

## Winter Weight

“Ughh,” I groaned as my stomach woke me from my already restless sleep. My hands moved towards my midsection and squeezed the soft roll that formed. The softness that should not have been there. Even lying-in bed I could feel the fat on my body. The way my stomach sloshes from side to side or the way my ass seemed to press into the mattress. It just felt wrong. “So hungry,” I grunted as my stomach rumbled once more, begging for food. I looked over to my boyfriend and was glad that he was a heavy sleeper. Especially as my stomach growled even louder and more aggressively a second time. I brought my pillow from behind my head and pressed it into my stomach and hoped it would quiet the sounds.

The practically starvation level of calories I allowed my body was genuinely concerning to my boyfriend, but my doughy image my body had formed kept his concerns silent. I could see the way his eyes looked at my fattening body as if he asked, “Are you really dieting?”

“Ugh,” I said as I gave in to my commanding stomach and rolled out of bed. My stomach jiggled in response and a knot of disgust grew within me. I knew everything I ate, whether healthy or fattening would show on my body. Especially this time of year.

Quietly, I snook across the bedroom and down into the kitchen. My fattened body bounced and jiggled with every quiet step I took. My ass swayed from side to side as my underwear dug deep into the underside of my cheeks. The recently added weight had seemed to form all around my hips and my belly thus far. I hadn't retrieved the fat clothes that I kept in the attic but felt that I had put the day off much longer than I should. But with the two pairs of trousers that I split in this past week; I was fighting a losing battle.

I don't know why I tried to pretend that it wasn't real. That the weight wasn't actually happening, or that my father wasn't who he was. But it was had to deny, especially when I saw images of him everywhere around Christmas time. It was even harder to say out loud, that my father was Santa - or more specially Nicholas Claus. It was cool as a child, but as an adult there were certain qualities that were required of all the Clauses. Even though I would never don the red suit. My body knew it was Christmas and with that, it turned against me.

For 11 months of the year my body stayed hard, muscular, smooth but as soon as December 1<sup>st</sup> rolled around the fat began to appear. It was easy to hide, and mildly control. I could cut out all the sweets, dairy, carbs. But just the smell of a cookie, or a whiff of a brownie made me lose all control. I always prepared the household, every year since I turned 18. The weight would slowly disappear by mid-January, but there was always a little left over and sometimes there was much more than I wanted. And with this past year I met Greg, and he had a sweet tooth - much to my displeasure.

"You are getting one nonfat yogurt, and nothing else," I said to my stomach. It grumbled angry as if it knew what I was agreeing to feed it. I stood in front of the fridge and saw my reflection in the shiny metal surface. "God, I'm only halfway through the month." I pressed my hands into the gut that peaked underneath my shirt and squeezed. I lifted it up and let it fall and watched as it jiggled like a bowl of Jell-O. My face had taken a few pounds to the jawline and my cheeks, rounding out my typical masculine features and turning them into something more - jolly.

Pushing my reflection aside, I opened the fridge and felt my heavy stomach jump in glee.

"No," I said as I stared at the large chocolate cake on the top level of the fridge. My mind replayed a partial memory from earlier in the day.

*"I'm going to be going to my sister's birthday party on Sunday," he said. I was lost in the mirror as I stared at my shirtless body. The thick layer of fat that surrounded and weighed down my pectorals was the growth I found this morning. Gaining a total of fifteen pounds overnight. The biggest so far this month, but far from the most I had ever gained in one night.*

*"A huh," I said, not listening.*

*"So don't touch that cake in the fridge. I know you have been cutting out sweets, but just wanted to let you know it's not for us!"*

"Not for us," I said, remembering the words Greg said to me earlier as my stomach jumped in excitement as the sight of the cake. The delicious, moist, overly iced cake. The food called to me like a siren and I gave in to the urge. "Just one lick. Just one," I said as I pressed my finger into the large sheet cake and gathered a dollop of chocolate icing onto the tip. I pressed it into my tongue, and I lost all self-control. I reached my hand towards the cake and brought back a chocolate covered paw and ate cake by the handfuls. One hand stayed on my stomach as a feeling of enjoyment rolled over the disgust I felt for my body.

“So fucking good,” I grunted as I watched the cake disappear bite by bite. I could feel my stomach as it swelled wider and heavier by the food that was instantly turned into fat. “No,” I groaned as it turned into an overhang, growing over my waistband, and turning less solid with every bite. “Such a fucking fat ass,” I said to myself in between bites of cake. The waistband of my pants pinched my widening hips as my ass swelled rounder and heavier. I adjusted my stance, widening my legs which only allowed for more space between my legs for the fat to swell.

The cake slowly vanished from my view as my fat hands squeezed the last bits from the fridge and pushed the last bit into my mouth. Hungrily, I sucked the remainder from my fingers, and stared at the fridge, losing what little self-control I had left in me. I stared at the two gallons of milk that sat beside the empty tray. With no attempt to stop myself I popped the top off of one and began to chug. The cool liquid flooded my mouth and pooled in my stomach, causing it to grow tight and round. With still half the jug still full I pulled the second one from the shelf and fell to the ground, drinking from it like I was starved.

With one empty jug I forced the other one to my lips while my other hand rubbed my expanding belly. The heavy gut formed on my thighs, spreading further and wider. My chest had become completely soft and sat atop my stomach with no form or muscle visible. When the gallon finally ran empty, I tossed the jug across the room and stared at my reflection in the oven. I was beyond anything I had grown in the years that I could remember. I looked obese, and I knew that within the next fifteen days. It was only going to get worse.

“Babe?” A voice asked me from the hallway, and my chubby neck snapped towards the shadows and watched as my boyfriend walked into the light of the fridge.