Aside from a few hiccups, Owen hadn’t slept that soundly in a long time. Once he had managed to fall back to sleep, he had stayed there.

Sleeping in his childhood bedroom had certainly been better than the night that he had spent at the motel, and getting to sleep next to the woman he was going to marry was always preferrable to sleeping alone, but such a deep and heavy sleep had left him with a headache the size of a Volkswagen. The sun was obnoxiously bright through the curtains, and the smell of the kitchen coming to life carried from downstairs.

“Baby, are you up yet?” her voice carried from downstairs, almost assuredly either from the kitchen or the dining room, “It’s almost ten!”

A cursory fumbling around to find his fiancée in the bed next to him yielded only his phone. But sure enough, as soon as he’d been able to put his hands on his phone, he had seen that she was right.

*9:56—1 New Message from Quinn.*

“Jesus Christ, I slept late.”

Owen muttered to himself, laying the phone screen-down on his chest. Sure he was on vacation, technically, but sleeping late during the week had always made him feel lazy. Especially when it wasn’t he *and* Becca sleeping late. God only knows how long she’d been up, just waiting for him to come downstairs…

Bleary-eyed and only half-awake, he checked his text from Quinn. It was from last night. *Late* last night. What the hell was she still doing up at three in the morning?

*Hey Frankie ran into Becca and your sister while they were out yesterday and they invited us to her bachelorette party on Friday! I hope you don’t mind everyone telling the absolute worst stories that we have about you lol jk.*

*Do you and the mrs. want to come out to the bar with us tomorrow night? Let me know!*

He read over the message a few times. His brain was stupid and still clouded with sleep. But as yesterday’s events began to take hold in the forefront of his mind, as he remembered some of the key changes that had taken place in his friends while he had been away, Owen began to feel a familiar fluttering in his chest.

*“I’ve made her so fat.”*

Despite its beating the night before, Owen’s dick twitched instinctively at the words that looped themselves back again in the back of his mind. The mental image of what he could remember from the picture that Quinn had shown him about how much weight Frankie had put on. A chance to see Frankie up close after all these years, and after such a *big* transformation was almost too good to pass up.

*Easy there, horn dog.*

*Yeah that’s cool. Idk I’ll ask.*

Throwing the blanket off Owen hopped to his feet, only to feel a chill run across his chest. His shirtlessness confused him, reasoning that he must have taken the baggy gray thing at some point during the night before remembering that he had taken it off himself. It had gotten messy during his trip to the bathroom last night, so he had balled it up and thrown it into the dirty clothes’ hamper.

He couldn’t go down like this.

“Baby?”

“I’m coming!” he called back down, “Just… getting dressed!”

*Get a hold of yourself, Owen.*

 ^ ^ ^

If Owen had been there the morning before, he might have gotten an idea of what breakfasts were like in a house where Emily had doubled down on every recipe from the family cookbook.

There were no surprises when Owen descended the stairs to find that the table was covered in serving platters and bowls. The offerings of the morning were great big griddlecakes, a thicket of bacon piled high, an ample amount of eggs that overflowed from his mother’s old Waterford crystal punch bowl, and what couldn’t have been any less than a half of a loaf of French toast.

Between all of the syrups and toppings, not to mention the places to sit at the table, he could barely see the tablecloth.

“Good morning, Owen!”

His sister’s voice came from the fat woman in the kitchen. Her stomach curved out underneath her smallish breasts, rolling out from underneath the apron ever so slightly as it cut into either side of her meaty flanks. Her massive thighs and blimping butt bulged and rolled over the waistband of her gray sweatpants, just as her arms threatened to burst out from her t-shirt sleeves.

“Is that what took you so long?” Emily snorted, “You’re like… *dressed* dressed.”

Owen hadn’t been able to find another sleep shirt to pull over himself. And he didn’t want to get the one that he’d balled up and put into the hamper last night. Even if it wasn’t crusty with ejaculate in a particularly *noticeable* way, it was likely wrinkled all to hell after spending a night getting thrust to the bottom of Emily’s dirty clothes.

He’d come to breakfast dressed for the day, with a long-sleeve sweater and a pair of loose-fitting black pants.

“You sleep okay?” she asked, her footsteps rumbling the floor beneath her, “You look kinda dead on your feet for a guy getting married next week.”

“Yeah, I’m…”

*Eyes up where they need to be.*

“I’m cool.”

“Good, I was starting to get worried when Becca came down without you. It’s not like you to sleep in.”

Much to Owen’s surprise, Emily wrapped her arms around him and gave him a tight squeeze. He could feel the softness of her new figure even through the apron. The two of them had never been all that close, but unsolicited hugs from his half-sister were far and away one of the things he had least expected to come back home to.

“It’s good to have you back, little brother.” She said with a reaffirming squeeze, “I know that I don’t say it a lot, but I miss you.”

This type of affection was totally out of the ordinary for the two of them. Growing up, they had almost constantly been at one another’s throats. And while it wasn’t like he didn’t *appreciate* coming home to someone who was happy to have him, it still felt odd for it to come from Emily of all people. He supposed that she had softened up after thirty… and in more ways than on—

*Don’t finish that thought*.

“I missed you too, Em.”

They hugged for a moment. And for the first time in a long while, it felt nice.

“Alright, now that you’re up we can *finally* start Breakfast.” His sister broke away with a smile as she turned towards the bathroom, “Becca honey, your fiancée decided to grace us with his presence, so we can start now!”

“Fiiiiiinally.” Becca sauntered into the kitchen, her hands damp from the bathroom sink, “I’m starved.”

Bringing herself close to Owen, she gave him a customary good morning kiss.

“You sleep okay baby?”

“Like a rock.”

*Does she feel—*

“That makes two of us. After yesterday, I was worn out.” Becca broke away and headed towards her seat at the table, “I am in *need* of some pancakes right about now.”

Owen was impressed, and more than a little aroused, with the speed that his fiancée seated herself at the table. She had actually been getting her plate ready before her cheeks had even hit the seat, Grabbing at biscuits from the basket and reaching for the butter with the other!

“How can you guys still have room after last night?” Owen chuckled, “We ate a *lot*.”

“Must be the mountain air.” Emily said as she plopped a spoonful of eggs onto Becca’s plate, “It does a body good.”

“I’ll say.”

Owen seated and served himself more modestly than his sister or fiancée. Pouring himself a black cup of coffee, Owen plated himself some French toast and a couple of slices of bacon. Compared to the full plates of the women at the table, it may as well have been a light snack.

“Ooh, that looks good.” Becca smacked her lips, little flakes of egg dotting the corner of her mouth, “Lemme try some?”

“Oh yeah, sure—”

Owen leaned forward to grab another serving from the platter, only to be stopped by one of Becca’s hands.

“No, baby.” She laughed and reiterated more slowly, “*Let me try some.*”

Owen didn’t understand the discrepancy.

“Feed it to me!” she said finally, “I just want a bite!”

*Feed it to me!*

Those words meant something entirely different to Owen, who had spent most of his life lusting after fat women from behind closeted doors of his sexuality. He had longed to hear those words come from *any* woman, but from Becca especially it just felt so…

“O-Okay…” he sputtered, his brain overclocking itself, “Um… here you go?”

Owen broke off a small chunk of the French toast before loading it onto his fork. Becca waited on the other end, leaning forward cutely with her mouth wide open. She… was really going to let him do this!

“Ahh~”

*Jesus Christ, what is it with everybody?*

ULP—Becca made a satisfied swallowing sound as she slid the syrupy bite off of the fork and onto her tongue. Her face brightened as she got a taste of what was (probably, he hadn’t had his own bite yet) some damn good French toast.

“You guys are so cute!” Emily tore herself away from sawing at her biscuit with a butter knife, “Do it again, I want to get a picture!”

And so they did it again. Becca opened her mouth, Owen broke off another piece of French toast, and fed it to his bride-to-be. And then they did it again, when Emily’s finger had gotten in the way of the shot.

*This is…*

“Soo~ good.”

Becca rolled her eyes into the back of her head as she fawned over the syrupy stack of bread and sugar that she’d been fed no less than three times now.

“Grab me a plate of that, would ya?”

Owen was happy to oblige, of course, but he couldn’t help but have enjoyed it more the other way…

^ ^ ^

The best part about getting married was that, as the groom, Owen was largely immaterial to the actual ceremony.

Sure, he liked to be included, and played a rather important role as one of the two people walking down the aisle to join each other in holy matrimony. But by and large, this was going to be Becca’s special day. And while she had been thoughtful enough to plan it in his hometown and inviting his friends, he very much doubted that they would be having these kinds of conversations if he had been born in, say, the uninhabited plains of rural Texas.

Becca had her heart set on a beautiful, rustic wedding in the mountains. Not just for the relative quietude and aesthetic, but because she had lived her whole life in hustle and bustle of Daven’s Port. This wedding was a chance to give herself something that she never would be able to again—at least, ideally—and she had gone all-in on having a wedding deep in the wooded area outside of Pin Oak Pointe. She was the sort of woman who got she wanted, and planned accordingly.

This was the woman who had picked out her ideal wedding dress, down to the shade of white. She had begun saving up for it *before* Owen popped the question, and had been starving herself for weeks trying to maintain a slim physique so that she could fill it out just right. Everything had been done with a certain amount of deliberation, but *the dress* was the end-all be all for this monumental occasion in her life.

To see his fiancée going from eating saltines for lunch to pushing back from the dining room table, unbuttoning her jeans and groaning in a blissful agony, was downright jarring.

“Alright… Emily, do you want to go over the seating chart again?”

Becca breathed heavily, obviously struggling to keep it all down. Over the course of the morning, Becca had indulged in not one, but two helpings of Emily’s calorie laden breakfasts. In the two years that he had known her, Owen had seen her eat this much exactly once, when she got drunk at an office party and he had ridden back with her to her apartment in order to make sure she got home safe.

Since she had been in Pin Oak Pointe, Becca had been stuffing herself at every meal.

“Okay honey.” Emily clicked her tongue as she stroked the back of her soon-to-be in law’s hand, “You feeling okay?”

“Yeah, just…” Becca grunted sharply, “…I think I overdid it with breakfast.”

Becca’s slender fingers pushed down into the surface of her stomach. There was no mistaking it, there had been a definite softness there that wasn’t before. Even taking into account her bloated physique, Owen had no way to account for it. Not with the way that she had been starving herself in order to make sure she looked good in the wedding photos.

“I’m gonna go to the bathroom.”

The small woman struggled to her feet and plodded slowly past the table.

“Don’t touch my diagram, okay?”

Wrestling with another burp, Becca exited the dining room with heavy eyelids and a noticeable drag in her step. Like all of the food that she had eaten was finally starting to weigh her down.

That just left Owen and Emily alone at the table for the first time in three years. More importantly, the first time that the two of them had been alone since he had come back to Pin Oak Pointe.

“I really like her.”

Emily smiled and raised a cup of coffee to her lips. She took a drink, and placed it back down on the table.

“She’s so sweet, Owen.” Emily continued to gush, “I can tell that you two are really, really happy together.”

“Thanks.”

A painful silence of about thirty solid seconds had passed with no interaction from across the table. The two of them hadn’t had much of anything to talk about since the accident. Despite the formalities and the friendly platitudes, it was obvious—in moments like these—why Owen had decided to leave Pin Oak Pointe in the first place.

“She’s… really looking forward to getting married out here.” Owen finally said, taking a drink from his own cup, “I showed her pictures of what the town looked like and she’s been in love ever since.”

“Yeah, nothing much changes up here in Pin Oak.” Emily paused, embarrassed, before her hand traveled down to pat the curvature of her prodigious paunch, “Well, *not much* anyway… you didn’t show her any pictures of *me* did you?”

He had, come to think of it. There were a few photos on his Facebook profile of the two of them when they were younger. He had been in high school, and she was in her early twenties. Some from the funeral. That had only been three years ago. Looking at her now, it was hard to believe that the bottom-heavy blonde sitting across from him was the same woman as the girl he had shown to Becca.

*Like you don’t appreciate the changes.*

Had Becca said anything about Emily’s change in weight since they’d gotten here? He knew that he had, and he knew that Emily herself had. But Becca—

“I must look like a real cow.”

Maybe she was just being a good guest. What kind of person would ask a woman to be her bridesmaid and then ask her how she got so fat in such a short amount of time? Likely, Becca knew about his sister’s change in size via the boutique order for the dresses.

“Yeah…”

Another slurp of coffee.

“You, um… you want to talk about that?”

A deep sigh from his sister. She leaned forward into the table, her belly cutting into the side as she rested her fat elbows on the surface.

“Not really.” She finally said, “There’s not much to say—after the funeral, I was pretty depressed. I guess food just helps.”

“Is that why you’ve been cooking up a storm since me and Becca got here?” Owen lightened his tone at the last second, offering a little laugh in an attempt to lighten the conversation as much as he could, “You know, Becca’s got a wedding dress to fit into.”

In that moment, Emily looked particularly embarrassed. A different sort than how she’d looked at Owen when she referred to her body and the changes that it had undergone while he was away. Owen’s small attempts at making the conversation lighter hadn’t done much at all to prevent the new kind of silence that was budding between them.

“I’m not used to cooking for three people.” She said solemnly, “I guess I got a little carried away.”

*What the fuck, Owen.*

“I’ll try to lay off a little bit.”

“Don’t—” Owen extended himself ever so slightly in to the table, “I mean, it’s not that I don’t appreciate the hospitality, it’s just—”

“You’re right though, it’s clear that Becca’s gonna eat herself sick before the wedding.” Emily sighed, “I probably haven’t been helping much in that regard.”

“She’s having a great time, Em… but I know that she’ll *stop* having a great time if she can’t zip up that ridiculously tight dress by the time that the wedding rolls around.”

“Okay.” Emily smiled, “But only because I am *well* acquainted with the pain and anguish that comes with not being able to fit into your clothes these days.”

Emily’s whole body quaked with laughter as the chair creaked beneath her.

^ ^ ^

Despite having grown up within walking distance, Owen had never actually been to the Black Star Bar.

He had heard stories of it growing up, naturally. The sort of stories that come from bored teenagers spreading gossip about the only place to get a drop of alcohol on their side of the mountain, but stories none the less. His parents had gone there once or twice, and Emily had mentioned meeting her dates there. But by the time Owen was old enough to drink, he was still trying to power through his Junior year of college a full eight-hour drive away.

During the brief time that he had been back, he had made it a pointed effort not to drink his way through it—not matter how hard that had been.

Looking around, it was somehow less grandiose than his preadolescent mind had expected it to be.

It was a small, brick and mortar building in a town full of lumber. The paint was peeling, and you could see the brick lay in more than a few areas. Neon flickered in the windows and behind the bar, helping to illuminate the otherwise dimly lit atmosphere. It was the kind of place where, fifty years ago, there might have been a cloud of cigarette smoke hanging overhead.

And though he might have been a little too rough in his assessment of the décor, Owen hadn’t been given the motivation to muster a second glance away from the other side of their booth.

“*Hff*… are you sure… *hgnnn…* that there isn’t an empty table?”

Even though she was normally the jealous type, Becca had been more than happy to go out with Owen to meet his old friends from high school. Seeing as how they were going to be coming to the wedding *and* the bachelorette party, she must have figured that getting to know them a little beforehand would make things a little less awkward.

Plus, Owen had told her plenty of stories about their misadventures in high school. Most of his stories were about the women in his life; Quinn and Frankie had just so happened to be some of the most prominent ones.

But somehow, he doubted that he would have been able to prepare Becca for just how large Frankie had become. Given the fact that his heart had practically skipped a beat when he realized that the massive woman toddling ahead of them was her, Owen wasn’t sure that *he* was ready to meet Fat Frankie.

“Sorry bud, it’s booth or bust.”

Frankie’s fat face creased into two, three tight little frowns. Her singular roll of neck dimpled into a pouty second chin as she mulled over her displeasure over the bar’s accommodations. Her beady green eyes seemed to dart across the table, seemingly trying to measure as to whether or not she’d get more room if she was seated where Owen and his fiancée had already taken root.

“Would you guys mind if I pushed the table a little?” she whimpered, “I feel like a little cramped.”

“By all means!” Owen invited with a spread palm, to which Frankie nodded with a pathetic appreciativeness.

She was a *large* woman. Larger than even the photos that Quinn had shown him suggested. The difference between the photos and reality had to have been another fifty pounds at minimum. She and Quinn quite literally took up the entire other side of the booth. With Quinn’s top-heavy build and Frankie’s sheer size, they were packed thigh-to-thigh and arm to arm.

*Jesus, they’ve got big booths here.*

He and Becca were swimming on their side of the table. There was so much room that all of the ladies’ purses had been able to take up the space of a whole other person. Of course, sitting next to Becca, there was *always* going to be more room. Especially when compared with—

“What can I get y’all started with today?”

Owen had never been to many bars with waitresses that came right up to the booth. Of course, given the struggle and *size* of at least one of the party’s occupants, she may have just been trying to be considerate.

“I’ll have a beer.”

“Whiskey Sour and some sweet tea—Frankie, you want a drink?”

“Um… *hff*… maybe a Coke to start me off…”

“Can I get a margarita… aaaaand…” Becca’s eyes scanned the kitchen menu, “Would anyone mind if I got an appetizer?”

Owen’s eyebrows furrowed in confusion. How in the world could Becca have had room for *anything* with the way that she’d been eating lately?

“I would *die* for some mozzarella sticks.”

“I like this one, Owen.” Quinn chuckled from the out side of the booth before turning back to the waitress, “And some mozzarella sticks for the table.”

Owen and Quinn shared a glance at Becca, who shrunk into herself shyly.

“What?” she laughed nervously, “Pre-wedding jitters—just because I’m small doesn’t mean I don’t get cravings!”

*If she keeps it up, they’ll become pre-wedding jiggles.*

Owen clenched his jaw tight, as if to keep the words from falling out of his mouth. His face grew hot, remembering the newfound softness to his fiancée’s figure that he had been ogling as he walked behind her.

“You’re not… *pregnant*, are you?”

A joke. It better have been a joke. What with their prenuptial celibacy pact and everything. But it was a way for Owen to say *something* that would hopefully steer the conversation away from topics that would inevitably force him to imagine his wife blowing up and up and up and up…

“I better not be—I’ve got a dress to fit into, remember?”

*D’oh!*

“Does anyone know where the bathroom is?” Becca asked

“Sure, it’s in the corner.” Frankie pointed with a thick, sausage finger, “Here, I’ll show you…”

Owen and Quinn exited the booth so as to allow the inner-seated parties space to exit. Becca’s lithe, small body slipped out of the space easily while Frankie’s flabby rolls caught against the lip of the table and made the whole thing rock. Quinn helped her stand with both hands, helping the rotund redhead come to a fully standing position and embarrassingly out of breath.

As Owen and Quinn sat down, back inside the booth, he watched them walk away side-by-side.

“I think she’s got a very *round* future ahead of her, O.”

Quinn chuckled as she settled in the other side of the booth. Owen was still watching.

“I mean, you know, if she keeps it up.” Quinn laughed again, “Huh? Say.”

And he couldn’t shake the thought that something was very *wrong*.