

Annamaria Part 7 – The Day of the Show

Summary: Annamaria has her first big fashion show, where she and other designers of the mutant world show off their vision. Laura has her first outing into the world of high fashion.

Tags: multi-head, multi-arm, multi-leg, fusion, NBM, tentacles, taur, tall, elasticity, tail, multi-breast, tentacles,

Everything's OK. Everything's OK. Everything's OK.

Everything was NOT OK! Sure, I had dreamed about being a part of a major fashion show one day but actually doing it was something completely different. My fashion designs were going to be the face of a multinational brand!

My own dress wasn't doing me any favors either. I showed all my clothes to Lucien, and they said none of them had the right "explosion of flavor" for a high fashion show like this. They had their other designers create a new dress for me, filled with spirals of fabric wrapping around my body attached to fine cloth mesh.

...

I felt like a villain from Power Rangers.

It didn't help that I had my own underlings to go with the look. Noelle and Daisy were there with me, ostensibly to act as my assistants through the show, though between you and me they seemed to be here primarily for the food and drink. They too were dressed in an outstandingly lavish dress of intertwined gold and silver ropes, hanging from their waist like a canopy. Meanwhile, their tops were reflectively sequined and fastened with absurdly high collars. Lucien said their outfit represented the "duality of the sun and moon."

I was still thinking Power Rangers.

My right hand kept looking to my watch while my left kept scanning the road that led up to the venue. The show was going to start any minute and Laura was still nowhere to be found. Did she have problems finding the venue? Did she decide not to come after all? Was this too intimidating for her? It was already too intimidating for me.

"Are you stressed?" Daisy and Noelle said at the same time.

"Why, do I look stressed?" I said with a nervous giggle.

"You are sweating so much you are standing in a pool of it," said Daisy and Noelle.

I looked down to the small pool of moisture that had collected at my feet. That was one bad thing about having multiple arms...it meant multiple armpits. I stepped to the side, as if that would help. Anyone who looked would know I was sweating like a pig.

"There is nothing to be nervous about," Daisy said.

"You are working yourself up over nothing," Noelle said.

"I... appreciate you guys trying to cheer me up, but... it feels like my whole career is on the line here," I said, tugging at the collar of my dress to try and air out my sweaty body.

"Why," the two of them asked.

"W-well, I mean everyone is going to see my work and what if they don't like it and-"

"If they don't like it, then it is their problem," Noelle said.

"Lucien is on the bleeding edge of mutant fashion," Daisy said.

"The public often dislikes their designs," Noelle said.

"Sometimes they don't even sell," Daisy said.

"It is worth it to push the boundaries of fashion," they both said.

Those words stunned me a little. I suppose I had never worked a job where I hadn't constantly worried that if I did something wrong, I'd be fired.

"If they do not like it, then you will come into work tomorrow," Noelle said.

"And if they do like it, then you will come into work tomorrow," Daisy said.

"The job remains," they both said. "Lucien is not trying to please the public, and you should not be either."

"But I thought, that was the point of fashion?" I said. "To make clothes that people want to wear."

"Perhaps in a store," Noelle said.

"But here, fashion is art," Daisy said.

Fashion is art... I mean... I knew that but... was that what I really loved about fashion? It really felt like every day new questions came up... new questions I did not have the answers to.

"But what if... I want to make clothes that people like wearing?" I asked Noelle and Daisy.

"Then-"

"ANNAMARIA!" I heard off in the distance, cutting Noelle and Daisy's reply short.

It was Laura. She was getting out of an Uber. Good. This conversation was already awkward.

Laura was... well she was stunning. She was dressed in a soft white dress which draped over her taur body, and simple red heels on each of her feet. Compared to the wild outfits at the show, she was the most conservatively dressed person here, but to me, she looked like an angel.

She stumbled a bit getting out of the car and walked up to me blushing. She obviously felt out of her element. I couldn't blame her. So, did I.

She spread her arms and hugged me with several, and then gave me a small kiss on the cheek. "Big day huh?" she said, trying to make small talk.

"Yeah," I replied. "It's been... intense to say the least."

"Who is this person?" said Noelle and Daisy, hovering way, WAY too close to me and Laura.

"Oh, uh, this is Laura, I uh... I told you about her before?" I said stammering over my words. "She's my... uh... girlfriend?" I said with a questioning tone that, upon reflection, was one of the stupidest ways I could put it.

Laura just giggled. "Yes, I'm her girlfriend. It's nice to meet you, uh..."

"Noelle!" Noelle said.

"Daisy!" Daisy said simultaneously.

Laura extended two hands for a handshake, but Noelle and Daisy just stared at her.

"Are they always this weird," she said between clenched teeth.

"No... usually they are much weirder," my left head whispered.

"The show will be starting soon," Noelle and Daisy said in unison. "You should take your seats."

And just as suddenly as they said that they began pushing me and Laura into the venue. We kept tripping over our own feet as Noelle and Daisy practically dragged us into the auditorium.

The venue was decorated stunningly. Long curtains and hanging lamps recreated the feeling of snow falling on a winter's day. Giant fans were set up across the runway to give the illusion of wind blowing through the models' hair. Soft violin music was mixed with a thumping bass beat. Apparently, Lucien liked to make people feel "discordant?" or something at their shows. They said this was to show that winter could be calm and beautiful but also rough and storming.

I really didn't get this art stuff.

Our seats were good though. As someone who helped put together the show, we had front row seats. There was a long carpeted raised catwalk that extended from behind the stage curtains, out into the audience, and we were right near the final platform. Lucien, however, was nowhere to be found.

“Isn’t Lucien coming?” I asked Noelle and Daisy as they took their seat. I was sitting next to them, and Laura was sitting on an elongated seat, made for a taur, next to me.

“Lucien never attends their events in person,” Noelle and Daisy said.

“What? But then how does he-“

“Lucien is a designer, not a showman. They watch from afar. They see no reason to stick their necks into shows like this once they start.” Noelle and Daisy said.

“Isn’t that weird...?” I asked.

“Have you not noticed that Lucien is weird?” Noelle asked.

“Everything they do is weird,” Daisy said.

“We are weird,” they said together.

“Lucien wants to give weirdos like us a place to work and live,” Noelle said.

“Weirdos like you too,” Daisy said.

“H-hey I’m not a weirdo!” I protested.

Laura just laughed. “Oh, I don’t know, you came off as kind of weird to me the day we first met.”

“WHAT!?” I exclaimed in a huff. “How was I weird? I just helped you pick out clothes!”

“Did you know that when you think about new outfits you talk to yourself?” Laura said.

“What? I do not!” I protested back.

“Yes, you do,” said Noelle.

“Yes, you do,” said Daisy.

“You pace around, heads talking to each other,” said Noelle.

“Like a crazy person,” said Daisy, “Or at least a fusion of two girls.”

“But we know you are just one girl,” said Noelle.

“One crazy girl,” said Daisy.

Laura couldn’t help but laugh again.

“OK, OK, are we quite done picking on me?” I asked with a gentle blush. At least it did help me break out of my cycle of nerves.

“So,” Laura said. “Did you design all the outfits here?”

“No,” I replied. “Just a couple models.

“You’ll point out which ones?” she asked.

“Yeah of course!”

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!” the speakers boomed. “PLEASE TAKE YOUR SEATS! THE DUBOIS WINTER SHOWCASE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!”

“Ooooh it’s starting!” Laura said with glee.

“Yep, here goes nothing!” I said, crossing every one of my fingers, each of my heads biting their lower lip.

I hadn’t ever been this nervous before in my life.

What is winter? The completion of the old year, or the start of the new one? What do the crisp winter winds tell us about ourselves? We bundle up in the furs of animals. We sit near fire, which burns, destroys, so that we may live. We celebrate holidays, and then lament the chilling sting of winter’s lingering grasp as it pushes into January and February. Winter is a duality, much like us as people, much like us as mutants. In a way, we are all winter. We are the turmoil of the winter storm and the calm of the sunny snow day. We are the joyous exuberance of the holidays and the crushing fatigue of a winter cold. We are conundrums, contradictions, constantly making decisions, second guessing them, and making them again, a life ever changing. And we at DuBois fashion want to express that, in our new winter line, not only the sight of winter, but the feeling of winter, the emotions of winter, the winter that lingers in our heads, and our hearts.

Without further ado, LET’S START THE SHOW!

The loudspeakers changed their soft violin music to thumping dubstep as the lights in the auditorium went down. Blue tinted spotlights shone on the curtains of the stage and the very first model came out.

This model was a large girl, possibly eight feet tall, covered in fur with webbed hands and feet. Unlike many of the other models she was covered in barely anything, a riff on what looked like a bikini. I suppose Lucien wanted to be able to get some items out there for mutants that have their own insulation. Huh. I had never thought about that before.

My long-legged model came out next, the one that I dressed up like a tree. Her spindly legs sold the illusion, which was only helped by several multi limbed mutants wearing capes made of feathers walking down the aisle next to her.

“That’s one of mine,” I whispered to Laura.

“And that’s one of mine,” Noelle added.

“Wait... the bird outfits? Noelle, you design too?”

“Everyone at DuBois fashion is allowed to design if they want. Lucien wants to expose all mutants to the world of high fashion,” Noelle said.

“Huh... Every day I learn something new about them...”

“SHHHHHH!” came an angered hush from the audience behind me.

“Sorry sorry!” I whispered. I would have to be careful of when I talked.

Up next was a mutant that appeared to be nothing but a head, a pair of breasts and many tentacles. She had shiny white silk stretching between her limbs which gave her the illusion of being a sort of living snowflake. She was followed by the mutant that I worked with who was carried by her handler. The lights really did a fantastic job selling the ocean illusion.

Another model came up on stage, a young woman with what must have been twenty legs. Her designer seemed to coat each of her individual legs with their own micro dress. So, as she moved it looked like she was controlling several puppets representing people at a winter ball.

Another model came on stage, probably the tallest one yet. She appeared to be three torsos, all stacked on top of each other. She was wearing a dress that started billowy at the bottom but slowly became thinned out toward the top, making it look almost like she was living cloud cover. She spun and twirled around, extending her hands in a small dance, as the music shifted to operatic.

The next was the most nerve wracking one. Barbara... coming out in nothing but a casual jean outfit. It was the only outfit here that wasn’t incredibly intricately designed. It just looked like any other outfit you could wear on any other day.

“Crap,” I thought. I was so stupid to have done this! I’m a professional fashion designer now. I was supposed to be making art! I’m going to be laughed off the stage. I’m going to be...

The dubstep music blared, and Barbara came practically dancing down the runway, strutting her taur legs one in front of the other.

... and the crowd went wild.

They loved it. They loved every part of it. This simple ensemble, jeans and a top, it made this crowd of fashionistas go crazy! How!? Why!?

“I love how it captures the feeling of being home on a cold night,” one audience member said.

“Low class chic, I love it,” said another.

“An upcycled version of a bargain big outfit. How gutsy. Lucien has done it again!” said a third.

Was... I taking crazy pills? I just put Barbara in a shirt and jeans!? How on earth did they think this was the same as all of these incredibly intricate and overdone dresses.

“That’s one of yours, isn’t it?” Laura said.

“How could you tell?” I asked.

“Well, I don’t know. It just feels like it was designed by someone who cared about comfort, about how the model was feeling. It’s also one of the only things here I would actually wear on a winter’s day.” She laughed a bit.

“Yeah, that’s Barbara. She’s a big model in Port Solei. She came here just for this show.”

“Well, she does your outfit justice,” Laura said, giving me a big hug.

“You know, she actually said she would like to hang with me during off work hours sometime. She only has a few more weeks here before she has to go home. I can introduce you to her if you want.”

“That sounds lovely,” Laura said. “Maybe we can go out for some drinks and-”

An EXPLOSION rocked the stage, as another mutant came out. She had two heads where her breasts should be, and where her neck would have been a collar made of red fiery cloth, making her look like a walking volcano.

“And maybe it can be someplace a little less loud!” Laura shouted over the music and pyrotechnics.

“Yes, that sounds lovely!” I said. “I’ll get in touch with her and-”

BOOOOOM! Another explosion.

“M-maybe we should just wait until the shows over!”

The rest of the show went off as predicted with the crowd loving all of the new designs. When the curtains closed, and the lights came back on I took Laura backstage to introduce her to Barbara and perhaps set up a time to get together outside of work before she had to go back to Port Solei. “Barbara,” I called as I maneuvered around racks of clothing and amps.

“Oh, hey Annamaria!” she waved at me with a smile. “How are you doing? Who’s your friend?” Her eyes were traveling all over Laura as we approached. She was clearly delighted to see another taur mutant.

“This is my girlfriend Laura,” I said and motioned to indicate her.

Laura blushed. “It’s nice to meet you. You did wonderful up there. I hear you do a lot of modeling in Port Solei, too.”

“Yeah!” Barbara said, a wide smile spreading across her face. “You wanna see some photos?” Before Laura could even answer she was already pulling out her phone and opening up the photo gallery. She handed it to Laura to let her swipe through them. “These are some of me and 3 of my best friends at one of our latest shows.”

I looked over Laura’s shoulder as she swiped through Laura’s photos. I recognized the mutants in the photos. There was Christine, the mutant with a double face. She was wearing This really elegant gown that hugged her three breasts tightly, emphasizing her ample cleavage. Mary had on a tube top that showed off not only her four front breasts but her two back breasts as well, and micro skirt that wasn’t even long enough to need a tail hole. Her tail looped around so that the head at the tip of it hovered just above her shoulders, and just beneath it there was a black choker to complete the outfit. And who could forget the gorgeous three-legged model, Penelope? Her low cut, short halter dress showed off her three long legs perfectly. They were all showing their stuff as they strutted and sashayed down the runway, the crowd no doubt in awe of their beauty.

“These are stunning! Thank you for showing them to me,” Laura said as she handed Barbara her phone back.

“No problem!” Barbara said and tucked it away. “I have to get going now, but Annamaria maybe we can get together sometime this weekend. Grab a drink and go dancing? Laura you could come along, too.”

My face lit up with a smile knowing Barbara liked Laura, too. “That would be great! I’ll text you later and we can work out exactly what time.”

“Sounds great!” Barbara said and walked away, swaying her rear hips.

Laura and I couldn’t help staring at them as the mutant model walked away.