

*(SOME CONTEXT: Free Willy was a 1994 cartoon show, based off of the live-action film; in the cartoon, a young boy named Jessie discovers he can talk with the marine life at the Misty Island Oceanic Reserve. Willy, a killer whale, and Einstein, a baby dolphin, are two of these animals, and together, they work to keep the oceans safe from the nefarious Machine, a cyborg with a long-standing grudge against Willy. This story deviates fairly far from the cartoon, and streamlines some things, to make the narrative a bit smoother and tighter. Enjoy!)*

## WAY TO GO, EINSTEIN

### DAY ONE

The Sea Labs had been bustling lately, white-clad doctors deftly weaving around security guards and the like as practically everyone in the compound was up and moving at once. Clouds had been circling over the area the whole week, and today they seemed to be at their darkest, casting a cooled evensong over all below them. Jessie rode on, nonetheless, as he'd been busy at school for several agonizingly long days. As such, he'd missed a few meetings with the whale Willy and his companions.

This new path was murder to him, as funding had allowed the small research facilities and staff to move on to a rather expansive cliff-side observatory. About half of the crew wanted to stay around their old haunt, Jessie included (as he felt he was close enough to “belonging” with the crew), but his new route was evidence of who'd won the debate. This all came from the government, apparently, so all were told to be on their best behavior, Jessie again included. Hopefully these new standards wouldn't change his relationship with those in the newly built labs, both old and new recruits alike. Despite any and all protests made in the past on his part, he had to admit that the new place did look like something out of prime time television, in the kind of way one was forced to ‘admit’ to. Before he could get past the front gate outside the labs, however, one of the burlier guards put a halting arm out in front of him.

“What’s going on, Ralph?” the young boy asked as he dismounted, hopping back a little.

“Sorry Jess, but we got word that there’s an agent operating somewhere in the facilities. Seems the Machine or someone got him in earlier without any of us knowing. You didn’t hear that from me, though.”

“What? One of the Machine’s men is inside?” His face paled to match the clouds. “Let me in, then! I’ve gotta make sure they’re all okay!”

“Hey, whoa! No can do, Jess, we’ve gotta keep as many out of this as possible. Just sit tight here, if you don’t wanna leave back home. If you stay, you stay right here, with me. Alright?”

Jessie nodded, then mounted and turned around on his bike. He looked back, then towards the pass he'd come in on, then sped back off into the distance. Ralph rubbed his neck, then sighed, and stepped back into his booth at the gate.

“Poor kid.”

Meanwhile, Jessie had made his way to the tree line on one side of the pass, where he doubled back and took a little known dirt path that he knew would lead him to the backside of the laboratory. He wasn't just going to sit by when his friends were in trouble like this. That wasn't him. About a half-hour later, and with the work of some tools from his bike pack, he'd done his amateur best to jimmy open a lock on the back door to the kitchen area. As he worked the lock off, a simultaneous bolt of lightning lit up the sky around him, making him cringe. Working up the nerve, Jessie went on and opened it, stepping warily inside.

The kitchen looked more or less the same as always, only no one was around. The lights flickered on and off in eerie patterns, as the power went in and out from the effects of the rising storm. Without any further waiting, he tore off towards the marina. The kitchen door swung open to reveal darkened hallways, klaxon ringing and buzzing as far down as he could hear or see. Upon his first step out, Jessie managed to collide with a form that he could have sworn he hadn't even seen a moment ago. With a grunt both of them fell back to the floor, landing in rhythm to the buzz of the alarms. Jessie lifted his head in time to see a dim, shadowy figure tear off past him down the hallway. A moment later, he was being shaken gently by someone. One of the women doctors, a new worker as he recalled.

"Jessie! Are you okay? You two! Take A-4 down towards the northern docks, that's where he'll head!" Two voices replied, then muffled footsteps padded off after the man he'd run into. "Hey, come on, Jessie, speak to me."

"Ow...I didn't see who it was," he huffed, before he noticed how angry she actually looked.

"What did you think coming here would do?" she growled, restraining her anger in a maternal fashion as she smoothed her blonde hair and helped him stand up. "You know we like having you here, but at a time like this you'll do more harm than good hanging around, understand?"

"Y...yes ma'am, sorry. But hey, are Willy and the others doing okay?"

"Yes, they're fine, as I recall. But this intruder tried to steal a valuable item from our labs, and if the Machine gets it, it'll wreak havoc on the environment! Our standing at this new facility will be in a lot of jeopardy with our benefactors if this gets much worse," she sighed. "Well, so long as you're here, go over to the marina and watch over the animals there, okay? And don't go anywhere else, or so help me, you won't be coming back for a long time. Understand?" He nodded, then ran off towards the marina. Both doors were illuminated solely by the glow of the alarms, which guided him close enough to enter through them.

"Willy!" he yelled, looking this way and that past the tankers, which glowed as well from the backup lighting set up around the paneling on the walkway. "Willy? Hey, where are you guys?" His keen ability to communicate with those inside the marina helped him yet again, as the familiar, steady voice of the killer whale echoed out of the water at him.

"Jessie, over here! Hey!"

"Willy! There you are! Are you guys okay?"

“Sure. What’s going on out there? Is it about that man who ran through here earlier?” Jessie gasped, then nodded, leaning all the closer in towards the tank.

“You saw him? He’s supposed to be an intruder from the Machine who came to steal something or other from the Labs. How long ago did you see him?”

“I didn’t; Einstein said he’d seen someone a few minutes ago, and swam out to the other tanks to try and see if he could find him. He was gone by the time I could even try and tell him not to...that, and he went in through the passages designed for him. There’s no way I’d get into them, thanks to the size of this new place.”

“For a dolphin, he’s really brash sometimes,” Jessie muttered, standing back up. “Stay here, Willy. I’m going to go make sure he’s okay.”

“Are you sure that’s really wise, Jessie?” the whale yelled out after him, not that it did any good. Jessie was already out the doors again, leaving them swinging quietly back to dormancy.

*“He’s not the only one,”* Willy thought, circling nervously.

Up on the walkways in the lobby, Jessie leaned cautiously onto the guardrail to spy the windowed passageways that lined the walls of the room. In and out they ran, with occasional breaks left to set up sections of the wall, every ten or so feet halting into darkness that was broken every few seconds when the lights would flicker. His vision danced past every passage, every movement made by the miniature landscape within, though he couldn’t make out any sign of Einstein anywhere.

As he turned to go try another area, a flash of gray whizzed past the middle left passage of the lobby walls, and he spun back around. Following him was another equally quick creature, something as akin to a moray eel as his sight could make out from up there. As soon as they’d come, they were gone; Jessie had already moved again, as he knew just fine where it was headed. The only thing that worried him was that Einstein seemed to be running more than anything else.

“Hang on, hang on, I’ll be there in a second,” Jessie panted, skidding from his momentum and rebounding with his hands off of the walls of the corner he took. His feet slipped out from under him, but he bounced back in time to get moving again towards the restricted zone.

The same kinds of klaxon rang out their warnings on both sides of a large, steel-shut door. Yellow stripe patterns lined its façade, with equally large writing that read: “D-4—Restricted Access”. He hadn’t ever been cleared to go so far into the experimental science division of the labs, but that didn’t matter at all right now. The power surged again throughout the complex, and as a result the bar code reader on the side of the door seemed to be on the fritz. However, power was still running for the moment, so...

“In I go,” he coughed, nudging the door to see if it would give. One side swung open lazily, clanging against the wall in the interior of the laboratory. Jessie gave the place a quick look-over to make sure he was safe; finding only darkened offices and an enormous centrifuge lying over in the corner besides some desks and a refrigerator, he mustered himself and went towards the back. His courage failed him, however, as a

heavy, random series of gasps wove in and out all around him, seemingly from everywhere.

“Hey...h-hey, Einstein? You here?” Jessie peeped, his body suddenly shaking as he rounded the office corner. Inside was some sort of variation of the moray eel he’d seen just minutes ago, only it was one that stood bipedal, though it was hunched over menacingly in the pitch, working away at something that its form obscured. It reminded him of a much more built version of the ones the machine had made to serve him in the past. This one was certainly a few feet taller than those before it. As Jessie watched on, to his shock, the monster seemed to be growing slightly bigger as time passed.

He watched as its back pulsed, then seemed to increase up and up until it tapped lightly up against the ceiling, then began to push into it as the base of its backside blew up more and more. Its eel-like tail thickened, then swished approvingly and in doing so knocked over a few beakers onto the floor. Its legs doubled in mass, until they mashed together, its semi-reptilian thighs expanding to gross proportions. All he could hear was an ever-deepening cackle as its voice grew with it, feeding off of some sort of power. Sneaking over to the side, the youth could make out a faint, flame-red glow spreading over the beast’s chest, soaking it with energy.

Whatever that eel thing had become since coming out of the glass passage, it was growing bigger as each second ticked past, so much so that its back began to push cracks along the ceiling, playfully threatening to surge up and break it apart with its increasing size.

“If that thing broke apart the passage...” he whispered to himself, “then what happened to Einstein?” He didn’t have time to think, however, as a hugely muscled arm tore through the side observation mirror of the office, sending a wave of drywall and glass shards out all over. He fell to the floor as the glass sprayed over all of it, tumbling violently onto him at the same time as a large, very strong hand.

“Well, look at you,” the thing rasped through a set of teeth that he could almost see his reflection in when he looked long enough. A pair of reddish eyes lowered down in place of the maw, peering at him in amusement. “A little morsel, I see. Master won’t mind my taking a snack for my troubles, will he?” Had he been less terrified, Jessie might have told him otherwise.

“Let...lemme go!”

“Then I’d have no morsel,” it answered, dangling his lifted body a little bit for fun. “I’m big enough now...Master didn’t say how this growth ray works, but more of it later will make me stronger, much, much stronger. That’s why Master had man let me into your tanks. I think I’ll devour you before I grow some more, and have some fun!”

That much was true: the beast had turned off the beam, which had been shot from a small cannon still gripped tightly in its remaining hand. The thing must have been ten feet, even hunched over. Its tail whipped around, smashing a few other things and scattering them to and fro.

“The guy was...a decoy?” Jessie whimpered, kicking away at its dark green hide to little avail. “Then just how do you plan to escape with the ray, after all this planning?”

“Oh, Master told me to just grow until I crush this place to dust, then bring him what he wants. But I will have more fun than that...starting with my morsel, here.”

Its grip on his throat tightened. Jessie couldn't believe, even at a time like this that the machine would let something that actually *kills* out into the environment. His fear soon faded, as anger flooded his thoughts. Young as he was, the next kick Jessie sent flying was enough to make a temporary dent in the creature's lower jaw. With a dull crunch, it fell back and released him to the ground. His hand also let go of the ray gun, which clattered over to the floor beside him.

Before the monster could get back on his feet, the young boy was off again, ignoring the few scratches he'd received, and clutching the growth ray cannon tight as he ran. Turning towards the back of the labs, Jessie could see that the eel had broken in through one of the ducts, just like he'd figured. The bad thing was that all the water had drained out, and the power came back on in time for the emergency shut off doorways to begin closing on the exits of the passageway.

In the distance he could also hear the power coming on to the doorway he entered through. Electricity ran through it once more, and he could hear it close shut and auto-lock. Fearing that his only remaining escape route would soon be cut off, Jessie leapt in past the rip and slogged his way over to the closing doorway. With a lunge, he whizzed past the entry as the close-off door clanged shut behind him.

Water came so quickly that he barely found the time to take a breath before being immersed. The boy's head brushed against the casing, his sight spinning around him as he tried to regain any sense of balance. What he couldn't see in the meantime was the eel-monster that had trudged over to smash him and the duct; the brute came within reach, then reared back and grunted as its body suddenly tripled in size.

His form slowly stretched up and into the ceiling, while his legs puffed out and down through the floor. It was momentarily crushed together within the frail confines of the lab room, its musculature billowing and bloating to fill the entire space. It soon grew so much larger that its elbow had bulged into the casing of the duct, which Jessie was still trying to escape through. One crack raced along its surface, then four more as the elbow increased further into it, the monster now four times larger.

“-essie, gr-b on, qui-k!” a familiar voice or sound rushed at him through the water.

Reacting as best as he could, the youth threw his hands out until they brushed a slicked hide; he felt for a fin and grabbed on tight. With that there was a great push forwards, like a submerged bullet, then darkness all around as they were taken through the remainder of the duct system. As they both escaped, the beast surged forward in size, now seven times larger than it had been a few minutes ago, and ready to burst the room apart as a deep growl formed in its maw.

At length the growl grew into a great bellow as the monster finally grew up and tore free from its shell, demolishing the entire Eastern Sector as its weight let it fall through the floor and smash through the first story and lobby. Still, it stood from that

point well above the waistline as it shuddered, then grew all the bigger, it now over eighty feet tall. The shock of its growth ran through the compound, sending out tremors that shook the railings that ran along the sides of the ducts until they snapped.

The one they were in heaved up and to the left, swinging out wildly and crashing clear through the walls. Jessie was almost out of air, straining vainly against his rescuer's hide as the view of a forty-foot drop into dangerous water greeted them both. Suddenly oxygen deprivation didn't seem so bad.

"*WHOA!*" the both of them screamed as the tunnel ended, throwing them out into the open; the winds rushed up at them and they down through them, plunging towards the water below and breaking through with an almost inaudible splash and a wave of cold. Soon the view of the compound was dancing in and out of their sights as they bobbed precariously around in the waves, the winds howling in Jessie's ears and drowning out all his thoughts.

"Jessie! Jessie, keep still!" Einstein yelled, thrashing some to overcome the elements. "Stop flailing around, Jessie! I gotta get you back on land!"

"Are..." he sputtered, spitting out an unwelcome mouthful of water. "Are you sure we'll get back in this weather okay, Einstein?"

"Uh..." they bobbed some more. "...No. The waves are too strong, I don't have as much power as Willy does!"

The words struck a chord with Jessie, who looked down to notice that he'd still been clinging to the growth ray gun from the labs. Not thinking things through, Jessie pressed what looked like its barrel to the young dolphin's sides. Einstein's eyes moved back to his human friend. "Hey! What's that thing?"

"A way to get back to land," he shouted, then pulled the trigger he felt as hard as he could, letting a ruby beam of light pour into Einstein as they both tried their best to stay afloat. "Besides, if that monster comes around, you'll be a match for it!"

"But that thing was huge!"

"Not as huge as you're gonna get! Hold on just a minute longer...hey! It's working!"

The light continued to flow into the dolphin's gray sides, which were slowly but surely beginning to stretch as Einstein ballooned out like some inflatable life raft. The hide heaved up and out gently until it brushed against Jessie, pushing him back a little, then a little more, until he had to grip the slippery skin as best as he could. Now about twice his normal size, Einstein reopened his eyes, a grin forming at the very ends of his snout.

"Incredible! I feel great!" he shouted, reveling in the flood of power as he burst forth again, growing another five feet longer, and three feet higher.

His fin stretched out like pulled taffy, only it thickened all the more instead of running thinner. Jessie could actually feel the growth as the ashen surface of his wet skin continued to increase around his hand, which was laid flat up against him in total fascination.

“This is awesome!” Jessie whooped, drumming triumphantly on the giant dolphin’s sides as they still blew up to greater and greater heights.

He was pushed further back, then looked up to realize that he could barely even see the fin tip anymore, as Einstein had grown so much bigger by now that he made Willy look to him like he used to look to Willy. Now twenty feet long and eight feet high, the not-so-little dolphin tensed up like one huge muscle, then sped out to find land again, easily smashing through the angry waves as they crumbled around his huge form, now thirty feet long and eleven feet high.

Jessie continued to holler out when Einstein yelled for him to hold on (in a notably deeper voice) before he submerged for only a second, then rose up like a boat-sized torpedo underneath him, allowing the human to sit safely behind his blowhole, nestled up against the front ridge of the fin.

By now the youth had figured enough to stop the growth ray, and turned it off. On the pair sped, Jessie still in awe as he occasionally felt Einstein growing only bigger than before under him; he would scoot back each time, so that the fin ridge would still be up behind him.

The sky had darkened so much by now that he could barely even see anymore, so he felt around for the sides of the ridge. Even that part of the fin had soon swelled up to such a size that his collective reach just barely wrapped back around them, and he tried to whistle loudly enough to hear himself through the weather conditions.

The dolphin must have grown some more while they were traveling, not that he could see it anymore until sunup. Besides, he could still feel the dolphin underneath him growing larger bit by bit, his sides plumping, continually fattening all around and spreading his own legs apart so much that he eventually sat Indian-style instead. The cooled spray of the waves as they broke in twain shot farther up, so that they would occasionally soak him.

Whenever he’d dry off from the beating of the winds, Einstein would simply grow larger and larger, happily letting his bottlenose snout lengthen and slice into the crests of the oncoming surf.

Through the howling gusts and the rush of the pitch-tinted waters around him, Jessie had begun to gather his thoughts for the first time. Just how big was Einstein by now? What had it been since evening, an hour or two? Hadn’t the eel-monster grown gigantic in a really short time, even after the growth laser had been turned off? If so, then what did that mean for them?

“Einstein, can you hear me okay?” he called out, blinking as a random bolt of lightning in the distance lit up a very, very large version of his friend below him.

The next came along as he was answered, showing Einstein to be a few feet bigger than before, then a few feet more the next time. Soon he’d resemble some kind of living aircraft carrier, which seemed all the more probable as another ten feet spread out over him, filling the dolphin with all the more power.

“Sure!” a deep voice rumbled up towards him. “we’ll find land soon.”

“I know, but it’s not that. How do you think Willy and the others are doing back there at the labs? I mean, they’re still there with that huge monster the Machine sent. I just hope they’re okay back there.”

“Don’t worry, Jessie. I’m sure that it’ll follow us and not them, since we have the growth thingy here with us.”

Another growth spurt hit as he spoke, swelling his voice up along with him as his blowhole grew closer out to Jessie’s legs. His shoes were suddenly over the edge of the hole, which still widened to the point where he really could have fallen in if he wasn’t careful. He backed up some more.

“Oh, that’s reassuring, Einstein. Thanks.”

“Hey, keep blasting me with that ray, and it won’t be a problem,” the (now fifty-foot) dolphin joked, his squeaky laughter rattling the passenger to his core.

The spray from the lapping waves on each side rose higher, indicative that the humongous dolphin’s fins were growing even larger, not to mention longer as well. On occasion he could hear them smack playfully against the inky black contours of the night-bathed water.

“Yeah, right,” he joked back. “That doesn’t sound like you. That blast was really, really long, so I don’t think you should get any more today.”

“I know, heh, just joking. Hang on, we should hit some land soon.”

A few minutes later, and there was indeed a halt. The waves lapped around Einstein’s big form as he settled down on the sands of some beach and tilted his side to the right a little, letting Jessie slide back down to the ground. He landed on his rump, turning back to and leaning appreciatively up against Einstein’s massive hide, just as he could feel it push him back as he grew bigger and bigger, another thirty feet jumping on. He could hear the end of the tail far away, slapping merrily on the breaking waves as he still grew bigger.

With the coming of another burst, he was nearly mashed down into the sand as the sides enlarged and inflated up over him, Einstein sinking a little into the shore as his great weight only grew greater. Now almost ninety feet long and forty feet high (excluding the fin), the dolphin let out a mighty sigh, and relaxed some. Jessie dug his legs back out from underneath the titanic cetacean, then dusted himself off and stood back up to try his legs out. For a minute he wobbled, the strong gusts of air not helping him any.

“That was great work, Einstein! You ruled out there!” he shouted up as soon as the winds died down enough. He could hear and even feel a great shifting as the now 100-foot long dolphin turned towards him, undoubtedly ginning.

“Yeah, well, thanks for the size change! Here, lemme move around, and you can stay under my tail. Hold on, I think I’ve got it.”

With that, the mighty creature turned himself around, letting the majority of his body soak back into the water, with his tail still poking back out over the dry land, forming a surprisingly large kind of lean-to or tent above Jessie.

“Thanks! See you in the morning, okay?”



“Okay! Good night!”

He crept under the tarp-sized tail, which blocked the winds well as it dipped down protectively over him. He fumbled for the small radio inside of his coat, hoping it hadn't been too dampened earlier. He lay there for awhile, trying to pick up any frequencies that would get him in touch with the labs back home. They had to be all right...

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Back at the labs, several technicians as well as a few remaining doctors all huddled around the security guards, who were busy prodding the form of the eel-monster. Not only had it stopped its rampage, but it had also somehow shrunken back to its early size of around eight feet or so, and was lying there on the debris of the eastern sector, out cold.

“So the other guy was just a decoy,” Julia spoke, folding up her glasses. “And to top it all off, we can't find hide nor hair of Jessie or Einstein. I swear, Willy's having a fit. I even told him to stay put in the marina, and he couldn't even do that! Now we need to look for him and the Machine at the same time.”

“Well, whatever kind of new mutant this was, it must have used the growth device, that much is for sure,” one said aloud, the winds whipping past them all. “But this is new. It reverts when left unaided for too long, it seems.”

“No, Mark, I don't think that's the case,” Julia broke in, stepping up. “The cell stimuli works on a circular-repetition regeneration basis, meaning that the effects of the beam shouldn't just wear off in due time. This is a lasting thing it does. The plants we were trying it out on were supposed to grow, then stay that way once a certain link or element that the stimuli needed was given in controlled amounts. If the element were ever removed, then, and only then, would it revert to its old size. If said element was always present, then the stimuli would continue on and on in a loop, enlarging the user to an unlimited degree of size.”

“So this guy here ran out of whatever it was that kept it growing bigger? Then what was the element?”

Julia looked out along the destruction to finally notice a duct that had been thrown partially out off the cliff's edge.

“Water! That's it! The beast had to have come in through the ducts, right? Then it was wet while it was growing when it used the ray; however, it didn't know that it needed water to continue growing bigger, so it let itself dry out. So, if that much is right, then it dried itself out and shrank back down. That's the only thing I can think of right now.”

“Well, let's get a cup of water and pour it over this guy...see if he gets a growth spurt,” Mark joked. Julia shot him a look, then headed for the nearest phone.

“Both Jessie and Einstein are missing,” she mused, “and they might have fallen out of that duct, though I can't think of why. If water is the element, and he's got the ray

cannon with him...ugh, that kid's so much trouble! We could have a dolphin the size of an island on our hands!"

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Meanwhile, Jessie had fallen asleep out of exhaustion from the efforts of calling in someone on his radio. What he couldn't see was the tail above him, growing silently as the night went on, slowly billowing out along with the rest of Einstein as his body grew bigger and bigger in his sleep, puffing up another thirty feet until he was over 140 feet long, and 60 feet tall. Then he grew and enlarged out up to 165 feet long and 55 feet high.

The massive dolphin could be heard humming appreciatively in his sleep as he stretched on to over 210 feet long and 70 feet high, then 230 feet and 80 feet high, the sounds of his thick skin stretching echoing into the night sky. On both of them slumbered, unaware of how much damage they had just done, as the young dolphin still grew larger...and larger...and larger...

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## *DAY TWO*

Clouds hung steady over the sky, sifting numbly, their reflections following across a calm ocean. The sun's rays sliced through every so often, scouring the waters below as they silently tread. When a wind cut through and brushed Jessie hard enough to force him awake, he realized he couldn't see any clouds at all. In fact, the youth found himself lost temporarily, a vast milieu of shadow having consumed him; the distant edges of the shadow were lined with ribbons of light, light from the outside. They rose and fell in a regular kind of pattern that began to tell Jessie what was going on.

The edges of his cetacean friend's flipper had grown and spread out far beyond its prior size, and was now flitting up and down as the dolphin dreamed on. Einstein must have grown, and grown a lot since last night. That much was obvious when Jessie crawled out from under the vast sail of gray (which took a notable ten minutes to do) and turned back around to face a veritable edifice, a sheer wall of slate that pulsed ever-so slightly as each breath came and went through Einstein.

The 'wall' quivered suddenly, then bulged forward, as if it were reaching for him as the slumbering Einstein grew even bigger on the spot. The youth hobbled back, then fell backwards and landed in the surf as it washed over his jeans, reacquainting them with the cold damp of last night.

"Whoa," Jessie managed to whisper. A beam of sunlight fell over them both, and he looked down and away from it, as he did so noticing that the growth ray cannon he'd hidden was now missing from his pocket. "No! Where'd it get to?" he gasped, patting

himself over haphazardly as Einstein ballooned bigger than ever before behind him, eventually nudging into the boy's sides with his enlarging hide. Another 70 or so feet had just leapt onto the massive dolphin, making him a staggering 690 feet long, and 230 feet tall.

The real size was difficult to make out, as with each surge of growth the dolphin would sink just a little more down into the wet sand as it caved in under his tonnage. Jessie made sure to halt and back up some, just in case. He looked up to see Einstein's side soaring up to the now quite blue skies above, the top of him impossible to make out. Hopefully he hadn't let the gun fall out overnight. If so, then Einstein would have increased so much in size that he would have grown right over it, and with his now ridiculously great weight there wouldn't be much chance in getting it back in one piece. As he thought, a huge rise appeared several hundred feet away offshore, the waves passing and trickling down off Einstein's shiny snout as it peaked in the air. He was up.

"Mmm! Ah, that's loads better!" Einstein trumpeted, shaking his humongous head to and fro. "Jessie? Are you up already?" he asked, twisting some to look back at the shoreline.

Whatever expressions Einstein could emote were all brought out in one moment as he saw how much larger he had grown in just one night. He moved his tail slightly, feeling the movement travel all the way down his titanic body until the huge fin replied and waved back, kicking up a spray of sand all over.

"Over here!" the boy screamed, waving both arms among the unwarranted explosion of sand.

The cry barely made it to the dolphin, who still couldn't see him. Jessie huffed in agitation as the last clumps of sand returned to the ground, then stuck his head under the water and screamed the same thing.

"Oh, there you are! Sorry!" the young dolphin squeaked (a little too loudly), though he could just make him out from where he was now.

A few caution-filled minutes later, and Einstein had turned himself around to face Jessie. He dipped his snout tip far into the sand, allowing Jessie the time needed to climb all the way back to the area he'd been at before. That much proved almost too much, however, as Einstein shuddered violently as he climbed and, when Jessie was near the left eye, burst forth again and grew another 95 feet longer and 40 feet higher.

Jessie screamed and fell to the glossed surface of his skin, clinging tightly to it as his snout grew and speared out into the underbrush of the island below his lower chin (as he was that much bigger already than the canopy itself). After the snapping and crashing of the mowed jungle faded Jessie gulped, gathered his bearings, and continued on, with the left eye carefully watching him. The eye glimmered back the youth's reflection, as it alone was bigger than a few decent-sized condos stack together.

“Got it okay, Jessie?” an unbelievably deep voice whispered, so that the bass wouldn’t shake him off during his climb.

“Y...yeah, it’s okay, thanks. How will I hold onto you when I’m up by your fin again? You’re so huge now, I don’t know what to do with you! I don’t know how to even stay with you without you growing over me and crushing me flat!”

“Eww, that’s probable...” Einstein began, before catching a very small frown being shot at him. “You could always... uh... well...” as he thought, his entire body began to tremble once again, rattling his words as he spoke. “Ooh, it’s a big one! H-hold on, Jess-”

The words were cut off as a low rumbling sound began to emanate from within Einstein. The jungle that remained about two hundred feet below his overgrown jaws began to shrink further down and away as the dolphin became larger and larger, rising up like an 800-foot long, 300 foot tall mammoth balloon of some sort. Another twitch followed, then another on top of that, as another 100 feet spread over him, forcing his already colossal tail to shoot out into the water, sending sprays up in the air as it grew longer, then longer still.

His topside puffed up, whatever landscape Jessie could still make out shrinking below as Einstein increased to vast sizes; another 70 feet pushed him higher up, his lower half swelling and mashing down heavily on the island, which was being slowly crushed. Water spilled in all around the inland as his weight grew with him. Another 130 feet of length was forced into him, creating a gigantic bulge in his middle, one that spread out evenly over his form, before another, bigger bulge would grow there again.

“Einstein, stop! Knock it off, already!” Jessie yelled, having again resorted to falling down on and hugging the growing dolphin, even as his hide grew out from under his hands every few seconds. The now 930-foot long, 370-foot high monster dolphin tried to talk back, his words shaking along with him as the growth surges raced through him.

“I...I’m try...trying!” he sputtered, as he exploded once more with growth and surged up and out another 180 feet in length, and 90 feet in height. The actual island was only about ten times larger than he at this point was, as it wasn’t much of an island to start, and it was showing. Another 250 feet crept over Einstein, who had finally closed his eyes tight as he let the enlarging process work.

Another wave hit, relentlessly bulking him up all around as he grew another 270 feet long, then 320 feet long after that, while he rose into the sky, half of him rising up from the water even as it spilled in all over the now-sinking island. Fishing boats from afar watched in dead-silent awe as a dolphin fin began to grow its way across their backdrop, slowly but surely filling up their horizon as it widened and thickened, until it blotted out the angled rays of sun from their perspective.

Still, the super-gigantic Einstein only grew larger than before, gaining mass in multiples of hundreds of feet now instead of dozens. Another healthy dose hit, and his sides began to bloat over the width of the small island, holding it down as he bulged over it on both sides, when it finally happened. As the next 360 feet of length came, a huge crack danced along the surface of the island. The 1,830-foot mega-dolphin floundered, squirming uncomfortably even as the flood of power filled him. His height shot up after that, gaining another 110 feet to make him over 570 feet tall.

Whatever terrified inhabitants there were on the land had already fled since last night, most of them having gone to the same location as the fishermen. All watched on, their heads tilting up little by little as the seconds of growing ticked by. They all watched on as Einstein would grow bigger and bigger and bigger, his top pushing up higher by another 120 feet; then they'd whip their heads back down and watch him grow bigger and bigger and bigger in length by another 500 feet, then look up again as he bulged higher another 150 feet.

It seemed to take hours. It might have, and no end seemed to be in sight, as the 2,540-foot long, 740-foot high dolphin tried to speak. All he could do for the moment was grunt something unknowable, as the growth power overtook him. Instead Einstein took a deep breath. There was silence from all nearby for miles, Jessie included, as they all waited for whatever it was that was going to happen.

Without warning, Einstein *doubled* his full size, doing it so fast that Jessie sailed straight up another 740 feet like a living rocket. The oncoming waves swept over many of the boats nearby, and they all did their best not to capsize into the afternoon waters below. Those that remained looking as the waves cleared could see a whopping, 4,900-foot long monster of a dolphin wriggling free as the island ultimately splintered apart, sinking miserably to the bottom of the ocean in defeat. The 1,480-foot tall Einstein sighed, then tensed yet again.

"No, not another one! Hang on Jessie, wherever you are!" he roared as he took a deep breath and strained, trying to hold back the next increase...

\* \* \* \* \*

"Found them!" Mark yelled across the tarp that had been spread over the ruined sector of the laboratories. The sun had finally come back out, casting a glare over the screens of some monitoring topography scanners the scientist had been looking over. "See that huge formation about 370 miles from here?" he asked, as Julia came by and took a look.

"That island doesn't look right," she muttered, tapping the screen with a pen.

“Yeah, ‘cause that’s not an island,” he shot back, raising his eyebrows as she turned to him, her lower jaw slack.

“You mean that thing is Einstein? Already, he’s *that* big?”

“Afraid so. Scanners got him at eleven this morning, and we just got the feedback. Trouble is, this data’s late in coming. So he’s probably a bit bigger than this already.”

“Load up two of the boats. We need to get to those two before some serious damage is done! If Einstein stays in the water like that, then the growth process will never stop, so long as he lives...and we can’t just kill him or anything, we’ll have to find some way to actually get him up and out of the water long enough for the process to stop.”

Mark followed her as she went on, both of them grabbing various trinkets and meters from tables inside as they moved towards the docks.

“Yeah, and he’ll shrink, given time,” Mark panted as they began to jog. “But what if that regression period lasts too long? If he’s out of water for that long, he’ll die!”

“Right, it’s a bad situation. Of all the creatures to get hit by the ray, it’s water-dwellers. Nothing else would be quite so terribly perfect. Come on! We’ve gotta head to Willy!”

“Willy? Why the whale? What’s he going to do?”

“He’s going to help us find Einstein! Since you said that data was late, then I assume that the island we’ll be looking for will no longer exist. If that’s so, then he’ll move on and we’ll lose him. We give him any more time to be chased around and he’ll just get bigger!” The two of them sped to the marina, hopeful, yet grave.

Meanwhile, the moray mutant had finally come to, and found himself tied down with about a dozen or so restraints. He remembered drying off, then passing out for some reason. His mind filled with anger as he realized he was no longer gigantic, and was quite vulnerable to the pair of armed humans standing behind him, their backs turned. It noticed a broken pipe that was leaking some water nearby, and tried desperately to get the tip of his scaly tail near it. As he did so, a guard’s boot fell over it, slamming down hard on it.

“Master will make you suffer for this!” the monster hissed, writhing around pathetically along the ground and rubble of the ruin he caused earlier.

“What are you two doing to that defenseless creature?” a cold, trained voice spoke from behind the two. They turned around to notice none other than the Machine himself, standing casually on their property. The cybernetic gentleman smirked, holding out an official-looking document of some sort for them both to read. “Oh, you weren’t told by

the officials?” he asked, his smirk becoming a mean smile. “They should have told you. The benefactors are all signed off under one name: mine. As head of the funding division for this...place of yours, I figured I should come by and see how you all are running *my* institution. And of course, I come here to find half of it mangled. You realize how this will all look to the other patrons of your new labs?”

The two guards were stunned, to say the least. They both stepped back, then one regained his composure and stepped forward.

“Can I read that, please?” he asked, reaching for the documents.

“Certainly, everything’s there. Now, release that imprisoned creature you have there. These facilities are obviously money poorly spent on our part. I’ll be taking over any and all experimentation and research on this brute here.”

“But...don’t you want to talk that sort of thing over with our staff? They’ll...”

“Enough,” the Machine interrupted, stomping a foot. “Release it, right this minute.”

The two looked at one another, then one shrugged and bent down to sever the ropes. The mutant tore free, a look of relish on its face as it turned and snared the first guard in his grip.

“No, no, not like that,” the Machine calmly ordered, giving the beast a cold glare.

It gulped, then set the man back down and followed behind his master. The guards were helpless to stop them. All one did was quietly radio in Julia on his phone. He trailed off on his report, however, when he saw the Machine simply turn to the side and shove the moray-eel mutant off of the cliff, throwing it headlong over the edge so that it fell right into the ocean. The two were aghast, then turned to the Machine, who feigned embarrassment.

“Looks like he fell over the cliff. Clumsy lout, wasn’t he?” the Machine laughed, shrugging. He turned and walked briskly off the area, as the two guards felt a tremor tear through the entire structure.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Let’s get moving!” Julia yelled to Mark as they both tore off in separate boats, with Willy racing on ahead, a harmless tracking device planted on his dorsal fin. “We don’t have time to let everyone else know, so we’ll radio them in a little while!”

Mark nodded, then split as they both followed the speeding whale.

“Hang on, you two,” Willy thought to himself, pumping all the faster. “How could Einstein get so far? He’s not that big, and Jessie’s weighting him down too. Whatever’s going on, I hope they’re alright...”

\* \* \* \* \*

The scaled hand that rose over the cliff filled the vision of both the guards, who tumbled over one another in shock as the twenty-foot wide hand slapped over the turf, then stayed there for a moment as it grew bigger. Ridges formed in the dirt along the sides of its fingers before changing to cracks as the hand grew over it, then grew more, until it was forty feet wide.

Both guards were too stunned to move into action. Rather, they just let their heads pivot about and try to take in the sight of an enormous mutant eel suddenly looming up over them, towering so high that its midsection alone met the cliff’s side, casting a shade over them. It sneered with a mix of contempt and rapture as it expanded, then seemingly doubled in height on the spot.

As such, its midsection boomed violently into the rock along the side of the cliff, demolishing all of it as his abs ground them down upon contact. Then it grew more, its pelvic region now replacing the midsection as more of the cliff was crushed away, then its thighs as it continued to grow up and up. Finally the pair felt the ground shake as a single hand reached down for them, covering their entire escape area as well with its still-increasing size. The 210-foot tall monster chuckled a little, letting the growth wash over him with wild abandon.

“Told you Master would come g...Master...would...g...” the thing tried to speak, as it felt something else happening to it.

It looked over to its side, its fangs bared as the surge overtook him. In the distance was the Machine, who had returned with two more of the experimental growth cannons in tow. Both were turned on, two dazzling beams of thin cadmium pouring into the monster’s bulky sides without slow or stop. The beast looked at its master, genuinely surprised, as its body began to shake.

“I’ll be confiscating these items, as well. Seeing as to how they’re mine now, I figure I should use them correctly, and put some real meat on your bones. Stand still, now,” the Master said, letting both beams soak into the eel as it also continued to stand knee-deep in the water below the cliff (or what remained of it). “There should have been four of these experimental cannons, including the one you already tried to steal. That means one more is missing from the labs. I want you to go find it as well, and bring it to me. Once this disaster turns epic, the labs will take all the blame, while I will pull out from the board of ownership with the knowledge that my enemies are completely



disgraced and destroyed. The beautiful nature of this is that they will have helped me the entire time that I have been setting them up for a fall so bad, it..."

The Machine reared back as the eel's set of huge fangs snapped down over the entire section of cliff. His master had dropped both cannons, still pouring out their beams, as the moray eel downed them both with an audible gulp. The Machine stood back up, dusting himself off and patting the sides of the titanic snout just a few feet in front of him.

"Greedy thing," he replied, coldly regarding it as its form began to bulge all over. "Do your job, and I'll forget what you just did. Fail, and I use you to start an entire purse and handbag company."

With that he walked off, boarding a helicopter and taking off just as the eel let go and grew over the entire area, letting his heaving chest fall down on the labs and crushing whatever remained of it to dust. Still both beams were left on inside of it, which became evident when the monster reared back up, bellowing as the growth increased.

He suddenly burst forth and tripled his size, his shadow growing along with him as it consumed the side of the cliff. Its musculature swelled out, turning the monster into a hulking figure as it turned around, then sank into the water. Each greedy gulp of water powered its enlargement more; it shuddered as it began to swim off towards its intended targets, and again tripled in size. The waves spread out evenly as the mutant's 1,890-foot tall form sped across the ocean, its thickening tail snaking behind it as it followed, it still lengthening as it crisscrossed the water's surface.

\* \* \* \* \*

3,700 feet of dolphin rose up as Einstein broke the cresting waves apart, having submerged himself for a moment. His body bumped and crashed through coral formations as well as every tiny creature that had the misfortune of being remotely close to the area. About 800 feet of Einstein's height showed, however, as his weight was catching up to him, and was pushing his hefty form down just a little into the water, displacing who-knows-how many tons of water with each movement.

He was now also 12,250 feet long, staggering a length as it was, though the growth surge had finally slowed down just a little bit, and he could rest. The tail fin brushed lightly against an entire section of oceanic bedrock, devastating it without even touching down completely on it. Somewhere thoroughly lost on top of Einstein was Jessie, who had been trying as hard as he possibly knew how to hold on to the vast cetacean without falling off. This problem was finally solved, however. Jessie had actually tried to fall off now, several times in fact, but it didn't do anything.

“It’s like trying to fall off an island,” he joked, though only the winds answered him.

Gray stretched on forever all around him. Only the gaping crater a few hundred meters away gave him any indication of where he was, as it had to be the blowhole. Turning back with a kind of detached wonder, he squinted hard enough to make out the beginnings of his fin, which rose higher than anything else up into the sky. The sun was still out, so he could more or less make out the tip. Staring out to the sides he could only barely make out a thin line of blue as the oceans passed by; they would widen and spread out, forming a rhythm of movement as Einstein sailed along. There was no way he could think of to talk to his companion anymore.

“What’s that?” the dolphin’s enormous voice suddenly echoed, the sound fulminating all over like an explosion of noise. “Looks like a boat, I think.” Einstein couldn’t have seen it well at all with his incredible size. Rather, Jessie figured as he covered his ears, the rocking of the boat must have tipped him off from afar. His thoughts were cut short as another huge voice suddenly tore through.

“Don’t touch it,” a gigantic turtle spoke, his 600-foot wide shell rising up out of the water; a massive head followed suit, poking out from the shell and down at the tiny boat. His aging beak hovered mightily over it in its entirety, but didn’t come any closer. “This thing here’s not to be touched, got it? You may be a really big fella, but I won’t let you any nearer to it.”

“I was just curious, is all,” Einstein rumbled. “There didn’t seem to be anyone on board. Are they okay?”

“I suppose. All I remember is being caught in something, then flung onto that boat. The ones who snared me an’ a couple of others were yelling about something and were all grabbing at some thing in one of their hands, when a bright light hit us. We grew right off the boat and back into the water, an’ we’ve been growing bigger since.” Jessie could hear easily, and took the initiative to run as fast as he could across Einstein’s topside.

“Hey!” he cried, making both the turtle and dolphin shift nervously.

“What was that?” the turtle asked, looking about.

“Jessie!” Einstein laughed, a note a joyful relief in his voice. “You’re still here! I was so worried I’d lost you somewhere last time I grew! Where on me are you?”

“Around the blowhole, I think. I need you to use your flipper, Einstein! Just reach out and let me get close to the boat, and I’ll see if that growth cannon is still on board!”

“Okay, but be careful,” Einstein squeaked.

The turtle had put things together by then, and had moved back. Einstein was still a good twenty or so times bigger than he, so he gladly obliged.

Jessie rushed across the dolphin, until he came to a vast drop as he finally reached the side. He slid down, screaming out as the winds blasted him during the fall. He eventually landed on the base of the flipper, as Einstein had been smart enough to curve it a little so as to let him slow his descent a bit and take the momentum out of his landing.

A few minutes later, and Jessie was at the very tip, which was still a good amount of moving space to him. The boat, for safety's sake, was still a few dozen yards away. The turtle grinned and glided over to crane his giant head down, just filling the gap with his beak so that the youth could cross over. With a thud, he landed on the slicked boarding of the deck, his feet ironically slipping out from under him as he tried to stand back up.

"Is he on?" Einstein asked. His massive eyes tried to peer down and back enough to see, but it was no use.

"Don't worry, he's fine," the turtle answered, staying in place.

"It's here! It's still here!" Jessie cried out, hopping and waving the cannon around. Assuming he had lost it overnight, it must have been taken or dragged in by some fishermen before they had the opportunity to see what it could do. They must have fooled around with it, then it went off and shot everything inside the fishnet. "Turtle, please tell Einstein that I'm coming back, would you?"

"Hmm? Oh, sure, fine. He's ready to come back now!" the gigantic turtle yelled, before suddenly blowing up to double its previous size, now having gained another 600 feet in mass.

The growth pushed back on the boat, which didn't break or splinter, but rather was pushed farther away from the two. Some waves lapped threateningly over the sides of the boat, but Jessie took a gamble and stayed put onboard.

"Whew, that was a biggun' that time!" the turtle sighed, reveling just a little bit in the growth as he rocked in the water. Einstein's body began to twitch.

"I feel something moving away! Is it Jessie? Did you push the boat back?"

The twitch increased, making the old turtle uneasy. The dolphin, though young, was still way over ten times his size.

"I must have, sorry," he coughed back, inching backwards.

"Oh well, you couldn't help it. Excuse me, I've gotta get him back! He's a really good friend, so I can't lose him out here!"

With that, Einstein carefully moved his 2.3 mile-long body towards the movement of the waves made by the tiny boat. It was less than a speck to the gargantuan dolphin, so he'd have to be extremely careful not to smash it apart on accident.

"Where are you? Come on, careful...ugh, I can't see him anywhere." Another twitch followed, traveling throughout his tremendously grand body. He was already growing. "Give me time, please...another one of these spurts, and I won't ever find him back! I can't get any bigger! Please, stop!"

His pleas to his form did nothing as he felt himself tense all over. The twitch grew worse, more insistent and fervent. The idea that he couldn't get any bigger, as it soon showed, was laughable.

Jessie had finished waving and hollering by now, as his boat was drifting too far to the right of Einstein for him to get any attention at this point. All he could do was watch in a mix of shock and complete awe as the mega-dolphin began to resume growing, his slicked body soaring up to fantastic new heights with each passing second. 3,900 feet became 4,200 feet, then 4,500 feet, 4,800 feet, 5,600 feet, 6,400 feet...Taller and taller he grew, at first, his entire corpus bobbing precariously in the water.

His tail grew out as though some enormous child were pulling on it, it threatening to tear from the rest of Einstein's plumping figure. Conversely, his snout pushed forward in front of his eyes as he watched, growing out of control as it would plunge into and under the water, then spear back out and peak into the air. Longer and longer he became, all the while filling up in width as the weight and muscle poured into him. He was now over 21,120 feet long, before he shuddered out another 900 feet in length, then another 1,100, then another after that.

The background began to again disappear as Einstein consumed all of it around him. No matter how much of him bobbed and sank back into the ocean, more of him grew and bulged up above the surface...7,800 feet of height grew into 8,500 feet. By the time Jessie could rub his dazed eyes and look again the cetacean was finally over the 10,000-foot mark in height alone, nearly 2 miles tall, before he shook all the more, and shot up to twice that colossal size. The living hill of dolphin had just burst forth and grown into a mountain, one that looked ready to become even larger in a second.

"You're joking, right?" Jessie sputtered, clasping the rims of the boat. "What was all that growing before, a measly warm up?"

Einstein lifted however much of his snout that he could up high as he emitted a kind of roar into the waning sky, sending up waves of birds from the rims of far-flung islands. The roar continued on, forcing Jessie to cover his ears once again as Einstein quaked all over, then (in the course of about one agonizing minute) swelled and tripled his latter size. 12,000 feet became 14,300 feet...15,600 feet...17,200 feet...21,100 feet...23,700 feet...

The old turtle had gone deep under to avoid getting crushed or rammed into by the growing body, though he had been pinned to a reef cluster big enough to hold even him as Einstein inflated all over him, mashing him down. The turtle felt a tremble of his own, then shot up another 2,300 feet, not that it did any good to him. All it did, in fact, was grind him further into Einstein's soft hide as he puffed up.

Soon the turtle was literally swallowed by the extremely huge body, and remained that way until another surge came, and he blew up into and through the reef and smashed it apart. 71,200 feet of length stretched on to 76,900 feet...84,400 feet...89,000 feet...93,200 feet...99,900 feet...

Everything in the ocean sped off in fear, even those unseen giants created earlier in the day as Einstein grew bigger...and bigger... and bigger...Few could escape, unfortunately. His bottom side pushed down in the water, which in turn only forced him to grow up higher into the sky to compensate. He would teeter, his flippers erratically slapping the surface and creating great tsunamis that washed over everything nearby. His belly sagged down in the center, threatening to eventually grow so huge that it would crush the floor of the ocean itself. Even the deeper areas began to feel the drag of his stomach as it surged and enlarged into it at last. 105,500 feet...108,900 feet...111,100 feet...117,800 feet...121,000 feet...

His hide shimmered all around his 126,720-foot long body, which pulsed quietly as the ultra-sized dolphin grew bigger and bigger, now over 24 miles long. He could have laid down and connected one city to another, tail to snout. Heck, he practically *was* a city, now. An eye big enough to encompass a neighborhood widened more as he boomed up past 25,600 feet tall...28,400 feet...31,500 feet...34,900 feet...38,700 feet...Power seemed to flow endlessly into Einstein, whose heartbeat began to audibly pump furiously in the water, sending out shock waves that gathered into tides.

Yet bigger he still bulged, the musculature inside him occasionally pushing so hard into the hide that it showed momentarily, as though it were ready to explode; he would then gain more fat around the sides, filling him to the brim and forcing his form to heave a little as his equilibrium changed.

The topside was no longer visible to Jessie; not even the beginnings of the fin could be seen anymore, as the 42,240-foot tall monster cetacean bellowed on, his voice now casting small vibration waves out along the ocean. At such a size, the lower half of that height had still managed to sag onto the floor of the ocean, demolishing everything near it to debris. The dolphin might as well have been a living mountain range.

"He's got to get to greater depths," Jessie thought, seeing the underwater film rising to the surface. "How can he grow this enormous? How? How could the stupid cannon do this much damage?"

He stopped staring as Einstein finally stopped roaring, then sped his entire 24-mile long body towards land, even as he still grew rounder and bigger in the distance. The youth's jaw hung down.

“Einstein? What're you doing! Stop! You'll smash the land apart! You're too heavy to get near them! Stop, stop!” His face sagged as well as he realized what was happening to his friend. “Oh, no...Don't tell me he's...hungry! Give me a break!”

His attention was broken as a mighty wave caused from earlier finally reached his boat, the roar of the onslaught drowning his own cries out. It crashed down on it, splintering it to bits as its hull finally gave out. Meanwhile, Einstein's hunger had indeed taken over; the awesome-sized dolphin hardly even had to go far for his massive form to get him towards a shadow-covered landscape.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Got him!” Mark cried, throwing a celebratory fist up. He picked up his comm link and put in a call to Julia. “Get this: we couldn't find Einstein with our tracking equipment yet, but we won't need to at this rate. Turn on your radio, I'll give you the station.”

“Why?” Julia asked, a little afraid to find out.

“Just do it.”

She tuned in just in time to hear a report from Rio de Janeiro:

*The creature, authorities and local marine biologists have designated as a dolphin of some kind, has run amok just off the coast of Rio. Approximately thirty minutes ago, what can only be called an “enormous, really, really gigantic dolphin” had been spotted speeding towards the Bay of uppermost Brazil. The beast towered at a height so great that neither officials nor eyewitnesses are able to tell how tall it is.*

*No one can even see the top of it, as those survivors in the area noted that the Sugar Land Mountain was, comparatively speaking, barely able to even reach the bottom side of a passing flipper. The flipper alone was measured on a tourist's camera to be at least three to four miles long, so long that it managed to rise above the mountain itself as well as part of town before going back under. Reports indicate that the supergiant is currently en route to the northern zone of Rio, and is cutting in east of the Bay towards the Rio-Niteroi Bridge.*

*Rumors also have been confirmed that the monster is actually still growing larger with each passing minute. This is not a hoax; the creature is growing even bigger as it moves along. The city service officials cite that, while the bridge is 8.75 miles long, and*

*is more than wide enough for the aggressor to pass between, it is still nowhere near tall enough. The creature will hopefully move outside of the parameters and will stay out of Brazil, but we can only...Aye, mi Dios, it has gone through! It has gone through the Bridge! Everything is...too tall to get under it, but...went ahead, and...en el nombre del padre...*

The broadcast went out finally, as the beginnings of a prayer went out with it. There was a moment of silence.

“How could Einstein go so berserk?” Julia thought. “Is he hungry or something? Granted, it’d take a ridiculous amount of food to sate him, now more than ever...maybe he’s gone crazy with hunger. What do you think, Mark? Mark?”

“Don’t they use a different dialect in Brazil?” Mark muttered on the other end.

“Who cares?” Julia yelled. “Maybe the reporter’s from Mexico! Let’s just go find those two already! He’s probably half the size of Rhode Island by now... We’ve got to find him, and now! Another day or two of this growth and there won’t be anything anyone can do about it...Where are we, anyway?”

“We’re...Closer to Cuba right now than anything else...it’ll still take a while, and Willy’s got to rest a little. The big guy’s about, what, 5,000 times smaller than “little” Einstein now, right? He doesn’t have that kind of power.”

“It’s 4,928, to be precise,” Julia corrected. “It’s only going to get worse, so we should—”

A sudden swell in the ocean rocked their boat, as the easily distinguishable figure of the Moray Eel mutant rose up into view. The waves cleared, showing them 960 feet of snarling, fang-riddled terror. The worst thing was, it was just his head. The other 5,000 feet of him was still increasing steadily as he drank in power from the water around him.

The beast sniffed the air, then closed its eyes and quadrupled in size in a series of rapid, booming, noisy bursts, climbing up to where its head and massively thick neck now snaked out from the ocean, towering over them. 7,000 feet (without the tail) grew and grew to 9,000 feet, then 13,500 feet. His scaled chest flared out and up into view as well, the rest of him bulging all around underneath the water’s glimmering surface. At last the sun descended, falling in contrast to the rising specter in front of them as it grew and grew. Still both lasers poured out from the cannons inside of him, soaking him with the promise of endless growth. 17,700 feet...19,500 feet...21,100 feet...23,840 feet...

“Master...let me get...as big...as I want,” it rumbled pleasurably, its tail finally growing out behind him. It widened the most, until it looked as though it had some ludicrous tree trunk with scales for a tail. The glass onboard both boats shattered, as Julia and mark covered their ears and fell to the deck.

Willy was awake by now, and had begun to tug away furiously at the two for both boats. He was good to do so, as the eel shuddered violently, then quintupled the last height. His body blew up until it boomed past the point they had been set at; Willy kept swimming for dear life, hoping he wouldn't give out as a vast wall of scales grew towards him, racing as more growth flooded the eel's billowing form.

When all was over, the 119,200-foot tall eel monster laughed to itself and plunged back as far as it's 22-mile tall form would allow into the water. It had grown so remarkably huge that its backside still rose up like vast hills out of the depths, as it was around 3 miles thick around at the chest. The great beast's search continued, he growing steadily once more as he tore off in other directions for his elusive prey. His enlarging form rose and fell along the waves as they reflected the setting sun.

Night had finally come, one that saw the street ways and structures of Rio de Janeiro soaked and tattered, though casualties were mercifully nonexistent. Were Jessie still awake, he might have considered whether or not this night would be the last night he would ever see the moon, before Einstein grew so big that he would block it out forever.

Meanwhile, the now 30-mile long, 8.6-mile tall dolphin continued on, voraciously gulping down whatever sources of food there were along the Bay. The amounts of water that could hold his belly's weight were dwindling bit by bit, not that it was heavy on his mind. Despite his great hunger, the young cetacean had done his best not to devour or hurt anyone still living. The influence of his friends was still strong, not that the populace of Brazil cared...

"Where are you, Jessie?" the dolphin thought, snaring another few fishing warehouses in one bite as he brushed his beak against the tiny little docks next to his huge flipper. Another twitch ran through his body...

\* \* \* \* \*

### ***DAY THREE***

Once again, a new sun arose in the sky, the glow of dawn panning out over the ocean. The faint slap of the waves came and went as they crested against the slate form of Einstein, who had dozed off again after his reluctant feeding frenzy, the night prior.

In slumbering alone, he had gained another 8 miles in mass, as was evidenced by how his snout had grown clear over the entire port of Rio, smothering out all of the structures underneath. A 1.5-mile wide eye fluttered open, and afterwards almost all of Brazil could hear a great squeaking noise fill their ears, drowning out all other senses until later that afternoon. Following the cry was a mighty wave that broke over the entire



coastline of Brazil, as the titanic dolphin fell completely into the water once more. His immense belly couldn't help but drag along the ocean floor, though more than half of him still rose majestically above the surface of the water. He was outgrowing the heights of the ocean, and would have to go somewhere deeper.

“Stay safe, Jessie, wherever you are,” Einstein thought to himself.

As instinct took hold he slid his incredible heft gradually along the ocean, intent on deeper regions. His search led him straight towards Guam, a part of the Marianas Trench that connected to the countless clusters of Micronesia. The water told him that was a good place to go; maybe it could actually contain him for a little while longer, while it was in a helpful mood.

The familiar sensation of growth spread through yet again, and he could feel himself growing all over, another 7 miles quickly climbing over him as he thickened up and lengthened out. 200,640 feet of length stretched and broadened to 207,900 feet, then 211,440 feet...214,200 feet...217,100 feet...220,000 feet...222,500 feet...Mile after mile was forced into him as he continued to grow bigger his fin growing from a tall hill to a small mountain, then an entire range of its own. More of Brazil could see his monstrous form puffing up into the sky, filling their view as Einstein involuntarily shuddered, then balloon *bigger*, still. Clouds parted fearfully as the tremors of his every gasping burst echoed through the continent, shaking the plates themselves as he surged and groaned.

His efforts to keep away from landfall were the only reason he hadn't grown over and crushed the entire area. He also grew higher, his 8.6-mile tall body pushing up and up until it eventually bulged all the way up to 12.5 miles; three or four of the rolls he would have done during shows, and he would have covered the breadth of an entire metropolis. 45,408 vertical feet of dolphin swelled, bloating with more size, straining out another 2,300 feet, then another 3,000 after that. 50,708 feet grew up to 53,000 feet...55,500 feet...58,400 feet...62,000 feet, until he could have laid flat and peered up over two mountains stacked atop one another, with no trouble!

The weight forced the slicked sides of his hide to shove out, one side brushing up roughly against a very small island. With another shudder he blew up to 66,000 feet tall, his growth just enough to edge his colossal girth over its crumbling borders. Seeing as to how it was around 8 times smaller than he, the expanding ultra-dolphin smashed it apart on the slightest of contact, cracked and sundered segments of unpopulated land tumbling under-bulk. On and on he grew, still, now 226,600 feet long...228,000 feet...231,500 feet...235,100 feet...237,600 feet...the only way Einstein's rumbling spurt might have seemed paltry would have been from space, where he steadily consumed relative inch after inch of ocean. Down below, however, it was *apocalyptic*.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Do you think he’s okay?” a voice wavered through Jessie’s thoughts, echoing across the pitch before he opened his eyes. “Oh, look, the little guy’s up at last!”

The voice was feminine and lively. That much ruled out the thought of them being the doctors from the labs. What the voice belonged to was, as Jessie eventually saw, a roughly 700-foot tall sea horse bobbing playfully in the waters along the shore. On closer observation, he noticed it was actually a less common species, a Sea Dragon if he was right.

“Uh, er…” he began, still laying down on the turf.

“Aw, don’t worry, no one’s hungry around here right now,” she grinned (at least it looked like she was doing so to him); her massive body curled in a little as she carefully glided nearer, letting her neck carry her giant head the rest of the distance to him.

A plane-sized head towered over him, the tip of her nose looming just-so over his scalp. The shadow she cast danced back and forth as she twisted her huge head this way and that, checking him out at her leisure.

“Aren’t you just adorable? I mean really, you’re much too tiny to be eaten. Right, you guys?” she added sharply, turning all the way around and staring at the water.

At that several more swells rose behind the Sea Dragon, revealing as the water cleared an enormous tiger shark, an adult marlin and the old turtle from before.

“Ah, so *there* he is!” the turtle coughed, a combination of relief and fatigue in his aging voice. “Glad to see he’s still alive, after all. That young dolphin’ll be pleased, no doubt.”

At that a low rumbling emanated, seemingly from everywhere, and the entire group began to tremble, then grow bigger and bigger all at once. The marlin grunted as he was pinched in between the turtle and the tiger shark, both of which were growing bigger than him. The Sea Dragon was shoved face-down towards the sandy beachfront, her head plowing into the area that Jessie was standing by.

“Not again!” the Sea Dragon huffed, shuddering harder. “Move back, move back! Get away from each other, hurry! It could be worse this time!”

Even she groaned as she tried to restrain the surge within her. Jessie, who had dove backwards to avoid being smashed, felt her hide brush against his backside. Before he could make the full turn to see what was going on, she had finally lost the struggle; her entire body exploded with growth, more and more of her pushing up over the land and nearly hurdling the youth back as she bulged all over.

Had he turned around completely, he would have seen an uncontrollably growing pile of moving parts and appendages, masses of aquatic dwellers that were literally growing over one another. Tails rose into the sky, while several random flippers of differing colors slammed down on the sand and the ocean's surface, sending up waves of both stuff to add to the confusion. But of course, Jessie was much too busy screaming, as the sea dragon's mass continued to relentlessly increase.

Another 320 feet had practically leapt onto her, then another 450 feet after that, her bulk rolling over the ground and splitting it apart, until cracks wove around her fattening undersides. More came on still, another 500 feet disseminating across her, forcing her underbelly to expand over the first set of cracks; the next 700 feet climbed on, and again it bulged out even greater, forming a new generation of cracks. The jungle areas were mowed down as her awesome form swelled and smothered that small chunk of the island.

Her 700-foot figure had grown fantastically larger, she gaining yards as though they were nothing; on and on she grew with the others, until she alone had almost overtaken the whole island in one incredibly potent growth spurt. There was now around 3,400 feet of her, and that spoke for the portion that was above water still. The pounding rhythm of her heartbeat slowed at last, to the point where Jessie could hear again. The distant crunch and snapping of foliage intermingled around him, though he could barely see anything but the sea dragon's massively thick skin.

Out near the beginnings of the ocean was the end of her tail, the curl just rising out from under the late morning waters. Surrounding it were the others, who had inflated into one another so thoroughly that they were still busy un-sticking themselves and sorting out who was how big, how fat, how long, and so forth.

"Aw, it's over," the marlin huffed, his spear-tip nose dipping back into the ocean. Of course, all the human could make out was the tip of a few fins shimmying around in the sky, as the sea dragon was still in his way. "Things were gettin' good and everything, too. When's the next one, you think?"

"For the last time, stop asking that," the tiger shark growled. "How would any of us know? And another thing: yeah, it feels great being like this, but we get any bigger and we'll have nothing that's big enough to feed us! We'll be giants, all right...giant skeletons!"

"Knock it off," the turtle interjected, moving his now 2.5-mile wide body snugly in between the two. The marlin, now a hefty 7 miles long, swam back some, sighing; were one to imagine a 7-mile island not only moving, but sighing, well...they would be well-ahead of Jessie.

The tiger shark, a mighty 11 miles long, growled a second time, not caring to be shoved against.

“I do agree, though, we’re gettin’ way too big for our homes. This sorta thing’ll only end bad if we get bigger like this. Don’t you think...gracious!” The turtle gasped as the other two followed his lead. They had all looked back at their comrade the sea dragon, who hadn’t gotten up yet; it was because she hadn’t stopped growing. In fact, she’d about doubled her size by then, having swollen up larger and larger by another 4,500 feet, then 6,000 feet, then 9,000 feet. Her latter size of 2.8 miles had blown up to 6 miles, then 7 miles, then 8 miles...

“Hey! Why’s she still getting bigger than us?” the marlin grouched, betwixt gasps.

“Look!” the tiger shark yelled. “That tiny little red light over there! It’s the same one from before, remember? Come on, we’ve got to move her off of it! She’s too heavy to move on her own anymore without being in water!”

All three of them hustled to her enlarging side, then shoved hard against her stomach. Another burst raced through her, and her sides grew over them just a little, pushing them back into the ocean and off what little bit of the island there was that was still left.

Most of it was steadily disintegrating, breaking apart and tumbling into the water alongside the other gigantic sea dwellers. Jessie was running along the borders of the dirt and land that was being pushed up and out each time the sea dragon expanded, and was racing precariously along the apex of the mound to reach the growth cannon he’d dropped a moment ago.

She’d grown so much bigger so fast that he barely had a chance at all to grab it again and turn it off. This little thing was, for all its novelty, more trouble than it was worth. The sea dragon’s friends looked smaller and smaller against her as the seconds passed, each of them straining their own huge bodies in an effort to move her tremendous weight off of the land. The growth surges came in unending floods, the curvaceous sea horse billowing up four more miles by the time the others could get back to her after being shoved back.

The panic didn’t help, as more of the poor island was sheared apart, splintering pitifully under her growing bulk. Her stomach pressed harder into the center of the island, which could no longer hold all of her. 16 miles of sea dragon squirmed back to consciousness, her merest of movements launching them all back down into whatever amount of ocean there was that could still hold them.

“What’s...h...” she tried to speak, though the waves of power stunned her back to silence as she grew bigger than ever before, then bigger than that. Her vast neck twisted in a vain attempt to move about, before it blew up so wide that she could no longer crane her head around to see anything beyond the base of her ludicrously fat neck, which trembled and burst forth again. Her weight increased ten-fold, and the island at last gave out underneath her 20-mile long body.

All of them fell back into a portion of the ocean, the sea dragon's 4-mile wide midsection the only thing still bobbing above the waters as the great series of waves eventually cleared. The turtle, marlin and tiger shark all had to make a brief trip back to their comrade, who at length reared back to life, which of course pushed them all back a second time. Jessie surfaced as well, the cannon in tow as the streak of ruby light continued to pour into the sea dragon.

"Off you go," he muttered, gasping for breath as he fumbled with the switch. The sea dragon rose up into a point in the sky from his perspective, that point beginning somewhere around her chest area. "Well," he grumbled, paddling a few more feet away as she continued to grow silently in the water, "She's still not as big as Einstein...or, at least, as big as he was last night. Hope he isn't in trouble, wherever he is."

On and on the great sea dragon grew still, the thin beam blasting away as Jessie tried to shut it off between mutterings. 23 miles tall...24 miles...25 miles...26 miles...an entire small city and roadway could have fit on her back, alone! The tiger shark watched on in awe; sure, he was 11 miles, but that was in length, not height. Like the marlin and the turtle, he barely reached 3 miles, and she...she...

"Finally! There, got it off," Jessie whooped, throwing up his arms in celebration so that he momentarily sank back into the water.

The 28-mile tall behemoth sighed, feeling the power of control wash back over her. With an echoing bellow she pitched forward, scaring the other four there to death as her shadow tripled around them. With an inaudible cry they scattered, haphazardly being thrown about as her insane mass caught the waters of the ocean dead-on. A minute later, the figure of a quarter of a mammoth sea horse was still jutting up out of the water, her head and bottom half-hidden. At last she threw her head back up, sighing contentedly, before she shivered, then trembled all over, and shot up a final 2 miles in height, a small amount of belly added onto her as well.

"Ah! Better, much better!" she mooned, letting her bulk settle into the ocean properly. "Guys? Where's everybody, all of a sudden? Are you all okay down there?"

The whole spectacle had been witnessed from afar, as Julia set down her binoculars. She rubbed her temples, then got Mark on the intercom. They swapped comments for a moment, each using the time as a way of adjusting to what they had just seen with their own eyes. Willy just remained in the water, staring on at the godlike giants in the distance.

...*"Now that...that is a sea horse,"* the killer whale thought to himself, awestruck. "But if this is the work of the growth cannon, then where are Einstein and Jessie? Why aren't they here?"

\* \* \* \* \*

*“Stop...stop...stop, please stop already,”* Einstein urged his body silently as the same growth spurt continued on and on, the torrents of growth filling him at a maddening speed. 274,560 feet of length stretched on to 285,700 feet in one breath; the ultra-huge dolphin held the next one, as if it would actually hold off the onslaught of power. Rather, it merely stockpiled as he held back, making him shut his eyes tight as he concentrated. The endless power surged in him, building steadily, pleading to be released. His size edged forward little by little, his resolve strong but wavering.

*“Please...no more, come on...stop...”*

His 290,400-foot long form responded only by bulging to greater size; rather than just the tip of his stomach, his entire belly now dragged sluggishly along the ocean floor, forcing all 55 miles of him to crawl. His 480-megaton body held him fast to the Earth, as gravity was now having a field day with his sheer mass. Once he had no more water to support him, it would only be a matter of time before gravity crushed him down with his own weight.

Even as he grew larger, he could feel the legions of birds, small planes and whatnot that he had brushed against in the past few hours; all of them were stuck on his topside, moving about and irritating his sensitive hide to no end. If he could just roll over once...Another twinge raced along him, but he refused to give in. Whatever really was stuck on top of him could feel the vibrations run through him, as the energy built to maximum inside. Still he persisted, taking a stand against the seemingly unstoppable growth spurt that had taken him for days now.

*“Stop...I mean it!”*

He felt a little control come back to him, at long last, when out of nowhere a great figure exploded out from underneath the water, off in the distance. The moray eel mutant had found his prey, at last!

\* \* \* \* \*

“Glad you’re okay, kid,” the tiger shark spoke, eyeing him for a moment with a glossy, lake-sized eyeball.

It was quite a sight to stand so close to the mouth of an 11-mile long shark, let alone to do it while standing on the tip of a 7-mile long marlin’s nose. The marlin had found him first, and had carefully scooped his near-invisible form on it. They could barely even see him, even when he made grand movements, so he would yell into the water to communicate with them instead. The sea dragon towered comfortably over them all still, even though Jessie could hardly even see over the others to begin with. They

were all the size of small townships by now, and looking to become bigger if something wasn't done.

"You all look so cute from up here, I can't stand it!" the sea dragon cooed, swaying in the water. Despite being a massive, 30-mile tall beast, she retained her dainty ways, dipping quietly down and nudging the giant turtle playfully. "Come on, admit it! You're a cutie!"

"Why her, of all us?" the marlin whined.

"This time, I agree," the tiger shark sighed. All of them came to attention when Jessie shouted underwater at them.

"Guys! Listen! I just saw a boat way off in the distance! I know where those kind of boats are from! They're my friends, they've found me! Could you let me get a little closer to them, and drop me off real quick?"

"Sure, I guess," the marlin spoke. All 7 miles of the fish swirled the waters as he turned back and headed towards the boats.

Willy nearly lost his shade of black upon seeing him come so close.

"Hey," the marlin began, then stopped, as Jessie whispered to it underwater. "Are you Willy? 'Cause if you are, I got a kid on my nose tip here that says he knows you."

"Really?" Willy asked, trying to maintain some measure of composure. "Jessie's on you? You're sure?"

"Hah! 'Course I'm sure, little guy! Here, I'll let him slide off, and he'll come to you."

Willy tried to adjust to being called 'little' for once, as Jessie fell back into the ocean, and paddled his way to his old friend. The whale shimmied about upon sight of the youth.

"Jessie! I can't believe you made it back here!"

"It was tough," the youth joked, doggedly resting up against the killer whale. "We've gotta talk with the scientists on the boats, Willy! Einstein's lost out there somewhere, and he won't stop growing bigger! We've gotta help him!"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Found you," the vast eel rumbled, its form riddled with hulking sinew.

It too had grown tremendously in the past day, as it easily stood up over Einstein, its knees meeting the surface of the deep water. Its tail speared out without end, until he whipped it about to its side. “You are the biggest meal ever...master won’t mind me eating you for snack...” it grinned, then closed its eyes and allowed itself to grow bigger and bigger, its mass and musculature doubling all over.

Up higher the beast surged, now 50 miles tall, then 52 miles...55 miles... 59 miles...63 miles tall, so massive that his feet could have covered a whole mountain. The arms and legs bloated into pillars of scaly brawn, each muscle pushing forward, then mashing into one another, all trying to grow bigger than the other at once. Its chest heaved forth and ballooned, pouring out until the super-beast had to lean back to stay balanced.

All sense of its original physique was gone, lost deep within a bloated mass of muscle; the mass doubled over again, pushing him both up, then back down a little as his tonnage held him. 64 miles...68 miles...70 miles...73 miles...thighs wider than canyons boomed uncontrollably, his every pulsing growth tic shaking the water.

His height increased without stop, the oceans soon quaking from the force of his unbridled growth spurt. Without warning the mega-giant eel bore down on Einstein, all 75 miles of brawn hurdling toward him, its vast, clawed hands aimed right at his flesh. Being about 58 miles long was one thing, but Einstein was still only 18 miles tall. This was his advantage, as he forced himself through the ever-increasing gap between the mutant’s swollen legs.

He moved just in time, as the hands missed their mark and crashed through the water, into the ocean floor. The tail of the eel whipped around, however, and managed to catch him in the sides with a loud, whip-like crack. Einstein twisted away in pain, a loud squeal erupting across the entirety of the Caribbean.

“How...did you get...” Einstein wheezed as he was spun back around to face the growing set of fangs that towered over even him.

The mutant formed a mean sneer, which Einstein saw grow bigger in front of him, the great tusks gleaming closer and closer. Though his body stung, and though the waves of growth were barely held at bay, the young dolphin growled and hurdled his massive form up for one spellbinding moment, captivating even the mutant as Einstein literally flipped all of himself up and over in midair. All of that weight, all of the force of the momentum needed to move like that was channeled into his tail, which sailed up and, before the eel knew what was happening, smashed directly into his bottom jaw.

The 78-mile tall monster fell back, his neck temporarily flung backwards as his head nearly met the cliff of muscles lining his back. Before he could recover Einstein took the offensive, turning back around and pumping his way to his enemy. As he went, he did the best thing he knew he could do in this situation: let it happen, as much as was



needed. At those thoughts, his resolve changed to want, desire for the kind of size needed to stop this creature before things got any worse. It began to happen.

Those on the edge of Guam had stopped their daily rhetoric, all activities and conversations dropped as the majority of the populace stared on at the two island-sized creatures dueling in the far distance. Even from miles away, they could see as the eel-like monster crashed onto several small, uninhabited islands, dusting them to nothing. Farther beyond it they could see a figure, the figure of a titanic dolphin racing toward them. The image of it increasing was not due so much to its coming closer as it was to the fact that the cetacean was literally expanding to larger and larger size.

55 miles had grown much, much bigger now, 5 more miles having spread with ease over him. The mutant began to work its neck back up, groaning from the shock of the hit it had received. Einstein sped up, pumping his tail hard as he grew another 5 miles longer, and 2 miles taller, so that he was 343,200 feet long, and 98,000 feet high...

The mutant finally reared its head back to, now 83 miles tall (52 miles, sitting)...

On Einstein sped, another 6 miles spreading over him, so that he was 374,880 feet long/107,000 feet high...

The eel shook its head, groggily glancing around. All 87 miles of it strained to get back up again, until it finally snapped to attention, its eyes widening in shock as it saw Einstein racing at it, growing bigger and bigger as he went...

All at once Einstein collided head-on with the gigantic eel, burying his snout deep as it would go into its exposed stomach. The wall of scaly muscle gave in, as his attack butted it hard in the midsection. With a hideous wheeze, the air was ground completely out of the mutant's mouth, which hung open as it was shoved back—not through the air, but through the *skies*.

All of the nearby islands, encampments and surviving boats stared on in wonder and shock as the massive pair sailed in the air, defying gravity's great hold over the both of them as they flew. The display of aggressively charged grace soon ended, as the both of them smashed into the entirety of the island clusters across Micronesia.

All 1,565 miles of deep trench was disrupted as a mighty spray exploded for miles all around upon their landing. Only the arms and legs of the eel were left above water, the rest of it having been brutally rammed into the ocean floor. Einstein gasped as he rested momentarily atop the ultra-giant, both of them still growing bigger and bigger as humanity watched on.

80 miles, roughly 422,400 feet of Einstein had fallen on top of the eel; the eel, now 90 miles tall and laying down, was at this point only slightly greater than his opponent.

“Get this,” Einstein grinned as he continued to let the overloaded growth surge loose. His entire form seemed to suddenly explode out all over, as though his figure were trying to cover the eel below completely. It was working.

80 miles shot out and lengthened to 85 miles...90 miles...97 miles...

More and more of him grew and smothered the mutant, which had begun to squirm around in an attempt to get out from under the growing coffin over him. All of that muscle still had trouble relocating 872 megatons of dolphin. Einstein finally allowed himself to revel in the enlarging process, merrily growing and growing as much as he could.

100 miles became 105 miles...110 miles...115 miles...120 miles...Higher and higher he grew, too. He was 35 miles tall, then with a welcomed twinge he shuddered up another 5 miles, then another after that, before ten miles climbed on again. At the tip of his dorsal fin he measured 53 miles in height, before he grew yet again and reached 57 miles.

The feel of the mutant shrinking underneath his belly was odd, but at this point he was in for the long haul, they both were.

125 miles...135 miles...145 miles...155 miles...

By now the eel had scrambled to turn around, until it was mashed in under Einstein and now was facing the ocean floor. With panicked strokes it managed to begin digging away bit by bit, its fantastic bulk the only reason its bones hadn't broken from being under something nearly twice as large as it was.

Einstein's underbelly heaved even bigger and heavier, pinning the eel to the spot by its tail. It struggled to get free as the dominant dolphin gained another 15 miles in mass; his belly bulged more and more into its scabrous backside, grinding it down as it could feel its rival growing along it.

170 miles inflated to 185 miles in length, then 210 miles, then 230 miles, making Einstein more than twice as huge as the incredibly gigantic eel was. 57 miles of height surged up and up...62 miles...66 miles...69 miles...72 miles...All 380,100 or so feet teetered drunkenly for a moment with each burst, the layers of cloud beginning to greet and swirl about his ashen topside. Forget being an island—Einstein was a state!

The young dolphin had finally grown past the million-foot mark in length, and was ballooning far past that as well. The mutant had gained another 8 miles, not that it did him much good; the pressure from Einstein's overpowering size had succeeded in milling out all of its air supply, leaving it in a state of extreme panic. Time and time again the now 110-mile tall behemoth strove to push the mega-dolphin off of him, working his gargantuan brawn for all it was worth. Einstein felt the decreasing pushes along his

paunch, and responded by not fighting the next twitch as it rolled across his 240-mile long figure.

*“Bigger, come on...”* he thought to himself, stopping only to sigh in contentment as the flood of growth continued. “Gotta stay bigger than that monster is. If I have to stay a giant, let it be this way. At least I’ll do some good.”

At that he swelled and curved out, growing and growing, until he was 260 miles long, and 80 miles tall. Through all that he began to feel something happening underneath his heft. A heavy rumbling tore across the ocean floor, forcing even him to quake as it grew worse.

He could soon feel the sensation of the moray eel mutant doubling his size under him, their forms mashing and rubbing against on another as it grew and struggled to get free.

The mass of muscle stuck under Einstein quadrupled, creating a living pile of bulk that strained over and over to lift all of Einstein’s 2.26-gigaton body. Einstein’s grin disappeared as the eel roared and doubled in size *again*, growing and surging up out of the water’s surface. Its arms bulged until they nearly met each other, smothering both sides of its expanding neck and pinching its head to a stationary position between them. Its huge legs poured out in size, to the point where the thickening base of its tail was consumed by their growth.

It was now over 440 miles tall, weighing an unimaginable 3.6 gigatons. The ocean floor couldn’t stand such competition, and began to slowly shift apart and break as its clawed toes grew into and through it, the power pushing it out more and more. Einstein saw nothing but clouds for the first time ever, as the moray eel’s reach had risen nearer and nearer to the atmosphere. The air thinned, making the cetacean supergiant dizzy. For once, a growth spurt wouldn’t come right away. All of that ability seemed to flow into the eel, which had surged up another 30 miles in one herculean breath.

The air thinned as far down as its giant muzzle as well, making it blink from the effort of concentrating. It hunched over to compensate, taking in greedy gasps from the thicker air near the surface below.

**“Not...fail...master...”** it bellowed, its voice no longer anything but sheer volume.

Up it grew, another 50 miles taller, until it was a whopping 520 miles tall, stretching from one peninsula to another country. It remained hunched, even as its backside beefed up all over, making it stand at an actual 380 miles in height. Einstein wriggled all of his body, but being stuck in the air, his weight had caught up with him in full force.

“Eat...you...then grow...*bigger*...” it managed to speak, as it had grown much more monstrous by now, losing more of its faculties as it grew.

Its own weight began to force it back down to the Earth; it was sinking into the ocean floor, though gradually, city-sized heels crushing into the unhappy terrain. It sensed a loss of balance and shifted a 60-mile wide foot to another section of the trench, where it would soon begin to sink into that as well.

The noontime sun cast a continent-sized shadow that fell over most of the Pacific itself, going North all the way towards Shikoku, Japan. All airliners in that direction had to veer as safely as they could manage away from the eel as it took shuddering, massive, reverberating steps around the Marianas Trench, as though the islands along it had formed a very crude kind of wrestling ring. It roared again and brought Einstein back down to its eye level. It was now almost exactly twice Einstein’s length, making it about seven times taller than he was, high. That equaled a frightening sight as it raised all of the ultra-gigantic dolphin to its opened maw, plains of teeth stretching out before and over him. He wasn’t bite-size yet—which he soon realized was probably *much* worse for him, in the long run. Which, honestly, wasn’t going to be long enough.

There came a barely audible cry from below, and the mutant halted; his mouth was still gaping, but his eyes were swiveling all around towards the ocean, so far below them. There, along with some much smaller creatures, was an enormous sea dragon, which backed up for a second head butt against its leg. With a deep grunt, the eel brought up one mighty foot and sent it crashing down over them. They moved away in time, as the displacement sent underwater currents every which way. A cloud of grit filled the water for a minute, then cleared to reveal the group, still safe, but quite rattled.

“This’s madness!” Mark coughed, staring up with Julia and even with Willy as well as a fight broke out. The tiny little boats couldn’t get past the vast, almost endless stretch of the eel’s lower ankles, which sank down until they could see the tip of the uppermost ankle instead.

“I don’t see Einstein anywhere,” Julia muttered, trying to shake off her dazed expression. “Is he up there somehow?”

They both craned their sights up as far as they could, only to see the end of a colossal gray tail fin flapping around in the cloud banks above. The moment spun into the surreal, as to them it seemed that the sky itself was shifting. Their boats caught the brunt of the oncoming crests, shoving them all farther back.

Willy was still getting used to seeing his little friend so unthinkably humongous, until he smacked up against the hull of Julia’s boat and came back to reality. With that, the killer whale tore loose from his straps and sped off towards the war zone.

The eel cried out as the pain hit, and callously hurdled Einstein away so that he could swipe a great mitt down and smash the tiger shark that had been biting at his

overgrown heel. As he did so, the marlin swiveled around and launched all 7 miles of him deep into the monster's other leg, nearly running it through. Even the 550-mile tall titan cried out; both his hands went down to grope at the marlin, who had unfortunately pinned himself stuck, like a vast dart.

The turtle clasped his beak around the marlin's tail and yanked him loose, just as the claws raged down over them. The eel had obviously lost whatever mild intelligence it once had, as it didn't realize that its hand alone was much too big to allow him to stab them, even with two of them together. Instead the massive hand hung over them with ease, filling their vision with a wide, darkening palm.

"Einstein!" Willy yelled, speeding around crashing debris and tsunamis as the battle raged on around him.

He raced underneath the falling form of the tiger shark, who had caught the end of the eel's tail, and narrowly missed the gigantic fish's body as it collided with the water. At last he could make out Einstein, or at least his head and snout. The massive mega-dolphin had landed nearby, a beached continent of cetacean mass, which seemed to be having trouble getting back up with all of his weight.

"Einstein! Are you okay, kid? Can you move?"

**"Willy?"** Einstein bellowed (to Willy's ears; he was actually whispering). **"Where are you? Is everyone else safe out there? I...I can't get up again, I'm too big now to move!"**

All 280 miles of dolphin squirmed, as if to demonstrate the obvious.

"Don't worry, your friends are taking that monster on as we speak. Take your time, and move slowly until you can get back up. I'm *really* glad you're okay, little...well, buddy!"

**"Yeah. Yeah, I'm happy to see you...er, hear you. Is Jessie down there with you?"**

"Sure is. Now come on, get back up and clobber this guy, so we can all go back home!"

The dolphin nodded, then grunted and strained to turn back over into what little water there was that could hold him. Willy backed away, until he bumped into a great wall of rough skin behind him. A towering shadow crawled over them, spreading up part of Einstein's enlarging side.

"Need help?" the sea dragon asked, panting from the efforts of holding off the moray mutant. "Hold on, I'll get you loose."

Within moments she was shoving with all of her 30-mile figure in attempts to budge the supergiant cetacean, to little avail. He was still about 80 miles tall, so she barely came to his midsection. With that she bent down low, propping her head up against Einstein's soft hide. She groaned as her body began to clench up, all of her tightening as she braced herself.

"Hang on, kid," she growled, then, almost out of pure willpower, forced herself to begin growing bigger and bigger, becoming 4 miles larger as the others waited.

Her head was crammed further into Einstein's glossy hide, as her neck blew up and pushed it forward all the more. She rested her tail against some remaining clusters of rock formations and let it grow all it could...36 miles...38 miles...40 miles...

With each surge she directed all of the heightening towards Einstein. Her head was engulfed momentarily by the young dolphin's bulging sides, before he finally began to move, slowly, rocking to the other side as her head reappeared. The real growth spurt broke through, and she doubled her size completely, her bulk going beyond that and quadrupling all over, so that her own sides and belly swelled and pressed through the rock below them, demolishing it.

45 miles...56 miles...68 miles...80 miles...She grew until she began to resemble a giant teardrop of sorts, her head forming the point. With a huff she pushed her last push, rearing up and shoving Einstein so that all 1,584,000 feet (300 miles) of him flipped back over.

At her full stature she teetered and moaned, until she found her center again and adjusted to being so much heavier. All of her reached the very top of Einstein, who finally smiled, and raised a massive flipper in thanks.

***"Alright, let's stop this thing before it gets any bigger! Come on!"*** He tore off, leaving Willy and the super-huge sea dragon alone for a minute.

"He's got so much all over his back, poor dear," the sea dragon giggled, before pushing off and following Einstein back into the fray. Willy did his best to keep up.

On the fight raged, the eel wildly swinging his claws at everything down below it. The trio of fighters were glad (though a little frightened at the same time) to see the pair of giants coming in to aid them. Einstein trailed back for a second, letting the sea dragon drift over his tail as he laid it under the water.

With the eel distracted, they took aim; Einstein brought his tail up, sending the sea dragon screaming out at the monster. She in turn let out a whoop and curled as much into a ball as she could. The beast turned in time to see it connect with its face, she slamming all 690,000,000 tons of her into his skull. Down the mighty eel fell, crashing into the trench with a wild explosion of water and land mass as she fell back down to her comrades.

“Is it ready yet?” Julia asked, looking frantically at both scenes. Mark wiped his brow, his tongue out as he worked.

“Yeah, almost...if they can just keep that beast busy for another minute, I’ll have this thing turned around. All we do is open fire on all of them, and hope that no one else was hit with the cannon when it was turned to growth mode. Okay, got it! This’ll kill the cell stimulation!”

“But it won’t shrink them?” Jessie asked, having come back up from below.

“Like Julia said before: if they’re out of their element, they’ll revert on their own in time. Well, let’s take the growth element out of the water itself, so we don’t risk dehydrating them by just moving them out of water. If this works, water will no longer act as the growth catalyst, and they can all be in it while they begin to shrink. It should still happen pretty darned fast.”

“Well, let’s do it, quick!” she grabbed it from him, though he pretty much let her at that point.

She whipped it around and took aim at all of them, the eel first and foremost. Jessie hadn’t seen her like this before. It was kind of funny.

“Moray, or not moray?” Mark muttered, wiping his hands on his coat.

“Hmm...*moray*,” Julia smiled, going along with him just this once. She pulled the trigger, blasting away at the exposed ankles of the massive mutant and letting it sink in good and long. “In fact, I think our overgrown friend’ll be feeling a bit ‘eel’ soon.”

“Now that’s more like it,” Mark grinned, shaking his head at the same time.

Jessie moaned, resting his tired face in his tired hands.

The eel grunted in confusion, looking all around as it tried to get back up; it was lessening all of a sudden, its mighty form decreasing and thinning as the muscle and bulk drained out of it. 560 miles wavered down to 540 miles, then 510 miles. The other fighters all stared on, their collective aggression faltering as they all witnessed the beast in front of them shrinking down another 20 miles, then another 50 after that, until it was about 440 miles tall. Its tail tightened and withdrew, as though it were retreating from danger. It was safe to say that the fight was over.

Julia gasped, then did a surprisingly unprofessional little hop on their boat (the other was busy sinking from a hole torn in the hull earlier by falling debris). She and Mark stared at one another, though only briefly, before she turned around and began to casually blast the other five giants.

Jessie hadn't even been paying attention to either of them, as he was still watching the eel shrink down to 400 miles. The marlin whined as he began to shrink as well, not quite ready to relinquish his newfound size. The tiger shark grinned as he finished shrinking, realizing at the same time as the marlin that they were only a few thousand feet in length again. The marlin gulped, then nervously edged away as the shark followed.

"All that made me pretty hungry, you know."

"Fancy that," the marlin laughed, backing away bit by bit, until they both broke out in chase into the distance.

The turtle was next, the old creature sighing as his busy day finally ended. He nodded his respects to the sea dragon and Einstein, then took off on his own as he began to decrease in size. Einstein smiled, but stopped when he still felt another tingle run through him.

"Great work, kid," the sea dragon said, nudging him affectionately. "Try not to eat me when I'm back to being tiny, deal?"

Einstein was busy restraining himself from growing once again.

"Ah, shy type, huh?" she laughed, leaning up on his massive body as she waited to be hit by the cannon. "This was fun, Einstein. Way to go."

With that she fell down farther and farther along his giant hide as the beam hit. She smiled again, then sped off to her own travels, gradually shrinking the whole way. Meanwhile, the eel was now around 300 miles tall, and still shrinking down. His small brain allowed him only the ability to murmur some kind of indistinguishable jargon as he realized he wasn't getting bigger anymore. Einstein, however, was, as those onboard saw their young friend expand right in front of him. Julia took aim.

"Hang on!" Jessie yelled. "We need to let this one go, in case he grows too fast and breaks the boat apart! In the meantime, we should move away; we can hit him with the cannon from somewhere safer! Come on, Willy!" he yelled to everyone, the killer whale included.

Willy looked up and up at Einstein, who shuddered up to double his entire fantastic size, making him soar up another 430,000 feet in height, and 1,600,000 feet in length.

The dolphin swallowed up more and more of the trench as he inflated to absurd proportions, his stomach sagging into even the deepest parts of the trench as he grew and grew, now 600 miles long/160 miles tall. His skin stretched out from the strain as more mass built in him, shoving him even higher up and out across the terrain. Newscasters all along the coast didn't need to send their reporters out far; all they had to do by now was



put their cameras out their windows and stare with the rest of the known world as a dolphin over half the size of Japan steadily grew bigger and bigger, higher and higher up into the sky. The clouds finally surrendered their form as his girth rolled over and surged up into them. He trembled violently, before doubling in size yet again.

*“Get going...Willy,”* the ultra-huge cetacean pleaded, his voice drowning in power as it grew with him. *“Get moving...before.. I grow too...big...to...”* his efforts went into holding back until everyone could get to safety, wherein he sighed and allowed the surge to run its usual course.

The boat sped on, the engine screaming as they cleared mounds of debris and leftover chunks of nearby islands; Einstein’s body raced after them, consuming the ocean at a terrifying speed as he exploded all over...

1,200 miles of Einstein heaved and poured out along the Earth’s surface, the soil and oceanic floor complaining as he increased on top of it, now 1,300 miles long, and 450 miles tall. His dorsal fin grew up into the heavens, past the first lines of clouds and closer towards the beginnings of the atmosphere itself.

Satellites picked up an ever-growing graphic of a monster dolphin outgrowing the entire northern Pacific, growing and growing until it was measured at 1,400 miles long/510 miles tall. His flippers spread out and blanketed the entire area, casting shades that lined all along the Pacific Ocean, his mighty tail threatening to lengthen over into the Atlantic. His edges bloated until it appeared that they were almost practically bowling over and out on both sides, his body growing meatier and wider as the size had nowhere else to go to.

At 1,500 miles Einstein roared and, with one last quiver, shot up to 1,620 miles in length and 620 miles tall, so that his tail just slapped the ocean past the edges of all of Micronesia. His great mouth swung open and, as he twisted around some, caught the now 60-mile tall eel mutant in his mouth. With a great, reflexive swallow, any signs of the Machine’s super-sized cohort were thoroughly gone.

The unaware colossus of a mega-dolphin was much larger than the entire Marianas Trench; he nestled snugly over it all as his paunch had grown to fill the area. Everyone across the world, including the boat, Julia, Jessie, Mark and Willy all held one collective breath, waited, then sighed in relief as there was finally a stop to his incredible growth spurt.

Einstein could even be heard for miles on end as he sighed in relief, then rested his vast head on the ocean, as it only reached so high compared to his 3,273,600 feet of height. He had grown so huge, the ocean was more of a puddle—a *suggestion*.

“Is it over for now?” Jessie asked, opening his eyes.

“Looks that way,” Mark muttered, blinking as the dusk sky set in. “Go for it, and try not to miss.”

“Right, he’s *really* a tough target now,” Julia answered, raising the gun towards all 8,553,600 feet of Einstein.

She pulled the trigger.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *EPILOGUE*

“Well, look who’s decided to show themselves,” the Machine snickered as they all pulled back to the demolished remnants of their labs. “I have some officers here with me who’d love to chat with you about this blatant abuse of such a powerful ecological weapon.”

Julia stepped out in front of everyone else, raising the cannon up with her.

“The batteries to all of the cannons wore out a few hours ago, just minutes after we finished shrinking down the last of the giants. They aren’t a threat anymore, until someone recharges them. I suppose that means you’ll do it later, Machine?” He scoffed, looking smugly at both officers who were waiting on the docks with him.

“My dear, seeing as to how I own most of the labs and their designs, I believe that that sort of thing is solely up to me. I shouldn’t have to answer anything like that to the likes of...”

He stopped as Julia grinned, pulling out a small radio and pushing a button.

*“There should have been four of these experimental cannons, including the one you already tried to steal. That means one more is missing from the labs. I want you to go find it as well, and bring it to me. Once this disaster turns epic, the labs will take all the blame, while I will pull out from the board of ownership with the knowledge that my enemies are completely disgraced and destroyed. The beautiful nature of this is that they will have helped me the entire time that I have been setting them up for a fall so bad, it...”*

She stopped it, grinning a little extra as the two officers turned their gazes at him instead.

“Care to repeat your story, Machine?” she asked. “I knew who was on the board of trustees, and the minute I realized one of your agents had caused the distraction several

nights ago at the labs, I had transmitters put on the remaining three cannons, one of which I have, right here. The other two were there for the taking, and just as we all thought, you went for them when no one was looking, and tried to make the situation as bad as possible so that you could set us up for a fall; then, you would be there to collect everything left over afterwards. Nice try.”

The guards understood everything; the Machine was lead away, as another officer took the cannon with him as evidence, as well as the tape recording that Julia had taken from the transmitters. As for Einstein, he’d dwindled down bit by bit as they had traveled back home, and was now *only* a few hundred feet long. It beat being bigger than multiple countries, combined.

“Welcome back,” Jessie said, hugging as much of the less-giant dolphin as he could manage to.

“Good to be back home,” Einstein agreed, before shrinking down another 50 or so feet, his hide decreasing under Jessie as he leaned appreciatively on him still. “It’ll actually be good to look up to Willy again, instead of down.”

“True, true,” Willy replied, allowing Jessie to move a hand over to his muzzle as well, so that he stroked them both while they waited along the docks, watching a new sunset drop into the crystal waters below as yet another day went by.