

“What do you mean, quarantined?” Kelly asked the researcher.

“I mean you aren’t leaving the compound,” he said firmly. “No one is leaving until we have a handle on the situation.”

Kelly understood the reasons for precaution – working with alien biology was not only secret, but potentially dangerous. She signed a figurative mountain of forms telling her just that before she joined the program. But to spend seven months knocked up underground and another three weeks recovering only to have her beach vacation canceled was still upsetting.

“Can I at least ask why?”

“Ask all you like,” he said dismissively, “I still can’t tell you.”

With a pouting stomp she turned and headed back to her quarters.

Apart from her current profession, Kelly wasn’t very unusual. After finishing her Literary History degree and finding out there were no jobs in the field, she spent months looking for meaningful work to keep a leaky apartment roof over her head. She was nearing her breaking point when a surrogacy ad arrived in the mail. With no relationship at that moment, she agreed give it a try.

Following one twins pregnancy for a local couple, the company asked if she’d be interested in a more ‘rigorous’ career path. Kelly pounced at the opportunity, partly for a secure job and partly to re-experience that live-giving feeling.

The opportunity turned out to be a secret government program. As part of a secret deal with extraterrestrials, labs were set up to help the Tibbar race recover from a plague on their home world. For Kelly, this mind-boggling, ground breaking revelation of intelligent life in the universe took second to the reality of bringing litters of children to term.

Presently, she huffed in frustration. The downside to her line of work was the isolation from the rest of the world. There was a time she dreamed of hitchhiking and riding the rails to see the world. Lately she’d get winded walking from the cafeteria to the exercise pool. She’d been looking forward to people watching on a Californian beach. Heck, she was looking forward to feeling something other than recycled air caress her skin.

She plopped her suitcase onto her bed. Opening it up to start unpacking, she saw her bikini.

Growing up, she’d had an almost mousy figure, often mistaken for a boy when wearing baggy clothes. Every pregnancy had simultaneously filled out and trimmed her figure just a little more. Now she had a power butt, feminine hips, a full bust, and if not washboard abs then at least a pinched waist. She didn’t consider herself vain, but she had been looking forward to being ooh-ed and awe-ed over by men with tanned abs and cut biceps. She’d been a wilting lily growing up – she wanted to feel like a bombshell for once.

Seeing the bikini, an idea began forming in her mind. It wasn’t quite a happy thought, but it was consoling. She smirked and headed to the compound’s medical clinic.

* * *

“Already?”

“Absolutely,” Kelly said. “I figure whatever our lockdown situation is, getting a head start on the next batch means a head start on the next break.” *And even more pronounced curves when I do hit the beach.*

The clinician nodded. “Makes sense. I think I remember a rollover clause for vacation time in our contract.”

Kelly cocked her head. “How do you know the surrogate contract so well?”

She blushed. “Remember that announcement allowing facility staff to participate in the program?” She pulled back her lab coat to show off a slight potbelly.

Kelly stood and hugged her. “Welcome to the Sisterhood.”

“Thanks,” she said lightly. “I just didn’t expect to get so big so quickly.”

The announcement had come out after she finished gestating her last litter, but there was no way that belly was less than three weeks in the making. The technician obviously had the procedure before the announcement or she’d been hitting the comfort food for a while.

Kelly cleared her throat to bring her back to the operation at hand.

“Oh, right,” she said, her hands fumbling back to the insemination tool. “Let’s begin.”

* * *

Three days after her procedure, everyone was called to the cafeteria.

Normally everyone worked and lived on a rotating schedule. Having more than a dozen of the compound’s sixty inhabitants – about five-sixths female – in one place was unusual. There wasn’t ever a need. The unusualness of the situation was a red flag unto itself.

Kelly chatted with a few of the other ladies on her way in. As an introvert she normally kept to herself more often than not, but she currently found comfort in being with other members of the Sisterhood of Surrogates, as they called themselves.

Something was nagging at her, but when they entered the cafeteria she figured out what. It was normal to see women at various stages of pregnancy every day. Tibbar litters gestated more quickly than human pregnancies, so growth was quicker. Of course, adult Tibbar were about a foot shorter than humans and tended to be lean, meaning a litter of five made a woman only marginally larger than twins or a big singleton. It also meant it was difficult to keep track of other’s progress.

With everyone in one place, however, it was clear that everyone on the whole was larger than they should be.

Kelly spotted one woman, Claire, with what looked like a full term paunch. However, she and Kelly were normally about halfway through when the other gave birth. She shouldn’t be due for another couple months.

On the other side of the room was Diane. She was leaning on a guard for support. Kelly was shocked to see the petite woman with a bump maybe 50% bigger than a normal full term belly. Diane once told her they gave her smaller litters due to her stature. She shouldn’t be that big.

Kelly saw another familiar face and headed over to sit by her. It was the new technician – Lyla, or Laura, or something. She couldn’t tell her size until she was standing right next to her. When Kelly saw the three month bulge on her midsection, her suspicions were confirmed.

Before she could talk to her, however, a voice rang out.

“Please be seated, everyone.” The Program Director, an aging man of South Asian descent, was lean and had graying hair on his temples in a way Kelly secretly found attractive. His short stature was his only physical flaw, but it did nothing to detract from his air of authority.

After a brief pause, he continued. “You all know we’ve heightened security lately. Some of you may even know we discontinued new inseminations two days ago.” That was news to Kelly, but she didn’t have the chance to reflect on it. “Today I can conclusively tell you all why.

“We received a message from the Tibbarian home world describing an outbreak and a warning to look for ‘peculiar’ sized newborns. A viral outbreak at one of their breeding facilities resulted in excessive growth in fetuses of mothers exposed.”

Murmurs began in the room, worried whispers of what it might mean. The Director raised a hand, forestalling questions.

“It isn’t directly dangerous to their mothers, which is why it was able to bypass their Health and Safety measures. With all the commonalities between our species, we believe that holds true for humans.

“However, we’re taking extra precautions at this time. We’ve suspended all inseminations until we better understand the consequences of this infection.”

He gestured to a raised hand. Kelly didn’t quite hear the question, but the response was clear.

“We believe everyone is already infected.”

More murmurs, this time louder, and he raised his hand again.

“That few of you have noticed the effects shows how unafraid of this all of you should be.

“Those of you nearing the end of their pregnancies will notice little to no changes. Each fetus will be marginally larger, but still smaller than a human fetus. Those of you halfway through your pregnancies will develop moderately more than normal. We are confident you won’t experience complications beyond an increase in size, which we can manage and you will be compensated for.”

Everyone held their collective breath.

“Those of you inseminated within the last month will experience an abnormally large pregnancy. Lizzie, would you step forward?”

The new clinician stood and waddled to the front of the room. Every woman watched her with rapt attention.

“Ms. Fairfield is among the most recently inseminated. Though she appears to be further advanced, she is in fact only 16 days post operation.”

Kelly gasped. She’d have guessed Lizzie – now she remembered her name – was no less than two months along, putting her in the second trimester for their accelerated pregnancies. That she was only about two weeks was disconcerting.

“Those inseminated before her will have a normal number of albeit large Tibbarian fetuses. Ms. Fairfield has another, rarer complication. She is carrying nine fetuses.”

Lizzie blushed while the collected women whispered to each other.

“Most of the inseminated fetuses split, making her five into nine. She and the more recently inseminated women – of which I’m glad there are only two – will likely experience greatly increased sizes in their pregnancies due to this complication.”

Nine. Nine extra-large babies in her womb. This was going to be a long seven months.

The director continued, detailing the gradual extraction of base personnel before totally decontaminating the compound, but Kelly didn't take in a word of it. She could only watch Lizzie rub her still modest bump while she felt her own stomach. It wouldn't be very flat for very long.

While she remained collected on the outside, Kelly felt a confusing thrill deep in her chest. She would be filling out that bikini *very* well when she hit the beach.

2

After the general meeting, Kelly was called into his office with another surrogate - Celie - and were advised on some precautions they would need to follow for the coming months. Under orders to double up on meals and not miss a dose of supplements, she left his office unsure what the future held.

Turns out, it held a record pregnancy.

This was the first time she'd noticed her bump before the first month was over. In fact, she could visibly tell she was growing at the two week mark.

The growth was obvious on others, as well. Claire looked like she should have popped a month ago and Diane needed a wheelchair so she didn't fall over. At least Diane was near her delivery date.

Kelly found herself spending more and more time in the cafeteria. Not only was she working to meet her calorie guidelines, she also was keeping track of everyone's progress.

Lizzie was her main focus. With a litter of nine and exposure to the pathogen for most of her pregnancy, she was the closest Kelly would get for a prediction of her own pregnancy.

Today Lizzie was just sitting down when Kelly entered the line for lunch. She only got a glimpse before grabbing her food, but it looked like the technician was waddling.

But first, there was food to grab.

Her appetite usually increased around this point, but it was much higher than normal. Kelly loaded three plates covered in food onto her tray. While contemplating if she could safely add a fourth an attendant reminded her she could come back for seconds.

Kelly smiled as she sat next to Lizzie.

Lizzie gave her a tired smile. "Exciting time, isn't it?"

"Preferable to boring," Kelly replied before tucking into some mashed potatoes.

Lizzie looked like she might argue the point, but sighed instead. "I suppose I wasn't looking for boring when I signed up to work at a secret lab breeding aliens."

"Yet still more boring than laying on a beach somewhere," Kelly added, crinkling her nose.

Lizzie laughed. "Boring and exciting all at once. There should be a word for that."

"Maybe enervating," Kelly said while wiping up some gravy from her chin.

"That's right, you're file said you're a writer," Lizzie said.

Kelly nodded, her mouth currently full of steamed veggies.

"So what do you write?"

That was never an easy question to answer. Kelly found she could sometimes give a generic *Little of this, little of that* answer to uninterested people and it would clue them in to stop asking.

For those interested enough to pursue a line of questions, she either had to answer or offend the person ‘just trying to get to know her’. Of course, actually answering honestly was risk enough – most people were at least taken aback by erotic Regency Era comedies, if not insulted.

Here’s to alienating another potential friend, she thought.

Kelly opened her mouth to answer, but a clatter of plates interrupted her confession.

They turned to see Claire leaning against a table, one hand on her fecund middle and a grimace on her face. Her brood was kicking up a storm.

She could feel herself growing pale as she saw half a dozen bulges push against her taxed skin all at once. It resembled nothing so much as a bag of aggravated cats trying to escape.

It only lasted for a couple moments, but the poor woman was sweating by the time it finished. Security personnel came forward to escort her to an examination room. Kelly rubbed her own growing womb in sympathy.

She glanced at Lizzie, who looked much as she felt.

That wouldn’t be them in a few months. They’d be bigger.

3

Time ran while seeming to stand still.

To Kelly, every day felt the same, yet she’d be bigger when she awoke and when she fell asleep. Staff had begun sequestering anyone halfway through with their pregnancy to protect the expectant mothers from any more near misses like Claire’s. Of course, that left the compound feeling emptier without, ironically, removing gravid women from the hallways.

Still short of two months into her pregnancy, Kelly felt nearly due. When she’d see Lizzie in passing she’d marvel that she looked due and then some at her halfway mark.

There was little to keep her occupied. Of course, she spent a lot of time simply eating, but worry prevented her from writing, sleeping soundly, or even watching television. It gnawed at her with every passing day and added inch.

And of course there were no answers from the staff. She’d asked a technician how Claire was doing, but got nothing besides vague assurances. Even Lizzie avoided talking with her.

So Kelly was going to get answers.

At dinner she was sure to sit near Lizzie without being close enough to make her leave. Then she pulled out skills she hadn’t used since high school – she started acting sick.

She started with shallow breathing and tremors. Kelly deliberately avoided looking at Lizzie because the trick to faking illness was acting like you wanted to be well.

The next step was tricky. She started grimacing and hunching, hinting at pain deep in her gut. She was hopping to start attracting attention, but not *look* like she was attracting attention. With as dull as the days had been, Kelly was counting on people noticing any small difference. “Are you alright?”

Kelly looked up to see another surrogate, one she only knew by sight, approaching with a worried look. She looked ready to deliver.

Kelly had to stop herself from smiling.

She waved the surrogate away without sitting up straighter. "It'll pass."

The woman didn't look so sure. When she waved someone over Kelly knew the bait was taken and the hook sunk.

She turned to see Lizzie waddle over, concern in her expression and posture. Kelly began to stand to reassure her, but halfway through the motion faked a spasm.

Everyone was in a bustle, now. Soon, orderlies and security were escorting her away to an observation room.

Kelly felt one corner of her mouth twitch to a smile as she continued to cradle her middle.

* * *

She relaxed a little once in the observation room. "Just a muscle spasm" seemed to reassure Lizzie, but they weren't in a position to take chances. So Lizzie left the room to order some tests. Kelly silently congratulated herself on the successful execution of her plan and pondered the next step.

Rushing in as they did hadn't let her see much. She needed an excuse to 'accidentally' walk into the wrong room. A slight pressure on her bladder gave her the excuse she needed.

She stood and walked to the door. With an ear pressed against the light aluminum, she could actually make out voices.

"– which isn't an encouraging sign," said a male voice.

"We're still inside the official parameters," argued another voice, possibly the Director.

"For how long?" the first voice asked. "With surrogate #9 on the limits of what she could deliver from only a week of exposure –"

"We have options for..." the Director said before moving out of earshot.

With the conversation continuing elsewhere, Kelly decided the coast was as clear as it could be. She opened the door as quietly as possible and stepped out. For her excuse to be plausible when caught, she walked like she really was holding back a flood of urine – which wasn't too hard, considering she kind of did need to go.

The records desk was probably occupied, so she turned the other way towards the doctor's offices. Not sure what she was even looking for, Kelly took a quick peek into each open door.

Second to last on the hallway was an office with a messy desk. Kelly slipped in and started speed reading.

One memo looked promising. Phrases like, 'infectious pathogen,' 'unknown side effects,' '300% yield,' and 'further testing' convinced her it was worth reading in full.

Kelly began folding the paper until she could stuff it in her bra. It wouldn't help her excuse if they caught her reading.

With intel in hand, she had to stop herself from slinking out in a Pink Panther walk. She was in the hall, debating returning to her observation room or actually finding a bathroom when something crossed at the end of the hallway. At first she didn't recognize what it was. The shape was too low and wide to be a person. When she finally processed what she was seeing, she gasped.

It was Claire. She was sitting on what looked like a powered scooter. In front of her was what could have been a yoga ball. It was concealed by a hospital gown, but her oversized womb could have held a curled up preteen. The nib of her bellybutton was at least a foot from the furthest her fingers could reach.

And her breasts, which were modest before this pregnancy, were advancing through the alphabet. The gown again made it difficult to tell, but she looked like at least an F cup.

She didn't glance over at Kelly. She was probably paying extra attention to maneuvering when she couldn't see the floor in front of her. The technician escorting her also was paying extra close attention to her charge, not looking up for even a moment from her task.

Kelly remained still, the moment reminding her of Jurassic Park and the instruction to remain still. She almost let out a laugh, realizing soon she would closer resemble the t-Rex than the people.

When they passed from view, she lost no time in turning around and heading back to her room.

She was nearly there when Lizzie rounded the corner.

"Bathroom!" Kelly blurted, barely remembering the plan after the peek into her future.

Lizzie guided her to another door. Kelly thanked her and quickly shut it behind her.

When she finished washing her hands, she opened the door to see Lizzie looking thoughtfully down the hall where Claire had passed moments ago.

"When they want you to go, you go," she said, feigning relief.

"What?" Lizzie asked, startled.

"The little ones," Kelly clarified, pointing to Lizzie's midsection.

"Oh, right, they do," she replied distractedly. "Now let's draw some blood. Some of the other ladies are low in zinc, which might be causing your muscle spasms."

Kelly nodded.

She let herself be walked through a check-up. Her elevated pulse earned a raised eyebrow, but otherwise Lizzie seemed none the wiser. For her part, Kelly was eager to get alone to read the pilfered document. She could only hope it revealed as much as a glimpse at Claire had.

4

Kelly lay on her bed, belly sticking up like a mesa above the desert. The report was loosely held in one hand. The news was still sinking in, and how heavy it was.

Between the initial reports from the Tibbar home world and research done in the last few weeks, it was discovered that, well, the short version was she'd be a blimp when all was said and done. She couldn't quite follow all of the technical jargon and they still weren't sure about longer exposure cases, but the mothers who'd given birth already had swelled to about double their normal size. The current best estimate for Lizzie was that she'd end up at about three times the normal litter size.

They hadn't even speculated about Kelly and Celia, the most recent inseminations.

Kelly looked down at her protruding middle. Now almost nine weeks into her expected 26 week gestation, she looked and felt due. Her normal litters were generally about the size of a twin surrogacy with human babies. Also, Tibbar tended to boom in size the last six weeks. Unlike human children, they didn't tend to survive being born early.

With all of her pregnancies, human and alien alike, Kelly knew from the start she wasn't keeping the children she bore. That helped her keep an emotional distance when the time came. She found herself fond of the little buggers, but not maternally protective or loving.

When she looked at her gravid middle, looming over her like a lonely mountain peak, she felt less fond and more fearful.

Her door opened without a knock.

Kelly was too shocked to react for a moment. Then she quickly sat up, tossing the report behind her.

Her mind immediately went to *They caught me!*, but it was just another surrogate.

Celia wasn't the newest surrogate, but only by a slim margin. She was blonde, her hair perpetually pulled back into a pony tail. She had a gymnast's short, muscular build. It made her protruding gut seem even larger than Kelly's, even though they were practically at the same point in their pregnancies.

She leaned against the doorframe, a knowing smile teasing her lips.

"Nice work with the acting," she said. "I see it paid off."

So she was caught after all.

Celia stepped inside and shut the door behind her.

"They shouldn't keep us in the dark like this," she said.

Kelly nodded, wondering how far she could trust this woman she hardly knew.

Celia huffed. "Look, I was considering everything from knocking out a guard to crawling through the air ducts to find out more. Your way was better. We're in this together, so I'm definitely not going to rat you out."

"If you do," Kelly said, "I'll tell them the whole thing was your idea."

Celia shrugged in response and held out her hand.

Kelly handed her the report.

As she read it, Celia became more and more tense. By the end, she had to sit to keep from falling over.

"This is serious," she said at long last.

"Yeah, this is heavy, Doc," Kelly replied.

Celia looked at her quizzically, but Kelly just shook her head. The best references usually went right over people's heads.

"What this doesn't say," Celia continued, "is what they plan on doing about it."

"I overheard part of a conversation," Kelly said, remembering.

There was a long pause. "And?"

"The director was talking with another doctor," she said, trying to remember the specifics. "The other doctor was worried. Said something about a surrogate being near the limits. The Director said they still had some options."

Celia stood and began pacing. She waddled remarkably little for how large she was getting.

“I need to know what those options are,” she said, mostly to herself.

“*We* need to know,” Kelly said.

Celia turned. “You trust me that much?”

Kelly shrugged. “We’re in the exact same boat,” she said, pointing at both their gravid middles.

“In that case,” she said, “I’ll let you know I’m very good at this sort of thing. Don’t ask me how,” she said, forestalling Kelly’s question, “and I won’t have to lie to you. That said, we are in this together, one mother to another.”

Kelly smiled. This was the first bit of good news since the quarantine started.

“So, how do we begin?”

* * *

A week later, they were ready to spring their plan.

It took them that long to lift a keycard and know it hadn’t been missed. They bounced a dozen ideas on how to enter the Director’s office. He was fastidious in following security protocol and they knew it wouldn’t be easy.

Now that Kelly was as large as she’d ever been (triplets she delivered a week overdue) she endorsed talking through problems rather than skirting around them. Celia was still in support of a more clandestine approach. When Kelly questioned her ability to sneak in her current condition, she jumped up, grabbed the lip of the top of the doorframe, and pumped out five pull-ups. The message was clear – despite looking fit to burst, she was still more fit than most women ever were.

They ultimately decided to incorporate both approaches. Kelly could be a distraction, allowing Celia to sneak in and grab the information they needed. But to pull that off, they’d need more than just feigned cramps.

They needed Kelly to express symptoms that weren’t self-reported to avoid suspicion. They rejected several methods before Celia suggested a sure-fire method for raising her temperature in addition to obvious swelling. Though she wasn’t excited about it, Kelly couldn’t think of a better alternative.

It would involve salt, a hose, and a LOT of hot water.

5

Kelly reeeaaally didn’t want to think about what she was about to do.

She was standing in her bathroom in only her underwear, feeling like a whale, and about to make herself more of one. A big, fat, uncomfortable, overheated whale.

The plan was to fake a temperature and a surge in fetal growth by pumping herself full of hot water. She’d been feeding herself salt over the last several hours so she’d be sure to retain the water. Celia helped her attach a hose to her shower head to help her fill up from the, erm, back end.

Kelly checked the time again. Celia would be in position in twenty minutes, so she really had to start the process now.

Quelling the tremors in her hands, Kelly pulled her underwear to the side and inserted the hose. She looked at herself in the mirror, not able to twist enough to see without it. With the hose firmly in place, she turned the hot water on full blast.

The hot water entered like a Black Friday crowd, all heat and chaotic energy. She winced at the temperature. She tended to run on the warm side anyway. She watched her scowl flush red in the mirror, the heat already having the desired effect.

Looking down at her bump, she thought she could see herself already growing even rounder. Additives in the food helped reduce stretch marks, but for the first time Kelly was displaying a few. She knew it was the pathogen and her overlarge litter, but the angry little red lines looked angry-er with the addition of what must be a gallon of near scalding water.

The seconds ticked by as she let the water fill her up. Each second brought more discomfort. She let the water flow for nearly two minutes before she shut it off.

If she was an orca before, now she was a beluga.

When she started she couldn't make her fingers meet around her middle. She still could barely reach her belly button with one hand, but only if she really stretched.

She reached for her belly button now, curious. She didn't risk stretching too hard in case that let loose some water, but her fingers were a couple inches short. She was officially too big.

As per the plan, she waited five minutes for the salt to do its work, syphoning water into her cells from her bowels via osmosis, before starting the water again.

As the surge resumed, Kelly idly reflected that her actual discomfort would only help her acting. Every moment she felt more like an overfilled water balloon. She needed to act like a woman with too large of a maternal burden. That was basically the same thing, right?

Kelly forced herself to continue. Sweat began forming on her forehead, as much from strain as from the excess heat. She'd definitely trick the thermometer now, but was there enough shock value for her size yet?

When she finally switched it off, she was fighting the urge to vomit. Kelly really didn't want to think about what was in her stomach or where it came from. Instead she gently inched out the hose. When it was out, she was surprised to discover she'd absorbed enough water that her sphincter was swollen enough to hold water. Nifty, that.

She waddled to her room. She'd laid out several outfits, not sure which would be best for the plan. While the t-shirt and leggings combination would likely show off her size the most, she wasn't sure she could put them on without spilling. She grabbed her sundress, the single largest article of clothing she owned.

Pulling it over her head, she had to fight the fabric to cover her middle. She could feel cold air against the bottom of her stomach and guessed she had a serious high-low effect at the hemline.

Not able to put on shoes, Kelly checked the time. Two minutes to spare.

She checked herself in the mirror. While she'd started a fair bit larger than she'd ever been even carrying triplets, now she was larger than she once thought she'd ever be. She held out an arm straight forward. Yep, her belly button was ahead of even her fingertips. It swelled up under her breasts, supporting them almost as well as a bra. It bulged out to her sides wider than her hips and shoulders. Pregnancies were never supposed to run this large, and she was only

halfway through. Sure, she'd lose a couple inches in a day as she shed water, but she was starting to see what had filled her darkest dreams lately. She was becoming more womb than woman.

She checked the clock again. Time to go.

Kelly exaggerated her waddle as she left her room. The hallways were empty. There were perhaps only six surrogates still allowed out unaided. After this stunt she wouldn't be, anymore.

One hand pressed against the wall and another reaching as low as she could to support her belly, she made her way down the hall.

She expected to see someone before the cafeteria, a security guard if no one else, but she reached it without a soul in sight.

"Help," she said, hoping to sound both scared and in pain.

Kelly reached the first table, legs shaking with real fatigue. If someone didn't find her soon she'd have to rest before continuing.

An elderly kitchen staff member opened the door, obviously having heard her.

His eyes went wide when he saw her. She let her legs collapse under her as he rushed to help her.

"Please help me," she repeated as he came to her side.

He looked at her for a moment, probably considering if he could get her to her feet without help. Apparently deciding he couldn't, he said, "I'll go bring the doctor. Stay here."

"Can do," she whispered as he left. She wasn't sure she could get up on her own.

As he left the room, it struck her how precarious her situation was. She and Celia were looking for answers to what would happen to them in the coming months. In the week it took them to put their plan together, she'd grown to be almost too big to take care of herself. When they got their answers – she couldn't consider failure – she wouldn't be in a situation to do much of anything about it. The thought made her shiver despite her soaring temperature.

A doctor and two orderlies followed the cook back into the cafeteria. She reached up pleadingly to them, allowing a scared whimper to escape. The orderlies each lifted her by an arm as the doctor ran towards the medical rooms shouting instructions.

Kelly let them do most of the lifting to make herself appear more helpless. One grunted as he adjusted his grip. She thought about asking if that meant he thought she was fat, but decided against it.

They carried her to an observation room, where a technician was setting out tools. The doctor was putting his stethoscope to her middle even before she was placed on the table. The cool metal sent a shiver across her belly and down her spine.

As the pandemonium continued, Kelly's thoughts went to Celia, wondering if this was enough of a distraction. She fervently hoped it was.

6

After a sonogram, blood tests, an MRI, and a complete physical Kelly was sure the gig was up. While still swollen, she'd long since come back down to a normal temperature. Now she was lying down in an observation room, uncomfortable and anxious.

Her anxiety spiked when the Director entered. He looked focused, determined, and possibly angry. Kelly's butterflies went from merely active to a frantic whirlwind.

He sat while she tried to sit up. He waited for her to finish before speaking.

"I put a rush on the tests. Apart from retaining water you're fine."

Kelly sighed, relieved she hadn't done herself or her litter harm, but more relieved he didn't suspect anything.

"I expect the hose attached to your shower has something to do with that."

She waited a long, tense moment. "What happens now?"

He nodded. "I'm glad you're not making this harder on yourself."

The Director stood and knocked on the door. Two burly orderlies entered.

"What happens now," he said, "is we isolate you. You're our longest serving surrogate to date and you've proven how robustly suited to the task you are.

"We've been slowing the growth of your current pregnancy. We're going to reverse that policy. You're the ideal candidate for testing what the human reproductive limits truly are."

The orderlies flanked her and she struggled against them, fearful of the implied threat in the director's words. They grabbed her by the arms, restraining her easily. She watched in shock as the Director drew a syringe.

"Cooperate and you have nothing to fear."

She tried shouting, but a large hand covered her mouth. The Director inserted the needle into her deltoid and delivered the drug.

In a few moments fatigue fell on her. She stopped struggling and instead slumped in her captor's arms.

"Take her to Isolated Observation Three. Be discreet. We don't have enough cells for everyone."

Kelly tried to say something, but her lips wouldn't respond. As they settled her into a wheelchair, her last thoughts were of Celia. Had she gotten the information they were after?

With one last feeble attempt to escape, she slumped forward onto her overly protruding midsection.

* * *

Kelly woke up slowly, the chemicals retreating only reluctantly. She was on something soft, more like a gym mat than a mattress. As she peeked around she didn't see much in the dim light.

Her spine was stiff so she sat up gingerly. As she did, the lights turned on and she winced. When the lights became less blinding, she looked around to see a padded cell. Apart from a camera and a few mechanical bits out of reach by the ceiling, there was nothing else but her in the room.

For a moment, Kelly felt hopeful. The pads indicated they were worried about hurting her. If that was true, what could they really do to her? She rubbed her stomach absently.

Just as she thought that, one of the devices on the ceiling began spraying ... something. The smell vaguely reminded her of the dentist and her old dorm.

For a moment, nothing else happened. Then Kelly felt a mighty hunger pang. The familiar smell clicked. They mixed marijuana in with whatever else to give her a HUGE case of the munchies. They wanted her to eat.

She slid herself over to the door, expecting someone to open it and deliver food. Instead, another device belayed down from the ceiling. On the end was a sort of face mask. There was a hose and two little plugs, probably for her nostrils. Around the mask portion were two almost pincher devices. They looked long enough to hug her head and clamp together.

Their plan became evident. The hose was to feed her. The nostril plugs were to help her breathe. The clamps were to stop her from taking the mask off before the meal was done. They were going to stuff her with whatever food and drugs they wanted.

Her stomach growled again. GOD they were making her hungry.

She resisted putting the mask on for several minutes. She would NOT give in like this. They couldn't do this to her!

But eventually her will caved to her body and brood's demands. Kelly placed the mask on her face, putting in the nose plugs and pulling her hair up for the device to clamp on. With a mechanical whirr the pinchers closed around her head and clicked into place.

The hose extended a short ways inside her mouth. She didn't have to wait long for it to spew out gloop.

It spewed into her. Kelly was hard pressed to keep up, swallowing as quickly as she could.

Bits of it spilled out from the hose in her throat to her mouth. It didn't taste bad, but they obviously didn't take pains to make it taste like actual food.

After a continuous minute of being pumped full, she took stock of her body. Her belly, only recently getting its first stretch marks from any pregnancy, began to grow uncomfortably tight. The bulge in front of her spread out from her body, growing up from her ribcage and down from her pelvis. Her belly was as wide as her hips – which were quite wide after so many births.

After another minute her stomach started becoming an angry red. Her veins bulged against her skin. The pressure was as bad as when she used the hose and quickly becoming worse.

Three minutes in and she was having trouble swallowing. Her stomach was tight and each second stretched it further. She wondered what would happen if her stomach pushed the food back up as hard as the hose was pushing it down. Whatever happened, she'd find out soon.

After nearly four minutes of a constant deluge of paste, the flow slowed, then stopped.

Kelly rubbed her aching gut, mentally thanking it for being so accommodating and praying she wouldn't pop.

She realized the pinchers hadn't released. They were leaving the mask on?

She looked up toward the camera and flipped them the bird. She couldn't cuss them out, but she could still make her displeasure known.

Inwardly, she worried. Between the feedings and the babies that did most of their growing later in the pregnancy, she was afraid she wouldn't be able to continue holding everything in.

7

Life became a cycle of feedings, panicked periods of feeling about to explode, uneasy naps, and the spray from the ceiling that marked another nightmare feeding.

Kelly had backed herself into a corner, using two walls and her gravid middle to stay upright. Thoughts of filling the room and being crushed by her own fertile womb would have been funny if she didn't feel in danger of popping.

Time became a haze. She had no idea how frequently they stuffed her to bursting. Every moment felt like an elastic eternity. She could only guess they waited a few hours to let her digest.

When she first needed to go to the restroom, she waved to the camera and tried to mime using a toilet. Something shifted below her and she moved aside to see what it was. After pulling her gut a couple feet away, she bent over to look. A section of pads, maybe nine inches square, pulled back into the wall to reveal a stainless steel chute. She looked at it uncomprehendingly for a second before it made sense.

She dragged her swollen body back into position, thankful no one could see her privates past her midsection. She was able to pull down her underwear and do her business before remembering she'd need to wipe.

She tried to mime her needs when a blast of water shot up from beneath her. Kelly tried scrambling away, but didn't shift far before it turned off.

If she could speak, she'd give them a piece of her mind about bidets.

The floor shifted back into place after she pulled her underwear back up. This whole process was degrading. This situation was intolerable. She hated being this powerless!

But what was there to do besides try not to pop?

She passed the time by trying to measure herself. When she first was brought to the cell, she hadn't been able to touch her navel with her fingers for days. She'd try occasionally with her feet. It was difficult to shift into a position to do it, but what else was she doing.

Eventually that became impossible. At that point, the top of her mound was equal to her eyes while sitting up straight. Her legs were pressed to the sides and her lap was still covered by belly.

And her breasts were sore! They'd typically begin leaking a couple weeks before giving birth. She could only guess that was still some time off. Instead they grew. She'd say they were tight, but her stomach had recently redefined the term for her. They were tender to the touch, but still had a bit of give. They were turning an angsty shade of pink. Again, she'd be worried if her middle wasn't a furious red.

She eventually ditched her dress. She was constantly hot and flustered. Instead, she replaced her bra with it. She wasn't going to give the crazy perverts more of a show than absolutely necessary.

Normally, her thighs would swell an inch or so during pregnancy. She could regularly burn most of it off before she began showing the next pregnancy, but they'd grown somewhat over the years. Unless she was mistaken, they were actually shrinking slightly now. Kelly took it as a sign that her Tibbar babies needed every calorie she ate. That wasn't surprising, but neither was it comforting.

The day her belly crowned over the top of her head no matter how straight she sat, she lost her last shreds of hope in Celia. She'd never asked her co-conspirator what she would do with the information they burgled. Celia was so confident, so collected. During their planning,

she'd had all the answers. Kelly wasn't sure who she was or why she was so good at breaking into places, but she imagined it was because the woman was a spy.

During her first days in the cell, that thought helped her stay hopeful. Certainly a spy could break out of here, let important people know what was happening, and save her.

That hope faded with every inch her stomach rose.

* * *

She was in a hazy fugue when she began to realize she felt hungry. The unfamiliar feeling brought her thoughts into clarity. She was never hungry. They began pumping food down her throat before she could feel hungry. She only ever felt either full or stuffed.

With effort, Kelly was able to bring her eyes into focus. The first thing she saw was her own fecund middle.

Holy crap was she huge!

Above the shelf of her boobs was a near vertical wall of stretched skin. It began rounding away over her head, so she couldn't see how high it went. It pressed into the walls on either side of her, leaving precious little room around her head.

She reached out with her hands, gently stroking her angry midsection. The skin was taut and felt paper thin. Whatever they'd added to her food to help her stretch was doing its job, but even so any pressure hurt.

She tried to touch her belly button with her toe. She only reached halfway around. Triple holy crap, she was massive!

Moments later a door opened on the other side of the room. She couldn't see it, but she could hear noise from the hall and air circulating against her skin.

"Kelly?"

Kelly swung the hose from the mask back and forth, hoping it was visible over her belly.

"Wait, she's still alive?"

Rustling sounds, followed by a hand pressing into her stomach.

Damn, why don't people ask before touching a pregnant woman's belly? she thought as tears filled her eyes. She wiped them away as a head peaked over her stomach near the wall.

"Are you okay?"

It was an unfamiliar face, but she'd never been happier to see anyone.

She tapped her feeding mask, then pulled up her hair to show him the clasp behind her head.

"Is that stuck?"

Kelly nodded.

"I'll go find the controls. Stay here."

Kelly laughed at the absurdity of the request until it began to hurt too much. No, she wasn't going anywhere on her own anytime soon.

It took her rescuers an hour to rig a hoist to carry her out. Thankfully the cell's wall was itself a door, negating the need to cut through it. Carrying Kelly through a conventional door was out of the question.

Their retrofitted forklift with netting harness backed through the halls, with Kelly's gravid belly following and Kelly herself sitting on an office rolling chair bringing up the rear. When asked if she wanted to hear how heavy she was, Kelly clamped her hands over her ears. She didn't want to know her weight – she was trying hard to not feel like a whale as it was.

Kelly winced at yet another small jolt. The intersections of hallways were smooth enough for a wheelchair, but she could feel every tiny movement in her too-tight-tum.

When they finally stopped in the supply loading area, she let out a sigh of relief. It soon turned into a face splitting smile.

“Celia!”

She was sitting in a scooter, belly supported, while conversing with an armed officer. Despite the exercise ball attached to her middle, she still had the muscled physique and authoritative grace Kelly remembered. She looked over at Kelly and her jaw dropped.

“Kelly! They told me you were big but holy shit!”

Kelly laughed in relief before grimacing. Activities involving her diaphragm or other abdominal muscles weren't a good idea.

Celia made another comment to the uniformed man and he rushed off. Celia powered her scooter over to Kelly's side.

“I was afraid they caught you, too.”

“No, I was in and out without them the wiser,” she said. “I sent out the intel, but then I heard they had you locked up. They thought you were trying for an abortion.”

“I thought you forgot about me,” Kelly said, surprised by her sudden tears.

“No, of course not,” she said, reaching out to give Kelly a side hug. “When it was clear I couldn't get you out alone I escaped. I organized a rescue as fast as I could.”

Kelly embraced Celia, crying from relief and exhaustion in equal measure.

As her sobs subsided, she felt a slight lurch in her overextended middle.

Her eyes shot open.

“Celia, how long was I in there?”

“A little over ten weeks,” she replied. “Those bureaucratic idiots kept throwing red tape up –”

Kelly's womb lurched again.

She was almost twenty weeks pregnant. In the twenty-six weeks it took to bring a Tibbar litter to term, the last six were the hardest. Not only did they tend to grow rapidly, but they were their most active at that time.

Kelly placed her hands on her incredibly stretched belly, soothing her brood even as her heart rate spiked in fear.

Celia's eyes widened in understanding. “Bring whatever sedatives they were adding to her food NOW!”

While Celia shouted directions, Kelly focused on steadying her breathing. Remaining calm was the surest way to ease her many fetuses. Panicking would ensure they panicked, possibly to catastrophic results.

She watched as a bulge formed in front of her, a foot the size of a toddler's pushing against her from the inside. Kelly stroked the skin there, shushing weakly as she felt a dozen other kicks at various points. Her breasts tightened in response, eliciting a grunt.

Suddenly, three pairs of hands were on her flanks, spreading a cold cream onto her taxed skin.

The storm of kicks continued, but the cream deadened her pain. The skin was still red and covered with stretchmarks. There must have been a local anesthetic involved, but that would hardly matter if she were ripped in two.

"Kelly, eat this."

While adding to the contents of her stomach wasn't something she wanted to do right then, she grabbed the proffered bowl and spoon and began digging in. It was the same stuff they'd fed her through the hose. Celia better know what she was doing.

Halfway through the bowl, Kelly could see fewer kicks, each one weaker than the last. She sighed between bites. *No water balloon impressions today.*

When her litter settled down to negligible activity, Kelly stopped eating. She didn't want to be any fuller than strictly required. She stifled a yawn.

"Change of plans," Celia said. "You're in no condition to travel. You're going to have to stay here."

Kelly groaned at the thought of another six weeks in that cell. She'd do it if the alternative was exploding.

"You told me about your canceled trip to the beach," Celia said, just for her ears. "I know it's not the same, but how'd you like to visit the pool?"

* * *

They'd lifted her down the halls through the compound. The few other surrogates left – she was told most were sent away after giving birth – gawked at her as she passed them.

Only two Kelly saw were still standing. Those women would have been on national news for their sizes. The women in scooters were even bigger than Claire had been, yet each one could only stare at the behemoth that was Kelly. While most of the women looked like they were big enough for their pre-pregnancy body to curl up inside their wombs, Kelly suspected she could hold any two of them at their current size.

She occasionally gave a familiar face a wave, feeling all the more like a parade float because of it.

After that ordeal, lowering her into the pool was another. They had to enlist a second forklift. When they lowered her into the water like a ship's lifeboat, she thought she saw one of the lift's wheels leave the ground.

Water rushed over the sides of the pool as she entered. She sighed while spooning more goo into her mouth. They could fill a hot tub with what she displaced.

But now she was floating contentedly.

The water felt sooo good.

Her middle made her more buoyant than she'd have expected. She could touch the pool's bottom with her toe if she reached, but currently she was kicking gently to stay in place. Her legs ached at even the slight exertion, but it was good even to feel that.

Celia offered to have someone bring her swimsuit. Kelly declined. Wearing a swimsuit during other pregnancies was one thing. Wearing one when she was imitating a celestial body was quite another.

With people busy guarding her and meeting her needs she always had people close by. After weeks of isolation she wanted to find it comforting, but none of them understood what she was going through. To them, she was an oddity to ogle. They might actually have her best interests at heart, but otherwise they were just as distant as the people behind the camera in her cell.

So she scooped another spoonful from the bowl of goop wedged between her breasts and tried to enjoy the water.

9

Days were almost as dull in the pool as they were in the cell. True, she could now move around a little and her diet now included ice cream, but she was still quite uncomfortable and the medicine keeping her litter from ripping her apart kept her perpetually drowsy.

They hooked up a harness to pull her mostly out of the water to sleep and relieve herself, but otherwise she stayed in the pool, two light hospital gowns covering her body and the smallest portion of her ever-growing belly.

Two days into her stay in the pool and the dog and pony show slowed down to the level of a sideshow. The other surrogates only occasionally paused by the door to gawk and the uniformed men – they told her they were part of a private military group specializing in corporate kidnappings – brought in her meals and took out the aftermath. Celia came by occasionally, but it was obvious she had too much to do and her expanded pregnancy was slowing down.

One soldier tended to linger more than the rest. He had a slighter build than the others. His blond hair and fair skin were a pleasant combination, but his kind eyes caught her attention.

The attention he gave her, despite his efforts to not be noticed, was different than the others. She wasn't an oddity to him. Maybe it was the pool putting her into this mindset or her long isolation was skewing her perception, but she thought he was checking her out.

Bored and wanting a distraction from her constant discomfort, Kelly made a plan and sent a message to Celia. The guard who brought back the response looked confused, but the note he carried wasn't: *Passing notes and flirting with boys? I feel like I'm back at school. I'll send it with him.*

Not an hour later, the kind eyed guard walked in carrying a bag. As she waved him over, she noted he looked like he'd been caught with his hand in the cookie jar.

"Ma'am," he said, "I was told to deliver this to you."

"Thank you," she said, reaching as high as she could. He still needed to bend quite a bit for her to reach. She noted where his eyes flitted as he did.

Before he could leave, she asked, "Would you wait to let me check it's all here?"

He nodded his consent and stood at attention.

Inside the bag were a couple bottles of lotion, a water proofed phone, some hard candy, and her bikini.

She had a maternity one-piece, too, but it would be laughable to try that on at her current size.

“Would you put this over there?” she asked, pointing to the far side of the pool.

He nodded, eyes fixed on the bikini in her hands. She suppressed her smile. As he walked over to the far side of the pool she slipped the bottom piece into the water. Kelly moved it into place under the gowns. It took some doing, but she tied the sides to fit.

The guard was setting the bag down on a chair next to the pool’s edge, close enough to reach and high enough to avoid the near constant overspill from her growth displacing more and more water.

“Actually,” she added, “could you give me a hand?”

He looked startled and confused. Kelly held up a finger, asking him to wait.

She stuffed the bikini top down the front of the gowns, then pulled her arms inside. She carefully placed the triangular patches over the ends of her breasts. With one arm she held it in place. With the other she pulled two strings out and up by her neck.

“Tie me, please.”

She couldn’t see him behind her, but after a moment she could feel two soft hands gently take the sting and slowly start tying it in place. Most of the string was occupied with reaching the considerable distance from the end of her bust to the back of her neck, but he managed to tie it securely.

“And the back.”

She pulled the gowns forward, then pulled the last two strings around. He obliged, his hands shaking with what she imagined was bridled desire.

Kelly began pulling off the gowns as he finished. She wasn’t sure the top was sufficient to keep her decent with her swollen breasts, but there was no backing out, now. Celia basically served him up on a silver platter and if she couldn’t believe this kind eyed mercenary with wandering eyes found her attractive she should just wear a box for the rest of her life. Either he found her attractive or he didn’t – she couldn’t assume she wasn’t or she’d never feel desired again.

“Ma’am,” he began, “I’m not sure—”

“Oh hush,” she interrupted. “Celia’s a friend. If she sent you in here, she did it to help me. Would you grab some of that lotion? The top side is getting a bit dry.”

As she said all of this, she removed both gowns and arched her back. She watched his eyes widen and couldn’t help but grin.

“The top?”

“Of my stomach, yes,” Kelly specified. “There’s medical additives in the water to help my skin, but the top doesn’t get wet often.”

He nodded, trancelike, and leaned over to squirt lotion onto the bits of her stomach he could reach.

A thrill ran through her as he touched her.

Despite bearing all the burden of the consequences of sex for years, she hadn’t been physically intimate with anyone in some time. The absolute isolation of the last few months only accentuated that reality. Sure, she’d had men’s hands on her belly recently, but that was all business. Touch without intent wasn’t quite the same.

And what a touch it was. He was firm and gentle, stimulating even deep tissues without upsetting her brood. Long, measured strokes rubbing in the lotion and making her nerves run with icy fire all at once.

“Could you flip around for me?”

Kelly was startled from her reverie.

“So I can get the far side,” he clarified.

“Of course,” she said, pushing off the pool’s wall.

Over the past day she’d discovered she was longer than she was wide. Her tummy extended less than her arm’s span sideways, but nearly twice her standing height forward. When she floated freely in the pool, she had to move carefully or risk scrapping or ramming her all-too-vulnerable stomach.

She swam across the pool’s width. Then she edged along the far side, letting her belly button swing towards where she’d been treading water before. Swimming back she was more careful – it was easier to see behind her than in front.

Situated along the poolside near her kind eyed, skilled hand eye candy she felt herself smiling. It was impossible to miss the way he looked at her – or the effect that had on his lower anatomy.

“Please continue,” she all but purred.

She closed her eyes as the blissful ministrations began anew. He was sooo good at this.

It took her a moment to realize he’d stopped. Peeking forward, she saw him put down the lotion and salute. He was gone before she thought to call him back.

Kelly pouted for a moment. She wanted him to continue, possibly working towards the rest of her and see what his hands could do on skin less tight. Maybe she’d even have tried massaging some of him.

Well, neither of them would be leaving for another month. She’d get another opportunity.

10

The last month stretched on. Her skin stretched on. Her quest to get closer to the guard stretched on.

His name was Kirby. She’d learned that much in the intervening time. He was quiet, a little quirky, liked to draw, and she was certain he found her attractive. Don’t ask her how he could look at her and not think ‘whale’. That was beside the point. Whether he was dropped as a child or was just some sort of pervert didn’t matter – he was attracted to her and she not only craved validation and an escape from the boredom, but she was reeeeaally horny.

During most of her pregnancies she had a period where she wanted to grab any willing male and shove his pleasure stick inside her. Like everything else about this particular pregnancy, that desire was much larger than normal.

If she allowed herself some introspection, she just might be trying to distract herself from the elephant in the room. Rather, the elephant attached to her. Not only was she going to have a spectacularly painful labor (or C-section, but she wasn’t asking), her future as a surrogate might be over. Heck, she might be stuck in a hospital for years or stitched up more than Frankenstein’s monster. Nothing about her future looked promising, so she tried to focus on the present.

She tried chatting with Kirby whenever he was around. She even got him to apply lotion a few times. He was oddly hesitant to touch her, but she could feel and see his arousal whenever he did.

Celia came by one last time before she delivered her litter. She was too big for the scooters and had to have the forklift treatment. Kelly stopped herself from smiling. She was really glad she wasn't the only one, though Celia was only as large now as Kelly had been when she was still in the cell.

"Long story short," Celia said, "all your medical expenses for the rest of your life will be covered by these people. We hired specialists to help us last surrogates deliver safely. No matter what happens, you're going to have the help you need."

"Well that's nice of them," Kelly said between spoonfuls of super-enriched ice cream. "I'm certainly going to need a tummy tuck."

Celia smiled. "So good news for us, they had Lizzie deliver the usual way and she didn't have any complications. In fact, the larger babies seemed to be healthier."

"Good for them," Kelly replied. It really was good news, but labor was still an unpleasant thing to consider at this size. It wasn't a mystery – she'd done it before. She found she was good at it, even. But this would be record breaking in all the wrong ways.

"So is there anything I can do before I let them pop me?"

Kelly considered it. What she said made Celia laugh.

"I'll make sure he gets the message," she said, winking knowingly at her sister-in-wombs.

* * *

A few hours later, presumably at night because so few people were about, Kirby came to the pool. Kelly was half asleep, but quickly woke herself. He wasn't getting away this time.

"I was told to report here and be ready to spend the night," he said, standing at parade rest.

"I requested you," she said, slipping from the harness and treading over to where he stood. She took it slow, partly to try her hand at acting sultry and partly because she had no idea how close she was to the other end of the pool. She did know she was touching the tiled bottom with her belly but not her toes. Why didn't they have an Olympic sized pool?

They never considered me or this virus, or whatever it is, she thought to herself.

"I will do what I can to help you," he said, eyes fixed somewhere on the far wall.

"Then come down here and let me tell you all about them."

Kirby frowned, then squatted at the edge of the pool. Kelly pulled herself up to the edge, careful not to let her stomach run into it.

"Please look me in the eye," Kelly requested.

He did, though she could tell he had to work to do it. After carefully inspecting her bikini top over the last few weeks, she was sure that it wasn't sufficient to keep her areola covered. Her constantly engorged nipples tenting the fabric didn't help. Each breast was as big as a basketball, but heavier with all the milk. They were always trying to separate and roll down the sides of her distended stomach. Her top was valiant in keeping them together, but wasn't sufficient to cover all the naughty bits.

“Hints haven’t worked,” Kelly said, all pretense of sexiness put aside in favor of frank honesty for a moment. “I’m uncomfortable talking about this, so I’m just going to say it. I’ve seen the way you look at me.”

He stood and she had to grab his boot to keep him from leaving. “For some reason you like how I look. I don’t care why. Right now, I feel fat and ugly and you checking me out is the only good thing that’s happened in months.

“Not going to lie – my hormones are crazy and I neeeded to be touched. You seem willing, so get down here and put your hands all over me.” Kelly could feel the blood rushing to her face. She’d never been that forward.

For his part, Kirby just looked up and away from her. “I can’t take advantage of you in your condition. It wouldn’t be right.”

“What?”

“I said it wouldn’t be right,” he repeated. “You’re stuck in a lab with a bunch of soldiers and are not in a position to protect yourself. Ma’am, I might not be a saint but I don’t take advantage of women.”

Kelly had started to get angry, but when she heard his explanation she began laughing. He looked down at her then, puzzled.

“I’m asking you.”

“You’re on medication.”

“Mild painkillers and something to keep the brats quiet,” she said. “They really don’t like giving out lots of drugs to pregnant women.”

He frowned again, this time looking down to meet her gaze. “Your hormones –”

“Of course I’m hormonal,” she said, getting aggravated again. “I’m super hormonal, but that doesn’t stop me from making decisions. I’m of sound mind and judgment and I want you to make out with me, maybe even screw me. I’ve wanted it for weeks and I’ve wanted you as my partner. Celia knows what I want and while she won’t order you to grope me, she did order you to stay here for the night – at my request.

“Now, if I’m wrong and you think I’m grotesque with this massive belly and these engorged breasts, then –”

“No, don’t even think that,” he said with earnest.

They stared at each other for a long moment.

“I’m not sure how you can argue that,” Kelly said at last, “but I wouldn’t mind you showing me.”

Kirby sucked in his cheeks in thought. Then he took a long look at her barely covered breasts, then the rise of her womb as it continued its whale impression. His slowly growing smile reached his eyes before he looked into hers again.

“It would be my pleasure.”

He knelt down and gave Kelly a kiss, which she emphatically returned. His hand started on her neck, then worked its way lower and to the front. She was starting to get light headed from the raw desire he was building in her.

They broke the kiss and looked at each other. Kelly bit her lip and gave her best come-hither look. His smile widened. He sat down and started untying his boots with gusto.

“When you have those off,” she said, “you can grab the floatation they built for me.”

He looked where she pointed at a set of straps and lifeguard floatation devices.

“That way we won’t need our hands for swimming,” she said with a wink.

She wasn’t sure how his smile got even wider, but it did.

He stripped to his underwear. The bulge in front raised her excitement to eleven. He slid into the pool behind her with the float. After a moment of strapping her in that lasted entirely too long, they were at it again.

Sometimes he’d be behind her, hands exploring and lips caressing her neck. All she could do then was grind him, which he seemed to thoroughly enjoy. Sometimes he came around to her side and they’d kiss. He remained gentle, but behind it there was fire and desire. They made out until a growl from her stomach sounded loudly enough to make ripples.

“Are you alright?” he asked, worried.

“Of course,” she said, “just hungry.”

“Then I’ll get you something,” he said and swam toward the pool’s edge. “I know where they keep your food.”

“The lemon tapioca ones, if there’s any left,” she said. She eyed him hungrily. He was satisfying all sorts of desires tonight.

When he was rummaging in the mini fridge they kept for her meals, a hand grabbed her arm.

Kelly turned with a start. It was Lizzie. There was a frantic look in her eyes.

“You caused me so much pain,” she said. “They didn’t even give me an epidural. Said it was only fair that I was a test subject for you.”

She stabbed Kelly deep in the shoulder with a needle, releasing its contents.

“I didn’t deserve this. I just wanted a job and to help. For that I get the worst pain of my life.”

“What are you doing?” Kirby shouted from across the room.

Lizzie stood in fear. Kelly got a good look at her then. From the shoulders up she was mostly the same. Her breasts were huge now, easily in the macromastia range. Her stomach was still distended, making her look fairly pregnant despite having recently given birth.

It was her hips that were the most shocking. She hadn’t been overly pear shaped before, but she did have a feminine figure. Now her hips were distended drastically, flaring out wider than her shoulders. Each thigh was as thick as a telephone pole. Despite that, she probably had a thigh gap. Nine oversized Tibbar babies did that. They couldn’t count how many were in Kelly, but guesses ranged from thirty to fifty. What would they do to her?

Lizzie ran and Kirby gave chase. As he left, Kelly could feel an increasingly frightening tremor start deep in her gut. Whatever Lizzie injected her with was doing something awfully fast.

Her skin, already angry with stretch marks, began to creak. The water level began rising, then flowing over the sides of the pool. Kelly couldn’t get enough air in to breathe. The pressure was filling her up so she couldn’t fill her lungs.

She felt her belly touch the far end of the pool, then the side. She turned her head and saw she was being pushed toward the end with her sleeping harness. It was a lot closer than it should be.

Kelly turned back toward her belly and let out a weak gasp. Her skin, which had done the impossible and held together around an SUV sized womb, was becoming transparent. She could

see veins and behind that was a shape that had to be a fetus. It began squirming and soon the lot of them were moving.

Her belly was pressed against two of the pools walls when the impossible happened: she touched a third. She was pressed back into her harness, then pushed forcefully. Her belly touched the fourth wall and she began to panic. The pain sharpened her thoughts and prompted her to action.

She put her hands on the edge of the pool and pushed herself up. If she'd had to lift all of herself she'd have failed, but her belly was touching more and more of the pool bottom and did some of the lifting for her. She scrambled to get her legs out so they wouldn't be crushed.

Pool water was rushing everywhere, covering the floor and spilling into the hall. People finally started arriving, calling for doctors and pushing equipment aside.

Kelly was starting to black out, but her eyes remained on her belly. The Tibbar babies were as big as second graders and they were beginning to move around, fully visible and dimpling the surface of her distended form.

As she slumped back, she noticed the top of her belly was getting quite close to the ceiling. She passed out before it touched.

Epilogue

One Year Later

Kelly shouldered her beach bag, filled with her towel and street clothes. She took a look at herself in the mirror. The scars and skin grafts to her stomach weren't visible under the one piece suit, but covered it looked like she could have abs. The doctors did good work. They were still pretty noticeable, but they were beginning to fade already.

Her hips stretched the bottom of the suit so much it was rolling upward. There were probably bathing suits in the world that could cover her lower half, but none would taper in enough for her waist, which was as thin as ever. As it was, the suit was a tad baggy there. Her thighs and butt were well shaped and toned after all the physical therapy. Squats worked magic. Her butt in particular was a little bigger than she'd like, but then some people were all about that base.

She was having the most trouble with the top, however. Her breasts spilled too much out of the sides. However, the cleavage they produced with the plunging top was absolutely luscious. They'd operated on them with a new technique, tightening the skin and lifting them to where they'd been as a teenager despite their size. Her breast friends had settled around a 32G. She'd consider a reduction at some point, but for now they were fun.

Kelly stepped out of the bathroom. The beach house wasn't ostentatious, but it was comfortable and spacious enough for their needs.

Kirby whistled, so she did a little twirl.

"I thought the blue might be too dark," Kelly said, "but I guess I've tanned more than I thought.

"It even fits alright," he said. Kelly gave him a look and he explained. "They usually don't make swimsuits for goddesses."

She grinned. When Kirby had stuck around after the delivery, she'd chalked it up to him feeling guilty for not stopping Lizzie. Kelly had to repeatedly explain that she asked Celia to let them have some privacy. That he'd continued to stick around when she began recovering tipped it off to possibly being more than guilt. She'd been in no shape for any physical shenanigans, but he seemed to enjoy just talking, too. She found his personality as comforting as his eyes. That sustained them for months of recovery and surgery.

He took a leave of absence when she left rehab and they began dating. Dating turned into courting, courting to engagement, and now they were on their honeymoon. Two weeks with a beach to themselves.

Kirby stood, showing off more muscle than when they'd first met. He'd been dubious about the speedo, but she insisted she'd seen him in less. He cut a mighty fine figure.

The phone rang, ending her reverie.

"Hello?"

"Hi, it's Dr. Banks. You have a second?"

"Sure," she replied. "Is this about the test results?"

"Yes," he replied. "You might want to sit for this."

She frowned, then sat next to where Kirby had been. He joined her and she placed the phone between them. "I'm sitting."

"Good, good. So after everything we weren't sure how well your reproductive organs were doing. I told you before that I thought you not only would be able to conceive again, but that you might experience early menopause. I was wrong.

"I frankly don't understand the particulars, but your results look more like a teen mother more than a woman after a decade of surrogacy. Whether it was a byproduct of that still unidentified pathogen or the alien biology I can't say, but you're as healthy and fertile as ever."

"Uh, thank you," Kelly replied, stunned by the unexpected news.

"I'd like to set up an appointment at your first convenience. In the meantime, continue your medication and enjoy your health."

"I'll do just that," she said, looking at Kirby and sharing a knowing smile.

After she hung up, she sat for a moment. Her husband held her, not speaking. He had a habit of letting her start the difficult conversations, which she understood to be his way of not pushing or pressuring her.

"As much of a nightmare as that all was, I still miss being pregnant," she said. He'd confessed all about his proclivities, but it had been an unspoken understanding that she'd never be pregnant again. He seemed to accept that. Liking a pregnant belly didn't seem to get in the way of him liking her as she was. Kelly loved him for that.

"Did you ever want kids of your own," he asked, keeping his face and voice as impassive as he could.

"I'd considered it," she said. "I really didn't want to do the single mother thing, though." She looked at him and batted her eyes. "But with someone else around, I could go for one or two."

He grinned. "Well, I can help make that happen."

He kissed her then and she kissed him back. They probably wouldn't make it to the beach today. That was fine by her.