

Before we begin the course, we must set the table.

And perhaps offer a few appetizers to our hungry guests.

One person is responsible for the events of the night in question.

One person who set the machinery in place for one of the most peculiar cases Heidi Hamill ever did investigate.

Hannah Lucas was born into immense wealth and prestige. Her family's hotel lines were renowned the world over, offering luxury to those who could afford it.

Her father didn't just limit the family to paltry accommodations, however.

He invested in anything that seemed lucrative. Science, media, transportation and politics.

The net he cast was so wide that it caught enough fish to nearly triple the family's already obscene fortune.

This was the wealth that Hannah Lucas was born into. The wealth that would become hers the day her father took an unfortunate and very heavily ill-advised helicopter tour of a hurricane.

For a while it seemed to the outside world that Hannah Lucas would be the quiet type of wealthy.

The wheels could spin on their own, so there was no need to alter the steering world.

She seemed to not have any interest in business.

Those that had known her for long enough knew that she was just very interested in a particular kind of business.

Some called her an appreciator of the female form.

A specific type of female form.

One day her mind clicked that bigger was better.

Not for her own form, no way.

This enjoyment was best exhibited on others.

Her first "subject" was her father's latest trophy wife, who was barely older than she was.

A supermodel whose beauty knew no equal, was seduced into gluttony and excess by her new stepdaughter.

Hannah was heartbroken when they divorced, as it meant that she could no longer wreak havoc on her waistline.

Her ex-stepmom, however, was happy that she got a hefty divorce settlement, as caring for someone who was immobile could get expensive.

Once the fortune of the Lucas empire was at her beck and call, Hannah did her best to extend her interests to the titans of the modern world.

It was not enough to just make a woman extraordinary obese.

They had to be the last people anyone would expect to put on weight. (well, except maybe one.) This was not destructive for her, as in her twisted mind a thin body was a cocoon that a glorious, overfed butterfly could emerge from.

Some of these subjects she kept close, even creating a solar system of friends, with her as the sun.

And as time went on planetary became a very appropriate descriptor of them.

What follows are short excerpts from the subjects present the night of the incident, from their first times meeting Ms. Lucas to some of the depths of calorie laden despair that occurred.

While by the time this story begins in earnest, they will have mostly shed the excess pounds that were impressed upon them, due to a set of extraordinary circumstances that might not remain the case.

Felicia Mayhew should have known better.

After all, she knew Hannah the longest, practically growing up with her as their fathers were both wealthy, even if the Mayhew textile business's fortune paled in comparison to the vast Lucas dynasty.

She had seen Hannah's stepmom grow, grow, and grow until she was gone, but she didn't have any misgivings about rooming with her when they got into university.

"This is going to be so much fun!" Hannah exclaimed as she pulled Felicia in for a big hug, squealing as she watched the help bring in the multitude of bags both girls had brought to their luxurious campus apartments.

Felicia smiled. "I can't believe your dad is footing the bill for our whole time here."

Hannah spun around and gestured to the small mansion they would be staying at for four years.

"You know what I say, when you can be decadent, be decadent. Come on let me introduce you to the chef."

“Back home we had a guy who was trained under Gordon Ramsay, I hope your guy can compare.”

Hannah’s eyes gleamed.

“Oh, I am sure he will not disappoint.”

The look on Felicia’s face when she opened the door and heard a familiar voice shouting out orders to the kitchen staff was almost priceless.

A few years later, however, graduation came for the girls, and it became clear that the two had gone down separate paths.

When Hannah walked across to accept the diploma, she was the picture of bright-eyed elegance. Not one single piece of the heir to the Lucas dynasty looked out of place.

But earlier, when her roommate made the same trek....

Well, more than one comment was made about whether or not the stage would survive the ordeal.

Lumbering, wheezing, and panting, Felicia Mayhew made her journey, eyes relentlessly on her prize.

All 450 pounds of her reached and grasped the diploma. She would have lifted it in victory if lifting her arms was easy.

Hannah grinned as she watched the display, every taste testing session, late night study meal, and keeping the fridge in Felicia’s room coalesced into the behemoth before her.

Understandably Felicia chose not to room with her after college, although they did remain close friends.

One person who would find herself targeted next by the billionaire was the host of “Jazzin with Jasmine” Jasmine Ford.

Rising in the ranking thanks to a warm personality, great guests, and extremely good looks, Jasmine felt like she was on top of the world.

Then she had Hannah Lucas on as a guest.

A few times actually.

The daily dalliances of the dainty dame were always great ratings boosters.

If only she hadn’t made friends with her behind the scenes...

“You bought me a catering company!” Jasmine exclaimed one day.

“You told me how much you hated the food you were served, so I thought that this is a least I could do for a friend.”

Jasmine picked up a sugar cookie and bit into it.

“God these taste just like the kind that they made in that little bakery by my home.”

“That might be because they are.”

Jasmine blanched. She had some amount of wealth afforded to her due to being somewhat of a celebrity. But this was expensive, even for her.

“This must have cost a fortune.” Jasmine said, even as she ate another cookie.

“What can I say,” Hannah said, raising her arms.

“When you can be decadent, be decadent.”

Jasmine would regret allowing herself to be so decadent.

As the numbers on the scale went up, viewership went down.

It didn't help that most episodes were later themed about food and cooking, obviously because the host couldn't go more than an hour without scarfing something down to fill her cavernous caramel stomach.

The last two episodes of her “Farewell Season” were never filmed, because her hippopotamus sized 620-pound ass demolished the already clearly suffering couch she needed to park it in.

Without the show she faded into obscurity, although this would not be the last time Jasmine Ford would be a part of this tale...

Teresa Cushing was another friend of Hannah's, although the effect she would have on her waistline was more seen as speeding along the inevitable.

Teresa was a darling of the gaming community. Long red hair, a cute smile, and a willingness to dress more risqué when she felt her chat deserved it meant she had a much quicker rise in views than others might have. She acted like the typical “Gamer” as well, and chat was always ablaze in how she could eat like she did and still be so thin. (The answer was exercise and a healthy diet off stream.)

She had the skills to back it up too. E-Sport tournament after E-Sport tournament all fell to the woman with the username TCush85.

One tournament, however, was hosted by none other by Lucas industries.

“You want to sponsor my streams! Really!”

When Teresa was called up to Ms. Lucas' personal hotel room, she was expecting a congratulations.

“We need someone to show off our new gamer fuel line, and who better than our favorite champion.”

Hannah unzipped a suitcase next to her, revealing it to be stuffed with all kinds of wrapped snack cakes and cans of energy drinks.

“I... don’t know what to say.”

“A yes will suffice, Ms. Cushing.”

Teresa picked up a sweet, opened it and took a big bite out of it.

“Wow, I almost just want to say yes if you promise me that you’ll keep giving me more of these.”

That elicited a satisfied chuckle out of the heiress.

“Oh Teresa darling we will be giving you much more than this.”

Out of her purse she pulled out a check and handed it to the doe eyed streamer. Seeing her almost faint made her smile grow all that more wicked.

“The first of many, I hope.”

“This is... too much.”

“I have a saying; one I tell all my friends. If you can be decadent, be decadent.”

Teresa certainly was decadent. With new food to show off on stream and a far from empty bank account, she looked like she would live her life to the fullest from now on.

It didn’t take long for her to start filling the screen anyway.

Waddling belly first into view from her webcam, the wheezing streamer came back from picking up a pizza she had delivered to her apartment door. Despite having enough money saved up to buy a whole new house, she hadn’t updated her wardrobe much, meaning her 462-pound body was crammed into the same sweatpants and crop tops that had made her famous.

She was still fairly famous, but not quite to the same height she was pre-Lucas industry sponsorship. A lot of her old fans left her once it became clear that her once pristine figure would be further buried under the weight of her monetary decisions.

Gamers being what they were, some held no compassion for someone seeing a substantial increase in mass and chose to share their vitriol with the ginger binger in her comments.

Luckily a team of Lucas screened moderators (Her only remaining sponsorship) made sure most of these were removed before Teresa could ever see them, but they couldn’t get all of them.

Those weren't the ones who caused Teresa concern.

Looking into the comment section as she brought a nice and greasy slice of meat lovers to her lips, she saw comments from her new audience. The ones who came specifically because she had blimped up to obscene proportions.

"Keep eating baby girl."

"Those thighs are looking might thin."

"Can you DM me your address? I want to send you another pizza."

Despite several instructions to her mod team, the only one to get removed was the one asking for her personal address.

On one hand, she was flattered. She expected to be found hideous once she started packing on the pounds, so having people compliment her for her fatness was a very curious thing.

On the other hand, the harassment she did receive could not all be blocked out. Every time she made a post on social media, the worms would come crawling out to fling vitriol and vinegar at her.

She needed to lose weight, she knew that. If only to escape the treatment she was subjected to daily.

She had a collage on her wall, of "Thinspirational" women just out of view of the camera.

And at the center of the collage was a picture of the model Cynthia Daniels.

A rather... outdated photo.

Not long-ago Cynthia was the apple of everyone's eye. Lingerie, perfume, she was even the cover model for Athletic Illustrations.

She certainly liked to act like she was the best around. It seemed like there was no prima donna trait that they didn't ascribe to.

Her assistants were overworked to appease even the wildest demand their boss wanted. Photographers would be told how to do their job repeatedly. And there would be some days where she would show up to a shoot and decide that day, she didn't want to do it.

Naturally, even though she had the looks to back up her behavior, her profit's started to dip.

Not enough that she would have to make extreme changes to her lifestyle, but enough that she couldn't really turn down any work for the near future.

Which is what brought her to the photoshoot for Choco, a chocolate company owned by the Lucas Corporation.

Showing up only 15 minutes late was an improvement for Cynthia, who waltzed into the studio as

stunning as ever, veggie smoothie in hand.

The bikini she was given was cute, a chocolate brown color to match the product. After several hours of hair and makeup was ready to begin.

Lounging on a plastic statue designed to resemble a wave, Cynthia took several pictures above, next to, and holding a platter of Choco milk chocolate bites.

During lunch, she was eating her cucumber sandwich when the owner of the company appeared, devious glint in her eyes.

“Cynthia! Love what you’re doing so far. I just have one request.”

Internally, Cynthia rolled her eyes. Owners loved to think they knew how to sell product, and would come up with outrageous photos that her editing team would more often than not discard.

Still, it was good to humor them at least, since they were the ones footing the bill.

“Thanks!” I’d love to hear it!” Cynthia said through a mask of pure deceit, carved from years of being a model.

“Oh, for this shoot I would love it if we could get some pictures of you eating the chocolate. It would really draw in potential customers if it looked like you were enjoying yourself.”

Cynthia blinked. “Oh, I don’t usually eat stuff like this- “

“Nonsense my dear, nonsense. It’s only one day. Besides, I want you to exemplify our new slogan.”

Hannah pointed to a banner, which read: “If you can be decadent, be decadent.”

Back at the shoot. Cynthia picked up a piece of chocolate and placed it on her tongue.

At once electricity flowed through her whole body, starting at her taste buds. Nothing she had ever eaten, done, or probably will do ever again compared to the taste of that chocolate bite.

That day she stayed longer than needed, a first. Just so they could get photos of her devouring chocolate bite after chocolate bite.

After the shoot, Cynthia approached Hannah, fighting her shaky knees.

“You know I don’t need that much money. Perhaps we could substitute some of my pay in exchange for a fresh supply of Choco bites?” Her voice cracked as she finished speaking.

Hannah merely smiled, seeing the wild look in her eyes meant her plan had worked.

“Oh Ms. Daniels, you’ll get all that you asked for and much, much, more.”

Cynthia became the full time spokesperson for the chocolate she was now practically addicted to, the effects of which did not take long to manifest.

Modeling gigs dried up faster than she could swell. She for a time was just as much on top of the plus sized modeling scene as she was on the “conventional” modeling scene, but she even grew out of that.

She “retired” from modeling soon after, but Lucas still sent her truck after truck of their chocolate, as a “Reward” for all her years as a brand ambassador.

“Jenny? Where’s my chocolate batch?”

Those trucks had, without fail, been eaten almost exclusively by the former supermodel, and every bite showed.

Waddling her obscene 679-pound body towards the kitchen, Cynthia was as far away from fitness as most people were from her fatness.

Thighs the size of two people wobbled and chafed together, supporting a monolithic belly that shook from the slightest movement.

And when you considered Cynthia’s extremely out of proportion bust, it was a wonder she didn’t topple over at the slightest provocation.

Her flustered chubby cheeks wobbled, as did her three chins. She called out again. “Jenny!”

“Coming Ms. Daniels!”

Jenny, a skinny little brunette, came over.

Most of Cynthia’s personal assistants were handpicked by Hannah, so they all had similar proclivities.

But Cynthia was such a demanding boss that most of them either quit or only did the bare minimum to satisfy their employer, as they may have liked fat, but not THAT much.

Jenny was a special breed. She didn’t just want her boss fat. She wanted her boss to be a bitch about it.

And Cynthia was certainly being a bitch about it.

Jenny brought the case of chocolates to her booming boss.

Cynthia lowered herself onto a groaning stool. Deep down, she knew her weight was a serious issue, but the chocolate had practically bonded itself to her brain.

Nothing was worth giving that up. Nothing.

Jenny brought over a pitcher of melted chocolate. This was both of their favorites.

Well, Cynthia's to eat. Jennies to watch.

The Last and most recent of Hannah's "Subjects" was also far more... intimate.

Hannah waited at the pristine restaurant. It was not that her date, was late, but she just liked to always be earlier.

Ophelia Jones arrived precisely on the dot, looking impeccable in a designer dress.

The green garment was sleeveless, showing off the toned arms of an MMA fighter.

Ms. Ophelia was just coming down from the height of her career, an undisputed legend in the arena of the octagon. She had movie deals, sponsorships, merchandise, enough to make sure that her post ring career would be just as eventful as her fights.

However, one of those sponsors reached out and didn't offer her more money.

They offered a date.

"Hannah! Good to see you!"

"You look gorgeous in that dress!"

Hannah and Ophelia had met before, at numerous events. They had such a good relationship, but it still surprised Ophelia that she was asked out.

She settled in, and picked up a menu.

"Wow. I would have to return from retirement to just afford this place."

"When you can be- "

"Decadent, be decadent, I know I know. Just... wow."

"Don't have any guilt over tonight. You've kept yourself all wound up until now, let's just relax."

They chatted and talked, Ophelia somehow not noticing that the appetizers were seemingly endless, and the entrée was absolutely enormous.

At least until she finished it.

"Wow, oh my god. It was all so good, but I don't think I can eat another bite."

She rubbed her stuffed gut through her dress.

Hannah merely smiled.

“That’s a shame, I already ordered us dessert.”

Ophelia’s eyes bulged as a thick slice of red velvet cake was laid before her.

She never questioned why Hannah didn’t have one in front of her as well.

“I-I can’t.”

“Ophelia darling, I’ve seen you crawl and climb your way to the top. Some cake can’t hurt you.”

She sliced off a piece of it with a fork, then held it to Ophelia’s mouth.

“If you can be decadent, be decadent.” She said that in a noticeably lower octave.

Ophelia lazily opened her mouth and accepted the cake.

Bite after bite, until all that was left was crumbs.

Ophelia almost didn’t want to breathe, she was so stuffed.

Hannah had to help her up, and when she did, she whispered in her ear “Let’s go back to my place and get you into something more comfortable.”

Ophelia merely nodded.

That night and the many nights that followed were debaucherous and of course decadent.

But after 2 years, both had come to realize that they perhaps made better friends than lovers.

And while it stung a bit, there were no hard feelings between the two women.

Certainly nothing was hard about Ophelia now.

“Is that it, have the movers gotten everything.”

“Yep, now all they need to move is my fat ass.”

“Oh, silence darling.”

Ophelia wasn’t exactly joking. Living with Hannah was... fulfilling.

Ophelia had let her contracts and sponsors slip away as she delved headlong into eating, and it showed. 713 pounds had been added in an obscenely short amount of time, and her body did not have time to adjust.

Mammoth thighs meant that most doorways were simply not available to her, requiring help or lubricant. Her belly was halfway to her knees, and her arms were twice the size that her legs had been at her thinnest.

She was definitely a bottom-heavy gal.

She smiled through her chubby cheeks. "Thanks' Han. For everything."

"Don't worry, and text me when you're settled in. Just because we aren't dating anymore doesn't mean we can't have a girl's night every once in a while."

Hannah hugged and helped lift the heavy former heavyweight champion. She made sure the movers had everything, and helped her into the second truck they had just for Ophelia.

There was sadness in her eyes.

Eventually, Ophelia lost most of the wight, through a long and arduous diet and exercise routine. She began appearing on tv again, but her stubborn pot belly was all that gave away her former life as a heifer.

All of them lost weight, some easier than others.

And then one day, they all got an invitation.

"Greetings. Friends, I wish to invite you all to my summer home. It has been too long since we all gathered, and there is something I wish to announce to you all. Use the QR code on the back of this invitation to get in."

One by one they opened the invitation, and made plans to visit.

One, however, had a plan.

A very sinister plan.

And another one, was delivered to a quaint British cottage.

"What a strange invitation? I dare say I've never met Hannah Lucas?"

Heidi Hamill read the invitation over and over, as she sipped her noon tea.

She was a premier private detective, solving the case of the Too Wet Goose and the theft of the Galmadi family diamond.

So, she knew.

Someone wanted her there for this gathering.

The only way to find out why was to go there herself.

