III

Somewhere deep underneath all of the extra poundage that she had picked up over the course of this assignment, Agent 299’s keen eye for peculiarity had caught the inherent strangeness of an employer going out with her secretary in public like this.

“Do you need me to slow down, hun?”

“Hff… nah, I… I mean… no thank you…”

Underneath all of her insular fat, all while sweltering in the California sun, it was easy for Agent 299’s façade to crack. As sweat dewed underneath the slightly unfashionable bangs cut into her wig, her plump lips were left agape as she huffed and puffed her way along the sidewalk downtown. Her double chin rolled out from underneath her buried jawline, resting on her fat padded chest as she waddled heavily towards the boutique. She’d been out of breath pretty much since she got out of the car with Ms. Mayer, and the two blocks that she’d been forced to waddle under her own power in the heat of the day had left her more beat than when she’d fought against those Serbian nationalists that—

“Are you *sure* you don’t want to stop and take a break?” Marissa asked with a quick little turn, hands on her hips as she looked the blimping secretary up and down, “You’ve got that far-off look in your eyes again.”

“Wha—suh… sorry…”

Lifting one hammy arm up to wipe the sweat from her brow, accidentally upsetting “Edna’s” hairline ever so slightly, Agent 299 struggled to heave herself forward. Gaining all this weight so quickly had made it so hard for her to catch her breath—if only she had a little something to snack on; then she’d be able to keep her energy up…

“Can’t have my favorite secretary passing out on the sidewalk, can I?” Ms. Mayer opened the door and allowed the roly poly woman inside, “Come on into the air conditioning—you’re going to *love* this place. Meredith used to shop here *all* the time…”

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Geraldine had seen drastic transformations from her agents before.

It was only natural for them to change to better fit their surroundings. Or if not their surroundings, then to better fit their roles within whatever mission that they had been assigned. Though she had never been an agent herself, after twenty-plus years of sending young women like 299 off to protect the secrets of the country.

But this one was something else.

“Huhfffh… when did the hallway to your stupid office get so *loooooong*?”

Agent 299 had barreled through the double doors of Geraldine’s office stomach first, with the footfalls of her cankled feet audible even from behind the lead lining. The roll that made up her neck hung low under her chin and lead up to chunky red cheeks—the peach-fuzz on her head had grown out into a little dyed-brown bob that hugged the roll that had formed between the back of her head and her double chin. The poor thing looked like she was going to keel over just from the walk from one room to the next—Geraldine had *seen* her have a sit down on the bench near the vestibule through the security cameras…

Not that she was anticipating her arrival, or anything.

“It’s the same distance as it’s always been, 299.” Geraldine said with a sip of her tea from behind the desk, “Perhaps you’ve just spent too far away from home to remember properly.”

“Does that… hahhh… does that mean that I get to come home, soon?” The Agent tried not to look *too* terribly excited as she wiped the sweat from her brow, “Because I’m not gonna lie… I *really* miss doing the… pff… cool spy stuff…”

“Perhaps soon, the organization will be in a situation where it will be able to go on without your intel.” Geraldine cleared her throat, placing her teacup down doing her best to look her Agent straight in the eyes and not anywhere else along her fatted physique, “Thanks to the information that you’ve gathered, we’ve been building a case against Sugar Rush Unlimited, and within a few years—”

“Within a few *years*?!” the enormous woman bawled, “I’ll be twice as much of a whale by then! Geraldine, you’ve *got* to—”

“It *could* be a few years. Or a few months.” The older woman raised one hand in a simultaneous acknowledgement and dismissal of 299’s concerns, “Only time will tell—but I *can* say that the more information you get me, the sooner you’ll be able to get back to your regular duties.”

The thought of watching 299 try and do her regular Super Spy, James Bond routine at her size was enough to make the older woman crack the softest of smiles. Waddling out in front of explosions that shouldn’t have happened on stealth missions, huffing and puffing out her silly one-liners as she tried her best to look cool, *squeezing* into those cat suits that she insisted on wearing despite how tight and impractical they were…

Oh yes, the idea of Agent 299 trying to squish herself back into the Agent Peacock role that she had lived out since she had come to this agency was a fun idea indeed. One that Geraldine hadn’t been able to shake since seeing just how *quickly* her agent was ballooning under the care of Marissa Mayer and her Sugar Rush Unlimited corporation.

It came to her at the oddest of times—while doing paperwork, during meetings, late at night…

“I keep telling you that there’s nothing more that I can *do* there!” 299 whined, putting her hands on the acreage that was her hips, “All of the action is at the warehouses or the distribution centers!”

“And do you *really* think that you’re suited to do much of anything at either of those sorts of locations? Hm?” Geraldine arched a steely eyebrow at her petulant porker of an employee, who could only visibly deflate in response to yet another rejection of termination, “We *have* to be thorough on this 299; the safety of the American people depends on us getting this done *right*, not *quickly.*”

299’s frustration with red tape was nothing that Geraldine hadn’t expected. She had spent her whole professional career coloring outside the proverbial lines in order to make sure that the job got done, no matter how much it had in turn frustrated Geraldine and those higher up the chain of command. But seeing her just *sink* into the realization that her mission wasn’t going to be over any time soon, that she was going to be stuck working at SRU as Edna indefinitely until the foreseeable future had come to pass *almost* made Geraldine feel a twinge of remorse for not swapping her out with another agent.

“Edna’s” mother could have gotten sick back in Wyoming. “Edna” was getting awfully heavy, and a sabbatical might have been in order. At the very least “Edna” was getting to be big enough that having to pay for two plane tickets would have been a reasonable excuse to get her out of there for a week or so.

But whether it was the defeated look in her eye, the heaviness to her breathing, or the way that she could hardly waddle away without sloshing from side to side in all directions… Geraldine would admit quietly to herself that she didn’t really *want* to see “Edna” take a sabbatical.

299 was *just* where Geraldine wanted her to be—and as a familiar chill ran up her spine as she wriggled around in her big, leather chair behind her big, fancy desk, Geraldine could no more cease the intrusive thoughts of just how big Agent 299 would get than Agent 299 could stop eating herself round…

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Like all of the spies that worked for the Agency, Agent 299 had been trained to resist mental persuasion as much as possible.

They weren’t robots, like their Russian equivalents. There was no taking of children and brainwashing them until they were loyal agents of The State. While the freedom to choose their own path was narrow, it *was* there—and Agent 299 was technically able to resign at any point.

It would have meant giving up her pension, pay, and a lot of her personal freedom as a civilian due to the heavily classified missions that she had been on and the massive amounts of NDAs that she would have been subjected to in such a case, but it *was* possible. There *was* still a parachute cord that 299 had yet to pull.

Not that she *wanted* to. She loved her line of work! Going on missions, exploring the world, and protecting freedom at any cost were just some of the perks that she had been able to enjoy during her ten and a half years of service to the Agency.

But when the cost was almost certainly going to come down to ever being able to see her toes again, Agent 299 was beginning to have her doubts as to whether or not her sacrifices were even worth it in the long run.

“Oh gawd… I can’t even put my fucking arms down at my sides…”

299’s gelatinous biceps pooled and squished between rolls of fat, threatening to pop out of the overdrawn sleeve that was the latest in a long line of boring button-ups from Edna *Keever*’s wardrobe. Her thick double chin folded into the tiniest third roll as her mouth hung agape, her heavy whining understandable as she felt her arms resist being put back at her hips.

“I’ve really got to stop eating so much…”

“Edna’s” predecessor, Meredith had supposedly gained a hundred pounds in a year before she was paid off by the Agency to take a permanent vacation. In a little less than twice that, she’d probably gained *twice* as much as the former secretary had. And by the time Geraldine’s contacts had gotten ahold of Meredith, she had been chomping at the bit to get out of this office—something that Agent 299 hadn’t really understood until she had started to pack on all these pounds. She was *huge* and there was almost nothing that she could do about it! The Agency wanted her to stay here, *Geraldine* said she was doing great work, but it was almost like she could *feel* herself get fatter by the day! They served so much food here, and the candy dish was always full, and… and…

“…buff I fan’t fhop eaffing!”

Even back at her apartment, Agent 299 was overwhelmed with cravings. Night and day, she felt like she needed to be eating something now. She was always hungry, and when she wasn’t hungry she was bored, and when she was bored she couldn’t exactly do cool spy stuff, and she couldn’t do spy stuff because she was tired, and she was tired because she was *fat* and—

“Edna?”

Ms. Mayer’s voice ripped through the downward spiral of Agent 299’s inner monologue, forcing the fat woman back to reality with an honest-to-god snort. She turned far, *far* faster than a woman of her size ought to have turned, and would have knocked Marissa to her feet if she’d been standing any closer.

“Whoop, didn’t mean to startle you there.” Ms. Mayer smiled from behind crossed arms, “I was just wondering if you… were up for a little lunch?”

*Stay strong, 299.*

*You can* ***do it*** *299!*

“I, uh… yeah, I could eat.”

And there was a small hook in Ms. Mayer’s eyebrow as she watched her secretary’s expression melt from stressed to wanting in mere seconds. The eagerness with which she hauled that heavy body forwards in hopes of satisfying what was apparently a mighty need for the chemicals that had been getting pumped into to her since the day that she arrived.

Maybe, Ms. Mayer pondered to herself, Edna *Keever* was far enough along that she’d be willing to say who she *really* was, and why she’d been sent here.