

Annamaria Part 9 – Plans for the Future

Annamaria and Laura begin to work out their plans for where they want their life to go. Unfortunately, some of these plans clash with Annamaria's career. Can she find a compromise that doesn't derail the life that she has build for herself.

Tags: Mutants, Slice of Life, Romance, Real Life Conflict, Taur, Multi Limb, Multi Breast, Multi Head, Nonbinary, Worldbuilding

I never knew opportunity could be such a hassle.

A year ago I felt like I had no prospects in love or career. Now I find myself having to make major decisions between the two.

... and I HATE it.

I spent an absolutely wonderful time in Port Solei. I never imagined that there could be such a wonderful place filled with so many mutants. Mutation was just... normal there. Mutant clothes, mutant sports, apartments made specifically to cater to certain mutations. For a girl like me it was an absolute paradise.

But for my girlfriend, Laura... not so much.

In the grand scheme of things, Laura has only recently mutated. She's had her new body for much less than a year, and while her form might be looked at as a bit extreme, she isn't really connected to the mutant world. She hasn't sought out other mutants like I have. She doesn't even particularly have much interest in mutant culture. Instead, she just looks at herself as a person, like anyone else. She has the same friends she had before she mutated. The same job she had before she mutated. Aside from the adjustments she had to make for her new body, she has the same life she had before she mutated.

I guess that's the difference between mutating as an adult and living as a mutant for most of your life.

So I guess it wasn't a surprise when Laura didn't want to move to Port Solei. Yeah, moving there for my job would have been great, for me. But for her it was just a vacation destination. She didn't have any friends or family there, and she would have to give up her job if we did move in together.

And so, we found ourselves staring down one of the more scary fights in our admittedly short but fruitful relationship. I wanted to move... she didn't. And the big question was, was the relationship more important than our lives outside it.

It's not particularly fair to expect someone to change their lives after a relationship that has lasted less than a year. Frankly, I thought this was where our relationship was going to come to an end. We simply see each other off and say "it was good while it lasted" and we could both focus on our lives from there.

But... to be honest, I'm a bit softer than I'd like to admit. My time with Laura has truly been magical, and I remember before I met her I thought I was going to be alone forever. I'd be a fool to give her up now.

Which meant, SOMEHOW, I had to break it to my boss that the one in a lifetime opportunity he was giving me to be a breakout brand ambassador in Port Solei for a major mutant clothing line, was going to be turned down like a cheap lunch invitation.

... I was not looking forward to this.

The silence in my office was deafening. Nothing but the *tick, tick, tick* of the clock to keep me company, which was particularly grating considering all our clocks were digital, so the ticking was artificial too. I should get Noelle and Daisy to turn it off.

Speaking of, where were Noelle and Daisy. Usually I couldn't keep them from tending to my every need, even if I really didn't want them to. However, I didn't see them at all today. God it was like the whole office was mocking me. Like they all knew what was coming up.

BRRRING BRRRRING BRRRRRRING

Another artificial sound, mimicking a phone to tell me I had a voice call ready. I timidly answered it and saw the monitor on my wall blink over to what looked like a scene from a fantasy book. Large pink flowers adorned the walls as an ever-changing sunlight shone through their petals onto a floor that looked like it was made out of real grass.

I guess Lucien changed their office around again.

"Annamaria, darling!" their voice boomed through the speakers of my monitor which I had STILL not adjusted the volume for since I first got this job. "How was your time in Port Solei? We are expecting *WONDERFUL* news. Just absolutely splendid news. With so many mutants around you must be bursting with inspiration no?"

"Oh, uh, yeah Lucien," my left head said. I tried to speak from my right head but my nerves had me all choked up in my right throat, so I just blushed and turned it away from the monitor. "Just, nothing but inspiration here... hehe... so... so... much inspiration," my left head said weakly.

"So? When can you start. We are willing to spend top dollar, TOP DOLLAR, my dear in order to relocate you. There are very nice apartments in the business district that I think you'll like." Lucien spoke as oblivious to everyone around them as ever. For them it was only ever ideas bouncing off other ideas.

"Uh... about that. I... don't... think I can take you up on your offer after all," I blurted out and then flinched as if they were coming to come through the monitor to reprimand me.

"Come again?" Lucien's many voices said.

"I don't think... I'm a good fit," I said, sweat was dripping down my body. I don't think I had ever been this nervous in my life.

"Nonsense girl!" Lucien said almost giddy. "We know you have those self esteem issues, but we wouldn't pick you for this project if you weren't the best!"

"No, it's not that it's just," I struggled. "I don't think I am a good fit for Port Solei."

Lucien paused for a long and uncomfortable amount of time. "Excuse me..." they said. "My dear you are practically obsessed with mutants, why wouldn't Port Solei be a good fit for you?"

"It's just not where my life is taking me right now Lucien. I, I'm sorry. I'll be happy to pay for the trip out of my own paycheck-"

"We are questioning your loyalty to this company... dear," they said in a particularly scary intonation. "You showed nothing but excitement about this project a few months ago, and frankly, changing your opinion so suddenly on us is not appreciated."

"I don't mean for it to be so sudden it's just, things have changed. Something has come up, is all."

"Well see to it that something doesn't 'come up' like this again!" Lucien shouted. I swear I felt my monitor shake as they cut the video feed. I guess I never experienced them angry at me before... I hope I never have to experience it again.

The rest of the day passed as a slog. No work came across my desk. No assistants came in to visit me. The normally bustling environment of the office felt like a ghost town. I simply sat there and did nothing until it was time to go home.

Well... if I was going to commit career suicide this was one hell of a way to do it.

"So, you told your boss no?" Laura said in surprise.

"Wasn't that what we discussed?" My left head said, licking an ice cream cone as we walked through the park in one of the most mutant populated corners of town. "You didn't want to move to Port Solei, and I wasn't about to give you up."

Laura blushed, "Well, yeah but to be honest I kind of didn't expect you to, you know, choose me."

"What? How could you say that?" My heads said in concert.

"Oh, stop being dramatic," Laura said, her many legs all decked out in heels, walking along the park path. "Relationships come and go all the time Ammy. Usually when someone gets a big opportunity like this the relationship just ends. We aren't married or engaged or anything. We are just girlfriends. And I certainly don't want to stand in the way of your success. So, I thought we were going to go our separate ways."

"Well, I guess I'm just full of surprises today," my right head said as my left went back to the ice cream cone. "Though, I'll admit it felt horrible. Lucien feels like a monster when they're happy. The silence after I knew they were upset... ugh... gave me the shivers."

"You don't think your job is in danger, do you?"

"To be honest," my right head said as my left leaned on one of my hands. "I don't know. I mean up until recently retail was as high as I got in my career. I don't know if turning down offers like this is a big faux pas in the fashion industry. But whatever happens happens."

"You seem really calm about all this," Laura said resting a hand between my heads. "Are you sure you are OK?"

"I'm fine," my left head said.

"OFCOURSEIMNOTOKTHISCOULDBETHEENDOFEVERYTHINGIWORKEDFOROHMYGODWHATAMIGOINGT ODOIFLUCIENDECIDESTOFIREME?" my right head blurted out.

We shared a laugh and I was reminded why I made this decision in the first place. Laura loves me, even if I'm weird. And I don't mean mutant weird. She loves me because I'm goofy and honest and nervous... she doesn't mind all of my flaws. Honestly, it would be worth losing a job.

"Well," Laura said. "I did a lot of thinking too, and while I'm not really ready to fly to a remote island country, I do know being around mutants is important to you so... maybe... maybe we can move in together a little bit closer to, you know a mutant community?"

I stopped, both of my heads looking right into Laura's eyes. "What are you saying?" I said in concert.

"Now look, don't get too excited, OK? I'm still not ready to give up my entire life or anything. But there are lots of cities around here that are heavily mutant populated and you make more than enough money at your job to afford an increase in rent. So maybe we can move to a more, you know, metropolitan area? One where there's a big mutant population? We can even be close to an airport if you need to fly to Port Solei on short notice." Laura was stammering over her words. She was obviously scared.

... I didn't care. I threw myself at her and hugged her with all my arms. "So, you are saying yes? Yes we can move in together? And in a mutant community!?"

"Mhhmm, I am saying yes BUT! We need to look around for a good house, OK? One that fits both of us. I can't be too far away from my job, so we won't be moving across the world. And while I do want to get more in touch with, well, mutants in general, just know that this is all very very new to me so I'm going to be going slow. And that means you need to slow down with me OK?" Laura said, booping my nose on each head.

I was ecstatic. So ecstatic that I basically forgot all about my job anxiety. "Is that why you took us here?"

"Well yeah," Laura said looking around.

There were mutant girls everywhere. Girls with lizard tails and taurs playing in the big grassy fields of the park. Elastic girls playing with multi limbed jocks on the volleyball courts. Mutant families were taking their little girls with snake tails and wings out for a day of leisure. It was like it was the first time I noticed any of it. I was so in my own heads worrying about my job it was like me and Laura were the only two people around.

"So, you knoooooow," Laura said. "If you wanted to do a little house hunting I wouldn't be opposed.

"YES YES YES I DEFINITELY WANT TO I, whoops!" In my fervent excitement to take out my cell phone and bring up a mutant friendly apartment hunting app, I dropped my ice cream cone flat on the ground.

Laura just laughed.

I was happy that I could make her laugh.

That afternoon was a fun one. As much as I love mutants there was so much about mutant architecture that I didn't know.

We saw houses developed for mutants who are more comfortable in water, with huge tanks set up in every room and canals installed for locomotion. Their water bills must be immense.

We saw furniture and beds specifically built for mutants with taur bodies. Laura of course liked that.

Honestly, the world of mutant architecture is a world you wouldn't believe. We saw misters for slug mutants that need to keep moist. We saw apartments with furniture built into the walls and ceilings for mutants who have the ability to climb and cling. We even saw buildings built into the local landscape, like hillsides and trees, for mutants with animal features to feel more at home should they have more primal instincts.

We wouldn't need anything like that. Well some taur furniture would be nice, of course, but despite my numerous additions I work pretty well with human furniture, cars, and living spaces. Still, I was foaming at the mouth to get a specially designed mutant smart home.

You can control your microwave with your voice...

YOUR VOICE!

Never again would I have to push buttons in order to microwave my late night burritos.

Of course, this was all just window shopping. We weren't anywhere near ready to make a purchase right now, and we weren't even sure if this was the town we were going to end up in. There were lots of other mutant communities in lots of other cities with clear access to public transportation.

We were just about to wrap things up, maybe catch a small dinner before going home when my phone rang.

It was Lucien.

Both me and Laura looked at it for a long time... but eventually we decided to ignore it. I wasn't on the clock so I didn't have to answer. Whatever it was could wait until I got back into the office.

Another few steps.

... it rang again.

Lucien again.

I hate it when people call me twice! Now you know it's some sort of emergency or else they would have moved on with their life. Then again Lucien was weirdly... possessive of their employees. So maybe they were just doing their eccentric thing.

Another ring.

"I'm sorry, Laura, I need to take this," one head said as I lifted the phone to the other. "Hello?"

“Annamaria daaaaaarling,” Lucien boomed over the phone. “Look, we wanted to discuss your job. we know you had... reservations about taking the Port Solei gig, but we do think we can work something out. Now it might be a bit... strange... but we assure you if you give this a chance we may find a solution to all of our, I mean, your problems.”

I took the phone down from my ear and looked to Laura who gave me a short nod with both her heads.

“Go on,” I said, nervous for whatever Lucien had cooked up this time.