

Only to be Leashed Down

This story takes places right after "Escape from Solitude" but I added it to the start for easier readability

High school was a harsh and competitive environment, with everyone trying to fit into groups one way or the other. Some were social and made friends, while some being charismatic, gathered people around them. People connected in classes or after-school activities. Although their methods and reasons differed, the struggle was the same for everyone, and they tried to make the best out of it. You, however, were barely breathing in this aquarium where other people swam like fish. The only things that kept you away from the malicious hands of bullies were your high grades and your only friend Hina. Both of you were top of your class and helped the others pass their exams, but unlike you, Hina had everything you lacked as well.

Despite having no one to spend time with, you were content with your life since you were left alone at the very least. The fact that you weren't going to have a great high school life was obvious, but you endured it, hoping for a better university life when you eventually got to it. You had no idea your peace on the corner would end the day you were brought down from your throne on top of the exam leaderboards by none other than your only protector Hina.

One unceremonious day, You found yourself in second place because of a simple mistake. A small scratch on an otherwise perfect notecard wasn't something to frown upon at first, but your view on it took a turn after your classroom made you realize its implications. Your score had been beaten by a girl. Although it was childish, they started mocking you for it since you had finally lost your value as a cheat sheet. Only after losing your immunity, you understood its importance as the days once passing like the wind, now felt like an eternity when people were constantly degrading you.

Hina herself felt sorry for the suffering she had brought upon you and offered a bet to see who got a better mark next exam. She gave you one last chance to prove your worth to others. Without having any other choice, you took the bet hoping to regain your old status. Studying was all you knew how to do thoroughly, after all. So, you foolishly believed you had a chance to win and underestimated how much pressure your classmates put on your shoulders. The results were unsurprising when you lost. Stress and anxiety weren't something you could deal with from the start. It was the reason why you were alone.

The bet was the last nail in your coffin, and others wasted no time burying you alive. Without your status, you were no different to a toy to be played with when they were bored, an easy target. Every day turned into a countdown before you got released from prison. The only thing you could focus on became the clock ticking slowly, and once your sole quality, your grades, were now worthless.

Your locker had turned into a garbage bin for a while, but you found a peculiar letter one day. It was a long apology paragraph from Hina explaining how sorry she was. There was an invite at the end of the letter for you to meet with her privately after school. Even though her audacity after all she had done was irritating, you still decided to humor her request.

She was a member of the athleticism club and had the time only after the club activities finished, so she had instructed you to wait for her in an empty classroom. You stayed inside the building after everyone left for the first time. While you waited, you realized how uncanny the school was when the corridors were deserted and the classrooms abandoned. Despite seeking solitude, you wanted a friend to spend time with like the rest of your peers, but you couldn't trust people. Hina finally entered the room right before you concluded it was just a prank to fool you. Dripping in sweat, she apologized yet again while panting.

"I'm so, so sorry to make you wait this long! Coach forced us to run a few extra miles today. I know my dry words mean nothing to you after everything that's happened because of me, but please know that I wouldn't have passed you if I knew this was going to happen..."

"The truth is, I don't want you to be alone like that. What you are going through is undeserved, and you need protection from someone like me. The problem is: my schedule is super tight, so I can't make any space for you. Hey, hey, don't get up and leave yet! I wouldn't have invited you if that was all I had to say! You are here because there is a way for me to make time. You see, after the club, my feet reek from sweat, and I have to clean them diligently to get rid of the putrid smell. As I was cleaning them yesterday though, I came up with a plan to spend time together. Let's say there was someone to clean them for me. Then we could hang out with them while they licked my feet clean! I understand it's kinda weird, but you are all alone in the class, so I thought you would be the perfect candidate to lap up the sweat from my soles."

Her idea repulsed you at first, and you rushed out immediately. Sadly, you came back crawling to her a few days later because you couldn't handle being alone anymore. You needed someone like her to aid you if you wanted to graduate from god-forsaken high school. Maybe you could learn to love it as time goes on...



TONTON

You were still at school long after students disbanded, sitting inside an empty classroom, vacillating between going home or staying. At that time, although you still had the chance to run away and continue your miserable life, you lacked the courage to leave and chose to stay just to become a mere slave of your friend. It was despicable, to kneel before a pair of sweaty feet and throw away what little dignity you had left, yet you deluded yourself by thinking it would be better to serve one person rather than being a rug for every one of your peers

Hina was late again. She clearly didn't depend on you the way you did on her, and now that she found a way to deal with the stench of her feet, she had no reason to come early. Missing you wasn't something she worried about because you couldn't afford it, so she didn't look back when she left you alone even longer than the last time.

If it wasn't a prank last time, it was today, you thought. It would have been funnier if someone came to worship your feet and you stood them after all. Yet, you still couldn't dare to leave and continued sitting in silence until a smell far away hit your nose, an artificial fragrance mixed with a bitter aroma. It was Hina. Her perfume was strong enough to reach you. It was a warning, but you were too simple-minded to realize.

Hearing her footsteps was enough to give you a false sense of hope. You were no different than a dog, thrilled to see its weary owner coming home. Blinded by relief, you overlooked how one-sided your relationship was. Hina's smile made you forget the time you waited for her.

Her breath was short from all the extra laps she ran. Each string of her clothing had absorbed enough sweat to get saturated and changed into an unclean color. Yet the salty drops were still shining on her smooth skin. The intoxicating tang of deodorant burned your nose now that she was close. To cloak her own smell, she had sprayed enough to make it poison. Panting, she greeted you but didn't bother apologizing this time.

"Ah, there you are! You've no idea how grateful I am to see you! I knew it was just a matter of time before you understood my offer was your best option, but waiting was still nerve-wracking. Your timing is perfect too! There's a big race in a few weeks, and I have to train as much as possible. Of course, that means you'll have to work as hard as I am, but surely you won't mind. After all, nobody forced you to come here. Now that you're here, however, you might as well get started, right?"

She asked with a cute voice. Constant bullying had caused you to forget your self-worth. Mesmerized, you stared at her kind visage, forgetting what was coming next. Although Hina had expected you to kneel on the ground, she resorted to sitting on a desk to gain the high ground once she realized you hadn't got her message. She giggled as she reached for her shoes to take them out, making the last preparations before tainting your purity.

She woke you up from your dream with one swift motion of her hand. As she took off her shoe, a revolting smell impossible to cover no matter how much sweet scent poured escaped and weighed down on your senses. The white sock she wore was battered and beaten, trampled inside a sickening sauna all day; it was begging to be released and put no resistance when Hina pulled it. With the soggy sock taken off, the repulsive stench only intensified. Your lungs cried out in pain, but you refused to cough as it would be disrespectful. Instead, you tried not to inhale any more of the toxic fumes. It was a futile attempt to avoid it, but you held on while she stripped her other foot.

Hina found you suffocating rather than taking a breath amusing, but you were frozen in place while she laughed. She took the initiative once again when she understood you weren't going to and brought her feet closer to your face. They matched your face flawlessly like puzzle pieces as if you were made for them, but your lungs gave in before Hina put them together. You coughed to no avail, accidentally giving her the perfect opportunity to start your shift. Without any warning, she pushed her toes right in your mouth.

Overwhelmed by the strong aroma you had the displeasure of tasting for the first time, you turned to stone again. Completely perplexed, you couldn't fight Hina's toes while they played with your tongue and smeared it with abominable excretion. You wanted to shout or spit, but Hina pushed her feet further each time you unwound your mouth until her sole covered your poor tongue. It was truly pathetic, yet she was overjoyed by the many faces you showed her, all rooting from disgust.

"Sorry, I couldn't help myself after seeing you like that, haha. Now you must understand why I needed someone like you, though. My feet are almost unbearable after training, and I had trouble hiding the smell for a long time. Don't you think it's great we both help each other? Well, you might have some second thoughts, haha, but it's a little late now anyway, so why don't you put more effort into cleaning my feet like we agreed to instead just standing still like a rug for me to rub my feet on?"

Her speech was derogatory, but her cute voice was all the more deceiving; and although what she said hurt you, it also brought you back to reality. No matter how repulsive the taste or how abhorrent the smell was, your only way out was submitting to her and lapping up the grime and sweat on her feet. Triumphed by her words, you finally gave up resisting and prepared yourself to give Hina's feet a long massage. Looking at them only disgusted you more, so you closed your eyes. Your tongue was all you needed on her soles.

Your taste buds screamed in agony the moment the tip of your tongue touched her heel, but you didn't stop. You hated everything about it, the aroma, the texture, the humiliation, yet you still slowly dragged your tongue across her sole because it was your choice to be here, and as pathetic as it was, you needed it. Hina didn't act like it, yet you were her mere slave.

With your sight blocked, your other senses sharpened. You easily differentiated lint, gunk, and grime stuck on the bottom of Hina's feet. Even though they felt different on your tongue, they were all coated with the same loathsome flavor, and you gulped them down all the same. Hina's feet were petite, if one left aside the vile stench, they might call them cute even, but they felt like a boundless valley ridden with plague to you. Beyond it, five soft toes awaited you and your attention. Between each was a thick miasma of foulness demanding special care, and you were the unfortunate soul forced to give whatever they desired. The thought of redoing any of it sent shivers down your spine, so you made sure you didn't miss even a speck of dust, even going as far as taking each toe in your mouth to clean them, sucking all the dirt all the while hoping Hina enjoyed it.

Once you went over every inch of her foot, you released it only to do it all over again. You couldn't muster up the courage to open your eyes but didn't have trouble finding her other foot with a little help from your humbled nose. Every inch of your body begged for you to stop, but you refused to do so until you felt something soft on your head. It was natural to think it was Hina reaching down to you with her hand to pet you and let you know you did a good job. It had been a while since anyone praised your work, long enough for you to crave the feeling. The idea that this was the only thing you managed to do correctly was pitiful, yet you were desperate enough to accept it. When you opened your eyes to see it for yourself, however, you were faced with the bitter truth. Hina wasn't looking down with grateful eyes. She was scrolling through her phone mindlessly, and what you foolishly believed was a hand petting you was just her feet she placed there to rest it. Embarrassed, you immediately stopped.

"Oh, are you finished? Good job! I didn't want to break your focus after seeing your determination, but watching you got boring since it took so long." She said while inspecting her feet and playfully moving her toes. They were in pristine condition thanks to your effort. Once Hina made sure the stench was removed, she reached out to her old socks, giving you a heart attack as wearing them would have made the torture you endured pointless. "You aren't even going to stop me? I wanted to see and trick you into thinking these were my only socks, but you didn't even give a reaction, bummer. Guess I was wrong for thinking my feet would be too much for you because you seem to love them. Don't worry, I brought a clean pair, but you can have the old ones as a treat since you were such a good boy today. You can use them as a chew toy, and maybe the smell comes off too, haha."

Hina left shortly after, saying she had to meet with some of her friends, but you sat right where you were for a while with her wet socks in your hands. Dinner tasted terrible that evening. The horrible aftertaste of Hina's feet left a mark on both your palate and your mind. Hours later, at midnight, you stared at your ceiling, unable to sleep. How she talked to you was no different than that of a master to their pet. "Is this my life now?" you thought. Just a few weeks prior, you were equals with Hina, but you cleaned her abominable feet with your tongue out of desperation hours ago. It was hard to accept it, yet there was nothing you could do anymore other than silently endure, no matter how much you hated it. Once you acknowledged your inferiority and killed the rebellious emotions brewing inside you prematurely, sleeping got less complicated.

Thank you for reading! I couldn't find the source of the first picture and the second is created by ai but as always, I am not the artist, I just wrote the story.

Although the original commission was supposed to cover what happens after these events, I just couldn't pass them. Special thanks to the commissioner for letting me write it like this!

The protagonists situation is messed up but at least he has someone he can rely on. Or does he? You'll have to wait and see...

