

The Thin Line

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Submitted: July 9, 2010

Updated: July 9, 2010

She may have been sixteen years old, but she looked about twelve, and was acting over this like she was five. Nana wasn't quite sure if she should keep fighting those lovely teen hormones. Oneshot, onesided Nana x Dedede.

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Nana stared into the mirror, her reflection looking right back at her, into her eyes. Her short brown hair was messy now, having been under her parka hood all day. She brushed her bangs back with an ungloved hand. The expert mountain climber looked almost unrecognizable in her pink pajamas, but her partner and their roommate were used to it by now.

"Come on, you've been there for several minutes!" Sonic spoke up from next to his bed, tapping his foot impatiently.

"Yeah, Nan'!" Popo added, already sitting on his own bed, sheets covering the lower half of his body. "Either stop being emo, or turn the lights off while you do it!"

"I'm checking for blemishes!" Nana fibbed. "Unlike you filthy pigs, ugh!" Still, she complied, walking over to the light switch and flipping it onto off.

It was pretty odd, at least to an outsider, that not only were there three tenants in an apartment that housed two to a room, but it was a co-ed room at that. But it had always been this way since the 'Melee' batch of fighters moved in. Nana and Popo were inseparable, and no silly idea about boys and girls mixing was going to change that. Sonic had learned to deal with it when he was assigned their room.

Nana had to stop herself from laughing out loud as she went to her bed, but it wasn't because of Sonic's melodramatic sigh and the following flop onto his bed. This was a sarcastic, bitter laugh. *How stupid. They're worried about us doing all kinds of things, but I'm crushing on a guy all the way on the other wing of the apartment!*

She lied down, pulling her blanket over herself. How many times had she been tongue-tied around him? Oh, this was idiotic to the max! Why would she even think about him that way!?

Without realizing it, Nana curled up a little. *Screw you. Just screw you.*

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The boys had gotten up before her, so until Popo got done with the shower, she had the room to herself. Once again, she stood in front of the mirror, and this time, she looked over the rest of her body. "Short," she muttered to herself out loud. "Short and flat. Kinda baby-faced, too. Puberty's being so mean to me."

Late bloomer didn't even begin to describe her. No wonder some people thought she wasn't even a teenager yet. How was it that aside from all the messy unwanted things, she had barely developed physically, but emotionally...?

"Ew, ew, ew!" Nana shook her head. "Admiring a giant bird isn't development at all! I was supposed to

grow out of dumb crushes like that in elementary!"

Still, she glanced back at the dresser, with two matching hammers propped up against it. True, some of the others used their hammers in fights, and there were always the hammer items for everyone to use, but...

When Dedede had first arrived, Nana felt a bit of her uniqueness die. Someone else with a hammer as their main weapon, out at all times? Ha, what a joke. This had led to a brief rivalry about quantity over quality, and it was still something that shone through at times, but lately...

Well, Nana was noticing the little things. How well the jet engine inside worked. How he could easily use the hammer one-handed if he wanted to. How nice and strong his arms were. How his eyes were a cute shade of blue...

Nana pinched herself on the arm for how fast her thoughts derailed, and yelped. As this happened, Popo opened the door. "Nana? Is something wrong?"

"I-I'm fine!" Nana tried to cover. "I stubbed my toe, alright?"

"You're not fine," Popo replied sternly. They had spent their whole lives with each other, and had a bond normally only shared between siblings or lovers. Nana couldn't hide her emotions from him very well, if at all.

Nana began to storm out the room, grabbing her pink parka, matching pants, and an undershirt out of the clothes basket. "Oh, just be quiet! I'm gonna go wash up. See you later."

Nana left the room, not looking back at Popo. She wanted to go back and apologize, but her body wouldn't let her. It was stuck on autopilot, going to the bathroom. Dammit, what was she, *five!*? Why was she throwing a tantrum and taking it out on Popo when it's all stupid Dedede's fault!?

No, no, it was hers, mostly. She locked the door, and was soon in the shower, letting the water run cold for once. She needed to clear her head, and fast.

Nana had crushes on fellow tenants before, including a long-standing one on Popo. She still did too, didn't she? So why was she thinking about Dedede a lot more than him lately? She was teetering on the line between admiration and puppylove pretty badly.

What would Peach do? What would Zelda say? They'd probably tell her to go with her heart. Ha, that was for fairytales. Samus was probably about as experienced with infatuation as Nana was. And Jigglypuff? Oh, please, don't even *start* on that creampuff! At least the princesses could get their heads out of the clouds.

Nana was a little more than rough when she lathered shampoo into her hair. Maybe they were somewhere on the right lines, though. Surely, Nana couldn't be the only girl in the world crushing on a totally incompatible guy, could she? Was this self-loathing and anger worth fighting it all? Seriously, that was the fifth time this week she spaced out in front of a mirror trying to check herself out.

Nana thrust out an open palm, slamming the knob and shutting the shower off. Her hand hurt now, but she didn't want to bother with it. She was done sticking around in the shower. It only helped point her in the right direction; it still let hormones kick her while she wasn't looking.

She successfully kept her mind on other things as she dried off and got dressed, leaving the coat hood down. Leaving the bathroom let a pleasant warmth rush over her. Had she really let the shower get too cold, or did she accidentally shoot some ice again? Ah, that was Pikachu's problem now. She waved to him, but said nothing as she headed down the hall, towards the stairs.

As she bounded down them, the comforting smell of breakfast reached her. Whoever had cooking duty this morning was pretty good. Nana hoped it was Peach, but she had it yesterday and was unlikely to get it today.

Nana passed the storage room, which was now kept under lock and key after the younger tenants decided it'd be fun to go in and steal some Cracker Launchers. She chuckled at the memories, and entered the kitchen, which doubled as the dining room.

It was mostly empty, as expected for five in the morning. The first person Nana noticed was Mr. Game and Watch at the stove, flipping some pancakes. The grin plastered on her face widened. She had always been amused at the 2D fighter in a 3D world.

Then, she looked over at the table, and felt her heart jump a little. Dedede sat there, looking over the newspaper, a bagel he had probably prepared himself on the plate nearby. Could she leave? No, no, that'd be dumb and *chicken*. Completely juvenile. Still, a part of her cursed herself when she grabbed a chair and sat down in it, muttering a quick "Mornin'" to him.

"Hey," Dedede said, flipping through a page, before looking at her from over the paper. "Where's your other half?"

"Popo's somewhere else. I didn't wait for him," Nana explained, realizing she had forgotten to look for him in her attempt to block out her thoughts on crushes and puberty. Whoops.

"Oh."

Well, chalk that up to another reason Nana needed to reconsider who she became attracted to. Even if she wasn't a little thing of a human and he a penguin twice her size, nevermind the big age difference, his personality didn't exactly leave him boyfriend material. If he wasn't being aloof and selfish, he was being a total show-off. At least when Nana had a crush on Fox for all of two weeks, she had picked someone *respectable*.

Respectable. It brought Nana back to that thin, sad line dividing simple idolization and blind infatuation. That line was looking more and more faded now. It didn't help that her mind was going over the little things she had noticed about Dedede. His strength, his resilience, his ability to crack a joke when others can't...

"By the way," Dedede started, jolting Nana out of her thoughts, "we have a team battle scheduled today at eleven. You, me, and Popo are up against the Creampuff Squad."

"I hate fighting against Kirby," Nana replied quietly.

"I don't blame ya," Dedede nodded -- was this *sympathy!*? -- as he folded the newspaper up. "If Bowser comes looking for this, hide it. But, if it's Ganondorf, well... Yeah, don't mess with him."

"I'll keep that in mind," she responded as she took the paper. Sharing the newspaper was chaotic even with a set order on who gets it, given how lost it easily became.

Dedede got up, but did something unexpected. He looked over at his untouched bagel for a few moments, before shrugging and pushing the plate towards Nana.

The young climber looked up at him in curiosity, blinking. She subconsciously noted how freaking tiny she was compared to him while she was sitting and he was standing. "You're not one to share food."

"Consider it a gift -- or maybe a bribe," Dedede grinned. "You can have that, and I expect you to help win this fight. Besides, you could use the extra boost; y'look like hell."

Nana crossed her arms, resting her head on it and looking away. "Puh-leaze. Even if I was that easy to read, it's not that bad."

"Point, but you're acting pretty out of it. I don't exactly want you off in Lalaland when Jigglypuff's trying to slam all her weight on you." Dedede then placed a hand on top of Nana's head, ruffling her hair. She was thankful he probably couldn't see how red her cheeks were now. "Take care, a'ight, kiddo?"

"Y-Yeah, sure," Nana said quickly, and didn't look up as Dedede left the room. Oh, geez, that's making a lot harder to fight the stupid girl hormones. Maybe it *was* better to just flow with it.

Yeah, she finally decided with a sigh, I'll try that and see how that goes. Maybe it'll get outta my system.

"Nana, there you are!" came Popo's voice as he walked up next to her, sitting in the chair next to her. "Man, it's hard to find you sometimes! Oh, hey, bagel. You gonna eat that?"

"Yes, in fact, I am," Nana lifted herself off the table, sounding more defensive than she had intended to be. Still, such an attitude over food wasn't unusual for her, so she was able to roll with it. "Oh, and we're up for a team battle. Us and Dedede against Jigglypuff and Kirby."

"There's too much pink in that spar," Popo rolled his eyes.

"Boys," Nana huffed, before grabbing the bagel. Yeah, boys were dumb, but they were there to stay, so she might as well flow with them along with everything else.

As she took a bite, she began to go over battle plans. And, maybe she'd have to convince Dedede to give her some lessons on hammer use later on... Yeah, that'd be fun, working with someone she looked up to.

Dang, she thought. He let this thing burn too much. Scratch that up as Flaw Number Twenty-seven.