

Claws tip-tapped across the cold marble floor as Cream the kobold shuffled down the hall to the Princess's quarters, her teddy bear tucked against her vanilla chest. The plush was warm, soft. On most nights, it provided her great comfort.

But tonight, the thunder boomed in the sky, rain hammered the roof, and her heart rumbled her small frame like a train barreling down the tracks.

Her ears folded over, just behind her short grey horns, and she held her free hand just an inch from the door.

*You're too old for this*, her mother grumbled five years prior. *Go to bed.*

The pink double door glared down at her, the maroon hearts strewn across the surface sharp like daggers.

Just as she turned to retreat to her quarters, the door creaked open.

"Cream?"

The voice of the fluffy pink Princess was soft and light. Warm, oozing from her lips like honey that Cream very much wanted to eat.

Cream squeaked and hid her face behind her little companion.

Princess Parfait's face softened. She waved a dainty paw into the room.

"A Princess can't leave her servants cowering in the night," she said, crawling under the velvety covers as the door swung shut. Cream stood in place, face glowing behind the fuzzy toy, until a paw softly rubbed the spot beside her. "Come. There's room for you."

The warmth that enveloped Cream as her Princess's paws slipped around her immediately melted her anxiety away. The thunder was so distant now, compared to the gentle beating of her Highness's heart against her cheeks. Both the scent of strawberries and the warmth of the Princess's freshly shampooed breasts enveloped her.

Paws caressed her back, layer upon layer of fear peeling away with each heartbeat.

"That's it, Cream. You're safe here."