

Jasper sat at his desk, his laptop in front of him, scattered papers and data sheets at his sides. Lines of code and columns of numbers danced in front of his glazed-over eyes. The data entry was arduous going, a task they had procrastinated the day before but found themselves unable to escape now. He had made decent progress but was becoming aware of the need for a break, told by his slumped posture and bloodshot eyes. Their glass of water stood long empty, as did the plates in the back of their room that were waiting to be put away since the previous day. Jasper stared at them, trying to remember what he had last eaten, and when.

Sudden rapping at the door snapped them out of their trance. "Um, yes?" Jasper called, half-falling out of his chair and untangling his tail as he leaned to grab the doorknob. The sight of their coworker and the pleasant smell of damp soil greeted them. Elliot filled the doorframe, holding something large and green.

The botanist brandished the shape at them in an offering. "Hi. Want a watermelon?"

Jasper blinked. "A watermelon?"

"Yeah. I grew a few extra non-modified ones," Elliot said. "They should be pretty good," he added.

A watermelon seemed like a bizarre thing to find himself with, but Jasper's hypothalamus jumpstarted at the thought of tearing into its pink flesh. He tried to remember when he last had any water and his mouth suddenly felt dry. "Sure. What were these for?" He asked.

Elliot sighed. "Just the control for some weird seeds I bought. I wanted to see if the modified ones grew faster, or were any different, but they seem about the same. At least we get some snacks out of it." He handed the watermelon to Jasper.

"I see. Well, thank you, and I'm sorry your experiment hasn't been more interesting," said Jasper. It was a large watermelon, and their shoulders strained to hold it in front of them. They turned to place the oblong fruit onto the desktop.

"It's alright. I still have some plants to monitor," said Elliot. "Maybe something will happen." The botanist turned to glance out the half-curtained window, behind which the afternoon daylight was beginning to fade. How late was it? Four or five P.M.? Jasper felt like the time had escaped him. "Maybe," he said.

"I'll go finish up. See you later," Elliot said.

"Later," Jasper said, watching him disappear down the hallway.

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Jasper pondered over his laptop for a few more minutes, then closed it, organizing his papers and stacking his dirty dishes. He took them and the watermelon to the kitchen, where he

dropped off the plates and opened the drawer containing his machete. Despite its primary use hacking through dense undergrowth to clear trails, it looked clean enough, and Jasper soon had the watermelon in two heaping piles of triangular slices. Elliot was right; it was a good watermelon. The flesh was dark and crisp, juice pooling in the divots in the tray. Jasper took their spoils back to their room to look out the window as they ate.

Soon, over half of the fruit was gone. Jasper was glad they had retreated behind a closed door. Watching someone eat watermelon was not usually a pretty sight, but it was much less so when one was half-starved and dehydrated. The scientist reasoned that anyone who passed their door would have heard some admittedly depraved sounds. Good thing Elliot was out in the greenhouse.

Jasper leaned towards the tray and realized they were close to uncomfortably full. Snake-like was their appetite, which ebbed and stretched into days where they didn't feel hungry at all and days when they couldn't keep any food in the house. His stomach, on the other hand, was human-sized and inconsiderate to his reptilian lineage, save for some extra gastric rugae- which didn't help much when the skin covering his belly was as non-stretchy as the average person's. Even now, their compression shirt was beginning to strain as their midsection tightened against it, but their hunger persisted. Their tongue flicked out to lick the watermelon juice off their chin as they eyed the rest of the fruit. There was only about a third of it left; they may as well finish the job.

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The sunlight filtering in through his window had barely continued to dim by the time Jasper was sitting before an empty tray, save for the watermelon rinds and puddle of juice. Black seeds lay scattered upon the mess, although some had certainly been eaten, as Jasper couldn't claim that he had been careful enough to spit them all out. The fruit had been a great distraction from their work, and Jasper decided they were done for the day. They sprawled out on their chair, which creaked on its old hinges.

Jasper's belly rose in front of them, their undershirt pushing up to leave a crescent-shaped gap between his shirt and pants. They rested a hand on it, then sunk their fingers into it, running them over the bloated skin. His stomach was full but not tight, full of water and soft watermelon flesh. A shiver ran through Jasper's body and a blush tinged his frills. They caught themselves and shook it off, frills darkening back to a neutral green. Jasper leaned forward to sit back up when they suddenly froze.

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Something felt off about his center of gravity. An unusual density was forming in his gut, like a pit within a soft fruit. More concerning was that it was definitely growing, his belly feeling gradually rounder and heavier. What outlandish situation had he found himself in? Was this what children expected to happen after being warned of the dangers of swallowing watermelon

seeds? His train of thought was interrupted by a sudden surge of growth. The scientist's insides lurched and he staggered to press his back against his chair.

"*Fuck!*" Jasper hissed, clasping a hand to his stomach. His flesh was pressing out in all directions, pushing up his shirt even further and shallowing the incline between his belly and his sternum. Their belt clicked and strained, and they hurriedly fumbled it off, holding their breath to yank the strap off the bar. An unnatural heaviness surged out before them. Jasper's sinking suspicions were confirmed; there really was a watermelon growing in their stomach, and it was most certainly Otech. How did he end up with programmed plants inside of him? *Elliot*... The botanist must have mistaken the control group plants, or they cross-pollinated, or something; Jasper didn't know. All he knew was that his head was swimming with both alarm and a feeling of growing fullness. His hunger was long extinguished, and the fullness was becoming something more, becoming tight.

Jasper anxiously prodded his distended stomach. Their fingers sunk into the same soft bloated layer as before, but soon met the firmness of a dense layer of cellulose beneath. Their shirt was growing thin, the glow of their flesh visible beneath the stretched black fabric. They clasped their hands over it, but it was no use. The fabric tore at the seams, their belly spilling out into their lap. Their stomach felt thoroughly stretched out. The fullness was overwhelming, and Jasper tried to ignore the heat pooling between their legs. Before they could think of what to do about their predicament, a new sensation made them jump.

Something was prodding his insides, something thick that slithered and undulated inside of him. Bulges moved beneath his stretched skin, wracking his body with shivers. *Vines? Roots?* Jasper couldn't concentrate as the shapes caressed and massaged his tight skin from the inside. Then, he let out a yelp as one made it down far enough to poke out from his asshole, a thin tendril that gently started rubbing his sensitive rim.

Jasper's eyes widened and their hand flew to cover their choked groan. The tendril was unrelenting, making small circles and tracing around his hole. Before they could fully react, another tendril made its escape, pushing past the smaller vine to stretch them out. Jasper moaned, his head tilting upward, his vision flickering. His throat squirmed and bulged, another vine forcing its way out of him, this one crawling from his open mouth. Jasper gagged reflexively, but the vine avoided his uvula, gently coiling around his throat and thrusting its tip against the scientist's tongue.

Jasper gasped and panted, overwhelmed by the attention on their holes and the pressure in their stomach. The fruit inside them had ceased growing, but the tendrils continued squirming relentlessly, bulges tracing their way around Jasper's belly. When another thin tendril breached their ass and began stroking their dick, Jasper keened, dick hardening and heat pulsing uncontrollably. The tension inside them mounted and broke. Jasper's orgasm washed over him and he twitched and shook, frills flushed with pink, breathy whines escaping him as the vines fucked his holes and slid over his dick. Jasper slumped against his chair as the vines continued touching and prodding him, but before it began to feel like torture, they retreated back inside

him. The tentacles within them quelled, leaving their stomach bloated and bulging from their ripped shirt but finally still.

Jasper caught their breath, chest heaving. They palmed their hands over their belly. It was solid, not a dream or hallucination. They would have to go to Elliot and explain, maybe leaving out some details, but showing their coworker their obscenely bloated form. The blush crept back into their frills again at the thought, but they quickly silenced it once more. There was nothing sexual about this, nothing obscene beyond the plant's defiance of reality and medicine. At the very least, Elliot would have his results. Jasper sighed; if only it had been a dream.

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