***Vacation of the Squeaky Kind***

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 Leona's eyes shot around the hotel lobby. *Exit behind me, two doors leading to the hallways on both ends of the room… big door way off to the side of the front desk.* Her eyes darted around more. *Five people… beachwear, no way to hide anything on th-*

 The Hrothgar shook her head, grunting. *Dammit, get out of this mindset.* She took a deep breath and released it. *Remember: vacation. No enemies around. Take it easy. No need to be in soldier warrior mode here.*

 She took another breath and released it, shoulders drooping. *God, I really need this…*

 Leona Moonclaw was right. She needed to get away from the action, from the fighting. A proud warrior as herself needed some R&R every so often and after going without any for several years, this needed to happen. She needed a vacation, to free her mind, body, and soul from the battles she's waged, even for a little bit.

 Taking one last breath and settling her mind down, the Hrothgar approached the front desk. She let her tension wash away, focusing on the fun she would have and nothing more. She felt some of her body relaxing already, though most of it remained on edge.

 She found the desk empty and hit the bell there once and then twice. “Yoooooou rang, honeycakes?” A giggly, bubbly voice echoed from the backroom behind the counter. A second later, a flash red of a new figure zipped out in front.

 Leona flinched, reaching for her belt… but remembering she had nothing and was being stupid. The figure that arrived was a bright red canine lady. She positively glowed with how shiny her fur was and how dashing her wavy, long, raspberry-red mane was. She was a sight for sore eyes or one that would give sore eyes given the vibrancy of her colors.

 “Welcome welcome!” the dog yipped, holding out her rather puffy paws. “My name is Cassie and thank you so much for choosing our hotel to spend your vacation at! How may I help you today?”

 “Ahh… I have a reservation?”

 From there, the two talked and got everything sorted out. Cassie checked the computer and got everything set up, while Leona got the payment all squared away. It was boring small and business talk, something that felt quaint to the warrior.

 “And here you are, Ms. Moonclaw!” Cassie pulled out a room key from behind the counter and dropped it into her hand. “Please enjoy your stay and let all of your worries, troubles, and whatnot drift away!”

 “That's what I'm hoping.” *What I'm reeeally hoping.*

 As Leona pocketed the key, Cassie's ears twitched. “OH!” the clerk said with a gasp, “Almost forgot something important!”

 She dipped behind the counter outside of sight, low sounds of her rummaging heard from behind. She eventually popped back up and plopped something on the counter with a soft, plasticy smack. “Here you are!”

 Leona took one look at it and blurted out, “What's that?” It appeared to be a handle of sorts. It looked like a very weird, gray handle that was made of rubber and plastic, almost like it was ripped off a pool toy. Though, this one stayed inflated without any air being sealed in.

 “This is our resort gift!” The red dog's tail swished about excitedly. “We provide one for every guest so they can have a most enjoyable, light-hearted experience here!”

 Leona did not understand. It looked like junk to her. *Unless… it's used for…* She dismissed the idea straight away, feeling foolish to think such a hotel would provide something so scandalous to its guests.

 Regardless, it appeared to be harmless. She took the item and held it in her paw, squeezing it. Definitely didn't feel any bit troubling. She could take it. It would be rude to turn down… whatever exactly the item she had was.

 “This doesn't work.” Leona frowned, her cheeks reddening beneath her white fur. “She was totally wrong about this.”

 Some time had passed and Leona was in her hotel room. She had finished unpacking and decided to spend her first day relaxing there at the pool. She undressed and put on the snow-blue bikini set that her friend recommended to her.

 *I don't pull this off at all.* Leona's bikini was, in her mind, meant for someone other than her. Someone with a curvier, full-figured body. It wasn't for a buff, well-built cat of a woman as herself. Plus, her naturally fierce expression contrasted even harder with the sweet swimwear.

 Everything about her felt like a strong contrast that would give anyone looking at her severe whiplash. At least, to her it would.

 *No… stop thinking like that.* Leona took a deep breath and smacked her cheeks. *Not going to be like this. I'm here to unwind and forget about being me. I can't help looking like this.* She nodded. *It's time to throw caution to the wind… somewhat.*

 She smiled, nodding more. This was her vacation, and she was going to enjoy it to the fullest! She gave her reflection a nod and turned for the door.

 *Oh.* The handle she was given was lying on the ground near her feet. *Why is… oh.* She remembered holding it when she first entered her room, along with all of her other luggage. It must've been dropped there when she was setting everything down.

 Leona was on vacation, but she wasn't THAT much on vacation. Her instincts to keep a clean, tidy room and space were still drilled into her deeply. She picked the rubbery item and brought it over to the bed, setting it there for now.

 *Okay, now I'm off!* She turned back to exit and took her first step towards her true vacation experience.

 Leona's catty foot hooked into one of the complimentary slippers the hotel provided, the top of it getting caught between her toes. Her foot twisted in response, and her legs went cross. She began stumbling forward in a heap.

 Though, her instincts kicked in, and she somehow threw herself back. She landed flat on the bed, legs going into the air and sending the tangled slipper flying across the room.

 She laid there, heart racing and body twitching. *Great…* She huffed and huffed, paws digging into her bedspread. *Just great. So frickin’ embarrassing. Can't believe I just did that.*

 Leona slowly sat up, ears bent back. She rubbed her face, grunting. *I'm letting my guard down too much. There's got to be a better balance between warrior and doofus.*

 She stood up and looked at the ground again. One look at the other slipper, and she immediately kicked it under the bed. *Never again.*

 Stretching her arms, she turned back to the mattress to redo the bed sheets after messing them up in her fall. However, as she did, she noticed something was missing. Looking all around, the handle was nowhere to be seen.

 *Did it bounce off the bed and roll under?* Leona thought about it briefly but ultimately decided to shrug. It didn't really matter, did it? She could look when she got back. The Hrothgar stretched her arms, bending back as she let out a yawn.

 Something felt off.

 There was a weird feeling on her back. It was like something was stuck to it, clinging through her fur and touching her skin. She did not like it one bit.

 She reached and felt around on her back. She hit a familiar, rubbery texture. *That handle?* She traced her paw against it from one side to the other. *What? What is this doing here?*

 Leona gripped the handle and pulled. It barely budged. *What the hell?* She tugged harder, putting more of her power into it. “MRRumph!” That surprisingly hurt!

 *Maybe I can tear it off at the base?* She ran her hand down to the bases of the handle, tracing it to the very end. Her finger moved over the rubbery vinyl and eventually hit fur. She ran her fingers around the area, but she could find no place to dig into it. There appeared to be no way to peel or tear it off.

 *What the… stupid thing.* She reached around with her other arm for a different angle on the item.

 She hit something else first. It seemed like the handle, but she was still gripping it with her first hand. There was another now.

 *What the hell?! I need a better look, stat!* She rushed over to the mirror on the closet and looked into it. Slowly, she turned around, keeping her eyes on her reflection as best as she could. Over the shoulder, she could just see them.

 Right on her back, not too far above her rear, there they were. The original and now new handles were stuck there. Fur parted around the handles’ bases, the material almost seeming like it was a part of her.

 *No way… no frickin’ way!* She gripped both handles together and pulled, but they would not bulge. *This isn't right! What is this… this…*

 Something else new caught her eye. She narrowed her gaze, focusing down at her reflection's back. Around the bases, there was yellow. A yellow, almost polyester-like material was leaking from each spot.

 It felt as if her heart skipped a beat, her hands immediately letting go. The substance began moving across her back, meeting up in the middle first before spreading out. The lights in the room shined on it, giving it a plastic sheen.

 *No no no!* She gritted her teeth. *This is an enemy attack? Have they been spying on me and put that canine up to this?* Her heart raced. *It can't be possible. How would they have known I'd be here? But… yet…*

 A cold sweat formed as she saw the yellow gunk crawl down to her long, cat tail. It wrapped around the base of her tail and shot up, spreading all the way to the tip. Her tail wobbled and straightened. A low **pssssssst** sound was heard after.

 Suddenly, her tail inflated. More and more it bulged, getting wider and wider, shortening just a tad. Then, just when it looked like it couldn't swell anymore, the tail split into three parts, two appendages coming off the main body. Two more split off those new additions too, covering up her keister and taking a curious shape.

 It looked like she had five, puffy tail feathers.

 *I can't…* It was too much. She turned and faced the mirror head on, no longer wishing to look at it. It didn't help much though given how far out her tail feathers stuck.

 *I need… I need to focus.* Leona closed her eyes and took a deep breath. She released it, letting her chest rise and fall. She took another breath and then another. *Remember everything you've been taught. Do not panic. Focus. Analyze the situation at play.*

 She reopened her eyes and looked at herself. *I need to think. What kind of magic is being used here. How do I counteract it? What do I… I…*

 As she looked over her front, her eyes came to her feet. Her toes were bulging, merging together into two digits on each foot. Fur vanished, leaving behind a white, rubbery substance. The toes bulged, stretching out into points at the tips and bulging at the top. They grew and grew, looking more like polyester talons.

 It didn't merely stop there either. The rest of her feet narrowed and stretched, orange rubbery skin taking over. The back of each foot bulged out, a smaller “talon” extrusion popping out there. The orange “skin” spread up and onto her ankles, moving towards her calves.

 It was like she had grown bird feet.

 *What is this sorcery?!* Leona had never seen anything like it before. Even if the handle was the trigger, the changes were happening all over her now and not spreading from just her back. Who knew how long she would have until… whatever was happening completely overwhelmed her?

 She needed help. Maybe she could call the front desk? Maybe call her friends or fellow soldiers? Whatever the case, she needed to call for somebody!

 She hurried over to the phone and reached for it. And she reached and reached and reached. The yellow substance had materialized over her paw, wrapping around her fingers and sinking her claws in it. They bloated and elongated them, turning into pudgy feather-like fingers.

 Her hand knocked the phone off, and she fumbled trying to pick it up. She tried using her other hand to help but found that it had transformed as well. She struggled for a minute, unable to work her new wing hands.

 *Dammit! I… I can't do anything like this!* Her heart raced faster than it ever had before. Everything part of her felt like it was going to burst into a panic.

 *N-no… need to calm down.* She tried breathing, getting back into her relaxing state. *Gotta think. There must be a counterspell or-*

 PSSSSSSSSSST! There was that sound again. She had heard before. It sounded like the sound of a balloon being filled with air.

 And it was coming from below.

 She looked down and found a nozzle, something akin to that of a pool toy. It was stuck where her belly button was. It was open, the noise was coming from it. She tried reaching towards the opening with one of her fingers. Despite its new texture, she could feel air going against it, being sucked in towards the nozzle.

 As air was pulled in, the area around the nozzle began to leak more plastic-esque yellow ooze. It ran and spread around her hardened tummy, covering her abs as it reached around her sides. Curiously, a ridge went out from the top and bottom of the nuzzle, much like an inflatable.

 Once the yellow gunk had reached around back to the handles, everything began to swell. The sound of inflating grew louder as her stomach lurched forward like a ball being pumped up. Her waistline widened, growing ballish with her tummy.

 *Need… need a counter spell.* Leona's pupils began to dilate. *Need to… need an ability… something that'll…* Her thoughts slowed. *Anything that could… could something.*

 It was hard to think. Panic was draining out of her and nothing was replacing it. All she had was this airy, light, empty feeling brewing within her. The whole thing frustrated her, ears bending back and her eyes closed, trying to focus.

 That's when her face felt numb. A similar substance as the one covering her body, only orange, leaked out of her mouth. It spread rapidly across her muzzle and nose, going to her cheeks. The rubbery gunk stretched and morphed, pulling out into a full beak.

 As the beak formed, her stomach stopped inflating below her breasts. Everything there felt so weightless and soft, almost like there was nothing at all. Her eyes opened as she tried to look down. However, her new beak blocked most of her sight.

 Leona felt her slick, glossy beak. *I just wanted… to enjoy a vacation.* Her “feathery” hands went down to her tummy, pressing against them.

 *Squeak.* Soft materials rubbed together, eliciting a cute noise. Her heart rose. *Well, that was charming.* She shivered.

 Leona shook her head. *Got to focus… focus on… on the problem?* Her head was feeling lighter, a pleasant sensation running through. Her white hair thickened, merging together and turning bright yellow and rubbery. It swelled and puffed out into a bird crest on top of her skull.

 It was then that she noticed something. The situation was no longer freaking her out. It wasn't that she was able to calm herself like the soldier she was. She was just naturally nice and oddly relaxed. It was almost like the situation wasn't that dire to her.

 *I know this is bad…* Leona felt her beak again. *But… but…* She pressed her bulging belly once more, wiggling her talon toes. *Squeak. Squeak.* *Heheh… that noise is nice.*

 SNAP! Her head snapped out of it. Her bikini bottom had broken. Her tummy inflation had finally spread even further down. The entire bottom half was getting rounder and rounder, hips getting sucked into it as her legs shifted further to the sides. Her shape was very much like a big-bottom cartoon character.

 There was one big difference. Her crotch was barren, sort of. When the bikini bottom felt, it showed a completely null, flat, yellow area. However, the spot soon after bulged into a big bump, the image of a lock on it.

 “*Oooooo,* ***boy!***” Her mind swirled as that big bulge inflated. “**I feel… heheh… nice.**”

 ***So nice.*** Leona sat down on the bed with a small **plop**. They looked down at themselves, giving their belly a pat and squeeze. Squeak. ***I'm sooo light now. It's soooo pleasant!***

 Their legs finished changing. Orange vinyl went up to the knees while yellow poured down to meet them there. Thighs inflated and inflated, looking like puffy drumsticks as they shifted position. They moved more to the sides of their big bottom, adding to their cartoony look.

 *Heheh, the doggo was right. This is, like, a gift!* They reached around and patted their handle. *She soooo knew this would happen… right? Totally knew, right?*

 It was hard to think straight for them. Their head was so airy and pippy now. Nothing phased or bothered them. All the tension was good. Even seeing their muscular arms thin and turn light as the yellow goop rolled over them didn't get a reaction. They were at complete peace.

 And when they thought about it (which took a bit given their airheaded nature now), this is what they wanted. They wanted to go on vacation to forget their worries and just relax. They felt *very* relaxed now.

 The yellow substance finally reached their chest, flowing over her breasts and reaching their neck. Their breasts slowly sank and sank, nipples vanishing. Their bikini broke in the back and slipped off, leaving them nude and null.

 But even noticing it now, they did not worry. They were on vacation to chill. So what did it matter if they were a new species and felt like a whole new gender? It didn't matter if they weren't Hrothgar or a lady. *He* was fine.

 *Am… am I, like, okay?* Leona rubbed his head as the pooltoy goop finally crawled up his neck and spread to his cheeks. *Something isn't right… not right… oh!*

 He nodded. *Name is no good now! Heh, totally not Leona now, right? I'm… I'm more a Leo now!* The yellow gunk crawled around his face, puffing out his cheeks and warping his head into an avian-form. *Yeeeeeah… Leo!*

 *I'm Leo!* His big bottom swelled further, making him double his original width. *I'm Leo the chill Chocobo lookin’ to forget and relax because… ah…. because things!* The nozzle where his belly button once was closed, the low inflation noise quieting. He was complete.

 The pooltoy Chocobo rubbed his noggin, squeaking away. He really couldn't think of anything. He knew he came there for a reason and was completely different before, obviously. However, trying to focus on his darker past and issues, nothing came to him.

 Leo just felt free and light, and that was just okay.

 He got up and walked over to the mirror. His heart fluttered, his big bottom wiggling with joy. He was so handsome and charming, the spitting image of a perfect Chocobo, but in pooltoy form! He happily felt up his sides and rubbery belly once more. *Heheh, I'm built for beach fun! Waaay more than before!*

 *Waaaaait…* He huffed. *Why am I still hanging around in this room? I need to have some fun on this dang vacation!*

 Leo headed over and opened the door. Despite how big his pooltoy feather hands were, he had no problems gripping or turning that knob now. It felt almost instinctual on how to do so, like he had done it hundreds of times before.

 Though, getting through the door was a bit tougher. His wide bottom got jammed in the door frame. He had thrust and shake until he popped out. Even with that though, his mood did not drop. He just happily strolled to the elevator without a care.

 As he boarded it, having to push his way in, Leo managed to think about something. He poked his tummy. *How long is this gonna last? That handle was stuck on pretty tight. Is this, like, a forever thing or just a whole vacation thing?* He wiggled in his bottom. Lasting all vacation did sound like fun to him.

 *Could ask that dog about it…* Leo nodded. He would do that after some time at the beach. If he remembered at least. His head was a bit too airy, the thought of remembering to do so was almost already gone from his mind.

 What was most important now was enjoying himself. He was a funtime chocobo ready to party. He didn't need to remember anything else important. He was on vacation after all!

***THE END***