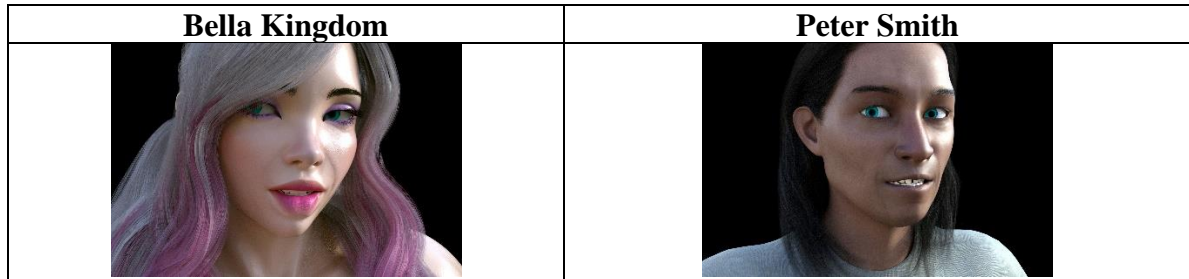


Chapter 2: **Dining With Bella**

Starring:



“Hey! Can I get burger, burgers, extra burgers, bacon, burgers, soda, burgers, big soad, burgers burgers, fries and fries and burgers, please?” Bella laughed, winking at the poor soul behind the counter, who couldn’t help but laugh back, well aware of their friendly neighbourhood gluttons at the gym next door.

As they sat in the cozy little diner, Peter and Bella found themselves seated across from each other, Bella patiently awaiting her “light snack”. - But Peter's appetite was overshadowed by the weight of his own conscience. He knew he had an ulterior motive for wanting to be Bella’s friend, and that motive wasn’t sitting right with him. He felt deceptive.

Bella, noticing the seriousness in Peter's expression, tilted her head and asked, "everything okay, Peter? You seemed happy to be dining with me a moment ago" she said, batting her big eyes at him to open him up.

Peter hesitated for a moment before letting out a sigh. "Bella, I don't think you should be around me. I don’t think it’s fair to you.", his words were fragmented, like he was trying to produce a mixture of information but didn’t know what order to put it in.



Bella raised an eyebrow, intrigued. "Why's that?"

Peter gathered his thoughts before speaking, "You see, I have an ex. A Recent ex who calls herself Khorosis. Hell knows if that's her real name, I doubt it." He paused for a moment, as Bella's mountain of food arrived. Bella shyly shrugged, feeling a bit inappropriate in contrast to Peter's tone.

"Sorry." She muttered, with a contagious smirk of guilt across her face. "Ha... no, you do you." Peter smile warmly, before continuing.

"... ..she's violent, and she's hurt me many times. I kinda live in fear of her, and one of the main reasons I asked you out was... ..for protection, because even the police are too scared to arrest her due to her immense super-strength."

Bella nodded, her gaze steady and understanding. "I see."

"...don't misunderstand me for a second, Bella. You're THE most beautiful woman I've ever seen in my life, but... you'll agree that it's a wrong reason to ask anyone out. Peter confessed.

Bella leaned forward, her eyes filled with respect for Peter's honesty. "...I didn't mean to lean so close, earlier, but I felt your little breath breathing all over my big belly; so I know telling me this isn't easy for you, and I respect that a lot, Peter." She said, patting his palm as it lay on the table.

She took a bite of a particularly large sandwich, her eyes locked on him. As she pondered her next words, Peter was visibly surprising his own amusement at the sight of Bella taking him

so seriously while looking slightly ridiculous amid her gargantuan pile of food. She herself held a smirk, silently laughing at his laugh.



With a playful grin, Bella shrugged, saying, "Well, you know what they say about me – I can eat for two." She sighed. "Two...?" Peter countered. – "Well, two of ME." She finished, scoring another chuckle from the both, before she took another bite.

Peter's initial anxiety began to ease as he realized Bella's genuine understanding and humour. He couldn't help but smile in return.

As the conversation wound down, Bella leaned back in her chair. "Alright, Peter, let's make a deal. I don't want you as a boyfriend, but you're a good-looking feller with a good heart. – Plus you're so cute I wanna cuddle you all day and make sure you're alright." Bella smiled as Peter shied away a little. "I hope that doesn't emasculate you, I mean it well."

"...heh. It's pretty hard to emasculate a man who's been punched around his own kitchen by a girl even bigger than you, Bella. - I'm pretty sure at this point that one of my testicles has actually burst, y'know. Only half of my manhood left, now!" Peter laughed, indeed his loudest laugh so far. But his desensitisation to the abuse he was living through made him oblivious to the fact that Bella was not laughing at all. Not even slightly.

Peter's words trailed off as he realised Bella was starting at him, her huge and big-hearted body beginning to burn with empathy. She looked sad and she looks furious. The small man immediately tried to steer the conversation like an ocean liner.

“Sorry, I wasn’t thinking. You can go, Bella, you don’t want to get mixed up in this.” He stuttered, almost panicked, because look in the muscle-girl’s eyes was so filled with obvious determination.



“...did you just say she BURST one of your TESTICLES...?” Bella repeated his words, her face forming a stoned-faced expression of neutrality, a faux poker-face trying to mask her temper. Peter thought for a moment, before attempting the only sidestep he could think of, which was evidently feeble at best.

“...err... I said... I’m PRETTY sure that it’s burst. It might not.” Peter dithered, awkwardly looking around.

In the calmest, most caring, but infinitely foreboding, bubbling and boiling tone Bella could muster, she said, in her lowest, coldest octave; “...Peter. A man knows - When one of his testicles - no longer exists.”

The pink-haired powerhouse began nearly tidying the empties from her meal, the severity of her voice beginning to sound like a lawyer, or a government agent.

“...swollen...?” she muttered, continuing to tidy up, her veins calmly beginning to throb with aggression. “...yeah...” Peter said. Finally deciding that lying or evasiveness was completely futile against this woman. Of all the bruises on his face, the eye was the most sensitive, and it hurt as he winced. Only here did Peter remember the injuries on his face, which made him remember that Bella wasn’t just listening to his words, she was adding his words to what she could so obviously see.

“...doctor...?” she followed. “Okay. Yes, I’ve seen the doctor. He was... incredibly concerned, for... many many reasons.” Peter said. “I’ll bet...” Bella whispered to herself.

“I don’t think I want to ask this - but did she do ‘it’... by hand...?” Bella asked, but to no answer. As he relived not only the moment in question, but other moments like it, Peter remained staring in silence.

“Forget it. – But, I got one more question, Peter, and it is my favourite question.” She asked with as smile, but her eyes were burning with action. “If we went to your place right now – **would she be there?**”

Peter hesitated to answer. His hesitance said more than words ever could. He feared the strength of his demon with all his soul, and Bella was his newfound angel, and the thought of her being broken terrified him – Bella found these fears extremely easy to predict. She leaned towards him as the two stood up, pulling him closer to her massive frame.



“You don’t know me. You don’t know what I am capable of.” Bella coldly whispered. “...and you don’t know how many mountains me and my friends have climbed.” She finished, Peter remaining completely unaware of the super-strong collective of women at the local gym in Harper City, but he seemed to get the gest, weakly nodding and padding Bella’s strong hand as it landed on his shoulder.

“Sorry.” He whispered, looking up at Bella’s big blue eyes.

“You have nothing to apologize for, my guy.” Bella smiled.

“Oh, but you’re picking the tab, by the way. I destroy your evil ex, the least you can do is buy me lunch.” Bella said, as Peter’s eyes exploded wide. “WHAT??” he briefly panicked, knowing he had very little in his wallet to pay for Bella’s ungodly meal. - But Bella burst out laughing.

“Kidding!” she said. “Besides, I eat for free in this diner. The manager thinks it makes punters mistake the place for healthy.” She said, emptying her tray in the bin before letting Peter lead the way to his own home.

“Come on, let’s go invert some tits.” Bella giggled, Peter still a little unnerved by how this whole situation had come to be.

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