screwed if the legislation itself decided to turn on her.

With that being the end of her thought exercise, left on such a grim, paralyzing note, she did feel her eyes begin to water as she laid back down on the bed that was far too big for her. She stared across at the window she could only reach to put her hands on the sill of, much less summon the Amazonian strength required to open it.

Hope being the last thing she had left to combat any obstacles thrown her way now, Dawn managed to give herself some time to sleep despite the cesspool of negative emotions she was encased in.

“Dawn...Dawn?” A familiar, unwelcomed voice jostled her shoulder as the girl moaned and groaned.

She opened her eyes and could see out the window. The sky was blackened and the stars were in the sky.

“Dawn?” The voice said again, speaking above her.

The girl turned her head and felt a jolt in her chest once she saw who it was.

Looking down at her with a complacent smiling face was the terrible Amazon, none other than Stacy.

Dawn quickly rolled herself across the bed, moving with such urgency and with fear that the only thing which stopped her from going off the other end entirely were the safety rails added on the edge.

“My! Someone must’ve had a bad dream, huh?” Stacy chuckled, yet no matter how cheery she looked, Dawn witnessed first-hand just what lies beyond her mask. This was the first time Dawn had ever found this woman in her room unannounced. It’s not a matter of possibility, Dawn would expect she could, considering the hotel staff only let the Amazon tour guide handle their room keys. That being said, being woken up by an Amazon that punished you the last time you saw her was an easy scare.

Taking audible breaths, and trying not to incur this woman’s wrath, Dawn ignored her desires to scream, shout, object and criticize.

“What...what are you doing in here?” Dawn asked, feeling her hand grasp one of the bars behind her.

“Mm...” Stacy pressed a supposing index finger on her lips, glancing back at the door. “Well, I had knocked earlier, and after getting no response I figured you were taking a nap... Guess I was right!” She chuckled, leaving Dawn’s question no more answered than it was a sentence prior.

“Okay... Did you need something?” Dawn said, trying to rephrase her question.

“I think it’d be better to ask if *you* need something?” Stacy grinned, as if a matter of losing one’s legal identification were worthy of light humor.

Her counter caught Dawn off guard for a moment, mostly inciting confusion, but the conversation she had on the phone with the employee jogged her sleepy memory.

“Y-yes...Someone took my luggage from my room.”

A cheery look on Stacy’s face suddenly dropped, morphing into concern and worry. Yet with the woman’s theatrics, it only made Dawn feel more sick as the act and emotions appeared as grossly forced and fabricated.

“Oh no!” Stacy laid a palm against her cheek, mouth hung agape. “All your things?”

Dawn nodded with a gulp, already stressing just from acknowledging the predicament.

“Maybe you just misplaced it?” Stacy passively commented. “You’ve been so busy and distracted with all the fun things going on...”

“No. I checked everywhere in the room...” Dawn said, yet again giving up on her protest as to being an adult rather than a child.

“I see...that’s a very serious issue, Dawn.” Stacy said, as if the girl at her wit’s end had not known this already.

Yet as terrible as this Amazon was to her, being the authority figure that she was, Stacy was the only person Dawn could ask a burning, heart wrenching question.

“Stacy...” Dawn struggled to voice the words, too paralyzed to face the potential truth. “I-if, if they take a little longer to find my stuff by tomorrow, I can just go back later, right? I mean, i-it wouldn’t make sense if--”

“Oou.” Stacy interrupted, making a brief, crude noise that matched her furrowed brow. “That is something, isn’t it?”

“What?” Dawn willed herself to ask. “Wh-what does that mean?” She couldn’t be implying what Dawn wanted to believe was ludicrous, right? They wouldn’t just bar her from going home if she missed the portal that she was scheduled for? They’d just send her off on the next one! It couldn’t be legal; preventing someone from going back to their own dimension. The more and more Dawn talked herself into it she fastly tried to believe that she undoubtedly would go home regardless of the outcome. And yet, what terrified her so much was how it all seemed to be contingent on others that made the decisions for her.

What bled her dying hope even further was the less than stellar look Stacy was giving, even through what exaggerated lens she expressed herself through.

“Honey, if you don’t have your passport or visa, that means you won’t be allowed to use the portal to go home,” Stacy explained quite simply.

It felt like a ton of bricks that rained from above.

“W-well...once I get them back, I can go home?” Dawn added, desperately searching for something to cling onto.

“Assuming the hotel finds your belongings before tomorrow, yes.” Stacy nods.

Each answer she gave only seemed to exist in hypotheticals and general statements. It was as if she seemed to avoid acknowledging a terrible, terrifying alternative that even Dawn wanted to believe wasn't true.

“But, once I *do* get them back, even if it's later tomorrow I can still--”

“No, you can't.” Stacy says.

An eerie silence wafted throughout the room as Dawn wordlessly stared at a certain-looking Amazon.

“Why...why not?” Dawn's voice trembled.

“Your visa is only approved for travel between when you first came, sweetie, and when you're supposed to leave tomorrow. After tomorrow at the time you're scheduled for, your visa expires and then you won't be allowed to travel back to Terra.”

“B-but I...” Dawn's voice quivered. “I-it's not my fault...! I didn't lose them, they were stolen!” Dawn pleaded, as if Stacy were the one who could solve her problems.

This couldn't be real. It was a fantasy. All a bad dream. All she needed was a mere moment of observation to realize just how fictitious this all seemed. Some random spam mail had managed to convince her to travel to another dimension, filled with giants that are infatuated with treating normal people like perpetual babies. Nothing about it made sense and neither did this, so all Dawn could find was less places to grip herself onto reality.

She wasn't really here. She wasn't being talked down to like a child. Her phone, passport and visa weren't missing. She was going home. She wasn't stuck in a dimension of giants. Absolutely not.

“Dawn?”

The girl gasped as she felt Stacy's hand on her shoulder. A soft touch from a woman that coated her mouth in soap.

“They’ll find my stuff, right?!” Dawn started to weep. “I’m gonna go home! Th-they...they can’t just keep me here because somebody stole my stuff!” She sniffled, feeling her chest rise and fall. And above all else, what hurt Dawn the most right then was Stacy. She made a small frown, as if to offer meager amounts of sympathy. From Dawn’s perspective, Stacy scantily seemed to offer much condolences at all. If she thought at all like that woman Katherine, she might even think of her being stuck here as a solution rather than a problem. Another Portal Little saved from their own demise.

“They’ll do their best, honey...” Stacy briefly rubbed Dawn’s back.

Dawn sobbed, trying to hold herself together. She tried to tell herself that she needed to be prepared for whatever might happen, yet that seemed impossible when faced with every obstacle possible.

“Of course,” Stacy exhaled, staring off at the door, “I suppose it’d be difficult if your bag was hidden?”

Dawn sniffled, barely taking stock in her words. *Hidden?* What did it matter if it were hidden or not?

“Whoever took it’s probably long gone, now...” Dawn hiccuped, erring on the side of pessimism with little hope to be found.

“Mm...no, they’re not.” Stacy said. Like that, her words cut through the atmosphere.

“How would you know...?” Dawn asked, clearly fueled by suspicion now. Her gaze slowly turned up to Stacy, who looked as rosy as could be.

“Dawn, honey, do you know what the word ‘quota’ means?” She smiled down at her.

“Qu-quota...?” Dawn mouthed. What did a quota have anything to do--?

“Quota means a certain number of something you have to do or get,” Stacy explains, likely willfully misinterpreting Dawn’s tone. “You see, Dawn, even us Amazons can get a teeny bit upset!” Stacy explained, annunciating her explanation with squinted fingers in front of Dawn. “When you said that naughty word in the lobby, you very much needed to be punished for it, but I suppose I may have gone a bit further than I normally would have... I was upset with you, you see.”

The longer Stacy went on to speak, the more confused Dawn felt. She came here to discuss your missing luggage is what you figured, yet why was she trying to relive the very recent past? It was obvious as could be that swearing pissed her off. Need she explain that any further?

“I-I apologized...” Dawn muttered, now feeling afraid for any kind of retroactive punishment Stacy might figure on the fly that should be warranted.

“Yes, you did,” Stacy nods to herself, “and you showed me how sorry you were. I forgive you for that.”

But what did any of this have to do with her luggage?

“My job as a tour guide is *very* important, Dawn,” Stacy said, “It’s my job to keep all you chickadees accounted for the entire time you’re under my care! For example, if I were to take you all out to the park across the street, but one of you stayed behind at the hotel and I didn’t know, you understand how that would be very troublesome for me, don’t you?”

“I...I guess...?” Dawn shrugged.

“Good!” Stacy nods, approving her piecewise digestion of the nuggets of explanation. “So, can you also understand how troublesome it might be if...say, one of my little chicks were to be adopted by an Amazon while we were outside, then come back as if nothing ever happened?”

Dawn wasn’t looking at her right then, staring forward as well. Yet in that moment Dawn could feel a chill up her spine, prickled by all the goosebumps along her arms and hairs sticking up. She could feel two piercing eyes above her, staring down on meager prey with its carnivorous fangs.

“Dawn?” Stacy said in a crisp, neutral tone. Everything felt so acute in that moment, Dawn could hear the separation of the Amazon’s very lips before she even went to speak.

“Dawn, you were marked as the last Little for my quota.” Stacy said. “I figured you had been adopted when one of the other Littles came and told me you’d been grabbed.”

She knew? She knew about this morning; her being taken? And yet she didn’t do anything about it? Dawn wanted to ask why in the hell no one came to rescue her, but Stacy continued. And as she did, Dawn could hear the annoyance and pissed-off attitude begin to bleed into her chipper voice.

“I’m supposed to be one Little shorter than I am right now. This nest has one too many chicks in it, Dawn.”

And then, Dawn could feel the mattress shift as the Amazon leaned in closer to her, so close that she could feel the woman’s breath as she spoke in a low whisper, directly into her ear.

“You’re *supposed* to be adopted right now.”