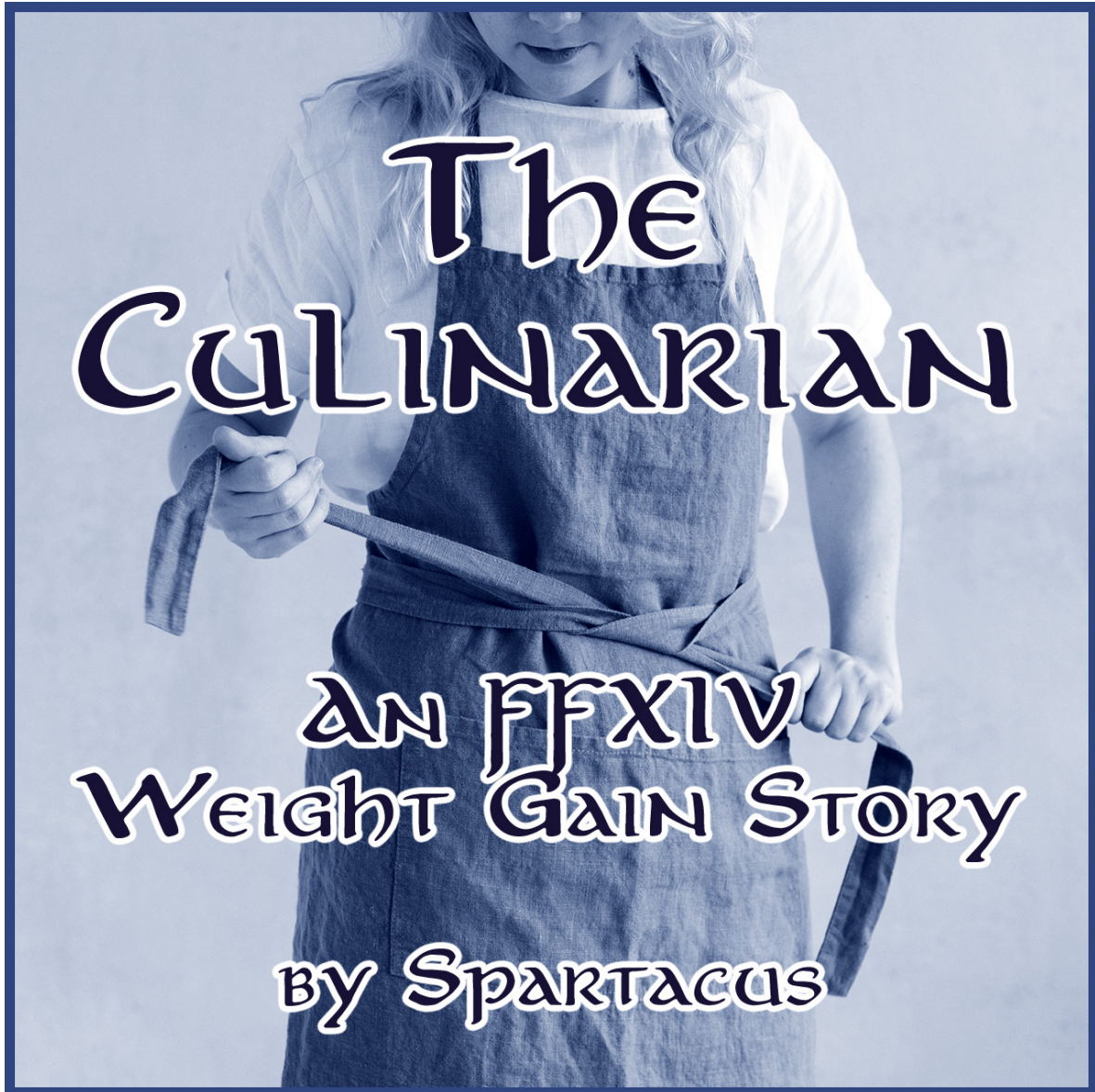




Disclaimer: This story contains adult themes. It is not suitable for minors or the easily offended.

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Contains: *Weight Gain, Stuffing*

The Culinarian

Constance's Cafe wasn't the most popular eatery in Gridania, but it was hers. With its handful of bar stools and three tables, the cafe was never completely full, but a steady stream of citizens and travelers kept her in enough gil to stock her pantry and larder. One of those regulars, a Lala named Nonororo, had left the cafe a few minutes before *she* walked in.

Constance was Hyuran, the humanlike race that made up nearly half the population of Gridania and the Black Shroud. She was short for her race, barely a yalm and a half tall, with a slender build and amber hair that hung in a fishtail braid nearly to her waist. She was used to looking up at most of her clientele with her grey-green eyes. The Alliance between the Eorzian city-states brought ever more varied races through Gridania, so she'd gotten used to craning her neck to serve the towering Elezen and hulking Roegadyn. Lalafel were shorter than everyone, of course, but even most Miqu'te women were a few ilms taller than she.

She wasn't the first Viera Constance had seen, but she was the first to enter her shop. With silvery-white hair falling in waves around her heart-shaped face and matching fuzzy ears as long as Constance's forearm stretching from her head, the woman had to duck her head slightly to fit under the cafe doorway. The Viera glanced around the shop curiously as Constance took her in. She wore dark armor covering her shoulders, wrists, and legs from mid-thigh to her feet. The breastplate cut a V between her legs, running up her sides to cover her chest, leaving most of her midsection visible under a drape of sheer fabric. She was clearly an adventurer, rigid posture and muscled limbs straining at her somewhat scandalous armor. Hells, those legs were almost as long as Constance's entire body, and those breasts... Constance briefly imagined herself using one of the cups of that breastplate as a hat.

Realizing she was staring, Constance shook herself. "Welcome in! Have a seat wherever you'd like."

The Viera glanced at the tables and the stools, stepping slowly up to the bar. As she approached, it seemed to Constance that the woman grew even taller, a pillar of tan skin looming over her. Even seated, her face only dropped half a dozen ilm or so, and Constance struggled to quiet the flock of pixies dancing a jig in her middle. The woman studied the menu board, her pale brows drawn together.

"I don't really... What do you recommend?"

Her voice was deep and smooth, like Kukurú Chocolate, making a fuzzy sort of warmth bloom below Constance's navel. She said, "The shepherd's pie is quite popular."

"I'll have some of that then, if you please."

Constance filled a glass of buckwheat tea, which the woman eyed a moment before lifting it to her velvety lips. A pleased smile spread across those lips, making Constance smile in turn. "Coming right up."

Constance eyed her plates in mounting panic. Most were a standard size for Hyur, Miqu'te, and Elezen, but she had a few Lala-sized plates and a handful of larger ones for Roe customers. The large portion might be too much for a Viera, but a body that... *substantial*, certainly couldn't subsist on Hyuran servings. She grabbed one of the large plates from the stack, making a mental note to ask the tinsmiths about making a fourth size.

Distracted by thoughts of the woman sitting just behind her back, Constance piled the plate overfull, wincing as she hefted the dish in both hands to place it before her waiting customer with a soft thump. The woman's violet eyes widened as she took in the steaming dish. Brushing a few strands of pale hair from her face, she blew on a spoonful of meat and popoto before taking an experimental bite.

"By The Twelve! This is delicious!" The Viera went in for a second spoonful without waiting for a response.

"Full glad am I to hear it," Constance said with a smile.

A party of two Hyur and a Miqu'te took one of the open tables, drawing away Constance's attention. By the time she served their drinks and dishes and was able to return to her place behind the bar, the Viera's plate was scraped clean. The towering woman leaned back in her stool, looking pleasantly sated. "I think I've found my new favorite place in this city," she purred.

Constance flushed. "Many thanks, I'm that proud of it."

"If this is your shop, you must be Constance?"

Constance nodded.

“Well met, Constance. Pray, call me Shaz.”

“I’m pleased you enjoyed your meal, Shaz. Can I tempt you with anything else? I have a lovely after-dinner tea with Doman spices, or some crème brûlée, perhaps?”

Shaz dropped a hand with long, elegant fingers to her middle, clearly engaged in some silent deliberation. “Oh, hells. Both would be splendid.”

“Of course.”

“Hey,” Shaz said as she eyed the overflowing platter of broad bean curry Constance deposited on the small table. “Could I ask you something?”

For the past few moons, the esurient Viera came to Constance’s Cafe more and more frequently. She’d yet to be dissatisfied by a single one of Constance’s dishes, heaping praise on the diminutive Hyur even as Constance heaped ever more food onto Shaz’s plates. She’d watched the bunny-eared woman’s armor grow increasingly tight, plump thighs oozing out of her pantalettes, belly spilling from the open middle of her chestwrap, and her divine bosom overflowing the cups of her metallic bra. It didn’t take long for the traditional Viera armor to vanish altogether, replaced by a series of increasingly roomy outfits. Shaz currently wore a flowing top and culottes made of pale lavender silk. The top fell long, one side passing Shaz’s knee, but did little to hide the generosity of her hips and backside, which were overflowing the sides of the wooden dining chair. Once sitting at the bar became too awkward, Shaz started using the table, and Constance purchased a fourth set, keeping this one reserved for her favorite customer. Seated in the overworked chair, Shaz’s face was level with Constance—though she could remember a time when the Viera’s eyes had been a few ilm lower, her seated height doubtless bolstered by the increase in her... seat. The posture gave Constance a full view of the cleavage that welled up in Shaz’s silk top. The material fell in a layered V, leaving malms of bare skin visible down to the belt cinched just below her bosom. Constance had seen that belt fastened above Shaz’s belly when she entered the shop, but it had slid up and out of sight below her breasts as the Viera filled that belly with Constance’s cooking.

Half-turned to check on other patrons, Constance said, “Hmm?”

“Pray, take no offense, but how did you come to be... *here*?”

Constance’s brow furrowed. “I’m not sure what you mean.”

“Don’t misunderstand, I adore this cafe. I would eat here every meal if I were able. But with food like this—” she waved her chopsticks at the glistening platter of curry “—you could be working in the finest restaurants in Limsa.”

Constance hesitated, folding her hands over her waist. With Shaz’s increasingly frequent visits to the cafe, the two women had become something like friends. Constance basked in the large woman’s praise, and Shaz wove tales of her adventures that made Constance giddy with wonder. Shaz had even once fought alongside the famous Warrior of Light.

“Hells, I have said something wrong. I pray you forget that I asked.”

“No, no. Apologies, I was lost in my thoughts.”

Shaz grinned. “You do that a lot.”

Constance couldn’t help but smile at Shaz’s teasing. “There’s no grand story to tell. I spent a year at The Bismarck, studying with the Culinarian’s Guild and serving at the restaurant. I suppose I could have stayed, but the Black Shroud is my home. Limsa Lominsa is just so... busy.”

Shaz grimaced. “Indeed. I love the sea air, but I try to spend as little time in that city as possible.”

Constance nodded. “And so, I prefer to run my humble little shop here, where I can come to know my customers in peace and quiet.”

Unable to resist any longer, Shaz plucked a small mound of rice and broad beans. “Full glad am I for that preference, though there is naught humble about your cooking.” Her eyes closed, and she hummed with delight as she chewed. “Although my armoire may be less than pleased...”

The comment seemed a personal musing, so Constance chose not to remark on it. She eyed the glass of sweet, dark liquid beside Shaz’s plate. “Can I bring you another sweet maple mate?”

Shaz’s eyes sparkled above her bulging cheeks, and she nodded.

“Constance! You’ll never guess my good news!”

The Hyur watched her friend fill the doorway of her cafe, skirted hips brushing the wooden frame. Constance sometimes imagined Shaz was getting taller as she filled out, but knew that couldn’t be true. The Viera did seem to grow wider every time Constance saw her, and the only thing keeping her from being as broad as a Roegadyn male was that she’d grown more “front to back” than side to side. Shaz lumbered into the cafe, floorboards creaking as she took her usual table. Constance had replaced the standard dining chair with an iron stool imported from Ul’dah after the chair collapsed beneath the hungry Viera. Shaz wore a floral cover-up skirt and a bikini top in a style popular during the recent Moonfire Faire, showing off malms and malms of smooth, tan skin: quivering thighs, softly rounded belly, and a pair of tits like prize-winning Allagan Melons.

The cafe being otherwise empty, Constance brought Shaz an extra-large glass of loquat juice. “I fear I am terrible at guessing games, so you had better just tell me.”

Shaz pouted. “You’re no fun. Oh, very well. I’ve taken a room at the Roost!”

The rooms above the Carline Canopy were the finest lodgings Gridania had to offer. It seemed her friend had decided to make the forest city her home.

“That’s lovely news!” Constance beamed.

“Is it not? I’ll be confining my leves to the Shroud, and I shall be just a short walk across town. You might even see me more than once in the same day!”

Constance’s heart thundered with elation at the prospect of seeing her friend so often. “That’s wonderful, Shaz.”

Shaz raised a plump arm to reach a hand toward Constance. By reflex, her own hand rose to meet the giant woman’s with a feather-light touch.

Heat blossomed in Constance’s middle, and she felt color rise in her cheeks. “Now, you must be famished—” she paused as both women contemplated the absurdity of that statement “—tonight I have Rroneek steak with a side of mashed popotoes.”

Shaz's pink tongue darted across her pillowy lips. "Sounds perfect."

Constance wondered idly how long her little cafe could hold up under daily visits from the Viera.

True to her promise, Shaz patronized Constance's Cafe nearly every day. Primarily for supper, but occasionally for luncheon or afternoon tea. She never quite made breakfast hours, but Constance often set aside Apkallu eggs to make her friend an omelette if she came in near midday.

And so, Constance cooked and fed, while Shaz ate and grew. To excess, in both cases. The Viera started coming into the cafe in loose tunics large enough for a Roe, straining at her ponderous bosom, and flowing skirts tucked under her round belly as it pressed deeper and deeper against her favorite table.

Then, Shaz stopped coming. A missed day or two wasn't unusual—if she was out on a protracted mission, staying in a village in or camping under the stars—but when nearly half a moon passed with no sight of her friend, Constance grew concerned.

As a pretense for her visit, Constance filled two baskets with DLT sandwiches until they were nearly too heavy for her to lift. She teetered across town, thin arms and shoulders burning with her burden until she staggered into the Canopy. An Elezen in a cap and cream robes greeted her at the Innkeep's counter.

"Good evening, miss. Your face is familiar to me, but I don't believe I've had the pleasure."

"My name is Constance. I run a cafe across town. I have a delivery for Shaz; I believe she has a room here?"

The man's eyes glowed in recognition. "Ah, yes, the, erm, robust Viera..."

He gulped as Constance shot him a glare. "I was not aware your eatery made deliveries."

Heat rose in Constance's cheeks. "It's, um, a new service I'm trying out."

The Elezen put on a placid smile. "Very good. You'll find Miss Shaz in room six. I've not seen her in some days, so she may not be in..."

Constance was already hauling her baskets up the stairs.

It took several knocks before the heavy door with a silver six nailed to its center shifted inward by an ilm. Shaz's violet eyes peered around the hallway with annoyance before her gaze shifted downward. "Oh... hi."

Constance's determination faltered. What was she doing here? Why had she hauled all this food across town? "Hi! Um... I hadn't seen you in a while, and I thought you might have come down with some malady." The excuse sounded stupid even to her own ears. Shaz clearly wasn't sick. Constance smiled weakly. "I brought sandwiches?"

"Oh my gods, you are the best!"

Shaz flung the door wide and beckoned Constance in. Extravagant wasn't enough to describe the suite. As large as her entire cafe with a bubbling fountain against one wall, the bed could have fit four of Constance with room to spare. Shaz wore little more than her smallclothes, her heavy shoulders draped with a silk robe that couldn't possibly close across her front. She relieved Constance of her burden, perching both baskets on the bed before dropping onto it herself, springs and frame creaking faintly.

"By the Twelve, am I glad to see you. I've been aching for your cooking." As she spoke, Shaz opened the first basket and plucked out a sandwich, peeling back its paper wrapping before sinking her teeth into the walnut bread.

Seeing Shaz seated on that bed, Constance amended her assessment of its capacity. She leaned against the desk below the window, watching her friend eat with a mixture of gratification and self-consciousness. She shouldn't stay, but now that Shaz had invited her in, she couldn't leave without making it awkward. More awkward, anyway.

"So... um... how have you been?"

Shaz's delighted expression fell, and her ears seemed to droop. The Viera's distress was so complete that she even stopped eating. "Oh, Constance, it's terrible!"

Nervousness fleeing from her mind, Constance crossed the room to rest a hand on her friend's shoulder. "What happened?"

"The Chocobokeep won't let me hire any more mounts after... after the third in a row came back with sprains. They said I've gotten too heavy to ride them! And without a mount, I'd have to *walk* to complete any leves, and it's so far!"

Constance tried to picture the overfed Viera tromping through the Shroud, startling packs of lemurs and scaring off whatever prey she was hunting. She suppressed a wince at the thought of a poor chocobo trying to bear all that bunnyflesh through the forest.

She stroked Shaz's arm gently. "Shaz, I'm so sorry. What will you do now?" If the Viera couldn't hunt and adventure, her prospects for earning gil were few.

"I don't know," Shaz whimpered. "Adventuring was the only thing I was ever good at, you know?"

Constance smirked. "You're pretty good at eating..."

Shaz swatted a hand at her, making her fleshy arm wobble. "Hush! That's how I got into this mess! My account is almost empty, and this room is only paid till the next moon."

A solution popped into Constance's mind like a word from Nophica herself. "You could work for me..."

Shaz met her eyes with her own tear-rimmed amethysts. "Huh?"

Details raced through Constance's head. "Come work for me at the cafe."

"But I don't know anything about working in a cafe. I could burn a pot of water!"

"You're friendly and personable," Constance insisted. "You could wait tables and carry plates so I have more time to cook."

"Where would I stay? Surely you can't afford to keep me here."

"I have an apartment behind the store." The words were out of Constance's mouth before she could stop them.

Shaz's eyes widened. "You mean... You and I... Together?"

Rather than skepticism or incredulity, Constance heard only hope in Shaz's silky voice. She took the Viera's hand, gaze darting between her violet eyes and her plump, glistening lips. "Why not?"

Shaz's eyelids drooped. "You... Truly?"

Constance nodded.

"Even though I've gotten so much bigger than you?"

A light chuckle escaped Constance's lips. "You've been bigger than me since we met. Why would I mind there being even more of you?"

Shaz tugged lightly on her hand until Constance was in danger of falling onto a pair of pillowy breasts larger than she was. She leaned in and pressed her lips to Shaz's.

When her mind floated back from the Aether, Constance found herself seated in the massive Viera's lap, straddling her bare thigh and swimming in a sea of soft bunnyflesh.

Shaz smirked. "Will you still say that when I've grown big as a Goobbue, I wonder..."

Constance pushed against Shaz's shoulders with her weary arms. She was nowhere near strong enough to budge the enormous woman, but Shaz obliged by falling back onto the mattress, making the sandwich baskets bounce. Constance climbed onto Shaz's hips, draping her small frame over the soft curve of the Viera's tummy, wrapping an arm around each of her massive breasts, and smiling up with her head enveloped in Shaz's cleavage.

"Of course I will." Constance sat up, plucking a sandwich from a basket and feeding it to Shaz. "Though we must needs call the carpenter's guild to widen the doors some before you move in..."