Attending a place like Buttercombe Academy, even for just a little while, could really skew the perceptions of anyone who enrolled there.

And that’s not just in the ways that the typical Private Boarding School Experience exposes students to new ideas. Concepts like portion control, delayed gratification, and even just something as fundamental as mealtimes are slowly whittled out of both students and teachers the longer they continue to attend the campus in what often feels like *any* capacity. There were only ever a handful of those that managed to escape the campus unscathed, those rare few teachers and graduates that weren’t stepping out from the hallowed halls of their alma mater at *least* half-and-again as big as they were when they first entered.

When Alice’s friends from Buttercombe Academy saw that she had managed to gain back all of the weight that she lost after moving to Daven’s Port, they weren’t particularly shocked—what left them so floored was just by how far she had surpassed her biggest size.

Megan, Ronnie, and Sam had all seen the video of the Abercrombie Acceptance Parade at various points, all around the time that it started to go viral; all forming their various opinions on the sheer size of some of the people that were being presented—none moreso than the vast white dollop crowned in feather plumage and adorned in costume gold.

The “Abercrombie Size Queen”, as she was being called by the internet, was quite literally immobile. If she hadn’t been on top of a float, seated in a throne straight out of Carnivale, she wouldn’t have even been able to match the glacial pace of all the other floats in the parade. Nestled comfy into her shoulders as the cheek meat around her dimpled with her breathless vocalizations, but with chunky little hands she waved politely to the crowd around her. Her sensible blonde bangs matted to her forehead as she tried and failed to deal with the springtime heat, her massive amounts of insulation seemingly offset by a double scoop of ice cream.

“How could anyone let themselves get that big.” Megan Mahoney had snorted from the comfort of her mother’s home, her top-heavy build cushioning her feet-up lazing to such a degree that she was not horizontal, “My ass is fat too, but you don’t see me literally parading it around for everyone to see…”

“Good for her—we stan a confident queen.” The barrel-built Ronnie Wilson chirped to her friend and business partner, Penny, who had shown her the clip in the first place, “Awww, she looks so happy!”

“Daaaaamn that’s a big bitch” Sam Wilsey’s rough laugh reverberated in her spare tire of chin and cheek chub as she reclined in her hot tub, “Givin’ me a run for my money—gotta show the fuckin’ group chat this one…”

And very slowly, the realization began to trickle into three minds at once. Three folks who hadn’t thought much of one another since high school, states apart in all cases, began to slowly have their memories tugged at. *Something* about that big blonde woman on the internet reminded them of *someone*; they just couldn’t quite put their finger on it… until they could put a name to a face.

“That’s… *noooo* that’s not—”

“Ooh! Hey wait I *know* her—”

“Oh shit oh shit oh shit oh *shit—”*

The name might as well have left their lips at the same time; that big blonde landslide getting paraded around like a blue-ribbon bouncy house was none other than *Alice Carlyle,* their old friend from Buttercombe Academy!

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Getting the three of them together had been far more of an uphill battle than any of them could have ever realized before they agreed to go pay their best friend Alice a visit.

Sure, Sam could cover the expense of logistically getting them all there—but that didn’t change the fact that Megan and Ronnie still had jobs to go to. Sure Megan was one foot out the door of her local Barnes & Noble already, but poor Penny couldn’t take on all of Ronnie’s work! Even getting Alice to agree to a time to visit had been difficult to manage; just what a thousand-pound woman did throughout the day that kept her busy enough to be so difficult to schedule around, the three of them couldn’t imagine…

“Teaching remotely is *still* teaching.” Alice said from the comfort of what was literally more metal bracing than sofa seating, “And when I’m not teaching, someone’s *still* got to watch Betty when she gets out of school.”

The three women that had touched down in Abercrombie were, between them, gearing on three quarters of a ton. The logistics of flying them all out to the Midwest had been baffling—Sam alone had needed an entire first class cabin to herself, all while Megan and Ronnie swallowed up two coach seats with their enormous physiques. The three Buttercombe survivors were so vast and heavy with the consequences of their appetites that they’d *all* had to wait until all of the other passengers had left so that the flight attendants could help wriggle them out.

And yet, even after seeing first-hand evidence of Alice Carlyle’s stupendous surge in size, the fact that the woman waiting for them in Abercrombie had ballooned up to the point where she was a half-ton (and thensome) on her own was enough to make all even the biggest among them balk in disbelief.

“So, what, you’re just doing Daddy Daughter Work day?” Megan felt like she was *swimming* in the armchair that usually housed Alice’s husband Zack and his enormous carriage, “How *old* even is—”

“She’s *six* and she’s *adorable~*” Alice crooned, chubby cheeks pink with the exertion of sitting up and the joys of motherhood as she struggled to reach for her phone, “Here, let me just pull up some photos…”

The changes in Alice Carlyle, in hindsight, were not more shocking than any of the ones that had befallen her other best friends from high school. Growing up and becoming a History of Fashion & Design teacher at Abercrombie University was, by comparison, one of the more mundane things to have happened to the freakishly fat foursome. No more odd than straddling a Lead position at a bookstore while still living with her parents, or owning a bakery in an up-and-coming city down south. Surely even the monumental weight gain that Alice had endured since the last time they’d all seen one another paled in comparison to things like Sam winning the lottery and continuing to pad her wallet by building a fanbase online with her size.

But seeing it all up close was downright sobering—even among the super-sized sisterhood of Buttercombe brats that had descended upon her otherwise unassuming midwestern house in the suburbs.

Alice had looked *huge* in the vertical video going viral around the internet, but seeing her *up close* was a whole different animal entirely. She was *enormous*—a great big blob with fluffy blonde hair propped up on a reclining bariatric bed, her stomach spilling all around her from every side as lovehandles and overhang melded into backfat and the remnants of what once were her thighs. The California King-sized wife and mother could rest her hands comfortably on the trusty table of tummy that spilled out in front of her, but her arms were too stubby and her belly too fat for her to reach much further than that.

How someone got to be this size in the first place raised enough questions on its own, but how she had been able to be a career woman, wife, and mother to her child made even the ever-enabled Sam Wilsey raise an eyebrow. *She* had lottery money and a bunch of simps online to make her life easier. Alice and Zack lived comfortably, but to call it any more than that would have been a stretch the likes of which even Alice’s prettiest pink cardigan wouldn’t have been able to pull off.

Megan, the lightest among them and still teetering at well over three hundred and fifty pounds, was all about the amenities that Alice’s deceptively accommodating ranch-style rambler had been able to provide for them. It had been so long since she’d felt *skinny* that she was genuinely in awe.

This was the same girl who used to try and gently remind her not to double-fist the cupcakes that Ronnie used to make for them back when getting her C’s to B’s and her DD’s growing into G’s were Megan’s biggest concerns. Now Alice quite literally had a mini fridge placed on her end table so that she could reach cans of ready-made milkshakes throughout the day because she was too fat to get up and walk herself to the fridge.

Ronnie, at well over four hundred, was concerned, despite the acknowledgement of her own hypocrisy. Penny hounded her at every opportunity over her weight, trying to get her to cut back on the sweets and still making attempts at roping her into going to the gym despite that *never* having worked in the past. But Alice was literally *twice* Ronnie’s size now! The same cute little freshman who used to get all teary-eyed whenever she popped out of her uniforms when they were in school!

Whatever she and her husband were doing was clearly *working*, like they seemed happy and all, but Ronnie couldn’t help but think that maybe Alice could make a few changes. This whole *town* seemed to be full of people around their size, so she and Megan and Sam weren’t exactly in any position to judge Alice for enjoying the Abercrombie accommodations, but how much bigger was poor little Alice going to get before this started to become a real problem?

That all being said, leave it to Sam, the closest one to minding the gap between Alice’s super-size and the only comparatively less vastness of her friends, to be the only one so outwardly supportive of Alice’s enormity.

“Look at you—fancy schmancy job, big ol’ house, dick on the reg…” Sam always had a certain *way* of describing things that, though a bit crass, was always more genuine than she might have lead on, “You’re livin’ the dream out here in Bumfuck Nowhere!”

Alice couldn’t have been more pleased with Sam’s assessment of the life that she and Zack had created out here. She was all smiles and sunbeams, her round face managing to dimple proudly as she beamed her way through a thank you. Even in telling the story of how they came out here for Zack’s job and how nervous she was to move again, Alice wobbled excitedly once she had been given the thumbs-up (to various sincerity) by each of her friends.

“We really like it out here! The people are so nice and the community is really tightly-knit.” Alice’s baby blues brightened after she managed to slurp down a few sips of shake, the can still gripped in her chubby sausage fingers as she reclined back to the headboard, “There are cook-outs and food festivals and all kinds of grand openings for restaurants—Abercrombie is still growing, if you can believe it! Apparently thirty years ago this was all farmland…”

As the livestock-sized hostess happily recounted the history of her new hometown, the place that had christened her as an adult with a steady job and a growing family, Megan and Ronnie could only glance at one another as oddity after oddity piled up. The accepting nature of folks around here as far as size went could only go so far when coupled with the mysteriously robust furniture that adorned Alice’s house and made her day-to-day life possible. The strange nature of the town’s obsession with eating made all but the most gluttonous of the foursome (read: the bigger of their better halves) downright concerned for what might lie in wait over the next *two days* of their vacation out here to the middle of nowhere…

“Abercrombie’s the *shit*, y’all.” Sam snorted, her fat face sloshing with mirth, “Don’tcha think?”

Megan and Ronnie could only smile and agree half-heartedly—the sight of Alice’s stupendous growth outweighed only by Sam’s starry-eyed obsession with this town that helped make Alice fat.