

## Parallel Reality

"Hey sis," my brother said from across the table. "What do you know about parallel dimensions and multiverse theory?"

I glanced up and George, eyebrow raised.

Since when did my doofus brother care about theoretical physics?

"A bit," I answered turning my gaze back to my food. On either side of the table, Mom and Dad were eating contentedly, happy to listen to the conversation but not to involve themselves.

"Tell me what you know," George said with a dumb grin.

I rolled my eyes. This was just the setup for some joke, I knew. My brother *loved* to make fun of how nerdy I was. Mock me for being the only person in the family with more than half a brain. Still, I decided to play along. After all, who was truly the greater fool; the educated mind, or the one mocking it?

"Multiverse theory assumes that more than one universe exists; that there are several beyond our own. Parallel universes are a branch of that idea; the thought process being that an infinite number of universes exist. With infinite universes, there are an infinite number of possibilities – and so an infinite number of duplicate Earths running in tandem with an infinite number of variances."

"So, like," my brother said, voice filled with that same quiet excitement it always had before he made fun of me. "There's a universe out there where you're not a giant bookworm and you actually have a life instead?"

"Yes," I said simply, not allowing him to get to me. "Technically, there are an infinite number of universes where I'm not intelligent. Likewise, there are also an infinite number of universes where versions of me are an only child. Luck them."

"Charlotte," My mother scolded quietly, "don't be rude to your brother."

I bit back a retort, a seething, bubbling anger flaring inside me.

They always took my brother's side. *Always*.

Stupid protects stupid, I figured.

"So what'd happen if two parallel universes connected?" My brother asked, grinning. There was a twinkle in his eye. "Like if our universe somehow merged or collided with one where you dress like an actual, proper girl. What'd happen?"

I glared at him, glanced down at the stained hoodie I was wearing. A little old and worn, and about a size too small from how it hugged my chest, but comfortable and warm. What was so wrong with me wanting to wear something like this? So what if I didn't ever wear skirts or boot-tubes or dresses? Why the fuck should *that* matter?

"Who knows," I shrugged, done humouring George now. "We don't have proof that a multiverse even exists, let alone how it might work."

George's grin widened, eyes twinkling.

He reached into one of his pockets, pulled out some kind of weird, metal wrist-band. My eyes were drawn to it, to the oddly glowing, crystal-like rock embedded in it.

It was unlike anything I'd ever seen before. Bright and shining and brilliant. It seemed so colourful to me, yet I couldn't tell what colour it was exactly – almost as if my eyes weren't able to fully register what I was looking at.

George put a hand over the crystal thing, closed his eyes in concentration.

The world fuzzed, blurred.

And then George pulled his hand away, looking exhausted. A bead of sweat trickled down his brow, the odd metal wrist-band no longer glowed. His gaze flicked over to where I sat, eyes intense.

Weirdo. Why was he looking at me like that?

I glanced down at myself, searching to see if I'd accidentally dropped some food onto my-

Why was I wearing a hoodie?

My eyes widened at the sight of it. Ragged and dirty and ugly, not fit to be used as dust rag let alone as actual clothing.

Where the hell were my usual clothes? Tank top and short-shorts. Tube-tops and mini-skirts. V-neck t-shirts and tight-fitting yoga pants. What the hell was going on?

George must have noticed my sudden distress, because he barked out a joyous, victorious laugh.

Before I could ask him what was going on, what he'd done to my proper clothes, why I was wearing such an ugly hoodie, he clapped his hands together loudly. The sharp sound cut through the otherwise silent dining room, me and Mom and Dad all looking over at George in confusion.

The crystal on his metal wrist-band began to glow again.

"This is amazing," George said to himself. "Holy shit, this is amazing."

"Language," Mom said softly, smiling at her son lovingly.

George planted his hand over the crystal again, closed his eyes.

"Gotta find the right one," he said to himself, ignoring the fact that the entire family was staring at him in confusion. He'd lost his damned mind. "The right fit... Yes! That one! That one works!"

Again, the world blurred and shimmered for a heartbeat.

I blinked, stared at my brother dumbfounded.

"Dad," I said, turning to look at his baffled expression. "I think it's time to have George institutionalised. He'd obviously lost his mind. Not that he had much of one to begin with..."

"Nice top, Sis," George said, drawing my attention right back to him. "Really digging the street-walker vibe you've got going on."

Street-walker? What the fuck was *that* supposed to mean?

I glanced down at myself, blinked in confusion.

Hadn't I been wearing an ugly hoodie a moment ago? Where in the world had it gone?

It was no-where to be seen. All I could see was my regular, run-of-the-mill clothing. A thin halter top that showed off my midriff and a tight-fitting miniskirt, no bra or panties as per the usual. Nothing out of the ordinary there, and certainly no ugly, stained hoodie.

I shook my head, brain aching with confusion and bewilderment.

Somehow, I must have just imagined wearing that hoodie.

"Guess you'd know all about street-walkers, wouldn't you Georgie?" I retorted way too late. "The only way a girl would ever sleep with your stupid ass is if you were paying them to do it."

"Charlotte!" Mom barked. "Enough with that foul language! Apologise to your brother at once."

I stared at my reflection in the mirror, eyes narrowed.

Something felt off, unusual. But I couldn't put my finger on what exactly it was. Everything *looked* normal. I was wearing my usual sexy clothing, the halter top and miniskirt. I had my glasses on, my brown hair was as long and full as it always was.

Everything *looked* fine.

Yet, I couldn't shake the feeling that something was wrong.

I shook my head, turned away from the mirror. Chances were, the answer would come to me at some random point later today – a revelation that'd put me at ease and make me feel silly for ever worrying in the first place. That was, after all, how the brain worked. Some questions couldn't be answered directly, couldn't be weeded out through constant thought and pondering. They had to come on their own, when the brain was focused on other things.

My room was neat and tidy.

Nerds had a bad rep for being messy. Being trapped in their rooms all day; cans and bottles and empty food packets scattered around, piles of dirty clothes and stinking laundry everywhere, closed curtains blocking out all light. Nerds, if common culture were to be believed, lived in filth – concerned only with the next video game or anime to come out.

That might've been true for guys – I wouldn't know – but it was *not* true of me.

My room was spotless. Clean and bright and perfect. On one wall, book-cases and shelves were lined with neatly arranged novels and educational books and comics. All sorted by type and genre, then alphabetically by author's surname. And, on another wall, there was my desk and wardrobes and a few more shelves – these holding figurines and collectables. My curtains were wide open, allowing the bright afternoon light to shine in and illuminate my spotless, perfect room.

I walked over to my bed, sat down on the edge and leaned back.

Alternate realities. What'd *that* been about?

And what had George asked? About realities colliding together?

It was impossible to know without experiencing it, and it was impossible to experience it because different universes, by their very nature, could not interact. If they even existed at all.

But, they didn't call it theoretical physics for nothing.

In theory, what *might* happen if two universes collided?

I gave the question a few minutes of thought; came up with several potential answers. The most likely scenario would be that both of the universes in the collision would be annihilated. But, if that didn't happen, who could say what would? Unexplainable phenomenon, perhaps. One universe bleeding its reality into the other.

Would the people even notice if that happened?

After a few minutes of pondering, I sat up in bed. It was a silly thing to think about. Interesting from sci-fi nerd's perspective, but meaningless from a scientific point of view. It'd be much better for me – for the world at large – if I focussed on things more earthly and immediate. Like studying the human body and its functions, for the day I inevitably became a doctor.

Several of the books on my shelves were medical in nature; compiled studies and notes and anatomical guides. The stuff taught in the early years of med-school.

I stood, stepped over to the shelves and scanned book-spines in search of an interesting read.

What did I want to learn about today?

My vision blurred, distorted. A ripple of dizziness passed through me, mind reeling from some unseen energy.

When my mind caught up with me again, and I was able to refocus, I found myself staring at a shelf full of medical books and scientific compilations.

I blinked at the sight, certain I must be imagining it.

But, when my eyes opened again, the books were still there. Still filling the shelf. And, not just that, but there were books on *all* my shelves. Novels and comics and all kinds of nerdy stuff. There were even a few figurines dotted here and there.

What the fuck?

Where were my toys? Big Blue and Mr Preston, Red Devil and The Twins? Where was my collection? Where the hell were Santa and Ribs and Lulu and Timmy Titan? What the *fuck* was going on?

Without thinking, I backed away from the shelves, eyes wide and horrified.

Mom and Dad *knew* not to touch my collection. They might not approve, but still...

George then? But *why*? Was this some sort of prank?

I'd kill him when-

The backs of my legs hit the edge of my bed, causing me to stumble and almost fall backwards.

Then, again, the world blurred.

My vision fuzzed, eyes unfocusing to the point of blinding me.

It lasted only a single second. A short heartbeat. But, in that scant amount of time, my panic doubled.

What. The. Fuck. Was. Going. On?

And then I could see again. My focused and my sudden dizziness faded. My eyes drifted to the shelves of my room and, mercifully, my collection was back where it belonged.

Big Blue, the prize of my collection - a bulky plastic, slightly curved vibrator. Mr Preston; long and thin and made of glass, smooth and cool and wonderful. Red Devil, bright red and monstrous. The Twins, a U-shaped dildo that could fill both holes at once by itself. Santa; anal beads of alternating colour, red and white. Ribs, my special ribbed vibrator – a favourite on lonely, quiet nights. Timmy Titan – hard plastic and far too girthy to fit inside me, at least for the time being. And, of course, Lulu – a vibrator made in the shape of a tongue, complete with lips and licking action.

They were all where they belonged. My prized collection.

I had more toys than that, naturally. A lot more. But the other ones weren't special. Hidden away in a box under my bed, used occasionally but not worthy of being displayed.

A sigh of relief escaped my lips at seeing my toys back where they belonged. The books and comics and all that other junk had disappeared, a horrible hallucination that'd thankfully been washed away. I relaxed, felt my panic slowly slipping away.

Though, even after several minutes had passed, a hint of that panic remained.

First I'd imagined wearing a hoodie at dinner. Now I'd hallucinated about my toys being replaced with books. That, I was pretty sure, was *not* normal. I'd have to look it up online, maybe see a doctor or something. Figure out what was going on in my brain.

But, for now, I'd settle with relieving my worries another way.

My eyes drifted to my grand collection.

Which one should I use today?

"Very funny, asshole," I growled, glaring at my brother as I entered the kitchen. "Fucking hilarious."

He raised an eyebrow at me, as if he had no idea what I was talking about.

"My clothes," I stated, crossing my arms and giving him the best 'I hate you' stare I possibly could. "Where did you put them?"

"I haven't touched your-" George began. Then his eyes widened and he let out a loud, barking laugh. "Oh. Right. Yeah, I took your clothes, sis. Replaced them. Don't worry, I'll put them back later. Just wanted to see your face."

When I'd woken up this morning, gone through my dresser in search of clothes, I'd found what could only be described as 'a mess'. Ragged, baggy clothing that I'd never be seen dead in. My underwear drawer had been totally altered, all my thongs and g-strings removed and replaced with boring, crappy granny panties. My sexy lingerie was completely gone.

My brother, for whatever dumb fucking reason, must have taken all my clothes and hidden them somewhere. Even gone as far as to buy an entire new wardrobe for me – filled with ragged, stained clothes that would look hideous on me. Likely, he'd probably gotten them from a dumpster or something, some charity shop. It would certainly explain why all the clothes were so ugly.

I'd had to settle for wearing the same clothes I'd had on yesterday. My halter-top and mini-skirt.

"You're a creep," I told him, walking right past him to open the fridge. "What kind of a

sick fuck steals his all his sister's underwear?"

He said nothing. Gave no answer.

As I got to making breakfast – bacon sandwiches – my brother rubbed the metal wrist-band he was wearing. The world blurred and distorted, same as it'd been doing since yesterday. For a brief moment, I felt dizzy and confused. Then the sensation and distortion vanished.

I placed cooked, sizzling bacon onto a slice of buttered bread, moved to place another slice on top of it. My bacon sandwiches were very simple – bread, bacon, bread, done. But as I was about to place that second slice on, something stopped me. Some deep, quiet part of me telling me it was wrong. That something was missing.

"Step aside, sis," my brother said with a sigh. "It's the least I can do, after my little prank."

My skull throbbed and, for a second, it felt like my brain was at war with itself. Like two versions of my thoughts were fighting it out, conflicting with each other.

I nodded my head, took a step back from the counter and the unfinished bacon sandwich.

There was an ingredient missing...

George walked over to the unfinished sandwich and, grinning like a moron, he lowered his trousers and whipped out his cock.

"Can you imagine," he said, beginning to jerk himself off, "a universe where this isn't normal?"

I rolled my eyes. "What is it with you and 'universes' lately?"

"Oh, nothing," George grinned, beginning to pant a little. "Just a thought. I bet, out there in the multiverse, there's an Earth where this would be considered disgusting. Where you would never eat..."

He gasped, hand moving furiously.

And, right before me eyes, he came. Jets of white shooting out and landing in messy lines on my bacon. Spurt after spurt, painting the sizzling bacon white.

"There you go," George grinned, turning to face me, cock still dangling between his legs. "No need to thank me, sis."

"Thank you?" I said, shaking me head in disbelief. "For what? Letting my bacon get cold? Fuck off, George. And, while you're at it, go put my clothes back where they belong."

George laughed, stayed in the kitchen as I finally put that second slice of bread down and completed the sandwich. He watched with a madman's grin as I lifted my breakfast to my mouth, took a big, delicious bite. And, only after I'd gulped down that first, big bite, did he leave the room.

Weirdo. Who smirks like that watching their sister eating a sandwich?

I stared at myself in the bathroom mirror, frowning at what I saw.

Why was I so over-dressed?

Had I *really* been wearing this all day? A halter-top and mini-skirt? It was summer. I shouldn't be wearing winter clothes like these. Why wasn't I walking around in lingerie like I normally did?

I couldn't think of an answer, except maybe it was because all the underwear in my drawers that morning had been hideous.

Thankfully, George had replaced all that ugly crap with my proper, actual clothes. Drawers and drawers filled with sexy lingerie and beautiful two-piece bikinis and come-fuck-me undies.

Tomorrow, I'd wear my normal clothing again. Not these excessive over-the-top clothes I was wearing right now.

Someone knocked on the bathroom door.

"Charlotte?" My brother's voice asked on the other side. "You going to bed soon?"

“Yes,” I stated, doing my best to ignore the asshole. What did he want now?

“Do you need my help?” George asked.

The world blurred, fuzzed.

“I... Yes. Yes, please.”

He let himself into the bathroom, dick poking out of his trousers – rock hard and ready to go. I rolled my eyes, grabbed my toothbrush and handed it to him. Hopefully this wouldn't take too long. I was pretty exhausted.

As my brother jacked off, got to urging the special toothpaste out of his cock, I found myself thinking about his questions the day before. About the multiverse and alternate dimensions.

Such stupid things to think about. Pointless to guess at.

If other universes with other rules existed, there was no way of ever knowing. And *certainly* no way they'd ever effect anything in *our* universe. Why bother worrying about it when there were so many other, better things a person could do with their time?

“Here you go, sis,” George panted, handed me back my toothbrush. He left the bathroom, glancing back at the toothbrush with his typical weirdo smirk before he closed the door shut behind himself.

I examined the white, sticky toothpaste.

Why did something feel off about it?

I shrugged, raised it to my mouth and began brushing.