

## Threads of Fat, Chapter 5

by Cerine Hero

Stella was sure that doing a photo shoot was going to be pretty easy compared to filming an action movie. She was wrong. It started out mostly the same, with her being shepherded into a dressing room, disrobed, and poured into the latest fashion. The magazine got the clothes for free so they could put a starlet into them and post them on the front of the next issue. Stella didn't think about it too hard, she was just going where Vivian pointed her.

While she sat in makeup, the skunk started to wonder how much she was getting paid to do this. Probably months' worth of her pay as a public defender. Movie stars made a lot of money. Her huge home was definitely evidence of that. How would she conspicuously ask Vivian what kind of income she was making on these kinds of deals? Gosh, if she was making millions, she didn't actually need all that. Her tail flicked at the thought of handing off one of those huge comedy checks to a charity... or would that be tacky? Probably better to not be a big showboat about it.

These moments when she could actually sit and think through her new life just seemed to make her even more confused. There were so many things to consider, and it was all thrust on her all at once. She'd heard how sudden fame often drove people off the deep end. It made a lot of sense to her now; if she wasn't just so confused and bewildered all the time it may happen to her. Trying to puzzle out all the implications for the weird stranger's alternate timeline or reality thing was even worse.

"Miss Mitchell?"

Stella blinked and leaned around in her chair. There was someone standing in the prep room doorway. "Huh? I'm sorry, I was off someplace else. I've been doing that a lot lately..."

"Well, they're ready for you in the studio," the corgi explained.

The heavysset skunk eased herself out of her chair and took another glance in the mirror. A huge woman in a shimmering green dress and perfectly coiffed hair looked back at her. Every time she started to get comfortable with her reflection, they changed it. Shaking her head, the skunk headed out the door. The dress she wore was mostly sheer, with wide strips of black fabric sewn underneath to hide strategic parts of her figure. It felt like wearing a beach wrap around a swimsuit. It was slit halfway over her hips on the sides, with the loose fabric hanging down between her legs. Stella's wide body spilled out of the sides of the dress, with bare fur jiggling as she walked. This was a *lot* sexier than anything she'd have picked out for herself. She adjusted the fabric around her middle, where it rest snug against her generous proportions. She could feel the tape pulling on her breast fur and she winced. To keep her assets where they wanted them without a bra, the clothiers had stuck double-sided tape on her boobs and fixed them in place in her dress so she looked a little more perky. It probably worked great on women with slimmer bustlines.

The corgi led her to the studio space, where there were a dozen lights set up around a white backdrop that covered one wall and stretched across the floor. Several people were already gathered into the studio. Vivian and the magazine executive stood chatting on the opposite side from the backdrop. The photographer, a slender bearded dragon, sat cross-legged in the middle of the floor surrounded by her equipment as she set up her camera.

Vivian clapped her hands together and walked over to Stella. "Goodness, dear, you look amazing! This is definitely going to rock the fashion scene this summer. And they matched the fabric to your fur so well."

Stella glanced down at the exposed cleavage and huge curve of belly underneath it, covered by translucent green fabric. "It's nice, just not really my style." She glanced at the sheer sleeves. "A little bit too much of 'me' showing."

"Well, it's going to be the big thing and we need you on top of it," Vivian reminded her. She wore a sharp, dark gray blazer and skirt and a pink blouse underneath. "You're a trendsetter, you know."

"If that's true, then it'll definitely be a *big* thing..." the skunk muttered.

The badger executive walked over. Like at the bistro, he had on a fine suit and waistcoat and looked very bold and dignified. He took Stella's paw and kissed it affectionately. The skunk blushed a little but didn't pull back.

"You look spectacular, Miss Mitchell," the badger told her, patting her paw before letting go. "I'm very pleased to have you on the cover of my magazine."

"I'm... pleased to be here," Stella half-lied, smiling with as many teeth as she could manage. She gestured towards the backdrop. "I guess you want me right over here?"

The photographer got her situated in the shooting area. It was blistering hot under the lights, but she was starting to get used to the heat and the breezy dress was well-ventilated. She squinted for a bit until her eyes got used to the bright shine from the fabric screens over the lights.

Stella never thought of herself as photogenic before. In her head, she always thought of herself as average-looking and she hated how she looked in photos. But here she was, being directed to turn this way and that, look up and down, raise her arms or put her paws on her hips. The bearded dragoness was an absolute professional, giving her instructions without sounding bossy or irritable. She guided Stella's face into exact poses with her scaly claws. The skunk was a little nervous about those huge slicers next to her nose and eyes, but the photographer was perfectly gentle.

It took a bit of effort for Stella to put on good expressions, however. After her somewhat disastrous attempt at acting in the Star Ranger movie, the skunk spent her evening practicing expressions in her mirror. She felt like a doofus the entire time as she mugged fangy smiles, overdrawn frowns, and smoldering glances at her reflection. But she reminded herself that this was her job now, and she rewarded herself for practicing by ordering a big cheesecake for delivery from a gourmet shop. She planned to only eat one slice, but the skunk ended up devouring the entire thing to make her bracelet happy. The green glow dimmed a bit.

The standing photo shoot was the easy part. Even though it was effort to heft her weight around, there wasn't much physical effort beyond that. Then the photographer led her, Vivian, and the badger to another room, where there was a set that looked like a rugged city street corner, complete with stucco buildings and a tall lamp post. Stella was taken to a small side room and helped change into a breezy white top and black leggings. Her butt muscles tightened when they yanked the tape off the curves of her breasts and she hissed sharply. That was coming sooner or later. Trendy knee-high boots were slipped on over her feet. The skunk wriggled her nose at how snug they were over her well-fattened calves. The tight leggings and boots probably over-emphasized her supersized thighs and rump, but fortunately the long top covered them somewhat.

"I look like a pirate," she mused, patting her weight in the mirror as one of the attendants laced the front of her shirt to look aesthetically useless and barely-covering. At least she had on a bra now.

"The look is really in right now for summer," the attendant told her. She held up a pair of oversized sunglasses and placed them on Stella's face. "There you go!"

"I could've used these about twenty minutes ago."

Stella walked back out to the set. Vivian signaled her appreciation of the outfit with some polite applause. The badger executive nodded solemnly but did little else. Stella was led to the fake street corner and told to wrap her arm around the lamp post.

"I'm not dancing on this, am I?" the skunk asked, looking up at the lamp doubtfully.

The bearded dragoness snickered and shook her head. "No, just lean your weight against it and lean like you're looking out for someone."

Stella narrowed her eyebrows and looked down. "Is it... like, sturdy?" She gave the pole a testing push.

"It'll be alright."

"If you say so."

Now the photo shoot was becoming exhausting. Instead of standing and posing, Stella was now

working around the lamp post, leaning on it, wrapping her arms around it, and putting her back against it and trying to balance her large body on one foot to get as many different poses and angles as possible. The photographer had her sit down against the brick wall for a couple different shots, and it was a lot of effort for Stella to stand back up – just to have to sit again to get more pictures. She was panting and tired by the time they were through with this second shoot, and the skunk went to find a chair to melt into. Her super-wide hips slid between the armrests like a squishy, round peg in a square hole. Fat, covered in leggings, bulged through the gaps between the armrests and the seat.

Vivian sat down in the seat beside her while the photographer prepared the set for the next scene. “They want to do a third shoot. They've got some summer swimwear for you to try on.”

“Oh no.”

“No?”

Stella looked over at her agent as she continued to melt into a pile of butter. “Who on earth actually wants to see this in a bikini?” She slapped her tummy and felt the ripples bounce off the armrests and splash against one another.

“Lots of people want to see you, dear. You have a beautiful body!” Vivian blinked and thought for a moment. “I suppose I could have worded that better.”

“Nah, I get it. I think.” Stella drummed her paws on her stomach. Somewhere down under the layers of blubber, her belly rumbled hungrily. She snuck a glance at the bracelet on her wrist. The green glow was bright and beginning to be tinged with yellow. She hadn't seen that before. Maybe it went red before things got... bad? The cryptic fox-thing didn't explain how it worked. The device must've been mad about all the “exercise” she got this morning. Apparently her breakfast of several orders of scrambled eggs and jellied toast didn't last very long. “Uh... can I get a snack first?”

“Can we get Stella something to eat?” Vivian asked one of the attendants, who scurried out of the room. He came back with a box of donuts. Stella took it and flipped it open, tucking donuts into her mouth without caring if anyone was watching. No one really paid her gluttony any mind; it was just one of those things.

After a couple minutes, they were led back to the first studio room, where the photographer was setting up the next set. She hauled bags of sand out of the closet, huffing and puffing and red in the face. The bearded dragon dumped the sand out on a green field that had replaced the white backdrop. There was already a significant pile of sand on the green mat, and she got down to spread it out with her palms.

Stella headed off to go change, carrying two donuts with her. She finished them off as the attendants helped her undress, and they brought her a rich, blue bikini that was almost too big for them to handle. There were a lot of straps and criss-crossing decorative bits. Stella raised her arms and they tied the top around her body, fitting her breasts into the cups. More tape was brought out and the skunk sighed as they secured her into the outfit so she wouldn't bounce all over the place. How much fur was she going to lose today?

She came back out of the dressing room, blushing as everyone looked at her. There was a big pile of sand in the middle of the room now, spread out to cover an eight-foot-wide space on top of the green screen. The photographer was fiddling with a small fan by the lights.

“So... are we doing a beach scene?” Stella asked, standing beside the sand.

“That's right.”

“In here? Why not go out to the beach and shoot it, like, for real?”

The photographer turned on the fan and it started to blow Stella's hair in gentle waves. “Oh, sometimes we do, but it takes planning and it's an all-day thing. A lot of times we do it digitally now, it's a lot simpler. But the real sand is there to get that physicality in the shot. Could you, let's say, stretch out and pose on your side for me?”

Stella gave her a flat look. “Well, you don't ask for much.” With some effort, the skunk laid herself down on the sand, on her side, with her head propped up on top of her paw. She tried to smile

and pose while feeling her huge body grinding against the grains of sand underneath her, feeling it even through her fur. It was probably as ridiculous as she felt.

The skunk spent a while on her side, back, and belly – with the latter being the least comfortable – as they took photographs. Then she had to get up, and it took the fat skunk a couple tries and a few helping paws to manage her blubber back onto her feet. They wiped the sand off her fur and took more pictures from behind, as if she was running. Stella's feet and hips ached, and her breasts were sore from the tape pulling on the fur.

All in all, the photo shoot only took a few hours, but it felt like an entire day for the heavy skunk. Once the photographer was happy with her set of pictures from the bikini shoot, Stella's face stopped smiling and turned right into mush. Finally she headed back to the dressing room and put her regular clothes on, and she was glad that she wore some comfortable pants and a button-down blouse. Anything more complicated than that would've been too much.

"You seemed a little distant today," Vivian told her as they walked through the magazine company's front lobby.

Because I'm tired and confused and irritable, Stella thought. "Isn't that what they want?" she replied. "That 'I'm looking at something hard-to-see over that way' look?"

The doe covered her muzzle as she laughed. "That's one way to put it." She reached over and put her hand on Stella's forehead.

"What are you doing?"

"Just checking, dear," Vivian replied. "I want to make sure you're not getting overworked. It has been a pretty hectic week."

"You're telling me. I just need to rest my fat ass for a little while, but I've still got something to do today. Maybe I can work them together..."

The doe took out some sunglasses from her purse and put them on as a white car pulled up on the curb outside the office. "Well, please get some rest when you can, Stella. This job never takes a break!"

"I'm figuring that out," Stella murmured. She waved her agent goodbye and then fished her cell phone from her pocket. Flicking her thumb sharply across the contacts screen, she found Vera's entry. Her heart thumped faster as she pressed it, and she put the phone up to her ear. It rang, rang, and rang, and Stella found herself clutching her chest between her elbows in tension. As she awkwardly moved her free arm to her hip, she heard the clatter of the phone being answered on the other side.

"Hey, Elle!" Vera said over the line, using the nickname Stella had given for herself. "You actually called."

"Hey there," the skunk replied, blushing and playing with the end of a lock of hair. "I said I would, right? So, uh... I know I said we'd go get something for lunch today, but I just got done with a... well, just a thing, and I am feeling exhausted."

Stella felt the disappointment over the line like a punch to her stomach. "Oh..." Vera said, her voice going low and flat. "Yeah, I kinda expected that."

"...Something wrong?"

"I just thought you were s-s-serious yesterday."

The skunk lowered her phone away from her face and huffed, calming herself down before she went back to the conversation. Of course she was serious! Why would she think that? Stella blew her breath out through her nose and raised her phone back up. "I was totally serious. I'm just saying I'm tired and I want to go home. Now – lemme finish – do you wanna come over and we'll get something delivered?"

"Your place?" Vera replied hesitantly. "Oh, wow..."

"Totally up to you! I could squeeze my ass into a restaurant booth if you want... Vera?"

"I was... picturing that. Your place is good! What is the address?"

Stella had no clue. She scrunched her muzzle and scrambled for a good excuse. "I'll make some

calls and have somebody pick you up, how about that? Text me where you're at and I'll have them come get you."

"Really? That would be amazing. I can't believe you can do that."

The skunk chuckled. "Awesome, isn't it? I'll see you in a little bit!"

Vera sat uncomfortably in the back of the limousine. She was expecting a ride-share car... not this! There was so much room for her to stretch her legs and spread out... though it felt like the middle of the seat was a bit squashed for some reason. The pretty tigress chauffeur told her not to worry about it.

"Do you know St-st-Stella?" Vera asked, leaning forward and peeking at Jackie in the rear view mirror.

"I've driven Miss Mitchell a few times," Jackie replied, flicking her eyes towards the white fox in the back of the limo. "I do not 'know' her, no."

Vera turned and looked out the window as the limousine turned onto a narrow road leading up towards the hills. The ocean sparkled off to their left in the midday sun. On the right, large houses peeked over the tops of hedge fences. Jackie turned into a driveway that looped in front of a big, gorgeous house and slowed to a stop in front of the front entrance. She got out and walked around the limo to open Vera's door. The fox climbed out of the seat and adjusted her clothes. A silver-spiked belt rest over the top of her black t-shirt with a bloody metal band logo printed on it. She wore a dark cadet cap, festooned with pins. Jackie looked her outfit up and down and shrugged.

"Have a nice day," the tigress said, bowing a bit and walking back to get into the limo.

As the limo drove off, Vera walked up the front steps to the door. She peeped through the frosted glass windows on either side but couldn't see much. Testing the doorknob, she found it unlocked and the door swung open easily.

The house was big. Right in front was a large, vaulted split room separated into a living space and sitting area in the front and a modern kitchen and dining room in the back. A decorative wall with a window in the center vaguely separated the two spaces. But Vera's eyes were drawn to the unmissable figure of the skunk. Stella was laying stretched on her back on the L-shaped sectional, with the large ottoman pushed into the corner so that her expansive build could rest comfortably. Vera bit her lip as she admired the bigger woman. Stella was wearing a white top and a pair of black workout shorts, even though she clearly hadn't been exercising.

Vera crossed her arms over her chest and walked around the couch until she entered Stella's field of view. The skunk's eyes lit up and she laughed.

"Holy shit, you are quiet," she said, struggling to sit herself up somewhat. "I heard the car, but I was waiting for you to knock."

"The door was unlocked," Vera answered, hooking her thumb over her shoulder.

"Yeah, I didn't want to get up to unlock it." With the fox's help, Stella rolled into a sitting position and she gestured for Vera to take a seat beside her. The vixen did as obliged, sitting just a couple inches away from the skunk. "Um... I'm sorry about earlier, on the phone. I didn't mean to get you upset or anything like that."

"It's f-f... fuck. It's okay."

"How come you can say fuck just fine? Is that okay for me to ask?"

Vera chuckled a little and shook her head. "I'm not sure. It only works when I'm mad, though."

"Huh." Stella glanced down and stared at the inside of her wrist for a moment as if there was something wrong with it. Vera noticed the tug on the corners of her lips and tilted her head. But Stella looked up and smiled. "Anyways, is pizza okay with you? I found a number in my phone and it's easy to get a hell of a lot of pizza."

Stella and Vera sat shoulder-to-shoulder on the couch, peering together at the tiny screen on the skunk's phone so they could browse through the online menu. They ordered one small pizza for Vera

and three for the skunk.

Once the order was placed, the skunk put her phone down and turned towards her guest. She leaned towards the fox and peered at her hat. “Can I see your cap?”

Vera took her hat off and held it out towards Stella. The skunk took it, but then she glanced up as Vera ran a paw through her thick, white fauxhawk. Stella's eyes sparkled and her mouth opened slightly, and she couldn't resist reaching out a paw and touching Vera's hair. The fox blushed and leaned into it a little bit, putting her paw on Stella's stomach. Her fingers felt the plush flesh just underneath the shirt.

“Oh my god, your hair is so soft,” Stella wheezed in delight, “it's like a cloud. I love it.”

“Yours is a lot prettier than mine,” Vera replied.

“I'm just gonna let you know: I can argue until I'm blue in the face, so you might just want to let me have this one,” Stella replied. “Your hair is gorgeous and we're leaving it at that.”

“Thank you,” Vera said, blushing.

Stella looked down at the vixen's hat and turned it over in her paws. She leaned towards Vera a little more and held it up between the two of them. Her belly pressed against Vera's fingertips, making it obvious that the touch was appreciated.

“What are all these pins?” the skunk asked, tapping at them with her claws. “I don't know any of these names.”

“They're my favorite bands,” Vera answered. She pointed at each of them and explained the names, since many of them verged on completely illegible even in large print. “And that's Redwheel Turning. That's my band.”

“You're in a band?!” The skunk looked at the fox, mouth agape. “That's awesome! What do you play?”

Vera blushed brightly and wiggled. “Guitar.”

“Shut up. That's fucking cool. I wish I could play something.”

“Well... I could teach you a little.”

They sat together, chatting about endless topics while they waited on lunch. While they started close, the two squeezed in closer every time one of them shifted positions. Before long, Vera was snuggled entirely against Stella's side, feeling her heavy figure bounce against her. The supersized skunk had her almost pinned between herself and the corner of the couch, but the vixen was happy with where she was.

Stella was nothing like she imagined a celebrity to be like. She was warm and down-to-earth, and she listened with eye contact. Vera felt her tail flutter behind her as they talked about music and TV shows. This was the first time she'd been invited into a star's home – a coworker's home, if she could say that. But here she was, connecting with Stella Mitchell, with her paws on her belly, no less.

The skunk was right. The real deal *was* different from the fake padding.

They heard the delivery car pull up outside. “Finally. I am starving.” She started to get up, pushing a couple times to rock herself forward enough to move her center of gravity over the edge of the sofa. Vera leaned in front of her and put an arm across her shoulders.

“I'll go get it. You st-st-stay here.” The fox got up and went to the door, accepting the pizzas from the delivery driver. She felt bad about Stella buying the meal – even if it was ninety-percent her own – so she paid a tip from her own cash. Vera smiled over the stack of pizza boxes and set them down on the ottoman. “This is a lot of... pizza.”

“I'm a lot of girl nowadays,” Stella replied, flipping open the first box. They just ate right there, with a roll of paper towels resting between the sofa cushions. Vera cuddled against the skunk's body, chowing down on a couple pieces of her white pizza. It didn't take long before the slender fox was full; by then Stella was only just starting on her second box.

Vera watched her eat for a bit, her tail wagging slowly. Mustering her courage, she reached out and picked up the next piece of pizza. Stella watched, and then the skunk's eyebrows went up when the

fox pushed it towards her nose. Flushing and grinning awkwardly, the big woman took a bite out of the food and swallowed. Vera climbed onto her knees and helped to feed her date, leaning her back into the couch cushions and massaging her middle with her free paw. Stella kept sneaking glances at her wrist while she ate, and she looked more content by the time the third pizza was mostly gone.

After the meal, Stella rubbed her belly and exhaled slowly. Vera had her head on her shoulder and patted the huge skunk's side. "Okay, tell me something..." Stella asked, shifting her weight to face the fox a bit more. "Do you like this? Like, me being... *this* fucking big?"

Vera smiled and blushed. She looked away and ran her paw through her hair as she fanned her ears down. "I... yes. I do."

"You don't have to be embarrassed," Stella said, running her paw down Vera's back. "I mean, I guess I'm happy to hear it. It's just kinda weird, because nobody else says a thing to me about it or notices."

"Do you not like it?"

Stella rocked her head from side to side. "I don't know. I've got no idea what to think anymore. I guess it's just hard for me to wrap my head around how someone could find all this attractive." The skunk jabbed a finger into the side of her breast. "Well... I never thought I was sexy when I was thin, either, so... maybe it's just me."

Vera bit her lip. Looking up at Stella, she smiled with her silver eyes. Pushing herself up onto her knees, the fox leaned herself against the skunk's body and kissed her. White-furred fingers wrapped around Stella's shirt collar and held her close as they both pushed into the kiss. Vera felt heavy, soft arms encircle her waist and pull her into the weighty embrace. Stella slowly rolled onto her back, pulling the fox with her.

"I have to get going."

"I don't want you to."

"Me, either, but I've gotta check on my snake."

Stella shifted her weight in the bed, lifting her arm up so that Vera could climb out from underneath her. The fox sat on the edge of the mattress and leaned forward to pick her clothes off the floor. They lay beside or under Stella's massive garments. The skunk ran her plump fingers down Vera's bare spine, watching as the fur on her back lifted up in pleasure. As Vera hooked her bra and pulled on her shirt, she looked back and smiled at the huge skunk.

Vera finished getting dressed and leaned over the bed, kissing Stella's muzzle. Her fingers wrapped around a roll of plush brown fur on her side and shook it, making the skunk's figure wobble. "Um... we could get dinner tomorrow, maybe?"

Stella smiled. She sat up, pulling the blankets unsuccessfully around her body. "I've gotta ask about any more surprises in my schedule, but I do want to see you more. Let me call you a ride."

"No, no, no," Vera said, putting her paw on top of Stella's as she reached for her phone. "We're not doing that. I'll get my own."

"Alright." Stella teased the fox's messy hair again, loving how it ran softly between her fingers.

Vera put on her cap and sat down as she ordered a ride-share. She held paws with the big skunk until car lights swept across the windows, breaking the nighttime darkness. Leaning down, the fox kissed Stella's nose.

"I'm not sure what to say," Vera whispered, sliding her paw along Stella's arm. "Just, um... call my ph-phone when you can, okay?"

"I will," Stella replied. She was at a bit of loss for words, too. Things had jumped forward pretty quickly, yet it felt completely natural. "Goodnight."

Vera stepped out of the room and Stella peered through the window, watching as the fox climbed into the car that came to pick her up. The headlights turned and the car rumbled down the driveway and out of sight. Finally letting out a several-hour-long pent-up breath, Stella rubbed her

paws against her face.

As soon as Vera was no longer in sight, or within reach of her paws, or snuggled safely underneath her heavy body, her heart began to cannon in her chest. She sat on the bed, just staring into space for a long time.

Fuck.

\* \* \* \* \*

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