Ayako fully expected to wake up groggy and tired, she had put on an all-nighter with the newest game she had purchased, after all. She knew she should have waited till the weekend, but having it right there in her room, sitting without use, was far too tempting…

When your family didn’t approve of anything that wasn’t martial arts, indulging in your hobbies was all the more tempting. She told herself it’d be worth it, she’d endure the consequences.

As it happened, she instead woke up feeling extremely well rested, without a hint of drowsiness the sort of pain in one’s eyes when you don’t get a good night’s sleep. It was like she had slept a full eight hours and woke up utterly and completely ready to start the day.

She had no explanation for it, so better not look at a gifted horse in the mouth.

Hoping out of bed with a body full of vigor, Ayako found she didn’t even have to stretch or take a moment to wake up fully. She felt like she had been up and it for hours already and with energy to spare. She hummed curiously to herself before shrugging and putting on her uniform, “Well, guess you lucked out, Mitsuzuri” Hey, maybe she’d be able to pull out some more gaming time tonight if this kept up.

Let it never be said Ayako Mitsuzuri didn’t have her priorities straight.

Heading out of her room with her school briefcase in hand, Ayako closed the door behind her, not realizing the material had bent somewhat under her grip.

X~X~X~X~X

As a physically active girl with various sports and martial arts under her belt, Ayako never had any issues with PE, she was a pretty good student in that regard, following through the exercises at a good rhythm and tempo. Though her specialty was archery, she did not particularly excel at other challenging activities. Such as the track field, that area was *ruled* by the trio of Yukika Saegusa, Kane Himuro, and Kaede Makidera. The last one, in particular, was their school’s star runner, whose potential and constant diligence towards the sport all but promised she’d have a career in the field one day.

Dressed in a plain white shirt and sports briefs, Ayako took her stance at the starting line along with the other girls. Even with the previous workout and exercises she still hadn’t managed to spend even a fraction of the energy she had welling inside of her. So when the coach’s whistle rang, she took off at full spring with energy spare.

She huffed in even rhythms as her arms swung back and forth in practiced locomotion, focused only on the task ahead of her, running over the field’s long line. It felt so… easy, so natural. Like she had done this a thousand times on much longer fields, not just track fields, but all sorts of terrains.

*Jagged arid hills, verdant forests, sandy beaches. Many of them plagued by all manner of beasts and deadly predators. They weren’t dangers or obstacles, there were just more tests.*

Ayako blinked as she came back from that… daydream. Honestly, she had no idea what that was, and when she snapped back into reality, she realized was running past Kaede, who looked at her in astonishment as Ayako kept running, outpacing *her* in speed and endurance.

When she reached the finishing line, there was only a slight sheen of sweat coating her skin, and her breathing was only a little bit agitated.

That… had been so easy.

Kaede and her friends finished close (relatively) while the rest of the girls were still going. The dark-skinned girl panted, resting over her knees while the rest of the trio tried catching their breath as well. “What the hell Ayako?!” The track star muttered, more out of disbelief than jealousy or anger. “How did you get so fast?!”

“I…” She barely had an answer herself. “Guess I’ve been training far more recently, you know how my family is…”

Himaru panted repeatedly, “They must be putting you on Olympic-level training if you were able to beat the school record and *barely* look tired…”

Okay, *now* Kaede looked angry and jealous.

X~X~X~X~X

As they hit the showers, Ayako kept thinking about what she had (unwittingly) achieved today. Even with all the training her family put her through for martial arts and archery, she still shouldn’t be at that level. Her brother trained almost as much as her and he certainly couldn’t do a college-level run like she had just now.

Was she hitting a peak? Was it a late-blooming potential of hers? Was all her training making her tap into some unknown power that took her to levels beyond that of her peers?

Ugh, she was playing too many visual novels…

She tried to forget about it for a moment, soaking under the shower. It became harder to do once Kaede’s excited voice called out, “Yikes, no wonder you beat my record! You’re getting cut!”

“Hmm?” Ayako looked down at herself and noticed something that had escaped her this morning somehow. Her arms were more defined, if she flexed them a small bump would come out. Her abs had a distinct series of lines running over them, and her legs were firmer and more toned.

She blushed when Kaede shamelessly poked at her stomach. “Girl, I’ve been working my ass off to get abs like this! What’s your secret?”

That was something Ayako was starting to wonder as well…

X~X~X~X~X

As class finished for the day, Ayako threw her briefcase over her shoulder and began walking home, running into someone else as she was leaving the school grounds. Rin Tohsaka looked like the prim and proper high-school star she always did, with a dignified air and a perfect pose.

Honestly, that was just Rin’s usual flair of ‘I’m better than you’ attitude. It was a weird friendship that the two had. They didn’t really hang out all that often, but there was a sort of mutual understanding and respect between them. She sure was spending a lot of time with Shirou and Sakura now. Well, good for her. Rin always had difficulty making friends regardless of what her popular status might show, so Ayako was happy for her.

“I heard you beat our dear track star’s record,” The Tohsaka said with some interest. “My, you’ve been pushing yourself Mitsuzuri”

Ayako shrugged, ignoring how her uniform felt a bit tighter than before. “Fully expecting her to break that record again, honestly”

“Not so eager to defend your new title?”

Ayako snorted, “It’s her title, I got no interest in being the track star. I just got lucky I think”

“Hmm…” Rin muttered as she shot her a very strange look. “Lucky indeed” And turned around and left.

Weird girl.

Ayako continued walking toward her home, idly pondering on the strangeness of today. She had gone the entire day feeling completely energized, and even with the sun setting and casting an orange light over the city, she barely felt like she had spent a few drops from her tank, she was still firing on all cylinders without a hint slowing down any moment soon. She wondered if she might even feel tired enough to go to sleep today…

She would have continued her trek with a distracted gait if not for a sight that *instantly* made her go on alert.

Yukika Saegusa was a cute girl, the most innocent-looking one of the Track Trio. Less of a runner herself and more of a manager of the club. Someone who would have preferred to go into cooking but settled for the same club as her friends. So she was not the most athletic girl at school, certainly didn’t practice martial arts. Combined with her adorable appearance she proved to be a disarming presence.

Or to people with less than ‘good’ intentions, an easy target.

Down the empty street, Yukika had her back against a wall, trembling as she held to her briefcase for dear life. Her eyes quivering with pooling tears, the poor thing looked like she wanted to run away. But she couldn’t all her exits were blocked by the trio of men blocking her.

They looked like knock-off yakuza. Just delinquents barely of age who pretended to be real-life gangsters, with their torn jeans and ruffled jackets, sporting various types of piercings while casually brandishing handmade weapons. One had a baseball bat slung over his shoulder, another had a chain wrapped around his hand. The last one, who was getting way too close to Yukika’s space, had his hands in his pocket, and Ayako didn’t dare imagine he didn’t have a weapon on him.

“P-Please, I just want to go home!” Yukika begged them with a breaking voice.

“Now why you gotta be like that?” The thug smirked creepily at her. “I just wanted to get your number. Can’t blame a guy for wanting to hang out with a pretty girl like you?”

She gulped, tears streaming down her face.

“What, you don’t want to go out with me? Now that just hurts me,” His sleazy smirk began to show all his teeth. “You don’t wanna piss me off, girlie…” His companions laughed cruelly at that.

Ayako saw red.

“*Get the FUCK away from her!*”

She already dropped her briefcase and stomped her way toward them with her fists clenched, feeling her knuckles pop. The first thug looked at the newcomer annoyed, while Yukika had hope in her eyes. “A-Ayako-san!”

“Who the fuck are you?”

Ayako didn’t have the patience to retort with anything witty, she wanted these assholes to get away from Yukika *right now*. And she was willing to throw down against all three of them if she had to. Her soul was roaring with anger and indignation, unwilling to let the poor girl become a victim.

“You trying to ruin my fun?” He clicked his tongue. “Whatever. Beat that bitch up” He ordered the other two, who gleefully walked up to her in an attempt to intimidate her as they brandished their weapons.

Insects. Nothing but vermin…

“Don’t you know who we are, girl?”

“Trash”

It was almost funny how one word seemed to piss them off while she herself felt she was about to erupt into flames by how much her chest was burning with barely contained rage. They knew nothing of anger…

Bat guy came for her first, shouting as he brought down his weapon upon her.

Ayako was a practitioner of martial arts, a damn good one at that thanks to all of her family’s training. She saw the attack coming a mile away and should have easily dodged it. Yet instinctively she brought up her arm, letting the wood collide with her forearm.

The bat broke the moment it made contact.

The thug barely had time to react when Ayako delivered a powerful kick to the side of his stomach. The impact was so strong he was almost sent flying toward the wall, all he could do was double over in pain, unable to get back up.

“W-Woah, what the fuck?!” The chain guy exclaimed in shock, unwrapping his chain to use it as a whip to keep her distance after seeing what she did to his friend.

Ayako merely reached out, letting the chain wrap around her hand before she grabbed it tightly and *tugged*. The thug yelped as he was pulled forward, where Ayako’s fist was waiting for him. She took satisfaction in the feeling of his nose breaking as he was knocked down for the count.

Ayako’s brown eyes glared at the remaining thug, who in a panic fiddled with his pocket in an attempt to pull out his own weapon. She almost laughed at the pitiful switchblade he pointed at her with a shaky hand and an atrocious stand.

It was almost too easy to knock it out of his hand.

Just as easy as it was to grab his neck and lift him up until his feet weren’t touching the ground. He struggled, kicking and gasping as his hands uselessly clawed at her arm, trying to pry the fingers with an ironclad grip around his throat.

Just a squeeze, that’s all she needed to snap this lowlife’s neck.

He deserved it. He should never have prayed on a defenseless young woman. The amazon was going to make sure he never would again.

“Ayako!” Yukika’s voice barely registered in her ears until she started shaking her. “Ayako!”

The young woman blinked, as if snapping out of a trance. Amazon, that’s what she had called herself in her thoughts. Why… What was that about? She looked at her schoolmate, then at her arm, and the thug in her grasp who grew limp as the lack of air caused him to pass out.

Ayako dropped him, and he fell limply on the ground. Breathing but unconscious.

Yukika started at her savior with a mix of gratitude, wonderment, and *shock*. “How did you do that…?”

“…Are you okay?” Ayako avoided the question.

When Yukika shakily nodded, Ayako went back to pick up her briefcase, giving one last look at the thugs she had *easily* demolished. Once more, Ayako had no answers for what had transpired today.

“I’ll walk you home” She decided that was the best she could do right now.

X~X~X~X~X

Ayako was lying in bed as she kept pondering on today’s events, going over them repeatedly in her head. From the athletic feats that defied explanation, to how she put those thugs in their place was such frightening ease.

It scared her, not knowing where those… battle instincts had come from, even her years of martial arts had not honed such precise and devastating movements. Much less installed into her such clarity with which she did not feel any fear even in the face of real danger. Only a rage so intense it brought a strange sense of focus.

She knew how to dodge, where to strike, what to do to overcome her opponents in the fastest, most efficient way possible… even how to kill them.

She would have killed that man had she not stopped…

It had felt… natural, in a way she could not explain.

Sleep did come that night, but it wasn’t exactly because she was tired. Rather it was her constant pondering that put her in a trance, in which darkness eventually claimed her.

Ayako dreamed. No, that wasn’t the right word. Was she remembering? That couldn’t be either. The things she saw weren’t of her life.

Yet she saw them all the same. More than that, she felt the smells and flavors that came with the moments she witnessed (re-lived). The salty smell of the sea. The taste of freshly grown olives. The burn in her muscles as she trained with spear and blade.

There were women around her. So many of them. Warriors all. Tall, imposing, muscular, beautiful, glorious. The blood of the War God ran strong in their veins.

Yet stronger still ran in two. Her sister(?) and herself.

Ayako felt she was staring at a mirror, and yet the reflection was a whole different person. The white hair was done in a few braids to keep it from cascading down the back. Those golden irises shone with strength and experience. And the body… it was a finely honed weapon of war, crafted from years of brutal training. Empowered by the blood of the War God. And blessed with the allure to charm the hearts of men and women alike.

Muscular. So muscular. Female warrior sensuality at its rawest. Large and imposing. Toned to perfection. With arms the size of pythons that would make any man weep with jealousy, a valley of perfectly carved abs, and a back so wide it was like a mountain range of girth and tone…

She fought. She killed. She conquered. They all did. With a war cry on their lips, they pillaged and reaped the rewards. They slaughtered monsters and men alike. They would not be stopped. They were the Daughters of Ares. And so long as his blood flowed hotly in their hearts, so too would the battle continue.

…And yet.

And yet…

She fell.

And shame was all she knew in her last thoughts.

…No.

No. No. NO.

She would not allow it.

She was strong, she was powerful.

She was an *amazon*.

Ayako’s body convulsed in her sleep, her face twisting into a grimace as a pitiful whine escaped her lips. Her pajamas ruffled and strained as the flesh hiding underneath *expanded*. Her sleeves filled out, little by little until the threads began protesting. Her legs increased in length, her quads widened as the fabric tightened around them, and her glutes inflated as they swallowed her underwear between rock-hard globes.

Ayako woke up with a gasp, sitting up on the bed as she ran a hand through her suddenly damp forehead. *What was that?* She wondered while ragged pants escaped her lips. She swung her legs off the bed and stood up, quickly walking towards the bathroom. Her sleeping clothes felt tighter than before…

Upon reaching her destination she splashed water on her face, taking a few more deep breaths as she slowly calmed herself. Ayako stared at herself in the mirror and found her own reflection staring back at her, not that woman’s. Brown eyes and hair instead of white and gold, and a normal body instead of enormous muscle.

…Why did her clothes look so snug?

She quickly lifted her shirt, and Ayako was treated to the sight of a fitness model.

Her abs were amazing, six blocks separated by thin lines. Her lats were starting to pop out, and her arms were firmly shaped balls of hard muscle. Ayako watched in awe as she slowly raised them and flexed, and small hills rose from her biceps.

Her bare breasts looked fuller, far more developed than before, supported by a strong chest with faint lines separating each pec.

Ayako’s flabbergasted expression slowly gave way to awe and amazement. She looked… magnificent. So powerful, so strong, so sexy…

The sudden wave of arousal hit her like a truck. She blushed when her nipples slowly unfurled from her areolas, and a dampness spread under her panties. Ayako could not will this *heat* away, so she only had one solution.

A shaky hand put a lock on the bathroom door, before it grasped one of her breasts, while the other went to her pants to stoke the heat.

X~X~X~X~X

It did not end that night.

Ayako kept growing bigger, faster, *stronger*, with each passing day. She took to wearing loose clothes whenever she could. To hide the very toned muscles in her body, and avoid questions and stares.

Not because she was ashamed of it, but because she *enjoyed* having her muscles admired.

The times she couldn’t hide them in school were the hardest for her during gym class, with the Trio basking in admiration for her newfound fitness. The showers were such a painful affair, Ayako had to hold herself back from flexing and having the girls fondle her muscles, for she felt the strong need to grab one of them and kiss them firmly, tightly wrapping them in her mighty arms before-!

Ayako was being consumed by this need to express her muscular might, to dominate and have others bask in her glory.

Try as she might to repress those feelings, there was no stopping her body’s development. And as much as she fought against it… Ayako still indulged in it, because deep down she wanted it *so bad*.

She made use of her boundless energy during the night. Running laps all over the city, pushing herself to the limit in hopes of finding *a* limit. Find a challenge that would make her muscles grow stronger while at the same time keeping herself away from others lest she lose control of this *proud beast* inside her. This warrior woman who wanted to roar.

She went to the most isolated place she could find, the woods, where her running eventually ended, not for lack of energy, but so she could keep training.

Ayako wore a previously loose tracksuit and pants with sneakers that were more form-fitting these days. Hints of sweat started dripping from her skin and soaking into the clothes. She held her hands behind her back and squatted, over and over she moved up and down to work her legs and her core.

She must have done a thousand before she grew bored of it.

“I need to test,” She muttered to herself, her brown eyes slowly shifting to a honey-gold color, “my strength”

There have been small accidents. Doorknobs she broke, doors she nearly pulled out of their hinges, metal bent under the strain of her grip. And those had been done unconsciously.

What would she be able to achieve, were she to put actual *effort* into it?

Ayako looked at the nearest tree and had an idea.

The trunk was wider than her, and the tree was at least seven times her size. She took a deep breath as her stance shifted into a martial arts kata, putting an open palm facing the tree while her right hand tightened into a fist. The muscles of her arms jumped, making the sleeve of her tracksuit ruffle and become snug.

Ayako let out a cry as her fist shot forward.

The tree groaned and shook, the bark around her fist splintering with broken pieces flying everywhere. Yet her hand remained unharmed, her fist did not hurt her in the least despite her knuckles burying into the wood.

Ayako reared her fist back and did it again.

And again.

And again.

She kept hitting the tree, making the leaves ruffle and the trunk shake, as her fist kept carving a path of destruction through its depths.

Ayako panted with a smile, she could feel it, this depth of power inside of her surging. She was finally, *truly* tapping into it. Filling her every pore, through her tendons and fibers, strengthening her muscles the longer she drew it out.

“HAAAAH!”

The final punch broke the tree. And Ayako moved away when it began tilting forward until it hit the floor with a thundering noise.

Ayako looked at the fallen tree, at her hand that had made it crumble, and grinned. “Gods that felt so good…”

It felt *good* to feel strong. It was *amazing* to wield this sort of power. This mark of greatness…

“Can I…?”

Without thinking, Ayako bent over, putting her fingers under the tree trunk as far as she could get them… and *lifted*.

“Hrn!” The martial artist groaned with effort, yet daunting as the task was, it wasn’t *impossible*. Her legs slowly straightened themselves, her arms burned yet still they were lifting the fallen tree from the ground.

And from her effort, her body morphed, transformed by the energies dwelling in her spirit. Her pants became painted on as her quads widened, flexing from the effort, calves surged forward as her buttocks hardened like granite. Her forearms widened in circumference, making the sleeves hike up while her shoulders inflated as she lifted the entire thing *over* her head. Her biceps quivered, pulsating with raw power as the mounds enlarged enough that a few rips began running over their lengths. Her thorax widened, her back expanded with potent musculature as her lats flared up, lifting her tracksuit enough to show the first two rows of abdominal muscles and a toned v-line. The zipper snapped under the onslaught of her pecs and breasts, revealing the white undershirt that looked painted on at this point.

Ayako had never felt stronger in her entire life.

With a valiant cry, she threw the fallen tree with great force, this one flew through the air before it collided with several trees on its path. They were crushed and wrecked as a result.

She had done that… *She* had performed this feat of superhuman strength with her own hands.

Ayako stared transfixed at the small-scale destruction she had unleashed, a small part of her finding it impossible a normal young woman could be capable of that. But when she looked down at herself, she realized she was not ‘regular’ in any single way anymore. Not with the body of a bodybuilder like this one…