

## All Wet

She stood in front of her mirror, looking at the one part of her that wasn't *her* yet. From the neck down, she was already a sea monster. She was doing her best to think of herself that was as she placed green scaly webbed hands on the mask hanging down her back, hooking the neck with short curved ivory claws. The face that was about to be covered was belonged to a person that wasn't her. She pulled the mask over that face, subsuming everything in the persona of the sexy scaly girl she was to become. That's what her acting coach had told her – the sweaty *not her* body underneath's experiences were hers now, she told herself – that she had to inhabit a role. Taking that advice to heart, she'd decided to inhabit an entirely new body. She turned away, putting her former self into the background with the deliberate decision to stop looking at it.

The squishy mask slid over skin, the features stretching over and changing what was underneath into something, someone, completely different. Hair which had been bound tightly under a cap was covered by a crest which expanded upward and outward as the mask stretched, the springy rubbery material finally freed from the packed accordion shape it had taken when the mask was off. Black lenses bulged out just a little from the human beneath's eye sockets, opaque from the outside so that anyone looking would see only unblinking amphibian eyes. She smoothed the edges against the gray-green scales of her neck and shoulders. Just before she turned to look, she remembered to scoop up the pointy dentures that would turn her unimpressive human teeth into the maw of a carnivorous beast. Once she'd bitten down on it and ran her tongue once over the jagged rows of sharpened fangs, she turned to see her new self.

She almost wanted to check behind her when she saw her reflection. A reptilian fiend from the inky depths looked back. A *female* sea monster obviously. A *sexy* female sea monster. The body was sculpted and

padded, subtly in some places and more dramatically others, so that nothing about her shape was like what was beneath the scales and rubber. She spent over a minute twisted around just admiring her new butt. It was so *cute* with just enough shadow beneath to show that there was shape, and that *tail!* She hadn't been sure about it when she bought the suit, but it was just what she needed to draw even more attention to what she was beginning to think of as her best feature.

The tail jutted out from just above that splendid heart shaped behind, starting out stiff at the base but then growing more flexible as it went on, bending in a graceful arc under its own weight until the end was ten centimeters away from the backs of her calves where it terminated in a split fin. It had a raised crest like that on top of her head, which ran up to the base and then became much shorter, tracing the line of her back - and incidentally covering a zipper line - until it started to grow again at the back of her head and stuck out so boldly at her crown, finally ending just above where a human might have eyebrows. Instead of hairy caterpillar things, she had slightly darker scales to give the impression.

Speaking of her face, it was much more attractive than she'd thought it would be. In addition to the eyebrow scales, she had lighter scales around her eyes, outlined again in dark lines to give the subtlest hint of eyeliner and mascara. Those black pits seemed to drink in everything and give away nothing. She practiced a grin and pinker scales around her mouth - slightly padded to give her the semblance of made up lips - drew back to reveal a sharp-toothed grin that seemed to suit her. Strange as it seemed, she thought her sharky smile was adorable! It was probably because the maker had sculpted the mask to have a rounder face than she'd anticipated when she'd imagined a sort of fish-reptile hybrid, and the dark lenses made her eyes look bigger and more liquid, overall leaving the impression that while she *might* devour a sailor, she was just as likely to play with them ... first.

Webbed fingers probed, and webbed toes dug happily into the carpet as she ran her smooth rubbery palms down her sides and back up, cupping breasts that she might have thought small except that they stuck out all the more on a creature that shouldn't have any at all. She'd thought about going for larger, and for a more exaggerated figure in hip and butt, but she'd wanted to inhabit a character, not a caricature. She had to admit that the mask's features along with the overall shape was cuter than she'd intended when she commissioned the suit, but it was just what she wanted for the pool party. That was why she'd gotten the suit in the first place, she reminded herself.

When the invite had come, her former self had been inclined to ignore it. The person she'd been was shy, not very good with socialization, and thought people would judge them if they showed up in a bathing suit. It had specified a costume pool party, which was even more confusing. All the girls, would no doubt make some attempt at being mermaids even if it was just to wear shimmery skirts they'd take off before going swimming. What then were guys supposed to wear? Something else that gave them tails? A turtle shell like on Dragon Ball? It all seemed strange. Then the awkward introvert the sea monster girl had once been thought about their time in amateur dramatics. Becoming someone else had been a freeing experience, and maybe that was the answer. Don't go to the party to be the wallflower but something, someone, different. It wasn't, the sea monster girl reflected as she checked to make sure that the sides of her head were smooth and the human underneath wasn't bulging through anywhere, the kind of advice that human would have normally taken. Then again, she thought, her former self had never gotten anywhere romantically that way. If nothing else this costume was *different*, and it seemed time, she thought, to try something new. Something new might have more fun.

She glanced at her packet of waterproof makeup. She hadn't been sure how the mask would look and bought the basics to make a few temporary changes in case she wasn't satisfied. Now that she was packed

into the tight and squishy confines of the monster suit and had seen the stunning change it had made, she wasn't inclined to mess with perfection. Lipstick, eyeshadow, all those things might make her look more beautiful, but only based on silly human concepts of beauty. She was mean, green, and proud. Baring her teeth and raising her hands into a fierce pose, shoulders up and elbows out, she growled at the mirror. "I am the fury of the deep, and your doom, puny sailors!" She put her hand to her mouth with a tiny, "ooh," and then laughed at the image that had changed so quickly from inspiring terror to an almost Victorian demureness. "I-aaaaahhhh. Wow." She touched her throat, which buzzed slightly with every sound, a reminder to her and her alone that something was happening every time she talked. "I - oh man, this is going to take getting used to. AAAAhhhhh. My voice sounds so weird. I mean it fits. Rawr," she growled at the mirror. "I didn't think they'd be able to make it change so much."

With that last heartening reminder that *no one* was going to guess who she'd been before she became who she was now, she picked up her keys and phone and walked out. Blessing that her squishy latex fingerpads worked with phones, she arranged for a pickup, locked her door and - checking left and right to make sure no one was watching - unzipped a waterproof pouch on the underside of her tail and tucked them away. Unencumbered by the accoutrements of her human alter ego, she skipped down her apartment building stairs and out into the hot sun.

Bert had gotten into ridesharing because he needed the extra cash, but he'd honestly enjoyed it. He'd driven his share of drunks, clams, and - in his opinion the worst - self-important pillars of the community of course, but for every loudmouth or confused inebriate he'd had plenty of interesting, fun people who had taught him that the world has a lot more to it than meets the eye. Taking all that in stride, he still wasn't sure if maybe he ought to give an even better rating to his last rider, a little old

granny who'd given him a brownie. He'd assumed it was just something she'd baked, but as he pulled up in front of a five-story tower of luxury flats, he was starting to wonder if that granny hadn't been putting something extra special in the mix.

"Uh, I'm here for -" he began.

"That's me!" The blank eyed creature with greenish gray scales and a tail which swung and bounced as she walked forward said, interrupting him before he could confirm his fare by name. "Going to," she named the address of the pool party.

"Yeah, that's right." Bert said as she opened the passenger door, looked appraisingly at the seat and then swapped to the back, draping her tail on the seat next to her. "You sure don't look like your picture," he said as he pulled into the street.

The girl - she sure looked like a girl monster - took a long moment to reply. "I get that a lot."

Inwardly, the sea monster girl - she decided she'd *have* to figure out a name for her new self before she got to the party - was annoyed at how long it had taken her to find a good response. A new name might help her submerge - heh, maritime monster humor - herself in her new persona. If it took her ten seconds to decide what a girl from the depths - who just *happened* to be attractive, purely by chance, to humans - would say then she may as well go back to being the awkward self she'd abandoned when her new face had slipped over the old. Oh good, the driver was saying something. Ichthya - she admitted it wasn't the best name, but it was fishy and had 'ick' and made her giggle when she thought of it - would have another opportunity to practice being reptilian and sassy. Was sassy right? She wanted to be the feared predator that dragged sailors to their doom, but she also wanted to be *liked*. Sassy would have to do.

“So, are you ... a vapoleon?” Bert guessed, taking in the ridged crest with its creamy membranes stretched in between crescent shaped bony (though actually made of pliable rubber) protrusions, and finned tail. The eyes too were a bit like the pokemon, though the color was off and he thought a vapoleon would have paws rather than the long, wicked looking webbed hands.

“I’m more of a deep-sea kind of girl,” Ichya replied, smiling a little and then wider at the look on her driver’s face when he saw the jagged predator’s grin. “Vapoleons are cute, I guess, but they usually doggy paddle around near the surface and frolic in fresh water.” The in-character response helped build her confidence. “I usually lurk far below, only coming to the surface to drag those who boldly and foolishly sail above me into the inky abyss.” She ended with a growl and flexed her clawed, webbed hands as if remembering a really good throttling she’d done. “I’ll walk on land like those little water foxes, but only when I’m *really* hungry.”

“Or when you need to select the best and boldest to take to your undersea palace and ravish so you can make another generation of horrible monsters?” Bert asked, trying to get into the spirit of having in his back seat what he guessed was some kind of actress on her way to a monster movie, the photo and name on the ridesharing app notwithstanding.

“I have to be in the mood for that,” Ichya mused. “I’m not sure if I am or not. Of course, I have to find a man who’s *worthy* of fertilizing my eggs.”

“If you know what I mean.” Bert said almost reflexively, taking the previous statement as an innuendo.

Ichya sat back and pulled her tail around, idly waving the flipper back and forth. Of course, she’d known that it was probably going to be that kind of party. The host was a well-known eligible bachelor, a self-confessed jaded veteran of the dating scene. The invitation was a declaration of boredom. ‘Bunga-bunga poolside shenanigans are old hat’ it

proclaimed, 'let's at least be a *little* creative.' Well, Icthya would *show him* creative. And if any of those spoiled little mermaids tried to horn in on her fun, she'd eat them! She broke the spell by giving herself a mental pat on the back for being so in character right then. With the spell broken, she wondered if anyone was going to find her attractive. Looking at the pale reflection of her lizard-fish self, she thought with a pang of fear about the kind of person who would be. Did she *want* that kind of attention? Her former, human, self had never had any attention at all. She consciously forced herself to be more *herself* again. Icthya would want the most desirable human, man or woman, and that meant she wanted Torvan, the host, the rich boy, the *challenge*.

"Here we are ... miss monster." Bert said. Best to address her the way she obviously wanted to be.

"Excellent." Icthya winced internally. That was Cybermen, not sea monster! She leaned forward and stuck her head between the seats. "That was a most enjoyable ride. I will forbear from eating you today."

"Thanks?" Bert was having trouble keeping up with the act.

Icthya got out. Torvan's mansion - she thought of any house with more than three bedrooms and a pool as a mansion - was screened with hedges and a low wall, and none of the other partygoers were on the sidewalk outside, so she hastily fished - heh, more sea girl humor - in her tail pouch for her phone. Her squishy, slick webbed hands weren't the best for entering reviews online, but she felt a duty to give a rave review of her driver who had obviously been trying *so hard* to play along, and had given her so many good opportunities to psyche herself up for the main event. Tucking away the phone and giving her tail a few good swings and squeezes to make sure it was attached and completely sealed, Icthya started up the path that led around the house to the poolside walk.

After standing out in the sun waiting for the car, and sitting without much ventilation in the back of a sedan without rear climate control, the

latex, rubber, and silicone monster was starting to notice her old self sweating and hot inside. "Not much further," she said to herself. Not much further until she'd be in - back in, she reminded herself sternly - the nice cool water where she belonged. How smart of her old persona to buy a costume which was only comfortable in the water! With more thoughts like that, reminding herself again and again she was Ichthy and no one else, and that she was tough, sassy, confident, and strong, she rounded the corner and was assailed by the gazes of more than thirty people who all looked better in bathing suits than her old self believed her old human form did.

Strangely enough, that thought of how a bathing suit looked reminded Ichthy that while she was - to Ichthy at least - naked and to some extent actually felt that way. The human self might feel a bit uncomfortable squeezed into a padded suit which was tight and even compressing - not just where the costume was stretched right over the skin but also where the pads sat - but strangely enough it was fitted *so* well that the entire costume moved as if she were a nude monster. That gave her the confidence to think *of course it does, because I am a nude monster. All these silly rules about clothing and how they fit are for squishy, soft humans.* Which she obviously was not. It also helped that she caught at least one of the men looking, and then turning away quickly to hide the bulge in his trunks she'd caught before he could turn. It was so nice, Ichthy thought, not to have external genitalia. She would never be so embarrassed as to sport a boner, or wet a thong, or any of those other things that made it so obvious when someone adored her. She had the advantage over all of them and it felt so good!

Then again, she mused, a claw rasping along her scaled flank as she remembered how good her butt looked as an amphibian girl, she'd look pretty good in a bikini now. She grinned at the image of her new, scaly and slick body in a spandex bikini. With her confidence even further boosted by how uncomfortable the other partygoers looked - most of them,

and she noted those who looked even more interested in her – she dove headfirst into the pool, a flick of her webbed limbs making it so that her two-finned tail flipped and waved as it was the last thing to submerge. Oh, that was *the best*. Her skin was suddenly cool, and she never wanted to come back up!

She thrashed and panicked as she felt her mask suddenly seem to get stiff over her mouth and nose, and then remembered it was supposed to do that. She hadn't entirely believed it when the maker said that the material would get sticky when completely submerged and seal up unless she forced them open, and that her tail had a little canister of air mix which gave it that extra weighted bounce, and when the material sealed, she'd find a tube to bite down on. It ran down her back crest and into the canister, giving her about ten minutes of aggregated underwater breathing time, used carefully and with reminders not to rely on it for more than four or five deep breaths or else she'd have to force the lips open to let out the bubbles or – wisely – surface.

Ichthya was nervous relying on a breathing apparatus she knew nothing about, so she resolved to only take one long breath per trip down. That would still confuse everyone up top who would see her swimming around, continuing to swim as if she didn't need to surface at all. Taking that first long breath, she struck down and then skimmed the bottom, using her webbed hands and feet to great effect to move gracefully along the pool's length and then burst from the opposite end right in front of two mermaids sitting on a shelf of shallow water. They looked at her with disapproval, arms crossed beneath shell bras and long fish tails flapping languidly, one's tail pink and the other blue. "Pardon me, ladies," Ichthya said, waving and then returning to the bottom of the pool where she belonged.

Her smooth skin and specially adapted limbs made it so easy to swim that she jetted the length of the pool without even having to take a breath. Her tail stabilized her, keeping her arrow-straight back and forth and then

back again before her second breath ran out. It would have been nice, she thought, to be able to use it as a rudder by flexing her bum, but that was beyond the craft of the person who made it. She looked up during her third dive, watching the slowly kicking feet and the shadows of lilos above her. There were so few mer-people who had taken things as far as wearing 'proper' fins, and none of them were swimming at that moment. A few were on the shelf or an island that floated on a rubber tether. She was sorely tempted to reach up and grab an ankle or nip at a toe, but instead surfaced as fast as she could, almost succeeding in leaping out of the water and back in.

Tired for the moment, she paddled back to the shelf and clambered up, ignoring the nervous giggles of the mermaids who were still chatting and sunning themselves in a passable 'come hither siren' impression. There was no way Ichthya was leaving the pool if she could help it, but she could stand to sit in warmer waters and look at the other people who had come rather than showing off and enjoying her newfound agility. The other partygoers were interesting to watch and often amusing.

Amusing for sure were her fellow seagoing ladies up on the shelf. While she stretched out, relaxed and insolently uncaring of who was looking, they were sitting up on rocks, dry to their midriffs except where Ichthya had splashed them coming and going. The sea monster girl stared unabashed and very entertained at where their tails met their midriffs, noting that the mermaids had intentionally pulled the top parts down enough to bare just the hint of flesh between the belly and crotch. As she watched, one adjusted her full blonde wig and she guessed that the other mermaid's shining black was similarly fake. They were so careful of messing up their real hair, she thought, that perhaps they never showed it off at all. She wondered where their boyfriends were and if they had none why no one was fawning over them as they obviously were hoping someone would. Perhaps they like Ichthya were aiming high and waiting for Prince Richie Rich himself to notice them.

She had to admit to herself that 'mansion' was probably the right word. She was on the near side of the pool to the house, a steel and glass modern monstrosity that showed that the race of man could be just as terrifying in their aesthetic choices as the most barnacle encrusted sea beast. Deck chairs were laid out all around the pool, which was Olympic length and double width, providing a staggering amount of space for the lagoons and floating island in the middle, complete with rubber palm tree. There were five or six mer-people of both sexes and a variety of bright tropical colored tails on the island, lying in pairs, groups, or alone interspersed with the much more common bikini, trunks, one-piece, or speedo. As she watched, a robot tray with a propeller and rudder came down a canal from the full bar and bobbed around delivering orders or offering whatever their host thought was a good compliment to the event. Icthya couldn't help but laugh as a mer-man and maid slipped into the water in a passionate embrace and then surfaced spluttering and thrashing, evidently having not enough practice with bound legs.

Most of the guests, however, were in the chairs or standing, drinking and talking, or else trying to have a cheeky snog without too many people making fun of them for starting in on each other so early in the day. They too were mostly in regular swimsuits, though on land there was the expected plethora of ladies in long, diaphanous skirts that emulated mermaid tails. A few people had gone as far as scuba gear and one or two men had skintight rubber wetsuits colored like orcas and sharks. No one came close to Icthya's choice for dedication or creativity, she thought with satisfaction. She realized that she hadn't talked to anyone yet, but didn't mind nearly as much as her former self would have. Let them come to her, she decided. She was the queen of Davy Jones's something or other.

The mermaids next to her started talking louder and shifting in place in anticipation of something. Icthya had rolled over to let her front get a little more cooling and craned her neck to see what the fuss was about. "Hello," a smooth male voice said from the edge of the shelf said, "I've

been looking for you.” A wave of water washed over Icthya’s back as someone climbed up from the deeper part of the pool. She turned over and looked past scaly rubbery breasts that suddenly seemed larger now that they were occluding her vision. It was *him*. Torvan, her host! The mermaids started into action, flicking their tails and simpering at him, but he was staring right at *her*. Icthya’s claws scraped the tiles - she was sure he could hear it - as she thrashed like a landed fish trying to either turn back over to arch her back and show herself to best advantage looking at him, or just sit up and hold a conversation like a mostly normal person. “Me?” She squeaked, feeling completely betrayed by her sudden shyness. This *wasn’t* Icthya, she said to herself scornfully. This was the behavior of the person she’d been before!

“Of course. You were swimming so quickly that I lost sight of you. You were like a shadow flitting back and forth down there; it was gorgeous. By the time I worked out where you’d gone, I was on the other side of the pool, and I don’t swim nearly as well as you do.” It was true, Icthya noticed, that he sounded a little out of breath.

The mermaids were looking at Icthya with open hostility, arms pushing their boobs so high up that they were probably going to lose their tops when they finally relaxed. Their disapproval somehow buoyed - heh, sea girl humor - Icthya’s spirits. “I’m glad you have the taste to appreciate my charms.” She said haughtily.

Torvan laughed. “Your originality at least! I knew it was a tall order, but I expect my guests to make an effort, you know? I write ‘costume pool party’ and I think to myself, ‘Torvan, you maniac. What kind of crazy thing will you unleash?’ and what do I get. Pah!” He gestured around. “Mermaids and scuba divers from the people who try a little, and poorly thought out Baywatch references from the rest. If I wanted swimsuits, I’d have said that.”

Ichtha smiled a sharp, self-satisfied grin. She and Torvan *were* by far the most seriously well-dressed pair at the pool. She in her terrifyingly cute monster suit and him having bedecked the inner portions of arms and legs with latex suckers which had been blended with his skin using reddish hues reminiscent of a starfish. The rest of his skin was mottled and rough in patches, and he'd bound his hair in a seashell covered conical cap also covered in suckers and starfish skin. His chest was slathered with something cream colored and squishy which had been blended with the same color of thong swimsuit.

"See, even your teeth are right!" Torvan said. "Magnificent. Come, you must tell me your name so that I know who to send flowers and heap with praise."

"I am Ichtha, scourge of the depths and terror to sailors of the seas and oceans." She replied. "Like you, I've grown bored of my life and have come seeking something different." She stretched out in the warm water, lying on her front and arching her back like she'd wanted to at first, tail swinging behind her, her chest and rear stuck out so there was no mistaking how proud she was of the her - the suit's - curves. "I've at least found something very comfortable."

"No, your real name." Torvan said, losing some of his ebullient manner. "Your costume is so outstanding. I have to know who took my invitation so much to heart."

"Costume? These human girls are wearing costumes. I'm - " Ichtha saw the disappointment on Torvan's face. "Listen, I'll drop the big show if you do, Torv. I won't tell you who I am when I'm not the cutest little lizard-sharky femme fatale you ever saw, but I'll tell you that before I got all scaly and adorable, I was someone who knew you well enough not to be taken in by that whole 'Latin-Hollywood' patter."

"All right, Icky - hey, you're the one who picked a monster girl name with 'ick' at the front," he said as she pretended to growl menacingly and

showed him her teeth. “We can talk like normal people in rubbery nautical costumes.”

“Wonderful.” Ichthy sat up and dangled her feet off the shelf, leaning back on her hands. “I hoped this might impress you. I was probably as stumped as everyone else when they saw the invitation. For the first few hours, at any rate.”

“That’s the point. You kept thinking about it,” Torvan replied. “Seriously, thank you. I kept my hopes low for this, and you really proved that there are some people willing to go for it. I dunno, all these kids are so ... unimaginative. So lacking in ambition.”

“Most of them are older than you are!” Ichthy protested.

“Yeah, but they all inherited or got where they are by being beautiful and getting picked up by some other rich person who had more libido than sense. So they’re kids as far as I’m concerned. Children in paradise their entire lives.”

“While you worked your way to the top. Now you’ve stopped, *that’s* what’s bothering you?” Ichthy challenged.

“Hey, don’t quote Jungle Book at me!” Torvan said. “King of the Swingers is a bit too close to the mark. Turn your killer instinct to the fish and mariners, please!”

Ichthy lay back, her black lenses keeping out the worst of the sun’s glare. “Ah what some of us would give to have a slice of *your* misery, Torv. Popular, suave, cover of GQ.”

“Right now, if the photographers came in trying to get my picture, I’d insist that they all feature you instead.” Torvan replied. “You’re perfect! Lying there, you look like you belong in the water. I feel like I’m just pretending.”

Ichtha smiled, without her teeth for once, the eyes behind the lenses closed, enjoying the sun and waves. "Then we understand *each other* very well, Torv. I'll let you in on another secret," she sat up abruptly and put her scaly lips to his ear. "That's how I feel almost all the time. This is the most outgoing I've ever been, and it's only *because* I'm convincing myself that I do belong right here right now."

"All right, now I think you're just trying to seduce me." Torvan said, pushing her shoulder gently. "Hey, you're less scratchy than I thought you'd be."

"Now all you're trying to do is seduce *me*. Come on, then. I'm getting hot and not just in a good way." She took his hand and pulled him down with her as she pitched forward and half-fell half-dove into the depths again. He surfaced quickly, not having had a chance to take a breath. Ichtha remained a few centimeters below, hand upraised to keep hold of his. She kicked and turned herself upward so she seemed to lie on her back a little below the surface, black eyes looking curiously at the strange air-breather who she'd found so strangely attractive that she'd come all the way up here to touch him. Then she was gone, her slick hand sliding out of his and the shapely sea monster girl returning to the dark domain she was born to dominate. He watched her go, her tail making her behind seem much more alluring and worth staring at as she kicked down and then arced back upwards, exploding out of the water behind him as he turned to track her.

"Much better!" she said. "I hope you don't mind us taking this somewhere less ... baking."

"I could watch you swim all day." Torvan said.

Ichtha rubbed his cheek with hers and was as surprised as him when they both went for the kiss at the same time. "Tell me more about how sexy I am." She said. "I need the validation."

“I never said you were sexy. I said pretty. I think beautiful. Original, creative, cute, a little scary. I’ve also never kissed a woman with such sharp teeth before.”

“Grr,” she growled baring them, “these teeth will be doing more than pricking your tongue if you’re not careful.”

“Do you *want* me to find you sexy?” Torvan asked. “I thought I was supposed to respect and admire the sea, not –” this time he was ready to take a deep breath as he was borne down, again having to surface long before she did, taking advantage of it to admire her smooth curves and fluid motion as she circled him swiftly and then came up right in front of him, their arms circling each other as if by arrangement. “How do you do that?” He asked between kisses, his hand moving down to hold her by the behind as she did the same. Neither was going to let the other be more bold or familiar!

“That’s just one of my many feminine and monstrous maritime secrets.” She teased, nipping his nose. He responded by gripping her butt in both hands and hoisting her over his shoulder. She was surprised at how strong he was, and let herself be borne to the poolside where she squirmed and escaped his grip. Squealing slightly as he tried to grab for her tail, she twisted and dove, climbing down the wall with her hands and feet, and then flipping back to reach upwards so she could run her claw down an exposed section of his thigh and leg. She felt him shiver and saw him looking down at her. She probed the squishy rubber speedo with her claws, trying to find a way in and always a little too fast for him as he tried to touch the top of her head or her crest.

Goaded, he dove in after her and she risked her second breath from her tail hose before forcing the mask’s lips open as they embraced, sharing the precious air with him as they kissed passionately under the water. Surfacing with gasps, they hung on to the lip of the pool, each scratching at the other’s itch but unable to reach through the elaborate, sealed costumes.

“Why don’t we take this to a more private lagoon?” He said. He pulled himself out of the pool, giving her the opportunity to admire him for a change, focusing especially on the muscles that were still easily visible under the aquatic makeup. She allowed him to pull her out of the pool and even to carry her in his arms, her tail slapping him across the belly and thighs. Carried by his arms and the stares of all the little boys and girls who had hoped to be the one to ‘get private’ with Torvan, the human beneath Ichtha closed their eyes, though of course the monster girl remained locked in a loving gaze with the man who had pulled her from the waves.

She opened her eyes as Torvan placed her carefully into a round hot tub and lay back as the jets played over her body. “I was already pretty hot,” she murmured as he joined her. “You’re going to boil me.”

“Maybe I want to get you properly heated up for the next part.” Torvan said. “When we forsake this wetness for a more ... intimate one in my bedroom?”

Ichtha smiled and moved over to sit in Torvan’s lap, his arms encircling her waist. She was keenly aware of the smooth, unbroken curve of the suit’s behind, and the same lack of an opening between her legs. She was also very aware of what was beneath that molded codpiece, and how much it wanted to be laid bare to the open air again for Torvan to do what he liked with it. “Sorry, Torv.” She said, rubbing her crest on his chin. “Not this time.”

“What’s wrong?” He asked. “I thought we -”

“I really want to, but this monster girl doesn’t put out on a first date.” She turned around and planted a long kiss on his lips, her scaled set and sharp teeth further arousing the man who wanted to be her mate. “I’d have to stop being me, and that would be just too much of a shame.”

“Fine.” Torvan said, squeezing her sides. “But you’re coming back! Pool party next week, just the two of us.” He whispered. “This time,” he murmured into where he thought her ear would be if she didn’t have a smooth skull, “mermaid and merman.”

Ichtha couldn’t believe she’d agreed. She also was impressed at how well she’d handled Torvan. The guests had gone to pursue their own amorous adventures when they left the hot tub room, and after a dip to get herself feeling comfortably sleek and cool again, she left Torvan with a promise that he’d have his mermaid the following week. He’d arranged for her ride home, and had even bowed and demurred from one last bit of fun in the back of the car – which was a relief because it meant that he wouldn’t guess who she was in her non-reptilian life. Now, she thought, posing in front of her mirror and saying goodbye to the luscious, adorable, fiercely sexual thing she’d become, her boring old human self would have to figure out how to deliver a mermaid in a week. A mermaid that would keep Torvan’s interest and also protect that weak, fleshy, insecure ape descendant from feeling too vulnerable. But first, she thought, Ichtha and the human deserved a reward. Lying back with the remote, she thought of how sweet it would be when she finally netted – one last sea girl joke – Torvan, and hit the switch, letting the rising buzz of the toy between her legs stimulate her mind as well as her body.

Miraculously, the theater’s special effects and costuming wonk had something ready-made that was perfect for the need. It had come in two parts, and Osine- she’d chosen the name the moment her pure human self saw it – had opted to put the top half on first since it would let her feel more herself. It also meant she’d be able to get ready without having to shuffle all over the place in the restrictive bottom half. She’d rolled and squeezed it so that she could get into the mask first so she could properly

feel herself as she went on, deciding that her transformation into Icthya had been in some way drawn out too long by having the mask go on last. The mermaid mask was stiffer, more sculpted, and strangely faker feeling than the sea monster's mask despite being mostly human in appearance.

As she shook out the aquamarine hair that fell in waves down her back, she took the chance of not having the gloves on to probe her new face with sensitive fingers. It had been sculpted with makeup on, mixing bright Caribbean Holiday blue-green lips with dark blue cheekbone highlights and lighter blue eyeshadow. Her face was sharper than she was used to, the long cheekbones and almond shaped eyes colluding with ears that were flattened to her skull and augmented with gill-like dark blue tattoos underneath. She primped her hair to better frame that face, the only mobile part being her eyelids and eyes themselves. Contacts which matched her lip color made sure that there would be no long gazes into her eyes to help Torvan guess who she was when not a mermaid.

Satisfied with how her face had been changed, she stretched the top part out so she could get her left arm into the costume, it's material too smooth and uniform in color to be mistaken for real skin except at a distance. The only accent were the shiny fingernails which matched her hair. She smoothed the skin out carefully, knowing that the other arm would be harder to do. As she'd expected, her right arm took longer because her left hand couldn't grip as well in the slick, latex-rubbery glove. Though a little too small for the human inside, it stretched, which was a godsend as it meant that by rolling her shoulders and waving her arms above her head, she could get the wrinkles out. Carefully gripping the slick material, the rest of her upper body went swiftly at first. The breasts – so much larger than Icthya's and a real drag in the unforgiving gravity of dry land – fell into place under their own weight, and the costume stretched easily at first, then began to compress to give her a trim, narrow midriff. Her boobs hid a few surprises, as well as having a pair of dark

shells molded on in a simulation of the classical bikini top so that she need never worry about straps and knots.

Getting sick of tugging and losing her grip, she found some textured clothespins and used those to help her pinch the very bottom edge of the suit top and pull it as far down as it would go, covering her now from crown to hip. Wanting to have herself be complete with no hints of anything non-mermaid in her image, she forbore from examining her exaggerated doll-like top half and dove straight into the tail. A masterpiece of silicone and 4-way swimsuit fabric, it departed from the blue-green motif, contrasting the doll top's model-like color coordination and elegance with a shockingly bright pink. Sculpted with hundreds of scales that scintillated in the light like sequins, it was made to draw attention from afar so that all eyes would be on the mermaid to appreciate the rest of her as she approached.

It was also, Osine thought as she huffed and strained to pull it up over her butt, *really* tight. She hoped that she'd be able to get it over her hips because she wasn't sure it fit! Her strains were not helped by the lack of grip from her slick doll's hands, but with a few heaves and the use of the clothespins again, she finally wiggled and squeezed her way into the tail, her feet finding their way into the pouch just above the split fin. She thrashed around some more trying to work the top of his up over her behind, reflecting on how this was giving her the authentic 'fish out of water' experience.

All that was left then was to tuck the bottom of the doll part into the tail and use some pink spray to blend her doll top's flesh into the fishy bottom. A bottom which - to balance her voluptuous top - was padded around the hips and where her bottom would be if she were a human in a costume rather than a beautiful mermaid doll. She pushed her fin back and carefully got up, taking her time to find her balance. With a few shuffles, she was in front of her mirror and Osine got to see the fruits of her labors.

Her hands flew to her hips at the first sight of herself, the brightly colored mermaid swaying back and forth to admire how her tail forced her body into a set of curves no matter how she stood. Her skin, unmarked and shiny smooth from the neck down, was just as she'd hoped it would be. An obvious, doll-like fake compounded by the lack of a navel or any kind of shadow or change in color apart from the painted nails. Osine brushed those smooth hands down the textured, rougher tail, admiring how the light struck it. She leaned forward to get a look at her face, which had a permanent smile stuck to it.

The only thing that showed any sign of life in the features painted in the colors of coral and sea were her eyes, which she'd thought about covering with something like Icthya's lenses but had forebore, wanting to leave something beyond body language to communicate with Torvan. She practiced with her eyes, using them to modify the static smile. Wide open and delighted, eyelashes lowered and shyly happy. Eyes half-lidded, the smile now inviting, asking for more. Satisfied that she'd be able to communicate a few emotions as long as she was careful, Osine took out her phone - thank goodness for materials that let her use it with gloved fingers - and was delighted that her previous driver was in the area. As before, she was careful to make sure no one was around as she locked up, and with another darting glance up and down the hall, she squeezed gently where a nipple would be on her left breast and twisted, feeling it give way. The shell flipped down on a hidden hinge with a slurp that told her that it would seal back up again as waterproof as before. She tucked her keys and phone into the capacious cavity inside her ridiculously massive boob, thinking that there were unexpected benefits to having doll-like proportions.

When Bert accepted the fare, he'd been happy to see the name and picture pop up again. He'd thought of a few more good lines to use, and with some preparation this time he thought he'd be able to really engage

with the fishy young lady. The other option was that the person would be out of costume and maybe he'd be able to talk to them about where he ought to look for photos or attend the show. Bright pink was his first impression from two blocks away, and then as he got closer he couldn't help staring at the mermaid's most prominent features. His fixation was made worse as she caught sight of his car and wiggled her way a little closer to the curb, the bouncing chest only barely covered by a pair of far-too-small shells. So much for playing cabbie to the queen of the black lagoon, he thought with some relief at not having to keep up with the overeager actress. Maybe as a mermaid she'd be a little easier to talk to, and even willing to divulge where he'd be able to see her. He wouldn't mind going to the theater if they featured big-breasted mermaids with – he thought as he finally was able to take his eyes off them – beautiful faces as well.

He got out and helped her into the back, disappointed when she only smiled and gestured her thanks as she slid her tail in and started fiddling with the seatbelt. "I'm kind of relieved, you know?" He said as he pulled out. "Last time I picked up a fare here, I ended up with this toothy, hungry sea monster in my back seat. I can tell you, I was a little concerned about making it to her destination with all my fingers!" He felt pretty good about that, and was disappointed again when she put her hands to her mouth in a silent giggle.

Osine also felt a little bad. Her driver seemed to be making a real effort to help her get into the narrative as well as the character and she couldn't show her appreciation very well. When he said something else about how it was a pleasure to have such a gorgeous lady who didn't look like she wanted to have him for lunch, she tried to sign that she wasn't able to talk. She wasn't sure he understood, which didn't help her confidence in being able to communicate with Torvan. She tapped her lips and made an opening and closing gesture, then shook her head and made chopping motions.

“You don’t speak English?” Bert guessed.

She nodded slowly and shrugged. It wasn’t quite right, but close enough. She blew him a kiss and started making minute adjustments to her tail and costume, twisting to see if she could detect any bunching or slips between doll top and fish bottom. She felt a little bad at how quiet her driver was for the rest of the trip, and decided she’d find a way to make it up to him.

For his part, Bert had gotten the idea, but wondered why his fare had suddenly decided to clam up and become a silent character. She’d been a real good talker before. He kept up an occasional comment, trying to put her at her ease. She mostly replied with hard to understand gestures and moving her eye. As he drove, he realized that her smile hadn’t moved an inch and thought maybe she was practicing some kind of facial exercise.

He had to help her out of the car when they arrived, and before she let go of him, she pressed her lips to his cheek. He was aware suddenly of how waxy her skin was, how un-lifelike. Still, the lips were warm and squishy, and he accepted the kiss on the cheek as her way of showing there were no hard feelings. Rather than turning the rideshare back on immediately, he watched her mince away, waving when she turned to look at him and feeling just a little bit better when she blew him a kiss and then turned a corner.

Osine was glad her driver had been so understanding and enjoyed looking at her but she could have done without him loitering around! Shuffling as fast as she could was tiring, but she needed to be out of his sight *and* Torvan’s if he wanted a good review for the ride. She wasn’t going to fiddle with her boob right where either of them could see her! With a quick note about how she appreciated his patience with her ‘voice issues’ she put her phone away, gave her left breast a good squeeze and press to make sure it had sealed up, and shuffled the rest of the way to the pool.

Torvan's happy greeting when he caught sight of her warmed her already overheating heart. He was in a full, dark red mer-tail himself, and she was a little annoyed when he didn't move from what she was starting to think of as the sunning shelf, forcing her to come to him. At the pool's edge, she fell into the water with an ungainly splash, but followed that up with more grace as she accustomed herself to the fin. Since the mask's mouth didn't open anyway, all that had to seal was the nose. Being chesty meant having plenty of space to secret a couple of air canisters, and since Torvan wasn't going to be a gentleman, she was in no hurry as she experimented with strokes and kicks of her tail. The water was a double relief this time, helping with the heat of her full-body costume and the mobility issues of her tail.

She thought about just gliding around the bottom for awhile, sulking in the deeps to protest Torvan's lack of movement. Let him get worried about how maybe she wasn't experienced with mermaid tails and perhaps he should rescue her. The image of him coming down for her and pulling her up, cradling her in those strong arms was appealing. On the other hand, it was understandable if he didn't want to heave himself upright and move in the ungainly manner of a fish on dry land. With a powerful kick, she darted towards the shelf, surfacing with enough momentum to send her sliding up and over into the shallow shelf filled with fake rocks to sit up on. His laughter when he got his first good sight of her mermaid costume made it worth all the effort.

"I deserve this," he said, sliding on the smooth tiles to sit next to her. At the tilt of her head he amended, "This obvious commentary on my lack of politeness at trying to get you to reveal all before you were ready, I mean." He stroked her sculpted, plastic cheek and she pressed up against him, eager for him to explore the results of his presumption on her identity." He tipped her face up and kissed her. "It's nice not to have scales scratching me whenever I do this, but I liked it better when you could open your mouth."

Osine twisted around and looked at him upside-down, her hair pooling around her in the shallow water. She flicked her tail for emphasis, sending a spray against his face.

“Yes, I know I’m getting what’s coming to me.” He said. “I also liked it better when you could talk.” This earned a tight embrace and a nuzzle. Then she sat up and put her finger to his lips. “No,” he said, “just because you’re playing the Little Mermaid game doesn’t mean you can make me.” She crossed her arms and huffed silently. “Go ahead, you’re only making yourself look sexier when you do that. Yes,” he said in reply to an unmistakable heft, “I’m enjoying them, though they’re a little big for my taste.”

Osine gestured at an invisible audience, and he replied, “If you’re saying that all the other mermaids had big tits, and I asked for a mermaid, then yes, I am once again getting exactly what I deserve.” He turned her back around and gathered her into his arms. “Since I’ll never even know your name, much less get to know you by listening, why don’t we just sit here for awhile and enjoy the sun?”

She closed her eyes, hoping that her smile would look contented. They sat like that for a long time, her tail laid out over his, their cheeks touching and his arm around her. She let herself float away with him in a comfortable haze, surprised at how easily they fell into the intimacy despite him not knowing who she was or even being able to say a word. She was brought back at his touch as he rubbed her side and belly. “The water just slides off you,” he murmured in her ear. “I kind of like it.”

She turned over and pressed her lips to his, luxuriating in the feel of his hands roving over her back and encircling her waist. Her own hands massaged his chest and belly and even through two mer-tails she could feel she was having an effect on him. Their pelvises moved up and down unconsciously, primal human need overriding their conscious attempts to maintain character. Feeling that she might break down and also break

character if his expert attentions pushed her any further, she tightened her grasp around his middle and yet again dragged him away with her into the depths.

This time their movements were synchronized by their matching costumes, and he was ready for her. They swam around each other, touching, separating, surfacing, and diving. His undulations drove her as wild as hers did him, and she forgot about air canisters and the pink makeup which worked as a sealant as well as blending tail to doll flesh so that no matter how roughly they pressed together before swimming back down and around in opposing corkscrews, her tail never moved a millimeter. It was as if she were a real mermaid, just as she'd intended, and it kept her from thinking about taking it off, too. She knew she couldn't, and that helped her stay as Osine during the long mating dance.

Torvan's seemed pretty well stuck on as well, though he unlike Osine wasn't trying to be someone else, so he was free to occasionally adjust himself. She envied him the luxury and every time he looked like he was about to, she'd pounce on him. They finally fetched up back near the shelf and she enacted her fantasy by throwing her arms around him. She was his doll, she thought, so it was his job to pick her up and put her somewhere else. He retaliated by - once they were both settled - picking her up again and putting her on top of one of the rocks.

"Since you airbrushed yourself and gave yourself that perfect model's expression, it would be a shame for it to go to waste, he said. He arranged her tail just so on the rock so that she sat a little sideways, propped on one perfectly unblemished hand with the fork of the tail flicking this way and that in the tiny waves of their motion. He got out and hurried inside, hampered by his tail. She let herself laugh at him when he was out of earshot, but was again the perfect silent mermaid doll by the time he got back with a chunky camera.

He held the camera up in silent question and she nodded. The terror her human self felt at the idea of being photographed as a mermaid with only two shells to protect her modesty sharpened the split between Osine and her other self, making her strangely *less* apprehensive. She turned her chin a little and shivered in mixed fear and delight at the shutter clicks. She looked at him, then away, then lay back and lifted her tail, returning to the pose that let her shining aquamarine hair spread out around her head. This was what a doll did, she thought. She looked good, and she enacted his fantasies even if they were ultimately empty ones. It was his choice, his desire. If he wanted something else, a partner or at least someone who gave him more than he put in, he could respect her boundaries.

When the photo session was done, the sun was starting to lower. She allowed herself to be lifted out of the pool and brought inside, enjoying every moment of his discomfort at having to carry her around while also wearing a bulky and restrictive mer-tail himself. They sat close to each other in the hot tub, and when he fell asleep on her shoulder, his hands on her breasts, she just sat there. It wasn't her place to wake him up, to drive anything. She was just an object of his desire. Though she had to admit that she was a damn good looking one, and the jets of water made her boobs do some very interesting things. Being a doll wasn't so bad when she could spend her time waiting with a view like that.

"All right, you win!" He said when he woke up. "You're lovely, but I promise I won't try to make you do anything you don't want to. Happy?" She tilted her head, and then nodded, returning to a little more life by embracing him and nuzzling his neck. "I want to see you again. Next week or maybe sooner?" She shook her head and put up three fingers. "That long! Why?" She shrank back and he relented. "Fine, three weeks. I know the answer, but another costume pool party?" She nodded happily and he sighed. "I don't know *what* I'm going to wear."

Osine shook her head and put her hand on his chest. Pointing at him, she pointed at herself and back to him. "I'm not sure. You mean you wear

one and I don't? That's hardly fair." She shook her head and made a complicated set of gestures taking in her outfit, pointing at him, then pulling a zipper up on his belly and chest. "You mean you want me to wear your - no. You're going to pick what I wear?" She nodded again, making a mock forehead wipe gesture. "You'll bring it with you?" Another nod. "Have it your way, but if you're going to get all that, then can I ask at least that you *think* about letting me get a little closer to you next time?" She tilted her head, then nodded and hugged him tightly.

Her human self might hate her for it, but he deserved more. She wasn't sure if it would be *next* time, but soon. She'd reveal all to him soon. He seemed to like her, but she like Ichthy was'n't real. He liked a ... a box of masks. They all reflected something about the real, everyday person she'd become when she took off the tail, but that person would never have done all the things she and Ichthy had. Mermaids and monster queens didn't give in to fear, she said to herself, bracingly, and maybe it was time for her shy inner self to take some tips from the outer shell they'd made.

Torvan went as far as to swim with her back down the length of the pool as she cooled off, then got out and helped her do the same, commenting on how having a smooth-handed doll wasn't as much fun as he'd thought as her hand almost slipped in his. It would have been a fitting way to end the evening if she'd fallen backwards and flopped back into the pool after all that.

It occurred to her that going home using Torvan's private car might tell him more than she wanted him to know, but as she sat back and let herself float away on the memories of the day, she decided that since he hadn't used car's destination against her, that he'd respected her that far. Lucky for her that the driver remembered where Ichthy had gone or else Osine might have been in a lot of trouble. Blessing that her apartment building had an elevator, she was whisked up and was back in her own

space in no time. She showered to get the pool chemicals off and returned to her bedroom to disrobe. Another spray dissolved the seal on her tail, and with thoughts of what she was going to make Torvan wear getting her primed -as if she needed it after everything else that day – she shoved the vibrator down the waistband of the tail and fell back on her bed. She thought about sealing the tail back up with the vibrator inside, and then of sealing *Torvan* up with it. So many happy dreams to aid the toy's job, and all of them within reach.

Mua swept a webbed hand, jet black on the outside, snowy white on the palm, over his black and white maw. He bared his teeth at the mirror, marveling at how the fangs which had filled *Ichthya's* mouth looked so much bigger in the face of the rubber-skinned orca. He turned sideways and gave his long tail a twang, watching it wave back and forth until it settled again into the stiff, alert position standing straight out from his butt that it usually maintained. He checked that his black head fin was standing up straight and centered, then rubbed his flank. The loud squeak put him in mind of two pool toys scratching against each other. He pretended to flex, though the rubber muscles on his arms, chest, and belly were always in that state. He'd worked very hard with latex paint to maintain the contours on his front while hiding the zipper, and now there seemed to be no sign outwardly that there had ever been a track of opening.

Unable to resist any longer, he spread his legs and grabbed the rubber sheathed shaft in both cool, smooth hands. It was so big! He'd never experienced having something like this swinging between his legs and the caress was meant not just to admire but to inform. He felt the tingle inside the suit, the pressure, and the stroke. Good. He'd hate to have his way with *Leucosia* and have to *fake* it the entire time. At first, putting on the orca suit had been exactly like wearing *Ichthya*, but adjusting the penis sheath and painting his chest had made it a special experience.

He was glad; he *felt* oddly less fierce than Icthya, but more methodical. She wouldn't spend an hour and a half with a paintbrush painstakingly blending her belly, but this man-beast would.

As he continued to try to differentiate himself from Icthya in a meaningful way that wasn't just a bunch of gender stereotypes, he checked that Leucosia was still safely packed, and then put on a pair of trunks. Icthya could get away with being naked, but Mua wasn't so lucky. Like her, his tail doubled as a storage space, and soon he was waiting at the curb for his ride.

"So," Bert said as his most unusual fare swung into the backseat yet again and pushed his tail over so he could sit, "it's not often I drive a shark."

"Nah, man, not a shark," the creature said in a musical baritone. "I'm an orca. Killer whale." He smiled and Bert smiled back.

"I had a fare just last month with pointy teeth and a fin. Know her?"

"Yeah, we go way back." The orca said. "Icthya's a wild gal, ya know. Wild, but always hungry. I like a good meal, but there's more to it on land than what's on the menu." He seemed to be warming to his topic. "Icthya, yeah, she comes up out of the waves and next thing anyone knows, she's gone again and so is some man up on the ship. Me, I come up and I watch a little. I wait. You can't rush these things. Half the time, she pulls down someone who isn't even worth the effort, or worse has grabbed a harpoon on his way down and then she has to fight to get anywhere. Me, I look around, I find the ladies. Not the ones who throw the harpoon harder than the guys. They're scary. No, I find the ones in the big dresses who lay around all day being brought tea and carry parasols. They almost never fight hard, and they're always better on the stomach than the lean, tough sailor men."

“Sounds like you’ve got things pretty well figured out.” Bert said, not sure if this new sea monster was more or less scary for his thoughtful attitude towards eating people. “What brings you this far inland, then?”

“Icthya, she tells me about this wild party she went to. She tells me that there is someone there I have to meet. So I come, I meet them. Icthya doesn’t see far, but she knows a good time when she has one.” He patted the bag he’d unslung from his shoulder and placed next to his tail. “I think to myself that if she can find herself a king of the depths, maybe I can find a queen of the waves.”

“If you keep on taking us, maybe we ought to start fishing for love.” Bert said.

“Hey, if you find someone who wants to go with you, be my guest.” Mua replied. “It’s a free ocean, yeah?”

Mua left his trunks at the gate, sauntering over to the poolside with his fishy shaft swinging. Torvan looked stunned and didn’t get up from the deck chair he’d been lounging in as Mua approached him. Taking advantage, the orca-man settled down on top of Torvan, his long member pressed into Torvan’s belly as his rubbery lips – black on bottom and white on top – caressed Torvan’s chin and mouth. “Were you expecting someone else?” Mua asked, nudging Torvan so they could lay pressed together side by side, Mua’s lanky, toned arm snaking under Torvan’s shoulder to hold him.

Torvan recovered with a laugh at Mua’s honeyed but masculine voice. He rubbed Mua’s belly, and Mua grunted happily at the attention. “Yes, but I shouldn’t have!” His hand moved down and Mua’s own held it before Torvan could start exploring how sensitive Mua was.

Mua moved Torvan’s hand up to his mouth and kissed it, adding a nip. “Remember what Osine – the mermaid – told you? I see a soft, hairy,

landlocked ape. Time to fix that.” He swung the bag up and over, landing it on Torvan’s side. “Do you want me to help you change? If not, I promise I won’t be a free willy or make free with my willy until you get back.”

“I think it only fair to both of us that you have to wait outside while I make myself –” he looked in the bag and grinned, “pretty. I’ve never gotten to see you in anything less than perfect condition.” He got up and skipped into the house. Mua kept his promise, although he couldn’t help a few tweaks as he thought about how beautiful Leucosia was going to be when she came out.

He was not disappointed. From the red-beige tights, bra, and opera glove markings to the eggshell body and face, the voluptuous sea mammal woman was everything he’d hoped she’d be. The body had been stretchy, so he hadn’t worried so much about it, but he’d had to guess about mask measurements and he was glad to see that she could move her heavy, dark lids and black lined lips easily and naturally. She wiggled out the door and then posed with her hand on a popped hip, lips pouted and eyes open as far as the almond-eyed sexy mask would allow. With her other hand, she ran dark fingers down the source of her annoyance. “I know I’m supposed to be a seal girl,” she said, gratefully letting Mua rise and help her to a chair, “but do you really need to give me a flipper?”

Mua smiled both at her tone and the mellifluous voice. They now had matching male and female versions of the same smooth voice. “You’re a sea lion, dear Leucosia,” he said, stroking her long, thick, honey blonde hair. “That’s why you have a mane.”

“Very nice. If I get to have land lion hair, why not legs too?”

“Well...” Mua said with a wicked grin which Leucosia matched with a little sharp-toothed smile. “I could do this.” He made a swift gesture between her legs, which popped free of the membrane holding them together.

“How do you switch?” She said, looking with delighted interest and kicking her smooth, rubber-spandex clad legs.

Mua climbed on top of her and after a long kiss, Leucosia let out an outraged squeak to find her legs stuck together again. “Maybe I’ll tell you later. After a little race?”

“Hmph!” Leucosia crossed her arms, which were almost lost under her breasts. “Why do you get to name me, huh? You haven’t even told me *your* name.”

“I’m Mua.” Mua told her, stroking her hair as she pretended to be angry and looked away from him. “I get to pick the name because I brought the outfit.”

“Fine outfit. You’ve come all prepared,” she said, grabbing his black-coated penis roughly and making his eyes almost pop out. “But you’re not going to have much to do with it with me trussed up like this.”

Mua grinned and with a finger illustrated his point by putting it through the gap between her upper thighs. “That’s why the join doesn’t go all the way up.”

“It might as well for all the use *you’re* going to get out of it.” She said, but then giggled and cried out in happy protestation as his finger crooked and moved up. “That’s amazing!” She gasped. “It almost feels better than it would if my –“

“Why don’t we go swimming?” Mua said, standing up and offering a hand.

“Tease.” Leucosia said, accepting his aid. “You know, you’re really bossy when you’re the one in charge. *I* never got so fresh when you were a lizard fish, or a mermaid. And you *don’t* get to name me, handsome. I’m Symphony, so deal with it.”

“Who knows? Maybe you would have gotten a lot further with me if you had been fresh.” Mua teased.

“Fat chance.” Symphony hefted her bosom and rubbed her flank. “I know it’s just silicone and whatever, but it feels so natural.” She flashed Mua a sharp, knowing smirk. “I wonder just how much of *you* has been natural all this time.”

“All of it and none!” Mua cried, leaping into the deep end of the pool. Symphony slithered after him, and they met at the edge, each holding on with one hand while entwining their other with their partner’s. “Ready for that race?”

“More than you know.” Symphony said with a gleam. “I’ve been watching you, honey, and I know something you don’t.” Mua’s confident grin faltered for once, and Symphony took full advantage. “Three, two, one, go!” She said, pushing off as best as she could with her flipper tail.

Wrong-footed, Mua still had the early advantage because his legs were free to push as hard as he could against the pool wall. He overtook Symphony at first, and having webbed hands and feet while she had her flipper and long, slender, but unwebbed fingers made him confident that he’d easily keep the lead. As they passed the island, he was aware as he frog paddled with hard strokes that every time he surfaced, Symphony was a little bit closer, and then as they neared the sunning shelf that she was ahead! He redoubled his efforts, but with a smooth, almost effortless grace she sailed on her own bow wave over the lip and onto the sunning shelf, twisting expertly to come to rest with her back to a plastic rock. She gave herself a little hoist and by the time Mua clambered up, she was sitting with her leg-flippers curled around it. As he approached, she lay back so that her hair trailed in the water and forced him to crawl all the way around to talk to her.

“What kept you?” She asked with a deep laugh at his expression. It was his turn to be outraged.

“How did you beat me?”

“You mean how did I beat you when my legs were stuck together and you had those awfully unfair hand and foot enhancements? How did I, a mere damsel of the shore who isn’t even a proper *fish* beat a mighty killer whale? How ungallant.” She closed her eyes in a self-satisfied smile. “I’ll tell you when you tell me how to unstick my legs.” With a huff, Mua showed her the trick of how to press against the web and, with her legs pressed together, how to push just so to make the webbing form again. Sitting up and kicking her legs with their dark, floppy fin ends in the water, Symphony continued. “How’d I beat you when you cheated? Easy, I’m a better swimmer, love. I thought it was obvious, though these enormous nonsenses, “she grabbed his tail and cock, “don’t help. I struggled to keep up with Icthya because I wasn’t streamlined or webbed, and we *never* raced around as mer-people. Care to learn how to do the butterfly properly?” She teased.

Mua grumbled. “I’m supposed to be the one taking charge.” But he let Symphony hold him and move his arms and legs.

“Keeping your legs *tightly* pressed together.” She said critically as he demonstrated what she’d taught. “I can do it even without you sticking them.” She showed off by doing a perfect lap with her legs never separating and arms always positioned just right. “It’s all down to practice, you big silly hunk.” She climbed back on the shelf and rubbed his chest, their noses almost touching. “Of course, I have another advantage there, I bet. I have a pool and you don’t.”

Mua pulled her down the rest of the way into a kiss, and then rolled them over so he was on top. “No more messing around,” he said.

“So romantic,” she said. “Give a girl some flowers first!” She wrapped her legs around him, and their embrace only ended when Mua’s hand which had been caressing her breast let go and he said, “I almost forgot to show you. He gave her boob a squeeze and she licked his nose.

“I can’t feel that you know.”

“Maybe not, but even if it isn’t as fun for you to fondle, it does have some fun parts inside. Here,” he guided her hand to the right place and squeezed hard. “Feel that?”

“It’s a hard spot?” She guessed.

“Yeah, air canister. Did you notice how your mouth and nose holes close when you’re underwater?”

“Yeah, scared the heck out of me!” She said. “You could have said something earlier!” She punched his arm and he pretended to wince.

“When that happens, a little tube should stick out of the inside of the mask. You can pull air from the canister through it.”

“Another unfair advantage?” She said.

“We both have it now.”

“Mmm,” she purred. “I did so enjoy watching Icthya, and I envied her too, having so much fun flitting back and forth all the way down there for so long.” She pulled herself over to the edge and slid in. “Your turn to watch me.” She called, and dove deep.

Of course, Mua couldn’t watch for long before giving in to temptation and joining the shapely shadow at the bottom of the pool. She teased him when he surfaced more often than she did at first, but then chose to be more cautious as well. On one dive as they skimmed the bottom together, Mua reached out and pulled Symphony to him. They corkscrewed in the embrace and then as if reading each other’s mind, she opened her legs just enough and his rubber coated penis went in. They kissed hard, though neither opened their masks so they could only feel the other’s tongue through a thick insulating layer. Then they separated again to surface, neither wanting to risk coming up faster than the other and

ending the intimate moment painfully. Despite having an air supply down below, they gasped when they breached, and clasped hands.

“My turn to invite you to the hot tub,” Mua said.

“Cheater,” she said fondly. “Always taking advantage.”

“How’s that?”

“By starting the monkey business here and making me want the spa even more!” She got out first and looked back at Mua, hand on hip. “I could get used to looking this sexy.”

“You always look sexy.” Mua said with feeling.

Symphony pecked him on the nose. “Thanks, lover. Looking this sexy to *myself* all the time might be dangerous. I’d never go out.” She bent over, hands on knees, and wiggled her rump at him. “I’d just do this,” she straightened up and started bouncing until she looked like her nipples might hit her in the face, “or this all day.”

Mua couldn’t help pulling her into his lap the moment they were settled in the steamy, bubbly water. His hands kept roaming over her body; curves were much more enjoyable on someone else, he decided as she giggled when his hand crossed a ticklish spot near her armpit. She twisted around, straddling him and firmly keeping his hands on her sides and chest, making it clear she wanted to take advantage of him this time. He let her take charge, though as she slid up in preparation, nothing could stop him from momentarily cupping her behind and giving that round butt a few good rubs. Then she’d went back down, her hand guiding him into her as she did so. When his hips gave an involuntary thrust, she nipped his nose warningly.

She tried her hardest to get him all the way inside her, wiggling and pushing, but had to laugh as she only got about halfway down before her natural impediments made it impossible to go further. Mua’s orca

endowment would have been too much for most real women, and there was even less space in the pocket which kept Torvan's own trapped behind a thin wall of soft, stretchy fabric that had no doubt been stimulating her the entire time. In fact, most of her skin was made of that same bikini swimsuit fabric rather than latex or rubber like Mua or Icthya, so she'd been embraced and teased by the sensuous material all over. The human inside Mua hadn't been sure whether to go that far, but thoughts of how it would feel trying on Leucosia - now Symphony. Purely for test purposes of course. Imagining how a costume like that would feel made the choice an easy one. "Let's see what you can do, big boy," she said, tossing her long blonde locks over her shoulder.

With permission given, he held her waist and started thrusting, with the sea lion lady joining his rhythm. The bubbles rose around them and the water lapped over the edge as their play got more vigorous. During one lull, Symphony looked over at Mua and then seemed to come to a decision. "I have to try!" She said. "I may never find out otherwise." Before he could ask what she'd been thinking about, she'd taken him in her mouth and was alternately sucking, licking, and chewing.

"Hey! I'm not a rubber bone." He laughed, tickled by the impression of the sharp teeth through the rubber sheath.

"That's exactly what you are," she replied through a mouthful of him.

Mua was breathing heavily. "If you keep doing that, you're going to get more than that in your mouth."

Symphony grinned wickedly and redoubled her efforts. "Good. Then I'll have the answer to one more question. What *does* your spunk taste like, I wonder? I've done girls and boys, my dear, and I know the difference."

“No ... fair,” Mua said, but couldn’t stop himself. He lay back, spent as the curvy sea lion curled up in his arms.

“One more question answered,” she teased. “Soon I shall know all your secrets!” Symphony looked up at Mua. “I usually get to know someone better before trying all this experimental stuff.”

Mua massaged her back and she closed her eyes. “Upset at being on the receiving end?”

“Mmm, no.” She sighed, squirming under his ministrations. “I wouldn’t call it that. We were both giving pretty hard.” She pulled his tail around and laid her head on it, her blonde hair obscuring the fin. “I’ve had my share of penetration in the other end.” She paused. “This relationship in reverse thing is fun. Learning so much about you before being able to put a name or a face to the idea of you works for me.”

Mua’s heart was pounding and Symphony seemed to notice something because she looked up. As their eyes met, Mua knew it was time. The human beneath was afraid, and Mua accepted that fear. Ichthya and Osine too. Even through the sea lion mask, the expression of tenderness was plain. There was more at stake than ever now that Torvan acted so attached. Did anyone else get ‘private parties?’ Mua didn’t think so.

Gently, he pulled the mask from Symphony’s face, and now it was Torvan looking up at him. Torvan with an exaggeratedly feminine figure, but Torvan. Mua guided Torvan’s hands to where the join was, showed him how to break the latex paint seals. He closed his eyes as his face fell away and the naked, fearful one was revealed. There was no cry of recognition; the person Torvan had gotten to know was so much more than the one who had first been sent that invitation, dispatched with low expectations that they would even show up.

The next sensation was Torvan's lips, and they sank beneath the water in a hot, slow passion that was everything the former orca had hoped for, but always been afraid would never be found. Zippers were undone and as Torvan led they way to his bedroom, the incubating waters of their romance were left behind. The empty shells of an orca and a sea lion bobbed and circled one another in the jets of the hot tub, shed just as the first stage of that cautious yet passionate romance had been left behind.