I

The drive to and from work was, without hyperbole, the easiest part of Ashley’s day.

Getting up and out of bed was almost impossible without her husband to help her. Squeezing into that shower was getting less and less possible by the day, it felt like. Even getting dressed and out the door was a Herculean effort that left her puttering like an old engine. So by the time she waddled out the front door and plopped herself down into the car, she was almost always ecstatic about getting to enjoy a whole fifteen minutes off of her feet as she drove to work.

Twenty to maybe twenty-five minutes if she went through the drive-thru.

After only a few years of marriage to her husband, Ashley had gone from a chunky nerd to a downright chair-squasher. Laying around the house, letting herself eat whatever she wanted (not that her so-called better half ever minded) and in general just having someone else around to boss around had resulted in quite the weight problem. This time last year, she wasn’t out of breath until she reached the car. But these days, she was huffing and puffing well before she wedged herself inside. And as her belly squished more and more against the steering wheel, she knew that it was only a matter of time before her morning routine would be getting another major upheaval…

“Fuck this, I’m stopping for Mickey D’s.”

It was her husband’s fault, really. Buying her treats every time she was upset in hopes that it would make her feel better. Getting Ashley her favorite drive-thru food after most days at his job, bringing it home and waving it under her nose. It wasn’t *her* fault that all of her emotions demanded food, and he was a real heel for leaning so hard into it. Now she couldn’t even get through a mildly stressful morning without needing to stop for something to top off what had already been an already calorie-filled two-course breakfast.

The steering wheel dragged against her gut as she turned to the right, pulling onto the side street and away from her destination. Work could wait—it wasn’t like there wasn’t anything *pressing* that needed to be done when she got there. She was just another code monkey. Plus, Melissa was on vacation, and she was the only one who would check her time clock and audit the minutes. A few extra bites to ensure that she was coming in happy and as stress-free as she was gonna get was really doing everyone *else* a favor. Even Ashley knew what a bitch she could be when she was hungry.

“Yeah, can I have… shit…” Ashley’s dark eyes traveled up and down the menu, brow furrowing as she tried to piece together just what she was hankering on a morning like this, “Three cheese and bacon flatbreads, a double bacon and egg McMuffin, and a muffin with jam?”

*“Anythin’ to drink?”*

“A Diet Coke—large?”

*“Alright, pull around.”*

Sometimes it even felt like the anticipation of yet more food to pile on top of her stomach left her out of breath. Heavy and wanting, Ashley attempted to steady her breathing as she reeled around the building and pulled up to the first window. The sharp turn and the creaking suspension of her overworked car had a bit of a tiff when Ashley hit the curb, but otherwise there were no issues getting to Ashley’s order.

“That’ll be—”

This wasn’t the first time that a cashier had stopped mid-sentence to gawk at the fat woman as she pulled up to the window. From the lower angle, she must have looked absolutely massive—driving around one of those big trucks would have at least put her at eye-level with this poor unsuspecting teenager. But no, instead he could see her gut pouring into her lap, bunching against the steering wheel as her seatbelt extender fought for its life. Her round, meaty chin folded into a tight if secondary scowl as she glowered at the cashier, dark eyes narrowed at the boy.

“Here’s my card.” Her delivery was flat as she snaked her fleshy appendage out the window, “That way you can keep the change.”

The cashier—who likely *knew* that he’d upset poor Ashley—just smiled and mumbled something from his training handbook, swiping the card and returning it to what would almost assuredly become even more irate if he handled this poorly.

“Don’t quit your day job.” Ashley panted out after snatching the card and lurching forward in her overworked sedan, “Absolutely ridiculous…”

By the time she had reached the second window, Ashley was itching to dig into her second breakfast. Getting stared at like she was some sort of sideshow attraction would do that, after all—that or elicit a tirade the size of which this McDonalds had never seen before, depending on how well the cashier handled her at this next window. Ashley was almost looking forward to getting to rip into the next pimply-faced loser that had the nerve to look at her like the last one had, but to no avail.

A plump blonde woman popped her head through the window, bright-eyed and chipper despite the early hour.

“You had the three bacon and cheese flatbreads, the bacon egg and cheese McMuffin and the muffin with jam?”

“And a Diet—”

“And a Diet Coke.” The upbeat fatty in the window said with a smile, grabbing a cup of bubbly brown liquid that was placed down next to her and handing it to the globular goth squished into her car like a sardine, “Right, here you are!”

“…thank you.” Ashley groused, hefting one huge bicep up and grabbing either side of her drink.

It wasn’t as though she *wanted* to be gawked at. She knew that her weight was surprising to a lot of people, to the point where seeing her all spread out about the car like this was enough to shock and appall. But getting to take out the frustrations that came with being so monumentally heavy (not to mention on her way to her soul-crushing day job) on some poor unsuspecting retail worker sounded like just the sort of thing that the great big grouchy gal needed right about now. Even as the bingo-winged blonde emerged once again with her brown baggie full of greasy takeaway breakfast, Ashley still found herself wishing that she had gotten to yell just a bit.

“Thank you, have a good day!”

“Yeah, yeah…”

Ashley hadn’t even pulled out of the window before she was nearly elbow-deep in the bag, steering one-handed while the other sausage-fingered grabber searched out what would be the first course in her third helping of breakfast…

\*\*\*

Ashley worked at a mid-level office building where she had a very prominent suspicion that nothing anyone that worked there did actually mattered.

Whether she was right on the money or just cynical, it helped her justify being more than ten minutes late before she had even gotten out of the car.

“Fucking hell…”

Dinging the door of the car next to her when her driver’s side popped open from the force of her flabby left thigh, Ashley knew that she was going to have a hard time getting out. She *shouldn’t* have, given just how wide of a berth her car door gave her—before getting married, this would have been no problem. But with things as they are now, namely her figure, Ashley was just barely small enough to squeeze into the space left by the two cars parked side by side.

“Oufff…”

Her joints and knees ached as she hauled herself out of the seat, big belly sliding back down over her thighs and towards her knees. One giant tit slipped from on top of her stomach’s upper rolls and sloped over underneath her hammy biceps. Her shirt rode up just enough to allow a handful of belly pudge to brush against the warmth of the car next to her, her wriggling and writhing making the carriage jostle a bit as she steadied herself.

As unpleased as she was that she was fat enough to be touching two cars at once (while fuming about how this asshole should have parked better, no less) Getting a bit of the pressure taken off of her was helpful at least. She could lean a little, let the car next to her support—

*BWEOOH—BWEOOH—BWEOOH!!*

“Fucking *hell!*” Ashley cursed, smacking the top the silver Estate with the bottom of her fleshy hand, “Why make your fucking car alarm so *sensitive!?* I barely brushed you, you fucking—”

Ashley’s morning was not going well. And going off on this vehicle like a crazy person was not making her no good, terrible, very bad morning go any more smoothly. She’d woken up late, been gawked at by some teenager, she was ten minutes late to work, and she hadn’t had as filling of a McDonalds breakfast as she would have liked—and now there was some fucking car alarm going off right in her ear because it was so *sensitive* that her just brushing against it had set it off.

Leaving the whining wagon behind her, the whale waddled her way towards the front door of her office building with all the grace and balance of a runaway water balloon. Her biggest pair of jeans strained against her legs as if they were made of tissue paper, her sandbag stomach sloshed from side to side with every belabored step as she heave-ho’d her way across the pavement.

Huffing and haggard, she would eventually reach the front entrance, brushing against either side of the doorframe as she forced herself through belly-first into another day at work.

“Good morning, Ashley.”

“Yeah yeah, g’mornin’ Marianne.”

The contrast between the two women was indescribable. Tall, lanky Marianne sitting behind her desk with a smile on her face while the nearly spherical Ashley lumbered her way in through the building, a full head shorter than the receptionist and almost four times as huge. Ashley propped herself up on the desk as she hobbled on by, very nearly toddling due to her size and topheavy build.

“Did you get the note from yesterday, Ashley?” Marianne piqued once the tubby typist’s back rolls were within view, “There’s going to be a Fire Drill later today, and we’re supposed to—”

“I’ll read the e-mail.” Ashley puffed out as she lumbered away slowly, “Thanks though.”

What a fucking day. It had only just started and everything was going pear-shaped. To add onto that, she was *exhausted!* Sweat was beading down her forehead and rolling into her chins like she’d just run a marathon—she was going to have to go on that diet soon, unless she wanted to start getting rolled to and from work every day. Not that her freak husband would mind; with the way that he fed her, it was a miracle that she wasn’t a perfect circle by now. It was his fault that she was getting so big, after all.

Maybe if she didn’t have a husband who enabled literally all of her laziest habits and fed her like a hog, she wouldn’t be having such a shitty morning.

“Good *morning* Ashley~!”

And in just three words, before she’d even collapsed into a sweaty pile at her desk, Ashley was given yet another tally on the “things that have gone wrong this morning” count. Strolling in fifteen minutes late hadn’t spared her from this particular annoyance, no matter how much she wished that she could have passed her up.

Of *all* the days for her to find herself in Monica Mathers’s crosshairs, today was not the day that she needed it.

“Are you just getting in?” the dark-haired bombshell smiled evilly, “That hubby of yours forget to unlock the pig pen this morning?”

The drive to and from work had been, without hyperbole, the easiest part of Ashley’s day. And by the looks of it, Ashley’s day was only going to get harder and harder from here…