

SHULKING UP - PART 1

by Supercake Studio (<http://www.patreon.com/supercakestudio>)

“Your honor, the defense requests a short--”

Suddenly her vision went black. The judge, the jury, the courtroom, everything disappeared in the blink of an eye.

“--a short break--excuse me--” She put one hand to her forehead and the other down to steady herself against the table, and stumbled. The table was gone. Well, that was just peachy. At least she hadn't gone blind. How many villains did she know who owned teleporters?

A lot, she thought, sighing. “If the lights come on and I'm in Murderworld, I swear I'm going to *bill* you for this, *double*,” she snapped.

“Processing,” said a pleasantly-timbred voice. “Please stand by.”

Jennifer Walters, also known as She-Hulk, snorted and began feeling for the nearest wall to punch through. She appeared to be in an endless black void that stretched on forever, but she knew from a long superhero career that some voids were voidier than others.

“Please stand by,” the voice repeated.

“Not likely, whoever you are. Arcade?”

“I am not, Ms. Walters,” the voice continued. “Nor are you in Murderworld, Latveria, or any of your planet's various underworlds, lost worlds, afterlives, or mirror universes. I apologize for our means of contacting you, but I think you'll forgive me once I explain. You see, my world needs your help.”

“Uh-huh.” Jennifer put her hands on her hips. “And now you're going to explain why you abducted me, instead of contacting me and asking nicely.”

“I am,” agreed the voice. It seemed to come from all around her, but it didn't sound like it was being broadcast over a speaker. It was as if the air itself were vibrating to generate the sound. “My planet is in grave danger. I did extensive research via long-range scan as I approached your world, and I determined that you are the only one both capable of helping us and willing to do so.”

“You've got a funny definition of 'willing', pal.”

“People are dying on my planet, Ms. Walters. Thousands have already already perished. Tens of billions will follow them without your help. The chances that a woman with your personal history, values, and strong sense of justice would agree to help them are 99.977 percent. The delay required by contacting you and explaining the situation fully would have cost exactly two million, six hundred and four thousand, seven hundred and seventy-one lives.”

Jennifer raised one forest-green eyebrow. “Those are...very precise calculations.”

“I am a very precise AI.”

“And I'm the only one who can help?”

“Oh yes. I'm quite positive of that. There will be plenty of time to discuss the specifics in the months ahead.”

“Excuse me. *Months*?”

“Six months, four days, four hours, eighteen minutes and seven seconds, starting--now. I began accelerating away from your world as soon as you were secured. Time, as I stated, is of the essence, but at our present course we will arrive in time to halt the worst of the damage.”

“I never agreed to being abducted for months!”

“Then I give you the chance to agree now. Which is more important, one year of your own life, or billions of humanoid lifetimes? If you believe your own life is more important, I will turn around and return you at once.”

“It's not that, it's--look, how do I know you're even telling the truth?”

“Because I have no need to lie. Also me to demonstrate.”

A palace formed around her. Jennifer spun in place, taking in the tiled floors and classical columns, the long tables covered in sumptuous food, the great windows opening onto a landscape of sun-dappled glades and pastures.

“Come on, that's obviously fake,” she said. “This isn't my first time at the holo-rodeo, pal.”

“I did create this environment, but it's not an illusion. Your senses should confirm that.”

She put a hand to one pillar and felt cold, smooth marble beneath her fingers. She sniffed. She smelled earth and honeysuckle drifting in from the windows, faint perfume, and a cocktail of delicious aromas steaming from the overloaded tables. Her stomach growled.

“Fine, so it's a really *good* projection. Where are the emitters?” She picked up a turkey in one hand and hefted it, checking for signs of technology. “Or is it magic?”

“I'm sure you're familiar with your planet's saying about 'sufficiently advanced technology', Ms. Walters. Suffice it to say, I can replicate *almost* any substance I wish, and to you, it's effectively real.”

Jen smelled, in rapid succession, pickles, garbage, candy canes, coffee, her father's gym socks, wet dog, popcorn, and a monkey house, each scent filling her nostrils and fading in turn.

“I could as easily have created a neurotoxin strong enough for even your substantial resilience,” said the voice. “I will not do that under any circumstance, you understand. I will not coerce you. I am merely attempting to demonstrate my good intentions.”

“By dropping thinly-veiled threats? There's an interesting strategy.”

“Not a threat. Just a good-faith demonstration that if I wished to use force, I could have. I will not. You're a superhero. You will do the right thing.”

Jennifer folded her arms, and one plump jade lip curled. She had to admit, though--the voice was right. If she was already under its total control, it would have no need to trick her. If there was even a chance it was telling the truth, she had to help.

“Fine. You've got me--conditionally, at least, and that *condition* is that you explain what this is all about, and why you need *me*.”

“It's a somewhat--delicate matter,” the voice said. “We will discuss it after dinner. Please, eat.”

Jen looked down at the turkey. It glistened juicily in her hand.

“It's not poisoned,” the voice said helpfully. “Trust me.”

“Oh, I'll put a pin in trusting you...but fine, so it's not poisoned.” She pulled off one massive drumstick and sank her teeth into it. Her eyes opened wide.

“Hlly fummphif shff!” she moaned around the chunk of meat. “Thff if *foo fummphif goof!*”

“Have a seat,” the voice said, and the lights brighted just slightly near a comfortable-looking reclining coach. Jennifer sat down carefully. At over seven feet taller and five hundred and fifty pounds of dense muscle, she'd learned to be careful around chairs. This one didn't even creak.

The jade giantess wanted to tell him where he could stick his turkey--*God*, this whole thing was fishy--but the heavy, succulent poultry was absolutely delicious, and her stomach was screaming for food. A Hulk body did *not* do well without fuel. She tore into it ravenously.

“I trust it's to your liking.”

“It's...the best turkey...I've ever tasted..!” Jen gasped between bites.

“Every molecule has been adjusted for your own personal body chemistry, the better to meet your needs. Put simply--I know what you like.”

“You really do,” Jen sighed, stripping the last few pieces of flesh from the skeleton and tossing it over her shoulder. A tan, long-fingered hand caught it before it could hit the floor.

“Allow me to clear that for you, my queen,” the loincloth-clad man said, spiriting the skeleton away. Jen watched him go, his shapely buttocks flexed under the thin, scampy fabric of the loincloth.

“You really, *really* do,” she corrected.

Two other men, identical to the first, appeared. They were tall, dark, and lean, with neatly trimmed beards and no more clothes than the first.

“Oh god,” Jen said, squirming. “Triplets.” Just looking at them sent a wave of warmth washing

through her lower belly. The *rest* of her belly was still begging for more food, and she started to push herself up.

“Please, my queen!” one of the three said. “Do not exert yourself. We are your devoted servants.”

“Rest and eat,” one of the others said, hoisting a platter of several hundred tacos, of which her offer Jen one. She crunched into it. It was *exquisite*, a taco like the very gods would have forged, if the gods made tacos. She inhaled it, and then another, and another. One of the triplets knelt at the other end of the couch as she ate and massaged her huge green feet. Another one fanned her gently with a palm frond.

“Laying it on a little thick, aren't you?” she asked the voice between tacos, but she couldn't hide her pleasure. This was a little embarrassing, but there was something very nice about being treated like some kind of empress from right out a decadent Roman epic. And the food--well--there was only one word for it.

Unreal.

She ate her way through the tacos, four fried chickens, a cauldron-sized helping of shrimp scampi, a small mountain of fried rice, six lobsters, a dozen pork dumplings, an extra-large pizza with everything, and a rack of barbeque ribs before moving on to desserts--cheesecake, quadruple-layer fudge cake, four entire pies, and a gallon of chocolate ice cream. She washed it all down with eight bottles of wine and a enough beer to fill a bathtub.

“Whoof,” she said as pie number five was placed before her. “I don't know...”

“It's key lime,” one of the triplets said. “You'll love it.”

“I *know*,” Jen groaned. “I've loved *everything* so far. That's the problem.”

She shifted on the couch, trying to find a comfortable position. She hadn't been this full in a long time. Her massive, powerful body could hold so much food she'd almost forgotten running out of room was even *possible*, but here she was.

On the one hand, it was kind of nice--how often did she get to eat somewhere where they really *understood* her appetite? Where she didn't have to keep embarrassing herself by sending back for more, over and over again? Would madam like sevenths? Nineteenths? Her host, whoever they really were, knew just how much it took to feed a Hulk, and had provided her with that and much more. Plus, there were those three servings of hot beefcake doing the serving. All in all, not bad.

On the *other* hand, she'd gotten so used to just shoveling food down until it was completely gone that, presented with infinite food, she'd forgotten it was up to her to stop eating. So she hadn't stopped--she'd glugged herself. Her powerful abdominal muscles failed to hold in the bulge of her stomach, distended like a ripe watermelon and straining the buttons of her white shirt.

She couldn't rip this shirt. It was *so* hard to find courtroom-appropriate attire in a woman's size XXXXXXXXXXXL. But that pie looked *so* good.

She moaned as she dug into it. Key lime. Exquisite.

Exactly as exquisite as the pumpkin pie that followed, and the thick New York cheesecake, and the fifteen pound block of fresh, gooey homemade fudge. She had no excuse. It was like a siren song, eat rich, sugary mouthful better than the last. By the time she was done, she felt really to explode, her ripped abdominals stretched around her gut like a sheet of steel buckling under pressure. And then she was offered a second cheesecake, and she couldn't say no to that, because some things were worth exploding for.

“My queen?” said one of the Triplets.

“Huhh?” Jen asked woozily, licking cream cheese from her lips. She was sprawled on the couch like a dying saint in a Renaissance portrait, except saints generally weren't bloated up like cheesecake-filled ticks. Her shirt was unbuttoned and smeared with fudge stains. The remains of her skirt, evidence that even elastic had limits, hung around one ankle.

“Would you care for more cheesecake?”

“Nuhhhhh,” Jen belched, waving it away. Showing remarkable strength, the triplets hoisted her off the couch and heaved her to a standing position. It was like hoisting the mast of a ship into place, except in this case the bright green sail looked like it was already billowing in the wind.

She let them lead her into a bathing chamber, where a colossal marble tub frothed with hot water. Jen let them undress her and help her into the water. She sank into the steamy soup with a satisfied groan.

“Ooh, that hits the spot,” she sighed as one of them massaged the slick, verdant skin of her upper back. She put her arms up on the edge and let her body sink down further into the comfortable warmth. Her belly breached the surface. *Thar she blows*, Jen thought, *the great green whale*.

Afterwards they helped her out of the tub, gave her a good toweling off, brushed her hair, and dressed her in something fresh and snow-white which looked a little like a toga. Jen didn't have to do anything but stand there and digest. Finally, she sank into a soft nest of silk sheets and pillows, bloated, blissful, and barely conscious.

But still conscious enough to feel the hands gently caressing her, running up and down her brawny flanks. The triplets. All three of them, working together somehow without getting in anyone's way--and they knew what they were doing.

She felt the beginnings of an insistent tingle in her lower belly, and squirmed. Her tree-trunk thighs rubbed against each other. “Oof, guys, don't,” she complained. “I'm *way* too full for this.”

They stopped at once. “Apologies, my queen.”

“No problem, and hey, it's not that it doesn't sound like fun. It's that I can barely *move* right now. How about a rain check? Or maybe just a massage?”

“A massage it is,” whispered a voice in her ear, and a finger traced its way across her back--her *back*, which was against the mattress, buried under a mountain of woman and food.

She felt her body being squeezed and kneaded with perfect precision. Her whole body relaxed. After a few minutes of expert massage, she was so full of endorphins they were almost slopping over her sides. She could barely keep herself awake.

Why even try?

Jen let go. She was out like a light in ten seconds and filling the bedchamber with marble-rattling snores in another ten. Beneath the sheets, the bulge of her belly rose and fell slowly with her breath.

The next morning she woke up feeling refreshed, set a new personal record for pancake-eating (one thousand and fourteen), and passed out again until lunchtime.

“Can you make a track or something?” Jen asked as she reclined in the palatial baths. “I was thinking of going for a run after breakfast.”

“Is that why you hardly ate anything this morning?” the voice asked her. “I would have worried I'd misjudged the chemical composition, if that wasn't nearly impossible.”

“It's why I didn't *gorge myself senseless*, yes. I wouldn't call a baked ham and two dozen eggs 'hardly anything'. Anyway, I haven't gotten any exercise to speak of in, what's in been, a month? I really need it. A weight room, too, if you can do that.”

“But, Ms. Hulk, surely these things aren't really necessary”

“Eating for twelve isn't necessary either, but you've got me doing it. Look, you *are* going to need me to do a little superheroing at some point, aren't you?” she asked, raising an eyebrow. “That's going to be hard to do if I'm out of shape. And I don't know if you've noticed...but I'm out of shape.”

“I want the journey to be a pleasant and relaxing one for you. You remain exceptionally strong.”

“My muscles weaken like anyone else's if I don't exercise,” Jen said. “Sure, in my case, 'weak' means 'bench-press a minivan' rather than 'bench-press a bus', but trust me, there's plenty of villains

who can tell the difference. And then there's this..."

She stood up, rivulets pouring off her body and churning the bath into foam. The water level dropped precipitously.

"I'm getting *fat*."

Jen ran hands over her plush flanks. Her muscles were still powerful, but the past month had left buried them under a layer of flab. She brought her hands around to the front, lifted the round, green mound of her belly, and let it fall. It felt like she had a bag of suet strapped around her waist. And her breasts, which had always been huge, were getting frankly ridiculous lately.

"And I didn't even know I *could* get fat! I never watched what I ate before. But I've never eaten *this* much for *this* long before, and I always used to get tons of exercise. There's limits to even my metabolism, and buddy, the way you've been feeding me I hit them like a freight train."

"This change bothers you?"

"Well--yes! I won't be able to fight as well. My speed and agility will take a real hit. Then there's the tabloids and the gossip blogs, and believe me, most of them make Doctor Doom look downright cuddly. Natasha Romanov put on ten or fifteen pounds last winter and the headlines were calling her Blocked Windows, which isn't even that clever." Jen scowled. "But it shouldn't be a problem. I just need to exercise more, and maaaaaybe cut down on the after-dinner cheesecakes."

"Ah. Ms. Walters, perhaps I should have brought this up earlier--"

"Oh, it's fine. I can drop the weight before we get there. I'll be lean and green when you need to me to do--whatever I'm going to be doing."

"Well, that's the thing, you see. We don't need you for your combat abilities. Perhaps it's time I explain why I selected you."

"You think? You've only been distracting me with cheesecake for months." Jen's stomach gurgled. "Ugh. Shut up, you. And *you*--talk."

"Very well. The disaster we seek to avert is not something that can be fought in the convention sense. It's a plague."

"A plague?"

"Yes."

"A plague. And you picked *me*? I'm not a doctor! I'm not a scientist! I'm a lawyer. I can draft a strongly worded cease and desist letter, and I can punch people *really* hard, but I can't cure sickness."

"You can cure *this* sickness, Ms. Walters. And in order to do so, we need your blood."

"Oh, hell," She-Hulk groaned. "Space vampires. I should have guessed it would be space vampires. Again!"

"You misunderstand!" the voice said quickly. "We want you to *donate* blood, not to drain it against your will. Your gamma-infused blood is the cure for the plague which afflicts my people. It must be you--only *your* blood is compatible; I already checked the other hulks."

"And you couldn't just draw some back on Earth and freeze it?"

"It must be fresh, and in large quantities. Quite large, in fact." The voice seemed hesitant. "Larger than you can safely give, at your...well..."

"Well, what?"

"At your *present* size."

"My present size." She-Hulk blinked. "You mean--if I was--"

"If your mass were to increase sufficiently--"

Jen's buttocks slapped wetly against the marble as she sat down heavily. "You've been--you've been--" Her thick green eyebrows lowered, and her lips twisted into a snarl. "You've been *fattening me up*, you sneaky little machine! No *wonder* you've been cramming food down my throat."

"You have lodged few objections so far."

"Well, I'm lodging one now, buster!" Jen shook her finger in her face. "If you think you can use me as some kind of--of prize pig--!"

"I remind you, Ms. Walters, millions of my people may die. Pathological vanity is not one of your recorded personality traits; surely, in your estimation, your own appearance doesn't outweigh their lives."

"Of course not!" Jen growled. "What I'm objecting to is having my body *manipulated* without my permission!"

"Then if I ask for your permission now, you will accede?"

"Well, that's--I mean, I suppose--" Jen deflated. "You know, you'd make a good lawyer. Fine. Millions of lives, I get it."

"I knew you would."

"Do you mind telling me," Jen continued, hesitating, "just--just how much weight are we talking about, here?"

"Our projections indicate you need to increase your current mass by 92.1 percent."

Jen bit her lip. "You want me to almost *double* my body weight in a few months?"

"Your physiology can handle it. I also calculate that, upon returning to a normal diet and reasonable exercise regimen, your body will be capable of shedding the weight in no more time than it took to gain it."

"But still..." Jen said nervously, running a hand over her middle. "I'm going to be an *oil tanker*. I mean, I already feel huge, and I'm going to be *huuuuuuge*."

"As I said, millions of lives--"

"I know about the millions of lives, dammit!" Jen snapped. "Just--give me a little time to get used to this!"

It would definitely be embarrassing. Jen was *proud* of her body, proud of her muscle definition and her granite-like abs--at least, she assumed they were *somewhere* under there. But it's not like anyone would *see* the newer, fatter She-Hulk except for a bunch of aliens. She'd just have to work her generously-sized ass off the whole way home to get back in shape. No one she know would know about her dirty, pudgy little secret.

Anyway, it *was* for the greater good. She had to help those people, didn't she?

And she would get to spend the next few months gorging herself stupid on every last scrap of delicious, fattening food she could cram into her body.

"Okay," she said. "I'm in."