

The lady wot lunched a little too much

~ Chapter 8 ~

Slowly, cautiously, like an astronaut stepping onto an unfamiliar planet, David lifted his left foot and placed it on the next step up. He paused for a moment, turning it slightly for a stronger stance. Then, bending at the knee and drawing in a deep breath, he brought his right foot up to join it.

He was surprised, as he did so, to feel a twinge in his quads, and to hear the breath he'd drawn in hiss out again through gritted teeth. Carrying drunk Holly up the stairs was a workout David had completed hundreds of times over the years. And although it was always awkward (Holly being the kind of drunk whose limbs went all limp and floppy) he couldn't remember ever struggling this much - even before he'd become a personal trainer.

The conclusion was inescapable.

She's putting on weight faster than I'm putting on muscle.

David smiled fondly. As revelations went, it wasn't a particularly shocking one. Always sultry rather than sporty, Holly had never shared his passion for fitness. A few token gym visits and some fairly energetic "bedroom athletics" were about as close as the auburn beauty got to an exercise regime.

But though Holly couldn't have hoped to keep pace with her husband on the treadmill, it was a different matter entirely at the dinner table. Many a surprised glance had passed between relatives at family meals as the muscle-bound six foot two personal trainer puffed his cheeks and pushed away his unfinished plate, only for his five-six estate agent wife to tip its remaining contents onto her own plate, wolf down the lot, and still go on to eat the most pudding. And on their weekly date night, many a waiter's eyebrow had risen upon discovering that the extra portion of cheesecake ordered to the table was for the petite young lady rather than the tall athletic man.

Or at least they used to, David thought, his smile quirking a little. By now both families were quite accustomed to Holly's "healthy appetite". And recently he'd noticed that restaurant staff seemed less surprised to find that the extra helpings were for her rather than him, even at places they'd never been to before.

A glance at the honey-coloured rump that was bursting through the hole in Holly's onesie made it pretty obvious why.

David wasn't blind, of course. He'd been aware for a long time that his beloved had been putting on pounds - gradually growing thicker, and softer, and plumper. But that was the thing: it *had* been gradual. Seeing her every day and loving her as he did, David never really registered the full extent of Holly's weight gain. That said, certain moments did stand out. The winter just after her 18th birthday, for instance, when she'd returned from her annual

family skiing holiday with some pretty dangerous looking slopes of her own. Or the time she'd popped the top button of her favourite jeans while reaching for that fifth Badusha doughball at her favourite Indian.

But it wasn't until the last day of their honeymoon cruise, watching his bikini-clad wife's belly jiggle like the jellied eels she was piling atop her third helping of lobster, that David realised just how much weight his once-skinny childhood sweetheart had piled on over the years.

Maybe that's why she's so slippery, he thought, bracing himself as Holly's head lolled and her hip slid in his grip. *Too many eels.* Christ, she was difficult to keep a hold of. It was as if her red onesie was packed out with jelly rather than a human body.

Of course, it didn't help that Holly couldn't even try to hold on to the bannister, what with one arm slung over her husband's shoulders and the other cradling her uncomfortably swollen belly. David glanced down at it, a bulging velvety sack, sagging forward and stretching the gold buttons of her onesie. It looked even bigger and tubbier now than it had after her seafood feast on the cruise.

Gemma's eating habits are really rubbing off on her, David thought, recalling all the pizza, chicken strippers and peanuts Holly had devoured over the evening. All of which audibly sloshed in a sea of prosecco as he took the next step a little too quickly.

'Oooh!' Holly whimpered, rubbing her palm along the underside of her jostled tummy and pouting uncomfortably. 'Care -uurp!/- ful!'

David gave her cheek an apologetic kiss. 'Sorry babe.' He splayed his hand across Holly's lumpy, gurgling paunch, his pointer and index fingers straddling the bellybutton, feeling the pulsing of blood rushing through Holly's body to her overtaxed digestive system. David gave her belly a gentle squeeze, just enough for the velvet-encased fat to begin to bulge through the gaps in his fingers, trying to ease his sweetheart's indigestion without putting too much pressure on her overloaded belly.

Holly responded with a grunt and awkward puff of her cheeks... and then an enormous pepperoni-scented belch.

David chuckled. 'Better?' he asked, moving his hand behind to pat his wife's exposed bottom. He couldn't help marvelling at the contrast. Where Holly's belly was tight and bloated, her plump bum was soft and squishy.

Although it still stuck out further. David twisted his head to admire the twin caramel bulges stretching out the gap where her bum flap had sprung off.

Just.

The feeling of her husband's long, strong fingers caressing her exposed rump caused Holly to purr with pleasure. At the same time, it was a rather unpleasant reminder of the evening's events.

'I can't believe my bum came out,' she groaned softly.

'You just got up a little too quickly babe,' David reassured her, kissing her hair as she tilted her head onto his shoulder. I don't think anyone else noticed.'

Holly snorted into his neck. 'Hmph. Liar.' She sighed sleepily. 'Peter Pervert's always looking at my bum. At least, when he isn't staring at Gemma's b—'

Without warning, Holly's head jerked up. David rocked back on the edge of the step, somehow managing to keep them from toppling backwards.

'Oh my god! Gemma!' Holly said urgently, apparently oblivious to their near fall. 'We can't leave her alone with that creep!'

David chuckled. 'He doesn't seem too bad to me. Definitely fancies her, though.'

'I don't trust him,' Holly mumbled, but already she was sounding sleepy and drunk again. 'He's *-urp-* sneaky. A sneaky creepy pelican.'

The effort of this tongue-twister seemed to exhaust Holly. She went limp again, her head nestling in the nook of David's neck. After a few seconds she began to snore.

Shaking his head with a smile, David continued up the stairs. Reaching the landing, he paused and looked out through the window. The garden was dark, but the bottle lamps lining the path were still glowing.

David's eyes followed the winding lights to the door of the summer house. He looked in through the still-lit windows.

And then his eyes bulged in disbelief.

*

'Two more lava cakes for the ladies - and another round of old fashioned!'

The blond quiff bashed his palms together like cymbals at the end of a symphony, his voice booming over the clink and chatter of the banquet hall. It was so loud that Aimi wondered if there was any point in taking the order to the kitchens. The cooks had almost certainly heard it, even from all the way across the room - and through six inches of wall.

Just one more hour to go, she sighed, reminding herself how much she needed this job. Besides, loud and brash though he was, the blond quiff was a gold mine. He'd already bribed Aimi to switch the seating arrangements, and he'd paid her even more to make sure the constant stream of cocktails he was ordering to the table were all double-strength.

All except his own, which were completely alcohol free.

A twinge of guilt fluttered in Aimi's chest. But helping someone secretly stay sober wasn't a crime, was it? And it wasn't as if the blond man was forcing alcoholic drinks on the women at the table. The pair of them were gulping down old fashioned like they were... well, going out of fashion. They were adults, weren't they? They had to take responsibility for themselves. A hundred pounds was a lot of money to a waitress.

But the guilt still lingered - a tiny moth in the bedroom of Aimi's mind. She glanced around the table. The two expensively dressed women were so sozzled they were almost swaying in their seats, and the rugged dark-haired man seemed fairly tipsy too. Yet anyone passing would have said that the blond guy was by far the drunkest of all.

And he was stone-cold sober.

When I bring this round back, I'll say this the last one I can serve them, Aimi decided. If he doesn't like it, I'll give him his money back the next time he goes to the toilet.

She'd started for the bar, when a voice from behind stopped her in her tracks.

'We're out of -huc- champagne,' it slurred pompously.

Aimi was glad she'd turned away. It hid the scowl that automatically tugged down the corners of her mouth. With great effort she hoisted them back up into her pleasant waitress smile and turned back to the table.

Even in a room full of haughty, overdressed beauties, the woman who'd spoken stood out. Hair as dark and glossy as oil floated around a perfectly contoured face. Dark green eyes lazed beneath lashes designed for sweeping hearts, and her shiny lips - made even shinier by a sheen of cream from the rich dessert that had just passed between them - were set in an expression of smug disdain. Abby Prescott, the place card at her table announced in elaborate curly writing. But from the diva-like way she'd been behaving all evening you'd have thought it said Kim Kardashian.

The annoying thing was that she probably could have passed as a Kardashian - a distant cousin perhaps, from a branch of the family that were built on a larger scale.

A *much* larger scale, Aimi thought, as Abby leaned forward drunkenly, her tits almost wiping the smears of chocolate and cream from her plate as they passed over it like low-flying zeppelins. Resting a plump ivory elbow on the table, she waggled her empty champagne flute.

'Well hurry up,' she slurred, bugging her eyes at Aimi sarcastically, as if she was dealing with a particularly slow child, 'we're *-huic!*- thirsty.'

The words stamped on Aimi's moth of guilt like a twelve-inch stiletto.

Fine, she thought, *you asked for it. Literally. Drink yourself into a stupor.*

And eat your way into a food coma while you're at it, her subconscious added, as Abby leaned back with a toss of her silky locks to allow her plate to be replaced with one bearing a fresh lava cake.

Aimi blinked. Apparently the chefs had heard the blond quiff all the way in the kitchens. But her astonishment soon faded, as a far more likely explanation occurred.

James... The spotty young waiter who was sliding Abby's second dessert under her great shelf of a bosom, bowing so low that his slimy lips came within an inch of nuzzling her tits. No doubt he'd been hovering nearby and overheard the order, and had leapt at the chance to slobber over them at even closer range.

The sleazy little shit's even brought more champagne too. Aimi cringed as James presented the bottle with a flourish, doing a feeble imitation of a suave French sommelier.

Still, he got his reward. As he leaned forward to refill Abby's champagne flute, a violent hiccup jolted through her glossy bulk, causing her vast creamy bosom to ripple like an ocean.

There was an expensive smash as a bottle of vintage Boerl & Kroff bounced off the edge of the table and shattered against the floor.

James blinked dumbly at the froth lapping against his shoes, gradually emerging from his tit-trance.

'Shit ... Er.. I mean, my apologies, madam.. I'll... let me clear that up.'

He bent down, only to shoot up again with a dry squeal as he felt something clamp firmly around his left buttock.

'Bring another bottle first,' a new voice growled. And releasing her grip, Fatima Marceau issued a smack to the waiter's scrawny backside that sent him scuttling off with a yelp.

Aimi sighed, but not out of sympathy for James. It was just her luck, wasn't it, to get the table with not just one, but the two most obnoxious and demanding bitches at the entire ceremony. From the moment they'd plonked their pompous oversized bottoms onto their seats, the bossy Indian diva in the silver dress and the bloated Kardashian clone in gold had run Aimi absolutely ragged. More wine. More cocktails. More bread. More dips. More shots. More champagne. More, more, more, more, more... In her three years of waiting tables, Aimi didn't think she'd ever heard two people make so many demands.

She'd certainly never seen two people eat so much. Aimi watched with mixture of disgust and awe as the glamorous pair dug into their second helpings of dessert. By rights, neither of them should have been able to do more than nibble on their starters, after the way they'd stuffed down the hors d'oeuvres earlier on. Yet here they were, still eating after ...Aimi did some quick mental arithmetic... seven plates of food each! Not to mention all the hefty chunks of oil-saturated bread they'd snacked on between courses.

No wonder their bums are too big for their chairs, Aimi thought, eyeing Abby the cake-inhaling Kardashian. There was a kind of stretched-out yet squeezed-in look about her golden bulges that suggested some seriously heavy duty shapewear beneath that Versace, and gave the overall impression of multiple giant straining water balloons all strapped together. The strain was clear on Abby's face too. Each time her neck convulsed with another swallow of cake, a wince passed over her haughty features, as more food arrived in her already full stomach.

The realisation struck Aimi. This—what she was witnessing right here, right now—this was real gluttony: someone who kept eating and eating and eating. Eating through the pain of eating. Eating even when her body felt ready to burst.

But if Abby was on the verge of bursting, then the other woman, Fatima, looked like she already had. The Indian beauty's backless silver dress was still squeezing her plump body like cling film, emphasising every puffy bulge, but it had long ago given up the task of holding

her in. Plush rolls of pudgy spilled out everywhere, overflowing her dress like dough bubbling over the edges of a pan, and jiggling as she leaned into every forkful of cake. Aimi watched a long droplet of sweat trickle down the squishy troughs between her pads of back fat before finally disappearing into the depths of her arse crack.

Fatima squirmed and shuddered, her fleshy rolls rippling.

'Where's that champagne?' she snapped.

The blond quiff leaned back easily. 'We'll take another round of shots with those old fashioned too,' he said, grinning around the table and making eye-contact with Aimi for the briefest moment. He pushed his chair back and stood up, swaying theatrically. 'Just going to pay a visit.'

The moth of guilt twitched a broken wing. Aimi gulped. This was her chance. She could intercept him when he came out of the toilet. Give him his money back and wash her hands of the entire business. She glanced again at the table.

And found two champagne flutes being waggled impatiently in her face.

'So that's one bottle of Boerl & Kroff,' Aimi said, her smile barely flickering, 'four old fashioned and four shots of tequila,'. And with a small bow, she turned away from the table.

A hundred pounds was a lot of money to a waitress.

Blinking groggily, Abby peered down at the remaining lump of lava cake like a bored goddess assessing yet another offering. Beneath the table, she pinched her dress between two fingers and gave it a tug. Ugh, the sooner she could get out of this stupid overpriced shapewear the better. It was squeezing her like a python!

And these bloody *-huc-* hiccups weren't helping either. Each one seemed to make her girdle clench even tighter, as if some invisible sadist was standing behind her, tugging on the strings.

In some far corner of Abby's brain, deep beneath a sloshing ocean of alcohol, a half-drowned Angel of Restraint fought its way to the surface.

Is finishing this cake really such a good idea, the angel spluttered. *We've had a lot to eat already. An awful lot. And the woman who gave us the shapewear did say-*

It's too -urrrp!- good to waste, snarled a rather green-cheeked Demon of Gluttony from atop her rocking pleasure barge. *Besides -huc- we're celebrating!*

This last word was accompanied by a vicious kick that sent the Angel gurgling back down into the depths.

Celebrating.

The reminder was enough to distract Abby from the straining pressure around her middle. Tossing her silky locks, she let her fingers stray to the glass trophy that stood tall and proud beside her champagne flute. She twisted its base, rubbing her thumb along the gleaming plaque. *Most Innovative use of Social Media.*

And that wasn't even the best part. For nestled in the top of that trophy, sticking out just enough so that they'd be clearly visible on any photo, were two tickets for an all expenses paid trip to St Lucia. A prize within a prize. Abby hadn't even realised there was a real prize that came with the trophy. Her lips creased into a smirk. She really hoped Gemma and Holly had been checking Instagram.

'So, who are you going to take?'

So soaked with booze were Abby's braincells that it was several moments before she realised that Ryan's words formed a question, and several more before she realised that question was directed at her. She looked at him blankly.

'To St Lucia,' he said, nodding patiently at the tickets. 'Are you going to take Gemma or Holly?'

Ryan fought to keep his own face straight while Abby's darkened like a lunar eclipse. 'Why would I *-huc-* take either of them?' she slurred, scooping up a huge, sullen spoonful of lava cake.

Ryan chuckled. 'Well I can't make it, and you only need one ticket.'

He smiled, but only to himself, as Abby's dark eyebrow glitched. He knew, of course, that she had no intention of sharing her prize with Gemma or Holly. He doubted Abby had ever shared anything with anyone in her entire life. But Ryan had a plan. Abby was already very drunk. If he could wind her up a bit - not too much, but just enough - then with any luck she'd head off to bed in a huff, leaving him free to find someone else to sleep with.

Someone in much better shape.

For although Ryan had been tempted at first, if only to see just how huge those tits really were once released, as the evening wore on his desire for his bulging branch manager had dwindled with every drink he'd drunk and every mouthful of food she'd eaten.

And there had been a lot of drinks... and even more food.

Not that Ryan was surprised. Abby had always been greedy. He'd taken her on enough dinner dates over the years to know that. But back when she'd been slim, she'd had a way of making her greed seductive: lowering those thick dark lashes as she squeezed oozing slabs of meat between her lips; moaning with near-orgasmic pleasure as she sucked down mouthfuls of creamy dessert; casting sultry, suggestive glances... Like the one she was giving him now, as she licked rich gooey lava cake from the back of her shiny spoon with that long, slow, slick tongue.

Ryan shuddered. Back in the day that move had been particularly sinful and sexy. Now it just made Abby's bingo wings quiver and drew attention to the thick creases around her second chin.

Creases which wobbled as she let out a languid, long-suffering sigh.

'Ryan,' Abby said, sighing again for good measure. 'You just don't *-hic--* see how useless Gemma and Holly are day to day. I'm constantly *-huc,-oof-* constantly having to... to mop up their mistakes,' she added, drawing inspiration from the spotty waiter, who'd returned with

sponge and bucket, and was now getting down on his hands and knees to scrub the expensive floorboards.

Ryan watched the bubbles rise in his champagne flute as the waitress topped it up. She'd returned just behind the waiter, closely followed (too closely, Ryan thought) by a smugly grinning Seth, who had apparently offered to carry the tray of drinks for her, and was now filling the little remaining space on the table with whiskies, espresso martinis, and tequila shots in glasses almost as tall as the champagne flutes.

But these weren't the only things Seth put on the table.

Having carefully created a space at the centre, and grinning like the tribal hunter-gatherer who'd returned with the ultimate goods, he proceeded to lift from the tray a vast glass trough, from which there rose the most enormous sundae Ryan had ever seen: a Himalayan mountain range of ice cream, each of its three towering peaks drenched in a different topping and surrounded by rolling hillsides of additional scoops, fruits and sauces.

Abby's lazy green eyes tracked the supersize sundae as Seth set it down. She glanced at Fatima, as if sizing up a rival in the late stages of an eating contest.

Ryan could hardly believe what he was seeing. After all that dinner and double helpings of cake... how could either of them possibly be thinking about eating even more?

He was distracted by something bumping into his shin, followed by a muffled apology. Looking down, Ryan was just in time to see the young waiter's cheap shoes and scrawny backside disappear behind the tablecloth, as he extended his scrubbing under the table.

Probably trying to cop a look up Abby's skirt, Ryan thought, remembering his own youthful (and not so youthful) indiscretions. The lad had been gawking at her tits all evening.

The lightbulb of an idea flickered faintly in Ryan's brain. But no— it wouldn't work. It would take more than a mere waiter to pique Abby's interest. It would have to be one of the wealthy directors, and they already had women of their own.

All of whom, Ryan realised with some bitterness as he glanced around the room, were considerably slimmer than Abby.

No, he'd just have to continue with Plan A.

'Gemma has made some good sales recently,' he said, casually. *While you've failed to get even a single proper bid on Ethel House*, he almost added, stopping himself just in time. That would have been a push too far. Yes, Abby had gotten fat, and her sales figures had dropped recently. But she was still a valuable asset. He didn't want to insult her to the point where she quit. Especially after she'd just won an award, which if nothing else had really pissed Fatima off - always a win in Ryan's book.

Abby lifted her tall thin shot of Tequila and tilted her head back, draining it so smoothly that for a moment Seth wondered if he'd accidentally given her his alcohol-free one by mistake.

But though she seemed calm on the surface, inside the dark-haired diva was seething, thanks to a combination of her increasingly tight shapewear and Ryan's increasingly tiresome

attitude. Who did he think he was, challenging her? Hadn't she made it clear how useless Gemma and Holly were? Hadn't she just won him a bloody award?

One day I'll take control of his stupid business, Abby thought. Then there'll be some serious changes.

Until then... well, she'd just have to get what she wanted the old-fashioned way.

Twisting her spoon in the gooey remains of her cake, Abby drew in a deep bosom-swelling breath. 'But if I invite Gemma,' she said, slowly lifting melted chocolate to her lips, 'Holly will feel left out. It's just going to create *-huc-* conflict. *Mmmmm...*'

Abby shuddered with tit-wobbling lust as she drew her spoon from her mouth upside down, the tequila numbing the agonising clench of her girdle as even more food arrived in her packed-full stomach.

Ryan twisted his champagne flute. 'I see what you mean.' He looked thoughtful for a moment, then smiled. 'I'll pay for an extra ticket. That way all three of you can go. It can be a kind of team bonding trip.'

Lumps formed in Abby's neck, lazy muscles tensing beneath thick wads of flesh. 'It would be much more fun,' she said, her voice teetering on the tightrope of seduction over a boiling pit of rage, 'if it was just you and me.' Pulling herself closer to the table, Abby looked up at Ryan from beneath the silky fringe of her lashes and drew a small circle on the back of his hand with her fingertip.

'Remember our Holiday in Ibiza?'

Abby's words and touch were like a time machine. Suddenly Ryan was swept back four years. Ibiza... A heated pool under a bluish midnight sky. Mists of hot steam rising around him as he gazed up at the stars.

A soft tinkling of water brought his eyes down... and then they stretched wide as the outline of a long, generous thigh pushed through the curtain of mist.

Clear olive skin glowing pale in the moonlight, Abby swayed down the pool steps like a lunar goddess, dark hair floating enchantress-like around her naked body, fingertips tracing smooth trails along the surface of the water, tendrils of steam swirling and caressing her slender limbs as if under her control. Reaching the bottom of the steps, she bent her knees, that delicious moonlit rump swelling wide and full behind her, the tips of her nipples lowering to brush the water as she pushed off in a languid breaststroke towards him.

Back in the banquet hall, Abby smiled at the dreamy look that had come over Ryan's face. She knew the exact moment he was remembering, the movie she'd set off in his head.

What she didn't know was that far from yearning for a repeat showing, Ryan was overcome with a deep sense of loss. How perfect Abby had been back then! Drunk on champagne and nostalgia, he gazed fondly at the image in his mind's eye. That beautiful body, smooth and slender, yet sinfully curvy. Her face as sultry as a sorceress.

But slowly the image began to change. The hips swelled, the arms thickened and puffed outwards. Ryan almost cried out in distress as his dream woman expanded before his eyes, desperately willing her back into the shape of that slender, sexy enchantress, even as a great pillowy potbelly slumped forth from her waist. But it was no use. Abby's body continued to expand, swelling as if it were being pumped with cream, rounder and wider and thicker, until it had completed its metamorphosis into the porcine parody of his dream woman that sat before him in the banquet hall, bulging and hiccupping with cake and champagne.

Ryan reached bitterly for his Tequila. All that beauty, buried beneath sixty or seventy extra pounds of fat. What a tragic waste!

He slugged back the shot in one go, wincing as the sharp liquid burned his throat. Woah, that was stronger than he'd expected! Blinking, he glanced to his side, just in time to see Seth having a similar reaction.

The lightbulb in Ryan's head flickered again. Could he fob Abby off onto Seth? But in spite of everything, the idea of that smug Trump-tanned bastard getting one over on him still rankled.

Besides, it looked as if the bequiffed blond had other plans. Having recovered from his shot, Seth had pulled his chair as close to the table as it would go, and was leaning forward with that dazzling white grin, pushing such a huge spoonful of ice cream towards Fatima's snooty lips that she practically had to dislocate her lower jaw to fit it all in.

Ryan cringed. He'd heard of men trying to get women drunk to get into their knickers, but Seth seemed to be trying to stuff Fatima with so much food that her knickers would burst clean off - along with everything else. The incredible thing was, it seemed to be working. Having initially complained about having to share a table with him (which Ryan was sure Seth had arranged somehow) Fatima had slowly mellowed as the evening progressed, and was now eying the blond man's muscular torso with a kind of sleepy hunger, much as a snake might look at its next meal.

Emphasis on the sleepy, Ryan thought, watching Fatima's eyelids blink and her head sway vaguely as she leaned into another spoon-load of ice cream. If Seth wasn't careful he'd feed the greedy Indian beauty into a food coma.

Deep in Ryan's brain, the lightbulb flickered again.

This time it stayed on.

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