

Blindsided

A TG tale by Ls1000



37 Illustrations

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A TG tale by ds1000

Imagine waking up in an unknown place after being unconscious for an unknown length of time only to be told that you've been poisoned! Sounds pretty scary, right? Well, now imagine that but also waking up to find a very real pair of breasts on your chest and other surgical alterations to your body!

For young Robbie, this is exactly the terrifying scenario he finds himself in. But things soon get worse as he's given a series of tasks to perform if he wants to receive the antidote. How far would you be willing to go to survive? How much of your male self would you be willing to sacrifice?

Written and illustrated by ds1000 (37 images, 37,000 words)

Frustrated, Robbie shook his head. Holly was late again, and he had better things to do than stand around all day like some under the thumb boyfriend. In truth, he'd only been waiting a few minutes, but it felt much longer, having just completed an eight-hour work shift.

Letting his mind wander, he thought about all the other things he'd rather be doing. Sleeping. Playing computer games. Drinking with his buddies. But instead, here he was sweating balls outside some fancy overpriced coffee shop, waiting for his girlfriend who didn't even put out anymore.

"Hey Babe, sorry I'm late," came a feminine voice from behind, bringing Robbie back to reality.

"Oh, hey, Babe," Robbie replied, giving Holly a peck on the lips as she leaned in.

Smiling at her boyfriend of two years, Holly stepped back. "So, how was work today? Anything exciting happen?"

Taking a deep breath, Robbie forced a smile. It was the same question she seemed to ask every time they met and to put it bluntly, he was sick of answering it. "Same old. Same old," he grumbled. "You know. Standing around all day as rich arseholes treat me like shit."

Holly scoffed. "Well, you were the one who insisted on dropping out of university. You were the one who wanted to start earning money."

"Yeah! Yeah! Blah! Blah! blah! You're such an idiot Robbie. You never listen to me, Robbie. Don't ya know, I the sage of all knowledge, Holly, am always right." Robbie said in a high, winey voice as he tried to mimic how Holly sounded.

"Fuck you, Robbie," Holly said, shaking her head. "I'm just saying."

"Well don't, will ya. I've had a long day and just want to relax. How about we go back to mine and veg out in front of the telly? There's cold beer in the fridge."

"No can do, I'm afraid," Holly replied. "I promised to help my mum later with that logo design thingy. You know she's useless with that sort of thing. But hey, I've got an hour or so to hang out. How about we do a little shopping?"

Screwing up his face in an exaggerated way, Robbie threw his head back and sighed loudly. “Shopping? Come on, Hol. Do we really need to spend more money on that hipster shit you keep buying lately?”

“Hipster shit?” Holly questioned as her facial expression changed to somewhere between hurt and angry. “You don’t like what I wear?”

“As you asked, no!” Robbie stated, folding his arms. “You used to dress sexier. Hell, I can’t even remember the last time you wore a skirt. And what happened to our plans to go travelling? How are we ever going to save when all you do is spend money on ugly grungy clothes?”

Taking a deep breath, Holly looked away with a saddened expression on her face. “Listen, I love you, Robbie. But I’m not going to dress like some slut for you. This is me. If you don’t like it, then perhaps we shouldn’t be together anymore.”

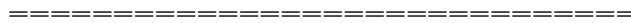


“Perhaps we shouldn’t,” Robbie remarked, the words leaving his lips before he had a chance to think them through.

Holly’s eyes flashed back around before staring at her boyfriend. His eyes were cold, and his face was expressionless. “Well, if that’s what you want. Then fine! We’re done!” She yelled before turning and storming away.

“Fine, see if I care,” Robbie shouted after her as she marched up the street. “I can do better than you anyway.”

Seeing Holly turn the corner, Robbie took a deep breath before turning to see an old woman shaking her head and tutting at him. “Save it you old cow,” he announced setting off up the road himself. He needed somewhere to sit and think and knew just the place.



Letting his eyes adjust to the dimly lit room of Joe’s tavern, Robbie surveyed his surroundings. A dark musty scent filled the airways, and his feet stuck to the sticky floor beneath. But even with its faults, for Robbie, Joe's tavern place felt like a home away from home. A quiet place to escape the pressures of the real world. A place where the beers were cheap. And perhaps most importantly, a place that was but a mere stone’s throw from his apartment door. Very convenient if you planned on having a heavy drinking session.

One sole customer propped up the bar, a grey-haired regular called Frank who as far as Robbie was concerned, practically lived on the far bar stool. With the strong aroma of urine, alcohol, and cigarette smoke dominating Frank's side of the bar, Robbie took up a spot on the other end, ordered a beer and a whisky, and told the barman to keep em coming.

For hours, time seemed to stand still as Robbie at one end of the bar and Frank at the other, like two pillars of sorrow, drank themselves into oblivion. Neither stirred from their trance unless it was to bring a glass to their mouth or order a refill. Robbie spent the time thinking about Holly, replaying the argument over and over

in his head and wondering if she really meant it this time. That is until something you didn't see often in Joe's bar caught his eye. A woman! A beautiful woman!

Trying to keep his balance as he rocked back and forth on his stool, Robbie stared at the vision of gorgeousness that had suddenly appeared before him, and with his beer jacket on, he felt compelled to speak to her. "Hey, let me buy you a drink," he declared, slightly slurring his words.

Turning, the woman in the short gold dress and heels gave the young man a puzzled look. "And why would I let you do that?" She replied as she pursed her glossy red lips.

"Because you're bloody beautiful, that's why," Robbie announced confidently. "And beautiful women should never drink alone."

Surprised by the forwardness of the answer, the woman smiled. "Ok, I've time for one drink. I'll take a glass of white wine,"

"On my tab, Barman," Robbie announced as the over-dressed, mysterious woman strutted over to take up an empty stool.

Surprisingly, the pair hit it off and after an hour of chatting, all thoughts of Holly were gone. Listening attentively, Robbie focussed on learning all he could about the sexy older woman to his left. Her name was Agatha. She was twenty-seven and worked as an air stewardess. With Agatha just there on the off chance, having popped in to give something to Joe the owner, Robbie believed their meeting to be fate. The universe finally rewarding him for all his hard work. Leaning in closer, Robbie gazed at the beauty in front of him, occasionally nodding his head as she chatted about her latest trip to Europe.



After finishing her story and emptying her glass, Agatha informed Robbie that she needed to go, but not before presenting him with a question. “Seeing as you were blunt with me earlier, I’ll give you the same courtesy,” she said while placing her right hand on Robbie’s thigh. “I like you. You’re cute and have a certain innocence about you. How about we go back to my hotel room where we can continue the party with my boyfriend.”

“Boyfriend!” Robbie stammered, obviously taken aback by the revelation. “You have a boyfriend?”

Agatha smiled. “Yes, his name is Jimmy, my grizzly bear, and a real animal in the bedroom. I know he’d enjoy you too. We like to share all things you see, even sexual partners.”

Closing his eyes for a second, Robbie tried to process what he’d just heard before leaping to his feet and sending his stool flying. “No fucking way,” he yelled, causing even Frank to momentarily peek over. “What do you think I am? Some kind of sissy fairy? There’s no way I’m going to sleep with a man! Find someone else to play your sick sex games with, you, freaky bitch. I’m out of here.”

Furious and frustrated, Robbie stumbled towards the exit. "Why does life always have to fuck with me?" He thought angrily as he started the short walk back to his apartment.

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With his eyelids heavy, Robbie squinted as the bright light of the TV screen hurt his eyes. Sitting up to locate his phone, he heard the clang of a few empty beer cans as they fell from the sofa to land loudly on the living room floor. It was 1 am, and he felt like shit. Worse still, Holly still hadn't messaged, and he had to be up for work in four hours.

“Fuck my life,” he moaned, heaving himself up from the sofa, already feeling the beginnings of a hangover.

With his bladder about to explode, he shuffled towards the bathroom, stopping momentarily to check his reflection in the mirror. “What are you looking at?” he

asked angrily, eyeballing himself. “I’m not doing it! I’m not calling her. She can call me!”

Suddenly, there was a loud crash from somewhere in the apartment. Turning his head to face the doorway, Robbie froze.



Rooted to the spot, the terrified young man considered his options. Stay where he was like a coward and hope for the best, or man up and go and investigate. Taking a deep breath, he reluctantly chose the second option.

Slowly exiting the bathroom with wobbly legs, he edged his way through the living room and entered the kitchen, reaching out to pick up the nearest heavy object. Quickly, before he chickened out, he flipped the switch on the wall bathing the room with light!

A sigh of relief left his trembling lips as he gazed down at the saucepan in his hand and the source of the noise, an open window, and a broken vase. Stepping over the broken glass, Robbie reached up to close the window but stopped dead halfway as a thought hit him.

The night air was still! If the wind hadn't blown the vase from the sill! How did it fall? Feeling a cold shudder run down the length of his body, he suddenly sensed a presence in the room. He went to turn but felt a strong-arm wrap around his body, binding his arms. He tried to scream out, but his cries were muffled as a damp cloth was placed over his mouth. Kicking out, the terrified young man tried to fight, but as a strong chemical odour choked and restricted his airways, he was starting to feel weaker. He was starting to feel faint! As the room began to spin, Robbie felt the last of his strength leaving him. His eyes blinked once, twice, and then closed for the night.

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Ring! Ring! Ring! Feeling as though he'd been repeatedly hit over the head with a two-by-four, Robbie slowly opened his eyes to locate the source of the ear-piercing racket. Groaning as he reached over, he picked up the receiver of a nearby phone before pressing it to his ear.

“Good morning, Mr. Owen. I trust you slept well. This is a reminder that check-out is in ten minutes. Have a pleasant day.”

“What? Check out? Who is this?” Robbie blabbered. No reply came as the line went dead.

More confused than perhaps at any point in his young life, Robbie scanned his surroundings, trying to work out where he was or remember how he got there. Everything was wrong!

For starters, he was lying in a bed that wasn't his own, in a small to medium-sized room with white walls and very bland-looking furniture. Taking a moment to process, he realised he was in a hotel room, that he knew for sure. Having spent the last few years feeling unappreciated as he worked behind the front desk of one, the décor and vibe was unmistakable. Not that knowing that made him feel any better. The more pressing question on his mind was, how did he end up here?

Suddenly, a partial memory came flashing back. He was in his kitchen, struggling. Then, there was suddenly a terrible chemical odour. Then, it all went black!

Inhaling deeply his body spasmed as he shot up into a sitting position, causing his chest to jiggle. "What the... WHAT THE..." Robbie screamed, not quite believing his eyes as they fell upon something that surely wasn't possible. A pair of breasts! A huge, very real feeling pair of breasts attached to his chest!

In stunned silence, he slowly reached down to touch them. "Urgh," he yelled as he brushed his right nipple, sending a jolt of electricity throughout his body. "They're real! No way. This can't be happening." The appalled young man screamed as he threw back the bed covers.

Looking down past the seemingly impossible twin mounds on his chest, Robbie let out a shaky sigh of relief, thankful that his manhood was still intact. But then, with a twitch of his head, he suddenly noticed something else was off. It took him a moment to work out what it was, but as soon as it clicked in his mind, he leapt from the bed in panic.

Sprinting towards the bathroom like a gazelle that had just caught whiff of a lion, Robbie tried to ignore the alien feeling of his jiggling chest, flopping back and forth like jelly.

Almost crashing into the sink, he gazed into the mirror with his mouth gaping. "This can't be real", he thought as he examined his reflection, causing the corner of his lip to curl in disgust. "There's no way this can be real!"

Apart from the scary-looking boobs, for the most part, he looked the same. But somehow, like the rest of his body, his face was now silky smooth and devoid of all hair.

For a few minutes, Robbie frowned at his reflection as his bewildered mind tried to find answers but could only ask questions. Is this real? How did I get here? Who did this to me? And why? Suddenly his thoughts were interrupted by a loud knocking sound.

Like a statue, Robbie froze. His thumping heart and laboured breathing seemed deafening loud in comparison to the silence of the bathroom. “Housekeeping,” came a voice before an even more terrifying sound. The beep of a key card as it unlocked the door.

Hurling from the bathroom, Robbie dived towards the main door, crashing into it just as it started to open, forcing it shut with a slam.

Hearing someone swear on the other side, Robbie pushed his naked frame up against the door. “I don’t need housekeeping,” he shouted, staring down at his breasts as they heaved up and down on his chest in sync with his heavy breathing.

“Sir, the check-out time has passed. I’m going to have to ask you to leave the room,” a man replied in a stern voice through the door.

“Ok, yes. But I just need a few more minutes,” Robbie shot back between the pants of his breath.

“Sir, I’m going to need you to open this door. If you refuse, I’ll be forced to get security up here.”

Panicked, Robbie looked around for his clothes and came up blank. “Please, ten more minutes. I just need ten minutes. Then I’ll leave,” he pleaded while rocking back and forth.

The man on the other side of the door ignored his pleas, instead choosing to get straight on his radio before walking away.

Leaping to his feet, Robbie knew he needed to get out of there and fast! Without wasting a second, he dashed around the room, scouring it for something to wear.

The options he found were far from ideal. A bed sheet and a pile of towels. But given the alternative was to walk out of the place naked, he chose the towels, wrapping a large one snugly around his chest and another smaller one around his head.

He looked ridiculous; he knew that. But what choice did he have? It also felt incredibly strange to suddenly have a pair of fleshy mounds compressed against his body. But as uncomfortable as he felt, objective number one was to get out before security found him. It was a conversation he wanted to avoid at all costs, as given the unusual nature of the situation, he knew the police would soon follow. It was hotel protocol.

Shaking with adrenaline, the inappropriately dressed young man sped across the room before suddenly stopping dead in his tracks. There was something stuck to the back of the door. A note!



GOOD MORNING PRINCESS,

IF YOU WANT YOUR CLOTHES GO TO RECEPTION. I HAVE LEFT YOU A PACKAGE.

Angry, Robbie tore the note from the door and stepped out into the hallway. Without a key, he was now locked out. But that didn't matter. All he could think about was reclaiming his clothes, even if he knew that a little public humiliation might be required in order to get them.

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Trying to ignore the stares, the half-dressed man made his way through the hotel lobby, and after waiting in line for what felt like an eternity, which in reality, was barely two minutes, made it to the reception counter.

“Good morning, err...guest,” said the receptionist as she greeted Robbie, clearly unsure of how to address him given the fleshy mounds protruding from the top of his towel and his contrasting male face.

Having done the same job, Robbie could only imagine what the young blonde girl was thinking. After all, he had seen his fair share of strangeness in his time. But a large-breasted man wearing nothing but a towel, well, that would be right up there.

“Hi, em yes,” Robbie mumbled while trying to avoid eye contact. “I think you have a package for me.”

“Can I take your name?” The receptionist replied as she looked him up and down.

“Err... Robbie. Robbie Owen.” He mumbled while turning red in the face.

“Sorry, can you repeat that? And... perhaps a little louder?” said the receptionist, turning her head to the side to listen in.

Irritated, Robbie took a deep breath. "Robbie Owen," he repeated, loud enough that the whole lobby heard.

"Oh... ok. Got it," the receptionist said, taken aback by the sudden change in volume levels. She then disappeared beneath the counter before returning to place a box on the counter. "I think this is it. Yes, here, Robbie Owen," she said as she read the tag. "This was left earlier today by your friend."

"My friend?" Robbie said, leaning forward and placing both hands on the counter, palms down. "What friend? Who?" he said in an aggressive tone.

"Sir, I'm going to have to please ask you to step back," the receptionist said as she pushed back in her chair.

Taking a moment to notice how uncomfortable the woman looked, Robbie quickly apologised before taking a step back.

The blonde receptionist nodded before sucking in a large breath of air between her gritted teeth. "Thank you," she said while leaning forward once more. "The man didn't leave a name. He just said he was a friend of yours, and that you would need this," she added while pointing towards the package.

"What did he look like? Please, is there anything you can tell me about him?" Robbie asked with pleading eyes.

"Well, he was tall, muscular, kind of handsome with dark hair," the woman said before looking slightly embarrassed. "Err... if that's all sir, I have other customers to see. You're holding up the line."

Glancing around, Robbie noticed a line of people staring with a mixture of impatience and curiosity written across their bewildered faces. Quickly turning back to face the receptionist, who now had her arms folded, Robbie put his head down in shame. "Have a pleasant day, sir," she said sternly before forcing a smile. Knowing he'd overstayed his welcome and having narrowly avoided security once already that day, Robbie picked up the box and turned to leave. "Oh, just one last thing," he said, spinning back around. "Where am I?"

The question seemed to catch the receptionist off guard as she twice opened her mouth and closed it again before giving an answer. "You're at the Jameson hotel in

Manchester. Are you ok, sir? Can I call someone for you? Perhaps an ambulance?”

Hearing he was no longer in London was hard to take, but in that moment, the mention of an ambulance scared the crap out of him. “Err... no, I’m fine, Really. Thank you,” he said, forcing a smile as his fight or flight reflex kicked in. “But could I use the restroom?”

Nodding, the woman pointed a manicured finger, “It’s right over there behind you. To the right of the lift.”

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Alone in the mensroom of the hotel lobby, Robbie wasted no time ripping into the package. Scared and confused, he craved answers and figured the mysterious box was the best place to begin.

Tearing back the tape, he opened the lid before reeling back in horror. These weren't his clothes! And to make matters worse, everything was pink. On top of the small clothes pile lay an envelope with the words **READ ME** printed on the front. Shaking his head, Robbie tore open the back of the envelope, sending a small piece of metal flying through the air. It hit the floor with a clang.

HEY THERE, SUGARTITS,

CONGRATULATIONS ON FINDING YOUR FIRST UPGRADE. PUT ON THE OUTFIT AND USE THE BUS TICKET TO GET TO YOUR NEXT DESTINATION. AT THE STATION THERE'S A ROW OF LOCKERS. USE THE KEY TO FIND YOUR NEXT CLUE.

OH, AND I DO HOPE YOU DIDN'T SPEND TOO LONG DILLY-DALLYING THIS MORNING. YOUR BUS LEAVES AT TEN THIRTY SHARP. MISS IT AND YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN. BETTER GET MOVING!

With shaking hands, Robbie flipped over the note to find the promised bus ticket stuck to the back.

MANCHESTER COACH STATION TO BIRMINGHAM COACH STATION

ONE WAY

10.30 AM

SEAT 4A.

“Shit, what The hell is going on? This is crazy!” he said frantically while placing his head in his hands. Through the gaps of his fingers, he saw the key that had fallen from the envelope, knowing it was decision time.

Guessing it was already quarter past ten, having seen a clock when queuing for the reception desk moments earlier. If he was going to do what the note wanted, he would need to move quickly!

“Argh,” he screamed aloud, trying to think. The options open to him seemed so limited. Ignoring the note meant he'd be stuck miles from home without clothes, his phone, or any money. And when he made it home, then what? He had woken up with a pair of breasts! Was he just supposed to get on with life like nothing had happened?

The other choice was equally as scary. The idea of blindly following the instructions to who knows what end made him want to throw up. The one positive was he might find some answers, and Birmingham was closer to home than Manchester.

Reluctantly, Robbie made his choice, and being the type of person to fully commit once a decision was made, a whirlwind of activity began. He quickly dropped his towel and kicked it away, causing his newly acquired breasts to wobble and his mouth to groan. Unwrapping the towel around his head and wondering what he

had been trying to achieve by placing it there, it soon joined its big brother in a crumpled heap on the floor.

Now naked, Robbie tipped the box, spilling the items inside into a nearby sink before fingering through its contents. He found a pair of panties, some yoga pants, and a small top. All were bright pink and made from some Lycra-type, stretchy material. Accompanying the outfit was a pair of trainers, also pink and sporting a hidden wedge sole.

Ignoring the part of his mind screaming for him to stop, Robbie stepped into the pink panties, pulled them up and snapped them around his waist. Forced to sit, he next wriggled his smooth, hairless legs into the tight yoga pants with minimal difficulty.

With the constricting pants on and slightly out of breath, the panting man reached for the next item, and aware of the time, he still couldn't help but take his with this one. With his nipples now hyper-sensitive, Robbie carefully placed each breast in its respective cup. Grimacing throughout as he manoeuvred the soft mounds in what was probably the most alien experience of his entire young life.

Last up, he placed his feet into the pink trainers and fastened the Velcro straps. Fully dressed, he stood back up before letting out a loud groan in frustration. Lifting one leg, he looked down in disgust to examine the slightly elevated position the wedge sole was now forcing his feet to adopt. Shaking his head, he started to think about how much more difficult they would make his trip to the bus station before catching sight of himself in the mirror. Placing both hands to the side of his head, he let out a whimper as he stared horrified at his sissified reflection.



“What the hell is going on?” He moaned while taking a second to examine his body more thoroughly, realising it had been modified more than he first realised. Along with the breasts and the hairless skin, he suddenly noticed his hair was longer than he remembered. An inch or two, at least! And now, wearing the tight Lycra pants and crop top, he could see that his waist was much thinner, but worse still, he had an unmistakable bubble butt!

It would have been easy to lose himself in that moment. The urge to collapse to the floor in a heap would have consumed most people, but not Robbie! Call it anger, rage, or the will to survive. Whatever it was, some part of him was determined to fight on. He needed answers and knew the only way to get them was to make that bus.

Snatching up the key from the floor, the Lycra-clad man grabbed his ticket and set off towards the exit. Stumbling as he went, not used to the three-inch hidden wedges under his feet or the weight of his jiggling breasts, both doing their best to throw him off balance as he moved as quickly as he could.

Barging a man out of the way, Robbie skidded up to the front desk. “Hey, watch it,” the man said angrily. Robbie ignored him. “How do I get to the coach station from here?” he blurted out to the same annoyed-looking receptionist from earlier.

“Sir, this is unacceptable behaviour. You’ve now given me no choice but to...,” Robbie interrupted her. “Please, just tell me and I’ll be out of your hair forever,” he fired back as he noticed the time. 10.22 am!

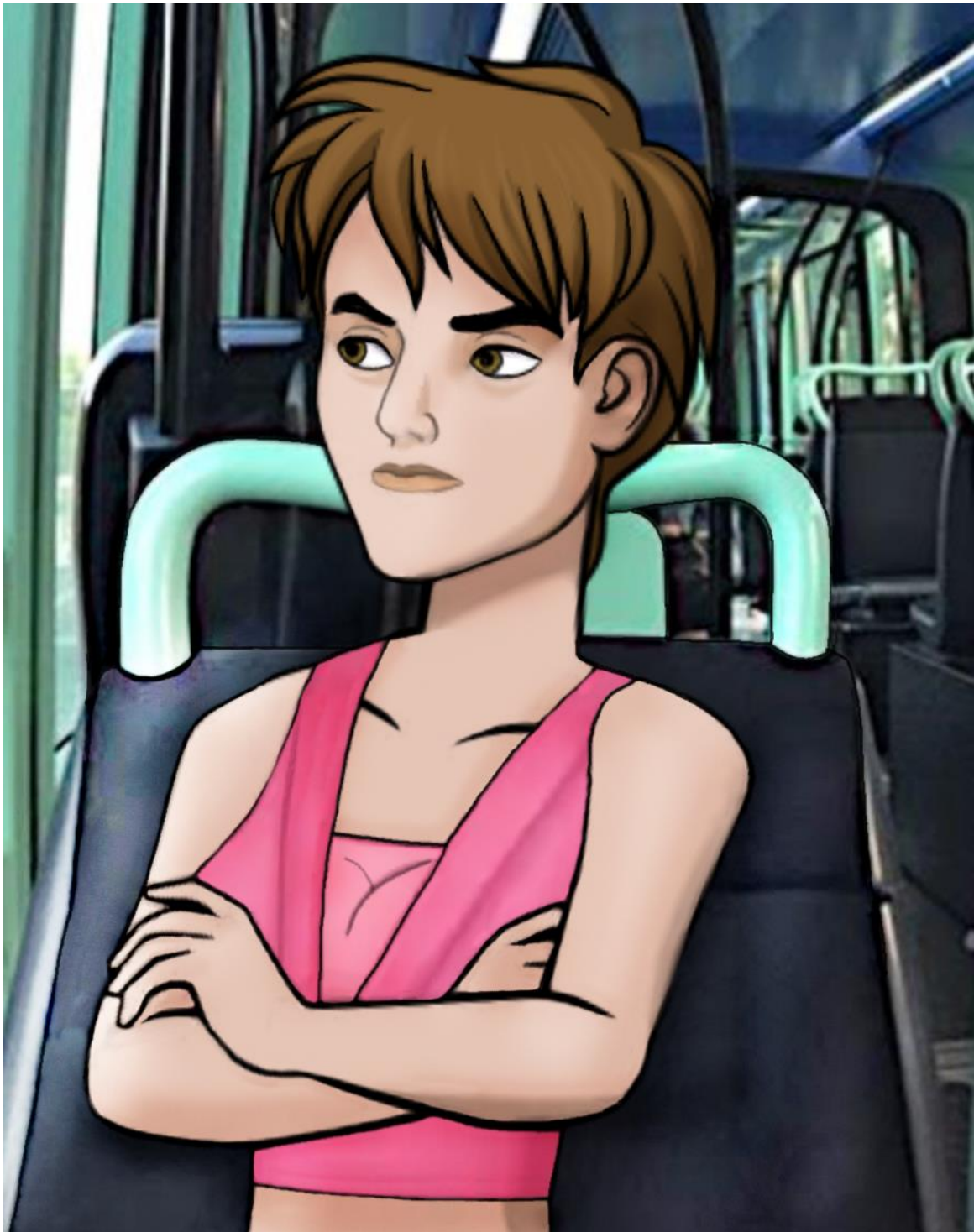
The receptionist took a second to size up the strange man in front of her, wondering what might happen if she refused. Would he get angry and attack her? He was clearly not your average person. He may even have a mental condition. “Fine, turn left out the front, and you’ll see the Arndale Shopping Center. Follow along the side, and at the far end, take a left towards Piccadilly Gardens. From there, you’ll see signs for the coach station.”

“Left. Straight. Left.” Robbie said, repeating the instructions and waiting for the receptionist to confirm what he'd said. Seeing her nod, Robbie took off across the lobby, shouting thank you as he bumbled awkwardly toward the exit.

Letting out a sigh of relief, the receptionist shook her head. “Sorry about that, sir. Now... where were we?” she said as she forced a smile and got back to her work.

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Out of breath and against all odds, Robbie somehow made it to the bus station without getting lost. And after unintentionally yelling at a few officials found his bus just in the nick of time. Once seated, the humiliated young man turned to face the window and folded his arms, trying to conceal his expanded chest and avoid all the curious eyes.



As the engine started and the bus pulled out, Robbie was finally able to relax a little. There were still many questions he wanted answering, but at least he was headed in the right direction. It was at this point he started noticing some new and unfamiliar sensations. And once he became aware of them, he couldn't stop thinking about them. Like how his bum now felt huge, like he was sitting on a cushion. Or how his nipples felt chaffed and sore inside the cups of his sporty pink top. Or how the skin around both felt stretched and tight.

Closing his tired eyes, Robbie felt like screaming, but already embarrassed enough, he resisted the urge, knowing it would just cause a scene. Who had done this to him and why? And what awaited him in that locker? Those questions and many more would dominate his thoughts as he rubbed the mysterious key between his thumb and forefinger on his two-hour trip down to Birmingham.

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First off the bus at Birmingham coach station, Robbie felt drained of energy. Taking a second to get his bearings, he caught his breath before trotting off into the main terminal building.

Being outside again after hours on the stuffy bus felt good, but it was hard to appreciate, given how strange he felt. Walking now felt bizarre. Every movement of his new modified body was a constant reminder of what had happened to him. Bouncing on his chest, the heavy weight of his twin mounds pulled him forward. To compensate for this, he needed to push back his shoulders and walk with his head held high, not an ideal situation for someone who didn't want to be seen. He also couldn't walk with his normal stride, his new booty, and the wedges beneath each foot, causing him to take smaller steps. Making something as simple as walking from A to B take much longer than necessary.

Not sure where he was going, the stunned young man entered the building and wandered around until he saw a sign saying lockers. Finding the room, Robbie stopped in front of a row of lockers before opening his hand to examine the key he had been gripping so tightly it had left an indent in his palm.

Again, seeing the number seventy-eight engraved on the back of the key, he trotted over to the corresponding metal door before momentarily pausing.

Nervous, part of him didn't want to know what was inside but walking away was not an option. He had come this far. He needed to know what secrets were hidden inside.

After missing the lock on his first attempt, Robbie managed to steady his shaking hands enough to thread the key into place. Click! He turned the key and swung open the locker.

Angrily, he slammed the door and turned his back. He felt like screaming! Screwing his hands into fists, Robbie closed his eyes and tensed every muscle in his body. Why was this happening to him? What had he done to deserve this? "I've had enough of this shit. I'm done," he muttered as he turned to punch the locker door. But instead of smashing into hard metal, his hand collided with a soft pile of clothing. Realising the door must have swung back open again after he slammed it, Robbie looked inside and shook his head only to suddenly notice a phone.

Reaching, Robbie plucked the phone from amongst the soft black and white fabric and turned it on. As the screen lit up, so did his eyes. He was saved! But as the phone went through its booting up sequence, something suddenly dawned on him. Who was he going to call? His girlfriend, Holly? His mum? The Police? No way! Not in his current predicament. He'd never live it down.

Hearing a beep, Robbie looked down to see a message on the screen. "One voice message received," it read. Part of him wanted to throw the phone back in the locker and walk away, but he couldn't. The part of him that was curious enough to open the locker in the first place was also intrigued to hear what the message said.

HEY SPORTY SPICE,

GOOD JOB MAKING YOUR BUS. AND AS A REWARD YOU'VE EARNED YOURSELF ANOTHER UPGRADE. OH, YOU'RE GOING TO LOOK SUPER CUTE IN THIS ONE! (GIGGLE)

TO FIND YOUR NEXT DESTINATION, LOOK THROUGH THE PICTURES ON YOUR NEW PHONE. WHEN YOU'RE SITTING BY THE

FOUNTAIN FULLY DRESSED IN YOUR SUPER CUTE NEW OUTFIT, SEND A SELFIE TO THIS NUMBER, AND YOU'LL RECEIVE A CALL.

OH, AND JUST IN CASE YOU GET ANY SMART IDEAS, LIKE IGNORING MY INSTRUCTIONS OR CALLING THE POLICE, DON'T. AMONGST THE OBVIOUS CHANGES YOU'VE NO DOUBT NOTICED; YOU MIGHT ALSO BE FEELING A BIT GROGGY TODAY. SURGERY WILL DO THAT TO YOU, BUT YOU'VE HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO RECOVER FROM THAT.

NO, YOU FEEL WEAK AS THERE IS A POISON COURSE THROUGH YOUR VEINS. IN A WEEK, YOU'LL BE DEAD!

BUT DON'T YOU WORRY, BUTTERCUP, I HAVE THE ANTIDOTE. AND IF YOU LISTEN TO MY INSTRUCTIONS AND COMPLETE ALL YOUR TASKS LIKE A GOOD LITTLE GIRL, EVERYTHING WILL BE OK. NOW, LET THE GAMES BEGIN.

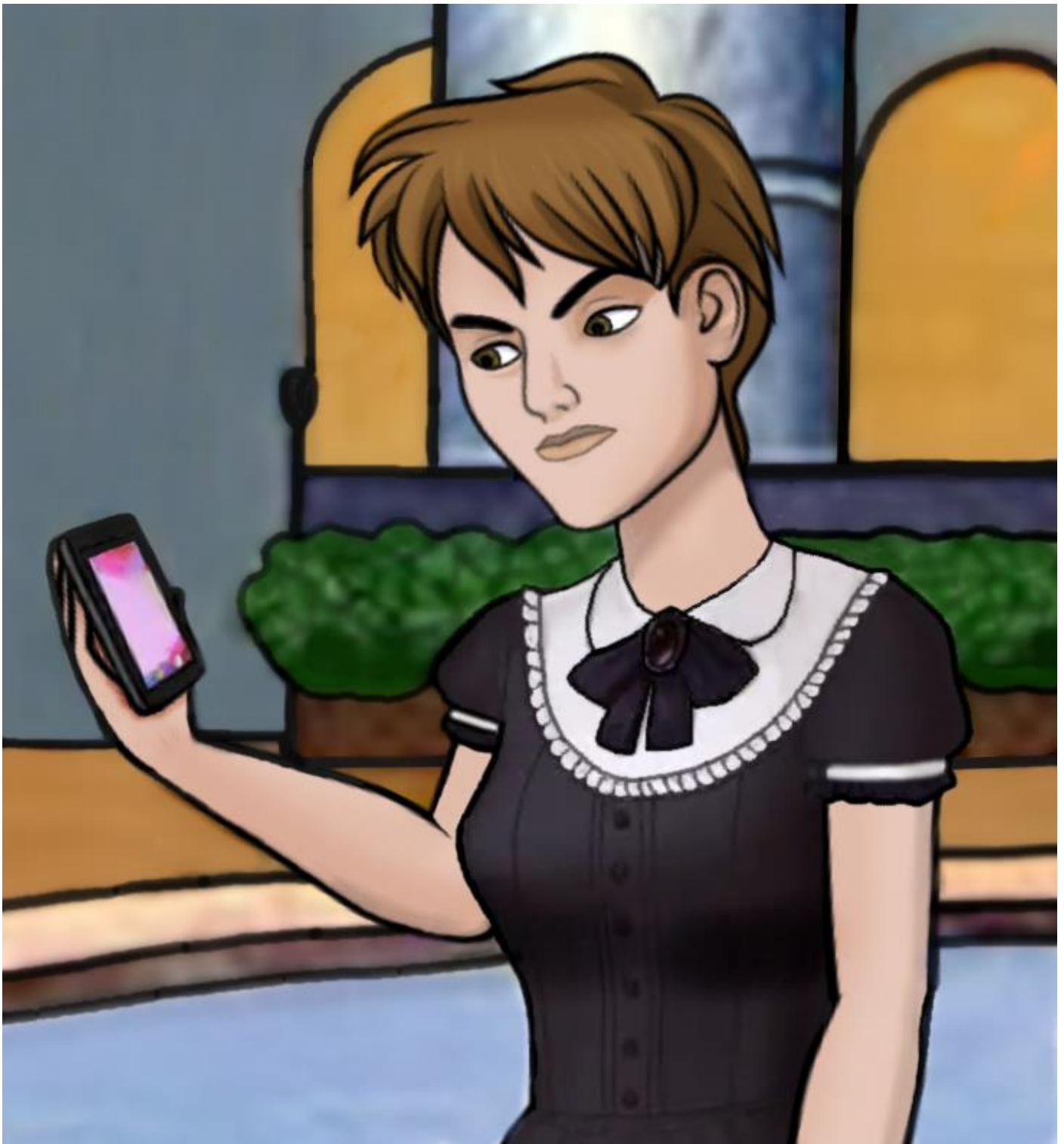
For a few moments after the recording ended, Robbie stood frozen with his mouth gaping. What he had heard was hard to take and had shaken him to the core. Was this really happening, or was someone playing a sick joke on him? It didn't make any sense. He was a nobody. He had no enemies. Who would want to do this to him?

Replaying the message again, Robbie listened carefully to every word and after confirming what he'd heard the first time, he slumped to the floor to sit at the base of the lockers. Surely the message was a joke, but what if it wasn't? Was he really willing to risk his life? His whole body did feel strangely lethargic and weak today!

Noticing a businessman in a suit looking his way and about to say something, Robbie looked away and clambered to his elevated feet. Placing the phone into the waistband of his yoga pants, the shaking young man reached into the locker to gather up its contents. Tottering away, he needed time to think, and the privacy of a bathroom cubicle seemed as good a place as any.

=====

In position, with the embarrassing selfie sent, Robbie sat waiting for the phone to ring. Wondering what was taking so long. He was in the right place. Wasn't he?



Checking the pictures on the phone again, he saw the map with a pin placed over a shopping center, and a second that matched the fountain behind him. Convinced he was in the right place he looked down feeling humiliated. It was bad enough wearing the pink sports outfit, but this new outfit was just cruel. Having just changed in a nearby bathroom, he could still remember the looks of curiosity as he shuffled over to his current position and snapped a selfie.

He was obviously dressed to stand out in an outfit that looked a cross between a French maid and a Lolita costume. If he had previously felt odd, he now felt like he was on the verge of an existential crisis. From the poofy skirt flapping around his legs to the caress of the tights clinging to his hairless legs, everything just felt wrong!

Suddenly, the phone started ringing. Taking a deep breath, Robbie answered.

“Ooh, la la! Looking hawt there girly,” said the same female voice as the recording from earlier.

“Who is this, and why are you doing this to me?” Robbie replied frantically, trying to work out where he’d heard the voice before.

“Hey, I ask the questions here. You listen. Is that clear?” Came a firm reply.

“No, it’s not clear. Who the hell are you, and why are you doing this?” Robbie yelled.

“Last chance, Honeybun, If you speak again, I’m hanging up.”

“But... please. I... Hello! Hello.” The phone went dead, leaving Robbie angry and frustrated. He tried calling back, but after four attempts, he realised that no one was going to answer. Placing the phone down, he put his head in his hands and felt like crying.

Twenty-five, soul-crushingly long minutes later, the phone finally rang again. Picking it up, this time, Robbie stayed quiet.

“I hope you’ve learnt your lesson,” the voice said. “Next time, I won’t be calling back.”

“Yes, I’m sorry,” Robbie meekly replied, feeling like a complete sissy.

“Good. I accept your apology, but for your outburst earlier, you must be punished,” the woman said with a chuckle. “For your forfeit, you’re going to dye your hair blonde. When you're done, return to the fountain. Take another selfie, and I’ll call back.”

“But I have no money. How am I supposed to...” The line went dead again, leaving Robbie fuming. “Son of a bitch,” he screamed, causing a few heads to turn in his direction.

=====

Walking into the chime of a bell, the unfamiliar chemical smell of a woman’s beauty salon clawed at Robbie’s throat. After sitting by the fountain for a further forty-five minutes staring at the phone, he had come to the scary conclusion that the woman wasn’t going to call back.

In almost a trance-like state, he had risen to his wedge-soled feet and set off, plodding around the shopping center with no particular destination in mind. That’s when he’d seen the sign, “Beauty by Shar.” With nothing to lose, he’d walked in through the door.

“Hello there. Can I help you with something?” Shar, the owner of the salon said while looking Robbie up and down.

“Err... Hi,” Robbie replied, embarrassed as he looked over at a strikingly beautiful woman. “I was hoping you could err... maybe dye my hair blonde. Is that something you do here?”

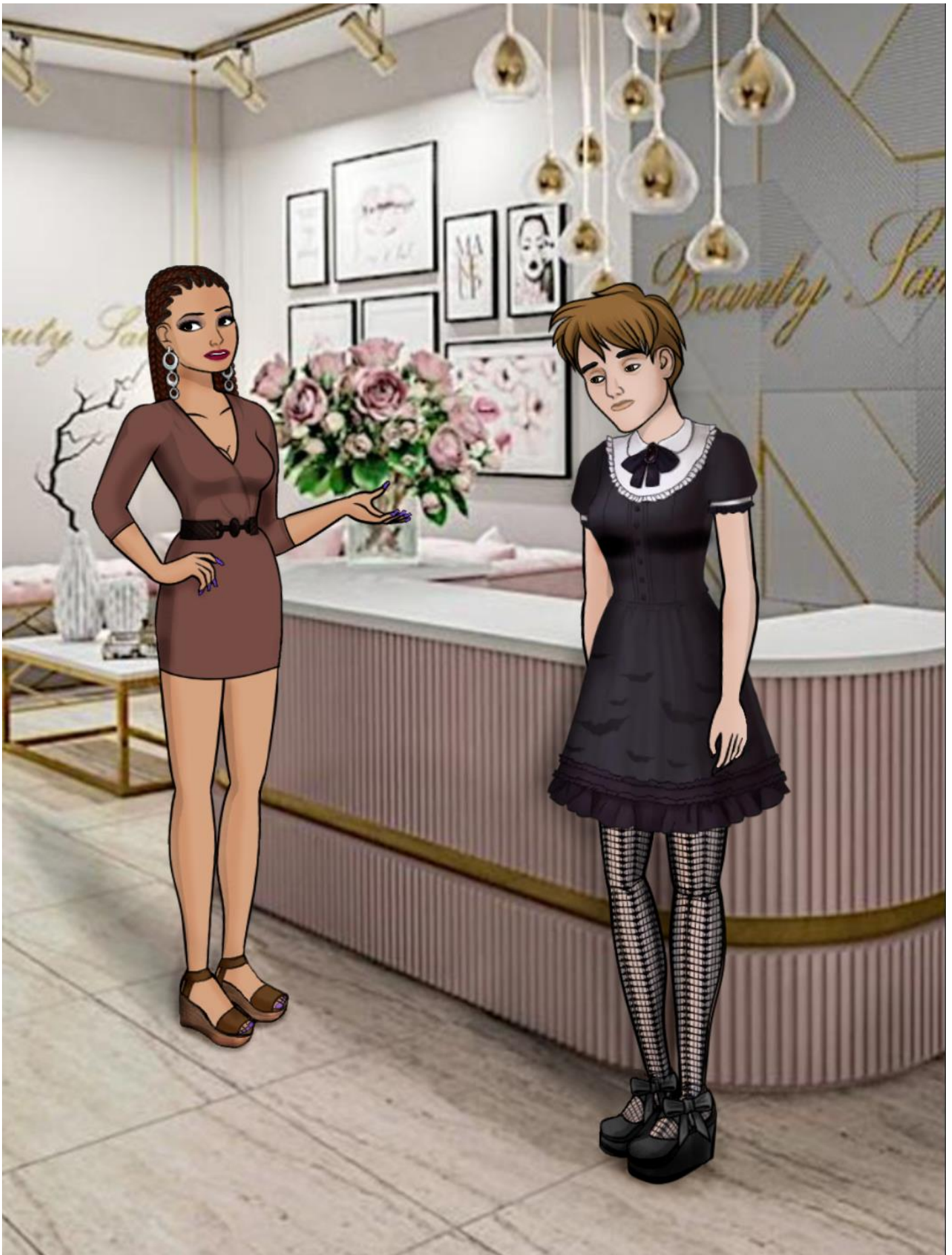
“Honey, this is a beauty salon. Of course, we do that here,” Shar replied with a chuckle. “Would you like to make an appointment?”

Looking up at the woman who had a few inches on him in height, even in his wedged shoes, Robbie gritted his teeth. “Well, I was hoping you could do it now. It’s a bit of an emergency, you see. And... err... I don’t really have any money on me right now.”

“No money! What do you think this is? A charity?” Shar exclaimed, shaking her head, and sending her braids flying.

“Please! It really is an emergency. And as soon as I get home, I’ll wire you the money. I promise.” Robbie begged while lowering his head, feeling utterly humiliated.

“Sorry, Sweetie but businesses don’t work like that. No money. No blonde hair for you.” Shar said, throwing her arms out and rolling her eyes.



“But, then again,” Shar suddenly announced while looking Robbie over once more. “Perhaps we can come to some kind of arrangement.”

=====

“Come on, pick up,” Robbie snarled while looking around in frustration.

After leaving the salon in a fit of rage, he'd stomped back over to the fountain to try calling the mysterious woman. But having tried six times already (each time with the call ringing out), it was becoming abundantly clear that she had no plans on picking up.

Hanging up, Robbie dropped the phone, only for it to be swallowed up by the large, poofy skirt of his dress that stuck out awkwardly due to the multiple layers of petticoats beneath. He didn't know what to do. Miles from home, he had no money and was dressed in a ridiculous women's costume. He couldn't even connect to the free Wi-Fi provided by the shopping centre as his new phone had been set up in such a way that it restricted certain functions.

Thinking again about the threat of having been poisoned, the options open to him seemed limited. He could go to the hospital. Perhaps they could cure him. But then again, perhaps they couldn't! Closing his eyes and screwing up his face in anger, Robbie thought about the alternative, returning to the salon to take Shar up on her offer. There she would dye his hair blonde, that's if he also allowed her to style it before posing for some pictures. Imagining those pictures on her website to promote her salon and try to attract more LGBTQ+ customers made him want to lean over and vomit into the fountain behind him. “There must be a better option,” he thought to himself. “Come on, Robbie. Think outside of the box.”

=====

“Hey, good work today,” Shar announced as she walked up to chat with a miserable-looking Robbie. “If you ever need a job, let me know.”

Robbie forced a smile and remained silent. Inside he felt angry and humiliated but didn't want to let his frustration show. He was now dressed in a spare salon uniform that consisted of a tight brown dress with a deep V down the front that showed far more of his new assets than he felt comfortable with. A brown belt that emphasised his thin waist accompanied the short dress. And a pair of sandals with a taller wedge than the previous pair that Shar had found in the back now sat below his sore, hairless legs. The whole ensemble made his lower body appear female. A freaky sight with his head sat atop! Shar must have agreed as after getting dressed, she slicked back his hair with a little styling gel before announcing him ready to work.

“So, are you ready to get your hair coloured?” Shar asked in her usual cheery, bubbly voice.

Looking around and seeing the salon empty, Robbie nodded his head. “I guess so,” Robbie replied in a far less enthusiastic voice. Understandable, considering he had just spent the last few hours sweeping up hair and making coffee for customers dressed as a woman. The last thing he now wanted to do was bleach his hair and model for Shar's website.

“You're a strange one you,” Shar said before gasping. “Not strange as in a weirdo. I didn't mean it like that. I mean... I'm not trying to say there's anything wrong with being trans or... sorry... whatever you identify as. I just meant that you came in here asking me to help you out with your hair and you look as if you're about to attend a funeral.”

“Well, It's been a bad day. A bit of a nightmare if I'm honest,” Robbie replied, rolling his eyes. “So, if it's all the same to you, can we just get this over with?”

“Erm... sure,” Shar answered, flashing him an empathetic smile. “No problem. And thanks again for the help this afternoon. I know that I pushed my luck a bit when you returned, but with that temp failing to show up, you were a huge help. I really need to call that agency and complain. It's the third time this month that one of their girls has failed to show up.”

Seeing Robbie staring blankly back at her, Shar chuckled. “Oh, yeah, sorry, your hair. I've been told many times that I talk too much. Anyway, let's get started, shall we?” She added with a snap of her long-nailed fingers.



=====

Robbie jumped as the phone clenched between his fingers rang. It had been an hour since he'd arrived back at the fountain and sent a selfie to confirm that he had done what the woman had asked of him.

The seconds ticked by at a snail's pace for Robbie as he sat fidgeting with his outfit, trying not to think about the edgy look Shar had forced upon him. And if the colour and bold cut of his hair weren't bad enough, his eyebrows were now, as Shar put it "shaped," and his face, to him, felt caked in makeup. There had been more than a few confused looks as he'd walked back from the salon.

Lifting the phone to his ear, Robbie answered. "Hey there, Blondie. Wow! Look at you with your bitchin new do, like a goth Barbie doll or something," the woman on the phone said before giggling loudly.

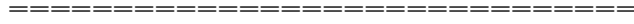
Already tired and hungry, being laughed at was the final straw. "Ok, you've had your fun. I've done what you wanted. Now, where's the antidote," Robbie said aggressively through gritted teeth.

"Woah, calm down there, Barbie." The woman replied. "This game isn't over, yet. Far from it, in fact."

Looking up to see a teenage boy a few feet away, staring right at him with a big grin plastered across his spotty face, Robbie squeezed the phone as hard as he could and took a deep breath. "Yes, it is. And stop calling me, Barbie, you fucking psycho. Let me tell you what's going to happen here. You're going to tell me where the antidote is and then you're going to hope you don't spend the rest of your life rotting in prison."

There was a moment of silence before the woman burst out laughing. After chuckling for a few seconds her tone abruptly changed. "Oh, Blondie, you don't learn, do you? The woman said sternly. "I make the rules here, and if I want to make you my Barbie doll, I will. You know, after that insult, I might just do that. There's now a forfeit to be paid, but I think I'll give you the night first to contemplate your behaviour."

“What? Wait! Where am I supposed to...” Robbie yelled, but the line went dead. “Son of a bitch.” He screamed, throwing his arms up into the air much to the amusement of the teenage boy who was now filming him with his smartphone.



Miserable, hungry, and alone, Robbie looked again at his new phone before dropping it to his side. It had been hours since the last call, but time had lost all meaning to Robbie as he sat with his pantied backside on the cold, hard ledge of the fountain. He had nowhere to go and no plan of action. His exhausted brain had given up thinking of a solution to his problems, and with the thought of venturing out into the streets much worse than the thought of staying put, he sat there in limbo as the last few customers vacated the building.



“Oh, hey it’s you,” came a voice, making Robbie look up. “What are you doing sitting here all alone?”

It took Robbie a second to recognise Shar from the salon, and when he did, he didn’t know whether to feel happy or embarrassed. “I’ve got nowhere else to go,” he replied in a sad, quiet voice.

Pushing out her top lip, Shar placed her handbag on the floor before sitting to Robbie’s right. “Is there anyone I can call for you?”

“No, there’s nobody who can help me,” Robbie muttered, “I just have to wait for her to call, tomorrow?”

“Call? Who’s going to call you? A friend?” Shar asked in a confused voice.

“No! Robbie yelled, making Shar jump slightly. “That bitch is no friend of mine!” Taken aback but seeing tears forming in the corner of Robbie’s eyes, Shar placed a hand on the feminised boy’s shoulder. “Shush... Hey, it’s ok. Everything is going to be ok. Look, I don’t know what’s going on with you, but I can tell you’re in trouble. And seeing as you have nowhere to go and this place closes soon, how about you spend the night on my sofa.”

Turning his head slowly, Robbie looked Shar in the eyes. “Really?” he asked.

“You’d do that for me? Why? For all you know, I could be an axe murderer.”

“Well, lucky for me, it looks like you left your axe in your other dress, and I don’t have one at my place,” Shar replied with a smile. “So, what do you say?

Interested?”

Nodding his head, Robbie smiled his first genuine smile of the day. “Yes, Thank you, Shar. That sounds amazing.”

=====

Looking over at Shar, Robbie nodded as he shovelled another spoon full of yoghurt and granola into his gaping mouth. She was rabbiting on about some difficult client who was visiting the salon later that afternoon. Something about her having a big head and never being satisfied with the final result. In truth, Robbie wasn’t listening. He had more important things on his mind, like the fact he’d woken up to find a huge pair of tender breasts attached to his chest. It didn’t help that he still felt exhausted.

Initially sleeping well after crashing out on Shar’s couch almost as soon as he lay down his head, he'd woken up at 5 am after a strange dream. Once again finding his body feeling alien and wrong, he'd struggled to find a comfortable position and couldn't get back to sleep.

“Looks like someone’s hungry,” Shar commented as she watched Robbie lick his bowl clean. “Would you like some more?”

“Err... sorry? What did you say?” Robbie replied, looking up with tired eyes.

“I asked if you wanted another portion,” Shar said with a smile. “You look hungry.”

“Oh, erm... yes. If you don’t mind?” Robbie answered before picking up his empty bowl and passing it across.

“It’s no problem,” Shar said while taking the bowl from his outstretched arm. “So, what do I call you anyway? I don’t even know your name!”

Robbie looked down at his smooth hairless legs, which were showing through the gap of the fluffy white dressing gown he was wearing, and felt ridiculous. “It’s Robbie,” he announced in a soft voice.

“Robbie, cool,” Shar said, nodding her head as she poured some more granola into his bowl. “Well, thanks again for yesterday, Robbie. I know you had a bit of a bad day, but I’m positive having a trans person representing the salon will be a massive help to business.”

Robbie's mouth fell open in disgust. “I’m not trans,” he blurted out, causing Shar to turn and raise an eyebrow. “I’m a man.”

“Oh, I see,” Shar replied in a surprised voice, glancing down at the two protrusions sticking out the front of his dressing gown before turning back to her task.

Embarrassed, Robbie folded his arms to try and hide his chest. “I didn’t... I mean... I don’t know who put those there... I mean... It’s complicated,” he stuttered before lowering his eyes, realising he must sound like a crazy person.

Turning, Shar placed the bowl back in front of the red-faced man. “Hey, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to pry. It’s also none of my business. You don’t owe me an explanation,” she said before turning back to the sink to start the washing up. “I read this article recently. It was about karma and how if you help just one person in need and they reciprocate, the world would be a better place. That's why I helped you, yesterday. So, while you're here if there’s anything else I can do to help, all you need to do is ask.”

Turning his head to one side, a wry smile crossed Robe's lips. "You wouldn't happen to have some old clothes I could borrow, would you? Perhaps a pair of jeans and a jacket?"



"Thanks for the clothes and all your help, Shar, but I guess it's time for me to hit the road," Robbie announced as he stood smiling at his generous host.

Dressed in a t-shirt, a hoodie, and a pair of trainers, he felt far more comfortable in the familiar clothing. Granted, the shorts were much shorter and tighter than what he was used to, but beggars can't be choosers, he'd thought to himself after failing to fit into any of the other pairs of pants Shar was willing to give him. At least with the cap, he'd placed on his head without asking, he could now hide his girly hairdo until he could get his head shaved.



“You’re welcome, Robbie. It’s like I said, the clothes are old. I would have only ended up throwing them out anyway,” she replied, looking down at the strange

person opposite her. “Oh, talking of clothes. What do you want to do with the outfit you were wearing yesterday?”

At the mention of the humiliating frilly black dress and ramped shoes he'd been forced to wear the previous day while sitting by the fountain feeling sorry for himself, Robbie shuddered. “Throw it out, donate it to a charity shop, or burn it for all I care,” he announced while shaking his head. “I don't want it!”

“Well, ok then,” Shar replied before retrieving her purse from the table. “Here, take this. It's all I have, unfortunately, but have it.” She added while handing Robbie thirty pounds.

“Thank you,” Robbie said sincerely, taking the money and placing it in his jacket pocket. “I've got your details. As soon as I get home, I'll wire you double. I promise.”

“Great, I know you will,” Shar replied before looking up at the clock. “Well, so long then, Robbie. Sorry to hurry you, but I need to go and open the salon.”

“Oh sure, ok. But Shar, before I go. Do you know what today's date is?” he asked, worried about the answer he'd receive.

“It's the 12th of April,” Shar answered while a confused look crossed her face. “Is everything ok?”

“Erm... yeah, tip-top,” Robbie frantically answered, suddenly realising that he'd lost three weeks of memories. “Well, bye then,” he added before ambling towards the door.

Shellshocked and still incredibly uncomfortable within his own skin, Robbie strode towards the bus station. Now with money in his pocket, from there, he could at least get on a bus headed for London, where he could see a doctor or perhaps call the police. It wasn't a great plan, but it was all he had. It at least gave him back some feeling of control.

With every step he took being accompanied by the unnatural feeling of his breast jiggling up and down (having stubbornly refused to wear a bra earlier), Robbie's plan lasted all of ten minutes before he heard his phone beep in his pocket. Ducking into a shop doorway, he looked down at the screen to discover a new message had been sent.

GOOD MORNING, MY LITTLE SUNFLOWER,

I TRUST YOU'RE FEELING RESTED AS WE HAVE A FUN DAY AHEAD OF US.

JUST OFF NEW STREET, YOU'LL FIND GRANDMA'S ATTIC. GO THERE AND ASK FOR TINKERBELL. BUT DON'T BE TOO SLOW NOW! REMEMBER TIME IS NO LONGER YOUR FRIEND. TICK TOCK!

Accompanying the message was a picture. A picture of himself lying naked in the hotel room he'd woken the previous day. But that wasn't even the scariest part! That honour went to the arm holding a syringe, injecting him with some unknown dark liquid.

Bringing up his hands to cover his mouth, Robbie let out a muffled scream as his tired mind searched for answers. Why was this happening to him? And what could anyone possibly have to gain by doing it?

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Two bus rides later, having asked a few random people on the street for directions, Robbie finally found himself looking up at the sign above the door of Grandma's attic. "Of course, it's a costume shop," he thought to himself glumly as he got a distinct feeling that his short time back in pants was about to come to an end.

Inside the long but narrow store, Robbie looked around to see colourful clothes lining both walls in a variety of shiny cheap looking materials. At the far end, a bored-looking woman sat behind a counter where she texted away on her phone, seemingly oblivious to Robbie's presence.

Inhaling a lung full of the musty air circulating the room, Robbie began to cough as the dust clawed at his throat.

"Can I help you?" Came a voice from behind the counter.

Stepping forward, Robbie coughed a few more times to clear his airways before looking down at the thin, surly-looking woman. “Yes, I’m looking for Tinkerbell.” He said as he wiped at his watery eyes.

“So, you’re Tinkerbell?” the woman said in her strong, Brummy accent while cracking half a smile. “I was wondering who would show up.”

“No, I’m not Tinkerbell, I’m Ro.... Oh, never mind,” Robbie replied, rolling his eyes. “Look, I was told to come here and ask for Tinkerbell. Do you have a message or something for me?”

The woman placed her index finger in the centre of her glasses. “Well, I have a pickup for Tinkerbell, but you just said you weren’t Tinkerbell?” She stated while repositioning her glasses and looking confused.

“A pickup? As in a costume?” Robbie asked.

“No, a Ferrari,” the woman scoffed. “Of course, a costume! Look around you, genius. What do you see?”

“Yeah, I got it,” Robbie replied in an annoyed tone. “Real great customer service you’ve got here! So, can I have it?”

“Have what?” The woman replied.

“The Ferrari,” Robbie answered while shaking his head and tutting.

“Ha, that’s funny,” the woman replied before chuckling. “I see what you did there. That's clever. But no. Unfortunately, I can’t give it to you.”

Robbie opened his mouth ready to shout but managed to stop himself at the last moment. “And why is that?” He asked while forcing a smile.”

“Well, that's obvious, isn't it? The package is for Tinkerbell. That’s the name on the pick-up. That means I can only give the package to Tinkerbell, and that's not you, is it?”

Tensing every muscle in his upper body, Robbie almost blew a blood vessel before taking a deep breath. “Forget what I said before. I’m Tinkerbell,” he said while grinning like the idiot he felt.

“Do you have any ID to prove that?” the woman asked.

“No, I don’t have any ID!” Robbie screamed, finally losing his cool. “I’m really not in the mood for this. Come on. Think about it. You have a package for Tinkerbell, and I came in asking for it. Who else would I be? I mean, how busy can a costume shop in April be? What are the chances two people are called Tinkerbell?”

The woman thought for a moment. “You do make a fair point,” she said while nodding her head. “ok, wait here.” She added before disappearing into the back room, only to return a few seconds later carrying a plastic bag. “Here it is Tinkerbell. Would you like to try it on?” She said while placing the bag on the counter.

“No,” Robbie snarled. “That won’t be necessary, but can you tell me who ordered this?”

“Some guy called in first thing this morning. He picked out the costume and said Tinkerbell would pick it up later. It all seemed a bit strange, but he bought the costume outright. So, whatever. A sale's a sale in my book.”

“What did he look like, this man?” Robbie asked as he picked up the bag and peered inside to see a sea of green.

“He was a big guy, muscly with dark hair. He looked like he could have been perhaps Italian.” The woman answered as a dreamy expression crossed her thin face. “Why do you know him?”

“Erm... no. Thanks for the help,” Robbie mumbled as his attention turned to a white envelope he'd just noticed sitting atop a pile of green fabric. Placing the bag back on the counter, he ripped open the envelope, apprehensive about the impending next set of instructions he was about to receive.

HEY THERE TINKERBELL,

IT'S FORFEIT TIME. PUT ON THE COSTUME AND TAKE A BUS TO CANNON HILL PARK. TO COMPLETE YOUR TASK, I REQUIRE TWO PICTURES. ONE OF YOU STANDING ON THE BUS IN FULL COSTUME, AND A SECOND TAKEN IN THE PARK AS YOU PLANT A KISS ON A RANDOM MAN OF YOUR CHOICE. SEND THEM THROUGH BEFORE 3 PM, OR IT'S GAME OVER.

GOOD LUCK, TINK. OH, AND I DO HOPE HE'S HANDSOME.

Slowly screwing up the note, Robbie looked back at the woman behind the counter who was already back scrolling through her phone. “Ahem! If it’s still ok with you, I’d like to try on the costume.

=====

With his feet now squashed painfully into a pair of heeled ankle boots, Robbie plonked his tired body down onto a park bench. Letting out a groan, the feeling of relief to be off his aching feet was by far trumped by the humiliation of being dressed like a complete and utter sissy.

Shuffling his pantied backside around on the wooden planks, Robbie tried and failed to find a comfortable position as he avoided the gaze of dog walkers and office workers out for their lunch. Not an easy task when wearing an indecently short green dress accompanied by a huge set of wings. Having just pressed the send button on his phone, he looked down at the picture still on the screen and scoffed.



Suddenly the phone started ringing. Answering, Robbie placed it to his ear.

“Oh my, look at you! I guess you are some kind of sissy fairy after all,” the woman on the phone announced before giggling.

Robbie’s mouth fell open as he almost dropped the phone. The sentence had triggered something in his memories. He'd thought the voice sounded familiar, but now he knew who it was. “Agatha? From the bar?” he questioned in a shaky voice. “Is that you?”

The voice on the line let out a loud hearty laugh. “Took you long enough to realise,” Agatha said, between chuckles. “Who was the guy in the kissing photo? Your boyfriend?”

“What! No! He was just some random guy I found in the park,” Robbie shot back, aghast. “Anyway, that doesn’t matter. What the fuck did you do to me and why? I have tits, for fucks sake!”

“Now, now beautiful, calm down and watch your language,” Agatha replied in a serious tone. “You’ve been warned before about speaking out of turn. You’ll get your answers in time, but for now, you listen. Otherwise, I’ll hang up, and you’ll die a horribly painful death before your friends and family bury you thinking you’re some kind of freak pervert. Say, sorry mistress, if you understand.”

Wanting to scream, Robbie bit his tongue and paused for a few seconds before finally giving Agatha the reply she wanted.

“Now, that’s better. From now on, you will only answer questions when asked and you will always refer to me as Mistress. Is that clear?”

“Yes,” Robbie muttered, again biting his tongue, and feeling deflated as he looked down at his cleavage, spilling out the top of his tiny green dress.

“Yes, what?” Agatha asked.

“Yes, mistress,” Robbie spat, feeling sick to his stomach.

“Good, very good, my little fairy,” Agatha replied with a snigger. “Now tell me more about the picture from the park. Who took it? And how many people did you have to ask before you got that shot?”

Feeling his face going flush, Robbie squirmed in his seat. “It was taken by the man’s friend,” he snarled. “And yes, I had to ask a few people just like you wanted, I assume?”

“Attitude, Blondie!” Agatha announced. “And be specific. How many people did you ask?”

Shaking with rage, Robbie closed his eyes. “I don’t know, twenty-five, thirty perhaps.”

Agatha burst out laughing, “Wonderful. Well worth it, I’d say for such a precious picture. But I’m sure that hunk of a man was disappointed to only get a kiss on the cheek. We’ll have to fix that when you complete your next forfeit.”

“Next forfeit!” Robbie hollered. “For what?”

“For the way you spoke to me earlier, of course,” Agatha stated firmly. “And was that a question I just heard? That’s another forfeit for you.”

“No, I mean yes, I mean... I’m sorry Mistress. Please, no more forfeits. Please!” Robbie begged out of desperation.

Oh, little one, you still don’t seem to grasp what is going on here, do you? I’m in charge here. Complete and utter control. I tell you to do something, and you do it. Without question or complaint,” Agatha firmly stated. “Now, at the northwest entrance to the park, you’ll find a rubbish bin. On the underside, I’ve left you a gift. Go and get it, fairy boy.” She added before the line went dead.

Utterly humiliated and more than a little flustered, Robbie dropped the phone onto his skirted lap as a tear rolled down his cheek, making him feel even more like the sissy he was dressed as. “I can’t do this anymore! He said aloud as he closed his eyes and bowed his head. “I can’t!”

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Leaning down to check the underside of the bin, Robbie shuddered as he felt the phone slide down slightly from its position wedged in between his breasts.

Crouched in a rather unladylike manner, he felt around the underside of the bin while flashing his panties to anyone who cared to look. Feeling something taped there, he ripped off an envelope before lifting himself back to his high-heeled feet.

Shaking his head, he tore open the envelope, curious but also a little frightened to discover its contents. Inside he found a folded note and a small green ticket with the number 58 on the front. Flipping the ticket over, he saw the word, Lush printed on the back. Confused, he decided to read the accompanying note.

LOOK AT YOU, A REGULAR LITTLE DORA THE EXPLORER.

**THE TICKET YOU FOUND WILL LEAD YOU TO YOUR NEXT CLUE.
FLUTTER YOUR WAY TO 17 HALL STREET, MY LITTLE FAIRY, AND
FIND TERRANCE.**

**IF YOU ASK HIM ABOUT THE TICKET NICELY, HE MIGHT BE ABLE
TO POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.**

Looking down past the two obstacles jutting out from his chest, Robbie lifted his right foot and rotated it in a circular motion to try and ease his discomfort. For a moment, he considered taking off the uncomfortable ankle boots and going forth barefoot. But with the cringe-worthy memory of him wandering around the park, asking strangers if he could kiss them still fresh in his mind, he quickly changed his mind. Dreading the thought of what else he might be forced to do if he incurred another forfeit, he sighed loudly before placing the phone back between his breasts and plodding out of the park.

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Finding Terrance turned out to be a more difficult task than it first seemed. After asking a few people for directions and getting either ignored or brushed off, Robbie had tried a different tactic. Hailing down a taxi, he showed the address to the driver, who after typing it into his phone, informed the embarrassed young

man that there were three places in the city matching that address. Rummaging around inside his pants, Robbie retrieved what remained of the money Shar had lent him. He then offered it to the driver and pleaded for help. Somehow it worked.

Typically, the first two stops turned out to be wrong. So, tired and at the end of his tether, Robbie stood under the moonlight at the final address given to him by the taxi driver, praying for Terrance to answer. Taking a deep breath, he knocked on the door. He wasn't sure what he was going to do. If this address was wrong too, he was now alone, out of ideas, and penniless.

“And who might you be?” A giant of a man boomed as he opened his door to find a fairy on his porch.

“Uhm... hi,” Robbie announced while hunching his shoulders. Suddenly feeling quite vulnerable in the huge man’s presence. “I’m looking for Terrance. Is he here?”

The man looked Robbie up and down as a smile crossed his weathered face. “You don’t look like the bailiffs. What do you want, little fairy?”



“Erm... I... This might sound crazy, but I have this, and I was told to come here and ask for Terrance.” Robbie said while opening his hand to reveal the ticket.

“Who told you?” A confused-looking Terrance asked while looking down at the ticket.

“Agatha. A woman named Agatha,” Robbie answered nervously while taking a small step backwards on his uncomfortable shoes.

“Hmm. Don’t know no Agatha,” Terrance replied while appearing to think. “But that’s a ticket for the cloakroom at work. How’d you get that?”

“At Lush?” Robbie yelled out excitedly, remembering the name from the ticket. “You work at Lush?”

“Yeah, I work at Lush. What’s it to you?” Terrance replied, folding his arms.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” Robbie said while flashing the man a smile. “I don’t mean to get in your business or anything. It’s just if this is for the cloakroom where you work. I need to get in there. Can you give me the address? if it’s not too much trouble, of course.”

Terrance smiled back. “Well, ain’t you a polite little fairy? And I could give ya the address, but it won’t do you any good. The club is for members only. You won’t get in, not dressed like that or without someone vouchin for ya.”

“But... I have to get in. Please, you have to help me. I’m begging you. It’s literally life or death. There must be something you can do?”

Terrance paused for a moment before looking Robbie up and down. “Well, I could getcha in. If I had some incentive, that is. What’s in it for me?”

“I have money. Well, not right now,” Robbie spluttered. “I can get it to you. soon! How much do you want?”

“If ya don’t have it now, I’m not interested,” Terrance replied, folding his arms. “But how bout I do it for ya as a favour? Then after, you can do one for me?”

“What kind of favour?” Robbie asked, not liking the grin on Terrance’s face.

“Hell, Lil fairy. Do ya want my help or not?” The man roared while throwing his arms up dramatically. “I’m riskin my job here, you know? It took years to get a cushy door job like this one.”

Robbie closed his eyes and breathed in deeply through his nose. He had no choice, and he knew it. “Ok, how does this work?” he asked, feeling like he’d just sold his soul to the devil.

“Come over around two-thirty, and I’ll let you in. I finish at three, so we can talk then,” Terrance stated while licking his lips. “And put some makeup on and wear somemin sexy. As cute as ya look now, I can’t let ya in looking like this.”

“Two-thirty? As in tonight?” Robbie gasped.

“Course, tonight. That a problem?” Terrance asked while narrowing his brow.

“Erm... no. No problem. I’ll be there,” Robbie replied while backing away.

“Thanks. See you later.”

Without looking back, Robbie walked away from the intimidating man as quickly as he could manage. Once out of sight, he sat on a wall and tried to think. How was he supposed to find another outfit at such short notice? He would also need to get to Lush somehow, and he had no idea where it was. Suddenly, his thoughts were interrupted by a car pulling up.

“Come on, get in,” Shouted the taxi driver from earlier through the open driver's side window.

“I thought you were gone!” Robbie shot back as a smile crossed his previously miserable face.

“Well, this ain’t exactly the nicest of neighbourhoods. I couldn’t just leave you here,” the driver replied, rolling his eyes. “Besides, my shift ended half an hour ago. Where can I take you?”

Robbie could only think of one place. “Do you know Beauty by Shar? he asked while hopping down from the wall.”

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As he entered the salon, Robbie's heels clicked loudly off the polished floor, announcing his presence. As he approached the front desk, Shar suddenly popped out from beneath. "Sorry, we're close. Robbie! What are you doing here? And why are you dressed like that?" she shrieked.

"Hey, Shar. Well, It's a bit of a long story actually, but to cut to the chase, I could really use your help," Robbie replied while rubbing his neck and looking away bashfully.



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“I really do appreciate the help, Shar, but you know, there really is no need to go overboard here. Some old clothes and a little makeup will do the trick.” Robbie muttered nervously from the salon chair.

“Nonsense, if we’re doing this, we’ll do it right,” Shar replied as she continued to apply the face mask intended to cleanse and soften Robbie’s skin. “What if someone saw you walking out of here looking a mess? It would be bad for my reputation.”

“Come on, Shar! It’s ten o’clock on a Friday night. The shopping centre's closed. Who on earth is going to be around to see me?” Robbie moaned. “What is this gunk anyway?”

“Hey, do you want my help or not?” Shar snapped in an annoyed tone. “Here I am, after hours, helping you out of the goodness of my heart and all you’re doing is complaining.”

“I’m sorry,” Robbie replied while lowering his head. “I really do appreciate you doing this. I can’t say I’d do the same if I was in your position.”

“Well, it’s like I told you before, Robbie. It’s all about karma,” Shar said while turning away to check her equipment. “Sending you away would be bad karma, and I don’t need that while starting a new business. All I ask is that the next time you come across someone who needs help, you won’t ignore them.”

“I promise,” Robbie replied as he lifted his hand to examine his girly-looking nails.

“That's enough for me,” Shar said before looking down over Robbie’s shoulder. “You’re not happy with your nails, are you? Well, that's your own fault. I asked you what colour you wanted, and you said you didn’t care.”



The sight of shiny pink nails hovering above a set of smooth hairless thighs made Robbie cringe. “I know,” he said, trying not to complain again. “They’re fine, really. I’m just not used to wearing nail polish, that’s all.”

“Really? How strange,” Shar said, raising an eyebrow. “Here, something’s been bugging ever since that comment you made about your breasts and not knowing who put them there. Robbie, Is someone forcing you to go to this club tonight?”

Robbie froze as he decided on how to answer. “I... It’s complicated,” he said, repeating his answer from earlier. “It’s a long story, and to be honest, I don’t feel like telling it. I just have to get into that nightclub. It’s really important.”

“I see,” Shar replied as she picked up the first of the hair extensions she had arranged to her right. “And why is that? Earlier, you said it was life or death!”

“There’s something I need in there,” Robbie replied while curling his lip at the sight of the long blonde strand of hair moving towards the top of his head. Almost complaining, he bit his tongue, remembering how he’d earlier begged Shar to help him. He also remembered how he’d given Shar free reign to do what she deemed necessary after conceding that he would really need to update his look if he was going to get into one of the city’s most exclusive nightclubs.

“Oh, come on! Give me a bit more than that, or I stop right now,” Shar cried before throwing a towel over the mirror to help Robbie focus on her. “I don’t have to do this, you know?”

“Ok, fine,” Robbie moaned, rolling his eyes. “I’ve been receiving these messages telling me to do stuff. The last one gave me a ticket and sent me to see some guy named Terrace. When I found him, he said the ticket was for the cloakroom, and if I dressed up sexy, he could get me in. There’s going to be some kind of message waiting for me there.”

“Robbie! Who is this guy? And what does he expect in return?” Shar asked with concern in her voice.

“A bouncer at Lush. To be honest, he creeped me out a little when he asked for a favour in return, but at least now, I have a way in.”

“Robbie! This sounds really dangerous! Shar exclaimed. “It’s never a good idea to owe people favours. Why is this so important to you?”

“I... as I said, it’s complicated. Look, Shar, I’ll be careful, ok? I’m just going to head in. Get what I need and leave. And after tonight, I don’t plan on ever seeing this Terrance guy again, so whatever he wants from me, he’s not getting it!”

“And what if he catches you on the way out?” Shar asked as she went back to doing Robbie’s hair. “I’ve known a few club bouncers in my time, and if he’s asked you to come, looking sexy, he’s only after one thing. You!”

“What? But I’m a guy. unless he’s gay?” Robbie blurted out in shock. He had briefly thought about what Terrance might ask from him in return for letting him enter the club, but what Shar was suggesting couldn't be true, could it?

Shar went silent for a second as if she was thinking. “I tell you what. Why don’t I go with you tonight? I can give you a ride over there and observe things from the car?”

“Uhm... really? I mean, that’s really kind of you to offer, but I’ll be ok,” Robbie replied, not understanding why Shar had offered.

“I’m sure you will but how are you going to get there at that time of night? And what will you do after? My sofa is free again, you know?”

“Uhm... ok then,” Robbie replied with a smile. “I guess I could stay one more night. That is if you really don’t mind?”

“That’s settled then,” Shar announced while clapping her hands together. “Now, let’s finish making you look the part then, shall we? And while I work, I’ll tell you how I ended up owning this salon. It’s a crazy story, you see It was left to me by my aunt, who died in a freak boating accident. She was on a sailboat in the Adriatic when...”

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Having attached the last of the extensions to Robbie’s hair, Shar placed her hands on his shoulders and smiled. “Ok, all done, and it’s turned out really nice. Are you ready to see?”

Having stared blankly at the towel still covering the mirror for the last hour while struggling to stay awake, Robbie sat up straight in his chair. The extra weight on top of his head was definitely noticeable, and out of the corner of his eye, he could see some dangling strands of blonde hair. “Yes, show me the damage,” he answered, eager to get the night over with.

Reaching over, Shar grabbed the corner of the towel, and with her long purple nails, yanked it clear.

“Oh my God,” Robbie shrieked, bringing his hand up to cover his mouth. “What did you do to me?”

Returning to her position behind his chair, Shar giggled as the astonished, blonde-headed man fell into a stunned silence.



“What you asked for, Robbie, hun. Now you look like a person who belongs in a club like Lush,” Shar announced before clicking her fingers. “Well, you will once I’ve done your makeup. Oh, and before I forget, let me fetch my piercing gun.”

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“I’m not sure I can do this,” Robbie muttered as he looked down at his feminine-looking body encased in a skimpy outfit.

“Do you want to leave? We don’t have to do this, you know?” Shar replied from the driver’s seat of her car, parked up next to club Lush.

“No! I have to do this,” Robbie shot back. “I just feel so really strange. And it’s not just this outfit and ridiculous shoes. I’ve got a killer headache, aches and pains all over, and I can’t stop shaking.

“That’s probably just the nerves and lack of sleep,” Shar replied before flashing him a reassuring smile. “And sorry about the outfit, it’s all I could find at such short notice. I don’t go clubbing much these days, not since I met my boyfriend.”

“Boyfriend! You never mentioned a boyfriend before,” Robbie said as the image of some man coming into the house to find him sleeping on the sofa flashed through his mind.

“Yeah, but he’s away with the military right now,” Shar answered while turning to look out of the window. “He’s away most of the year, so we don’t get to see each other as much as I’d like. Anyway, It looks like the queue has died down, and Terrance is on his own. Now might be a good time to go and talk to him.”

“Yeah, but can I have your shoes instead of these ones? You saw how I walked to the car. I almost broke my ankle.” Robbie asked with a pleading look.

“Sorry, Robbie. No can do,” Shar replied, shaking her head. “The shoes match your nails and makeup. And a girl like you, going to a place like this, would know how to colour coordinate. Just walk slow. You shouldn’t be in a rush to get over there. A girl going here wants to be seen. She wants to be checked out.”

Robbie gulped and shook his head from side to side. "You're not helping my nerves, you know?" Robbie replied as his shaky hand reached out for the door handle. "I don't suppose you have a coat I could borrow, do you?" he added, looking down in disgust at his exposed thighs poking out from beneath his tiny pink skirt.

"Just go will you," Shar replied, giving Robbie a gentle push on the shoulder. It's not that cold out, and you're going to a cloakroom, remember? There's most likely a coat waiting for you there. What are you going to do with two coats?" Grunting out of frustration, Robbie threaded his pink polished nails through the strap of his purse and exited the car.

The slam of the car door made the crossdressed man jump slightly. On edge and suddenly feeling vulnerable and exposed, he looked around the dimly lit car park as a light breeze tickled his exposed legs and arms.

Mustering up all of his strength and courage, Robbie clutched the cloakroom ticket tightly in the palm of his hand and set off across towards the club on his wobbly legs. Ignoring the annoying strands of blonde hair flapping across his face, Robbie tottered on, all the while constantly being reminded of how he was dressed by the tiny mincing steps he was forced to take and the loud clicking sound of his stiletto heels.



Grinning from ear to ear, Terrance watched Robbie approach from his position on the door before licking his lips loudly as the scantily dressed man stopped in front of him.

“I’m here,” Robbie announced as he looked up at Terrance, trying not to let his nerves show.

“I can see that Sweetheart,” Terrance replied while chuckling. “Are you on the list?”

“Erm... what list? You said you’d let me in.” Robbie stated angrily while shaking his head.

“Ahh, Little fairy,” Terrance hollered, suddenly realising who he was speaking to. “Sorry, I didn’t recognise ya there, Doll. You scrub up nicely, don’t cha. Turn around and let me see.”

Letting out a sigh, Robbie did a slow twirl before suddenly yelling out as he felt a hand squeeze his pantied backside through his tight pink skirt. “Hey! What the hell, Dude? Robbie cried, quickly spinning back around before teetering on his heels for balance.

“Sorry, Little fairy. Couldn’t resist,” Terrance said with a smile.

“Well, try,” Robbie shot back irritably. “So, are you going to let me in or what?”

“Sure,” Terrance answered, leaning down slightly and turning his head. “The entry price is a kiss.”

Lowered his head, Robbie grunted. “Of course, it is,” he muttered under his breath. “Fine,” he added before having to raise himself onto his tiptoes as even wearing four-inch heels, he was still too short to reach the bouncer’s cheek.

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The cloakroom attendant gave Robbie a curious look. “Is this your box?” He asked in a confused-sounding voice.

“Erm... yes,” A smiling Robbie replied, taking the box from the man, and clutching it to his chest.

“Ok, enjoy your evening, Miss,” the attendant said before turning his back.

Seeing a sign for the bathrooms, Robbie trotted over and decided to use the women’s, considering how he was dressed. Heading straight for a stall, he locked the door, placed down the seat, and took the weight off his aching feet. His full focus then fell on the item in his hands. It was about the size of a ring box and seemed a strange thing to store in the cloakroom of a nightclub, no wonder the attendant looked at him so strangely. Opening the lid, he found a folded piece of paper with what he assumed to be a telephone number written on it and a matt black earpiece.

Opening his purse, Robbie found his phone and typed in the number. Holding his breath, It rang twice before Agatha answered. “Wow, I’m impressed. You made it inside. Good work, girlfriend.”

Biting his tongue, Robbie reframed from saying what he really wanted to say. “Yes, I’m here. Now what?”

“Oh, so grumpy tonight. I love it,” Agatha replied with a giggle. “Perhaps Missy isn't feeling so well. Headaches. Sharp stabbing pains. How bad are they on a scale of one to ten?”

“Ten,” Robbie declared angrily. “But how do you know that?”

“Oopsie, I guess someone may have given you a little too much poison. It seems your frail sissy body can’t handle a real man’s dose,” Agatha announced. “But don’t worry, snowflake. We’ll get you a little tonic that will delay the effects. Well, If you’re a good girl and complete tonight's task, that is.” She added before laughing loudly.

“What the fuck? You can’t be serious? What task? Robbie screamed down the phone in horror.

“Now, now, we’ve talked about this potty mouth of yours before, haven't we?” Agatha said, switching to a serious tone. “I’ll let it slide this time as you’ve just been given some stressful news. But remember who you’re talking to. A woman who literally holds your life in her hands. Now, you’ve no doubt found the earpiece.

Connect it to the Bluetooth on your phone and put it in the ear covered by your hair. When your set up, I want to hear you say, I'm ready, Mistress Agatha."

Wanting to tell the bitch to fuck off and smash the phone under the heel of his pink pump, Robbie took a deep breath before taking a second to do what he was told.

"Good," Agatha said after hearing Robbie's voice. Her voice now coming through the earpiece rather than the phone speaker. "Ok, now down to business. From here on out, I don't need to hear your voice, so put the phone in your cute little purse. I'll instruct you on what to do next when you've exited the bathroom."

Heaving his femininely dressed body up onto its shaky legs, Robbie dropped the phone into his purse before staggering out of the cubicle. Stumbling, he managed to catch himself on a counter just before he fell. Glaring at his face caked in makeup through the mirror above the sink, he felt like screaming. "Hurry up now, princess," the voice in his ear boomed. "Time is ticking. If you pass out before you get your tonic. You're done!"

"Yeah, and whose fault would that be? You crazy cow." Robbie muttered as he gazed at the two round globes attached to his chest. He wondered how his parents would react when the police informed them that they had found the feminised corpse of their son, dressed like some slut, in a random Birmingham nightclub! Would they remember him as some sort of pervert?

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Exiting the bathroom, Robbie clutched his temples in pain as the thump of the base vibrated every brain cell in his blonde head. "When you enter the main room, take a right," Came the voice of Agatha in his ear. "You're headed for the VIP section. When you get there, tell the bouncer your name is Ruby Lovewell. You're on the list."

"What?" Robbie spat, not quite believing what he had just heard. "Ruby Lovewell, you've got to be fucking kidding me?" No reply came!

But faced with a choice, his survival instincts kicked in as one thought dominated over all the rest. He didn't want to die! Whatever he needed to do, no matter how degrading, he would do it!

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After his two days of being humiliated at the hands of Agatha, using a ridiculous name and getting checked out by a security guard upon reaching the VIP section didn't seem too bad. That is until he was told to follow the man, who led him towards a sofa occupied by a well-dressed, middle-aged man!

"Ah, you must be Ruby. It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance," the man announced as he stood up before moving in to kiss Robbie on both cheeks. "My name is James. Would you like a drink, Ruby? Some Champagne, perhaps?"

Stunned, after being kissed by a man for the second time that night, Robbie wasn't sure how to respond. "Tell him yes and sit down," Agatha boomed in his ear.

Realising that she could actually hear what was going on just made Robbie hate the woman more as he nodded his head and sat down next to the older gentleman.

Watching as James looked him up and down like a piece of meat, Robbie grabbed the hem of his tiny skirt and wriggled his plump bottom to try and cover a little more of his tantalisingly smooth legs. With the skirt not budging, he gave up and instead pressed his thighs tightly together as he looked up to accept a flute of Champagne from an arriving waiter.

"You're a little late, but worth the wait, I'd say," James announced as he lifted his champagne glass. "A toast to new friends."

Smiling awkwardly, Robbie nodded before taking a mouthful of Champagne.

"Well done, now this handsome and very wealthy businessman is James Hemingsworth. And tonight, Blondie, you are his shemale escort," Agatha announced as Robbie spat his drink across the room.

"Oh, I say," James cried. "Waiter, bring some towels to clean this mess up. Are you alright, dear?" he asked Robbie with concern on his face.

Overwhelmed, Robbie nodded his pounding head. “Now that wasn’t very ladylike of you, was it?” Agatha said with a chuckle. “You need to flirt with this man and charm him, not soak him in expensive French plonk. Now get a grip of yourself and calm down. I’m not expecting you to sleep with this man. You just need to get two pieces of information from him. His telephone and room number. Do that, and you get your tonic. Easy peasy, right?”

Feeling slightly relieved after hearing the news that Agatha didn't expect him to solicit himself to this old man, Robbie took the towel offered to him by the waiter and dried off his Champagne-soaked legs. At that moment, Robbie resigned himself to the fact that if he wanted to get out of the place alive, he would need to do some things he wasn't necessarily comfortable with! “I’m so sorry, James,” he announced with a giggle. “I can be such a klutz sometimes. Why don’t we start again? Please tell me about yourself. Do you like to work out? You look awfully strong.”

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Twenty minutes later, James was cracking up after another of Robbie’s seemingly hilarious jokes. “Oh, Ruby, what a delight you are,” he said while stroking Robbie’s knee with the hand that had been resting there for the last few minutes.



“Delightfully funny, Robbie said, blinking his eyes and trying to act cute. On the inside, he was dying.

James chuckled once more. “I agree wholeheartedly, my dear. And as much as I’d love to spend all night listening to your comic genius, it is getting late. Unless,” James paused. “You’d perhaps like to continue this in my hotel room?”

Swallowing hard and resisting the urge to vomit, Robbie placed his hand atop James. “And where might that be?” He asked while trying his hardest to flirt.

“The Grand. Room 712. Interested?” James asked, moving his hand higher up Robbie’s leg to play with the hem of his skirt.

“Oh, very, but unfortunately, tonight won’t be possible, I’m afraid, handsome,” Robbie announced in a husky voice. “But let’s exchange numbers, shall we? Then we can arrange something soon.”

“Very well,” James replied as he shuffled closer to Robbie before producing a business card from his pocket. “Now, how about we end a lovely evening with a kiss?” he added while waving the business card in the air.

“How about we end the evening with a black eye? You creep.” Robbie thought as he forced a smile. “Of course, James,” he announced as his stomach churned. Feeling the hand on his thigh disappear up his skirt, Robbie resisted the urge to bat it away, puckered up his glossy pink lips, he closed his darkly lined eyes.

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Back in the safety of the bathroom, Robbie tottered as quickly as he could over to the sink to wash his mouth out. “Well done, Barbie girl. Now that wasn’t too bad, was it? You even got a good night smooch.” Agatha announced with a chuckle

“Not too bad?” Robbie bemoaned as he came up for air. “I just kissed an old man, and now I’m about to keel over and die from being poisoned. How can things get any worse?”

“Oh, don’t be such a drama queen. You’re not going to die,” Agatha replied with a tut. “Redo your lippy. You must have some in that purse of yours. Then go to the bar. Find a bartender named Rafael and tell him you lost your cloakroom ticket. He may just have found it.”

“Then what?” Robbie asked as he stood up straight only to see his girly reflection and cringe.

“Then you get your vial and leave,” Agatha answered. “Now hurry up and redo those sexy lips of yours lips. The club closes soon. Oh, and don’t think I’ve forgotten about that crazy cow comment from earlier. We will have words about that in the morning.”

Sighing, Robbie opened his purse and located the lip gloss Shar had placed there earlier. “I thought you couldn’t hear me,” he moaned as he twisted off the lid and ran the wand across his lips, transferring a generous amount of pink gloss in the process.

“Too late for excuses now, Buttercup. Besides, I said that I didn’t want to hear your voice, not that I couldn’t hear it,” Agatha announced with sass in her voice. “If you survive the night, we’ll discuss the consequences tomorrow. For now, keep that earpiece safe. You may need it again.” Abruptly, the line went dead.

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On extremely shaky legs that were threatening to buckle beneath him, Robbie exited the building. Having located Rafael and exchanged the cloakroom ticket he’d received for a box containing a vial of liquid, he now had a sweet sickly taste in his mouth. Albeit, in his mind, a thousand times better tasting than James Hemingsworth’s tongue!

Accompanied by a loud click from his painful shoes, the miserable man stepped out into the chilly night air as a refreshing gust of wind cooled his warm, sweaty skin. Breathing a loud sigh of relief, he turned towards the car park, never wanting to set sight of club Lush again.

“There you are, Little Fairy,” The deep voice of Terrance boomed out, sending a shiver down Robbie's spine. “You didn’t think you could sneak off without repaying that favour you owe me, did you?”

“Err... Terrance, hey,” Robbie said as he turned around to see the huge man looming over him. “I thought we were square after that kiss earlier?”

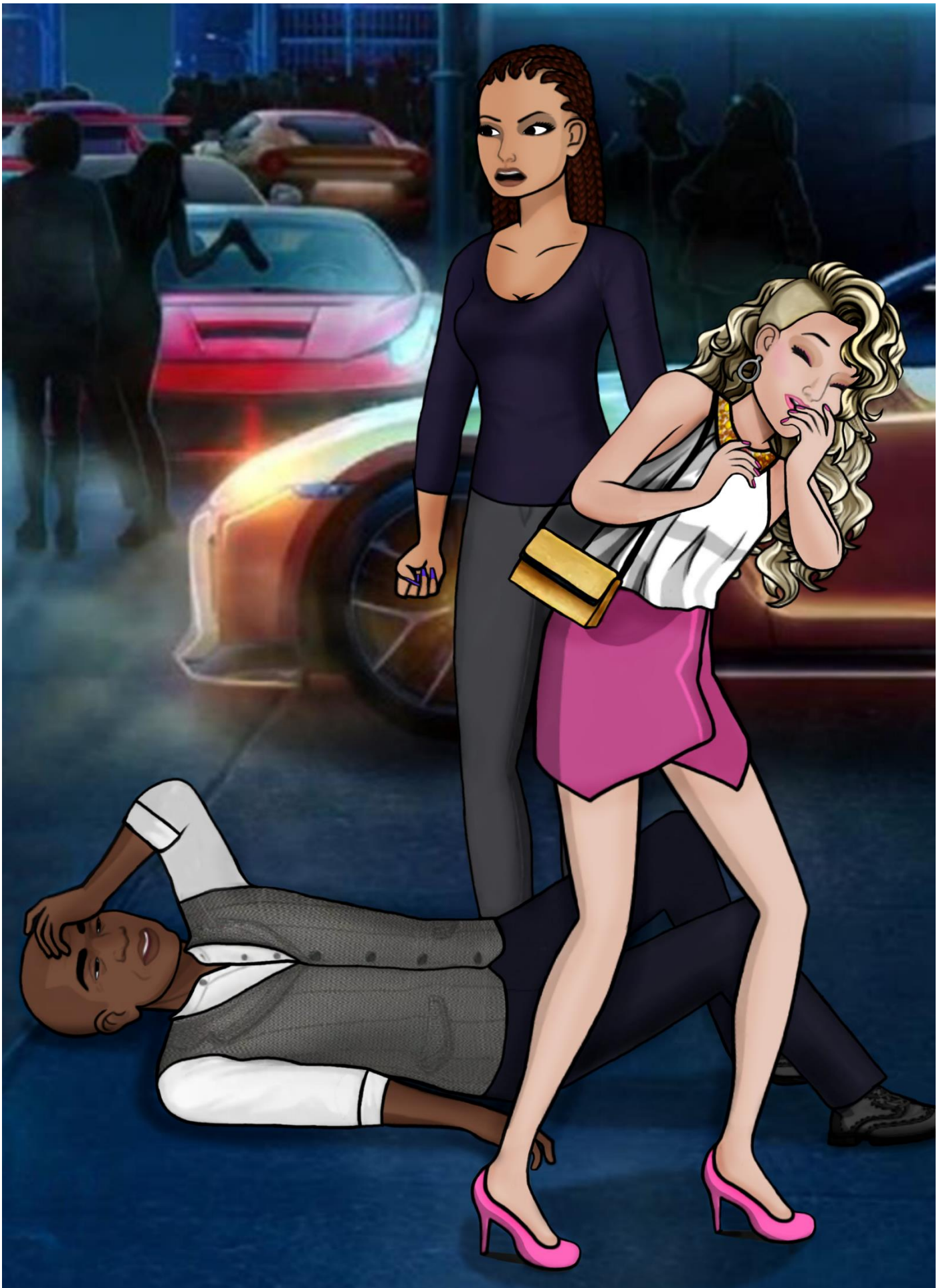
Terrance burst out laughing. “Oh, no,” he announced when he stopped chuckling, “That was just a preview for the night ahead.”

With a sinking feeling in his gut, Robbie turned to make a run for it but didn't make it very far. Crying out as Terrance grabbed a handful of his hair, he was caught in seconds. “Naughty, naughty, Little Fairy,” the larger man declared as he placed his other hand around Robbie’s chest before easily hoisting him into the air.

"Put me down," Robbie screamed but his pleading fell on deaf ears before he was silenced as Terrance released his hair and smothered his mouth. Kicking wildly, Robbie was dragged towards Terrance’s car as a few drunken people in the distance seemed oblivious to his plight. But lucky for Robbie, one person was not ignorant to his situation.

Out of nowhere, Shar appeared, who was channelling her inner Bruce Lee. What happened next was over in an instant as Shar swiftly took Terrance down with a vicious kick to the groin followed by a skilfully placed chop to the throat.

Hitting the ground like a sack of potatoes, Terrance rolled around, groaning in pain. Somehow managing to keep his balance after landing on his stiletto-heeled feet, Robbie reeled away in a state of shock.



Shame on you! You fucking pig!” Shar screamed while giving Terrance a weighty kick in the ribs. “If I ever hear of you trying something like this again, I’ll come around here, cut off your ball and feed them to you. Am I making myself clear, Scumbag?” she added as she placed her boot on the bouncer’s groin.

“Yes, crystal!” Terrance cried, “I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I thought the fairy was up for it!”

“Well, now you know otherwise, you fucktard. No means no,” she announced before pressing down hard with her foot to elicit a scream of pain from Terrance.

“Come on, Robbie. Let’s go home,” Shar said, turning and placing her arm around the cowering man’s shoulder. “On the way, you can perhaps explain to me. What the hell is going on here!”

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For the second day in a row, Robbie sat opposite Shar at the breakfast table as he shovelled cereal into his mouth. Physically, he felt much better than the previous day, but mentally, he was on the verge of a breakdown. Glancing up, he caught Shar staring at him and quickly looked away.

The conversation was sparse that morning. With Robbie having told Shar the whole story on the car ride home the previous evening, there wasn’t much left to be said.

Suddenly his phone rang, making Robbie jump and causing him to spill a spoonful of oats across the table. Knowing who it was, he stared at the screen, hoping the ringing would stop.

“Is that her?” Shar asked from across the table. “The Agatha woman you told me about?” Robbie looked over and nodded his head. “Answer it, Robbie, and put it on speaker. I want to hear,” she added in a reassuring voice. “Remember, I’m right here with you.” Nodding again, Robbie took a deep breath before placing his pink polished finger on the screen to answer the call.

“Good morning, Sweetness,” Agatha chimed out in a cheerful voice. “Feeling better after your little tonic last night, I imagine. Well, the bad news is, you’re going to have to take one every day from now on.”

“And I don’t suppose you’re just going to give them to me?” Robbie replied in a downbeat tone.

Agatha laughed. “Smart, girl. No, you’re going to have to earn them, of course. Every day I’ll give you a challenge. Complete it, and you’ll get your tonic. Fail, and you’ll still get it, but only after paying a forfeit.”

“Fine,” Robbie growled. “Just tell me what I have to do, already.”

“Less of that attitude, Missy,” Agatha stated in a much harsher tone. “And you’re to address me as Mistress, remember?”

“No!” Robbie declared forcefully, surprising both Agatha and Shar. “I don’t know what you want from me. But one thing I do know. Is that you didn’t go through all this trouble of putting me through surgery and poisoning me just to hang up and let me die now, did ya? Plus, I imagine it wasn’t that easy setting things up at that club last night,” he added confidently. “Here’s how I see it, Agatha. You need me for something, and I need the antidote. I’ll do what you want but drop the mistress nonsense and just cut the crap, will ya?”

There was a moment of silence before what sounded like a slow clap came through the receiver of the phone. “Bravo, Blondie. I guess you still do have a pair of balls after all. Well, for now, at least.” Agatha remarked. “Fine, let’s get to it. Ask the good Samaritan from last night to do your makeup. I’m thinking dramatic eye look. She’ll know what to do. She is a beautician after all.”

“How do you know about her?” Robbie asked, raising both eyebrows and sounding confused.

“The same way I know that bouncer from last night is probably having nightmares about her from the emergency room this morning,” Agatha replied in a sinister-sounding voice. “I can see everything you do, my little dolly. So, don’t get any ideas about trying to outsmart me. It’ll end badly for you. I promise!”

“You’ve been watching me?” Robbie yelled out in surprise. “Why are you doing this to me? Surely It can’t just be because I turned you down in that bar?”

“Enough questions, Blondie” Agatha snapped. “Back to business. For today’s challenge, after the do-gooder has done your makeup, head back over to Grandma’s attic. There’s a costume waiting there for you. Put it on and go to the shopping centre with the fountain. You have until 2 pm to procure a thousand pounds. I don’t care how you do it. Beg, steal, rob a bank! Get it, and you get your next vial!”

“So, this is all about money, then?” Robbie shot back angrily.

“Perhaps,” Agatha replied with a giggle. “Perhaps not. You’ll find out soon enough.”

“Or perhaps I refuse to play your game and go to the police instead,” Robbie shot back. “I mean, how do I even know this poison you're talking about is real?”

“You could be right, Miss Smarty pants. Perhaps there is no poison!” Agatha answered in an eerily calm voice. “Perhaps, it’s just a coincidence that you feel so much better this morning after drinking my tonic! But ask yourself this. Are you willing to bet your life on it?” There was a click before the line went dead.

Robbie’s eyes widened as he looked over at Shar. "Are you ok?" Shar asked pushing her lips into a half smile.

"No," Robbie replied, shaking his head. "This is so fucked up. What does this bitch want from me?"

"I can't answer that, I'm afraid," Shar replied in a soothing tone. "But it seems like, for now at least, you better do what she wants. I can help you get ready if that's what you want. But if we're doing this, we have to hurry. My first appointment is at nine.”

=====

With a familiar musty smell filling his nostrils, Robbie slowly plodded through the unnervingly quiet costume shop. Scanning around for any signs of life, he batted the heavy faux lashes that Shar had glued to his eyelids and resisted the urge to rub his eye.

Continuing down the aisle, the frustrated young man eyed the cluttered rails of old costumes and shuddered at the thought of which one would soon be replacing the comfortable outfit Shar had lent him. A princess! Wonderwoman! Little Bo Peep!

“Hey there,” came a sudden and loud-sounding voice, making Robbie jump so high he almost peed his panties.

“Jesus Christ,” Robbie shrieked, turning around to see the woman that worked in the store appearing from behind a rack of clothes. “You can just jump out at someone like that. You almost gave me a heart attack.”

“Oh, sorry, I was just doing a stock inventory. I didn’t mean to scare you,” the woman replied in her lifeless Brummy accent. “Wait a minute, Tinkerbell! Is that you?”

“Yeah, it’s me,” Robbie replied, feeling his cheeks turn red under the thick layer of makeup plastered to his face. “I’ve come to pick up another costume.”

“I know,” the woman announced before rearranging her rather eye-catching headband. “I just didn’t know what time you’d be arriving. Your boyfriend picked you out a real doozy this time. Will you be wearing it out again?”

“Yes, but that man isn’t my boyfriend. I’m not gay! I told you last time that I didn’t know who he was.” Robbie angrily wailed. “Why would I ask what he looked like if he was my boyfriend?”

“Whatever,” the woman remarked, stretching out the word while placing her hands into a W shape. Irritated, Robbie folded his arms and rolled his eyes.



“Just give me the costume already, will you?” Robbie said while tapping his leopard print pump. (A pair of shoes he was finding much easier to walk in, but still quite annoying, given their lack of support in the sole and their tendency to slip whenever he took too large a step).

“Sure thing, Tinkerbell,” the woman replied. “I’ll just go grab it from the backroom. Do you want a wig cap? I mean, you do have quite a lot of hair.”

“A wig cap!” Robbie announced while screwing up his face in confusion. “Why would I need one of those?”

=====

“Good morning, Sir. Could you spare some change for our school fundraiser?” Robbie asked a man rushing by in a high, sickly voice that hurt his vocal cords.

“Sorry, I have no change,” the man mumbled before continuing on his way.

Feeling like a complete and utter fool, Robbie let out a heavy sigh while rocking from side to side on his uncomfortable shoes. The round-toed Mary Jane-style pumps with precariously thin heels and an ankle strap that cut painfully into his foot had been waiting along with his outfit. And having now worn devilishly painful shoes for the last three hours, his hatred for them burnt strong.

Leaning down, the shaky man scratched his nylon-clad thigh and winced. It wasn’t the first time he had been forced to wear a pair of tights in the last few days. But whereas the ones he’d worn with the Lolita-style outfit were light and airy. This pair was thick, clingy, and itched.

Panting, Robbie reached up to loosen the tie that felt like a noose around his collared neck. Its tightness, along with the blazer was almost suffocating. Another person approached, but before Robbie could even open his glossy red lips to ask for her money, the fashionably dressed young woman raised her phone to her ear and dramatically turned her head. Robbie couldn’t blame her. Nobody liked being harassed for money, especially by a grown man dressed as a sexed-up version of a schoolgirl!

When he closed his heavy eyelids, he could still picture the smirk on the woman at the costume shop's face when he first looked into the bag. The thought haunted him, as did her comment about how cute he was going to look when all dressed up. "A school girl!" He had exclaimed, "No way! I can't wear this." But he had, along with the wig that accompanied it. And now stood up on the first floor of the shopping centre balcony while looking around nervously, he wanted the ground to open and swallow him whole.



Prying open his lips while having to use a little more force than usual due to the tackiness of his gloss, Robbie took a step to intercept an elderly woman. “Excuse me, Ma’am. Could you please help me? I’m...” Frantically waving her arms, the woman cut him off. “Get out of my way, you sicko,” she loudly announced while quickening her pace. “Whatever you’re selling, I don’t want it.”

Shaking his head which caused his twin pigtails to swing around wildly, Robbie looked past his thick lashes at the clock high up in the middle of the shopping centre and groaned. It was only midday but felt like he’d been standing there on his aching legs for days. So far, he had humiliated and degraded himself by harassing passers-by. And to make matters worse, he was nowhere near the thousand pounds Agatha was demanding. With sixteen pounds in his blazer pocket and two hours to go, he knew he had very little chance of completing the challenge. It almost felt like he had set up to fail!

“What’s the point?” he thought, blinking a few times as the annoying fake lashes fluttered in front of his vision. “No forfeit can be worse than standing here any longer. To hell with this.” Peeling the wig from atop his sweaty head, Robbie tossed it to the ground in anger and stomped off.

=====

The call came in at two on the dot, where Robbie informed Agatha that he didn't have her money. She didn't sound surprised. In fact, she took great pleasure in mocking him before explaining what his forfeit would entail. And after hearing what he would have to do, Robbie regretted not trying harder to get the money. Especially given how in the last hour, he had started to feel the same cramps, headache, and shivers of the previous day returning.

Entering Shar’s beauty salon, the familiar sound of the bell rang out above his blonde head, hurting his ears. “Robbie! What are you wearing? And are you alright? You look terrible.” Shar announced as the feminised man clumsily stumbled in through the door atop his unfamiliar footwear.

“No, not really,” Robbie cried, tottering over to lean against the counter as the cramps in his stomach made it feel as though he was being stabbed repeatedly. “I

didn't make the money, and now I'm here for a forfeit, but I think I'm going to pass out."

"Here, come and sit down," Shar announced, rounding the counter to help the distressed man over to a sofa on the far wall. When seated, she sat next to him and rubbed his shoulder gently.

"I'm sorry, Robbie, but I can't help you now," She explained while continuing to rub his shoulder. "I have a customer booked in for five minutes time. Perhaps, we should call you an ambulance?"

"No," Robbie shot back, making Shar jump. "I just need another tonic, then I'll be alright. Agatha said to come here. She said she had booked me in for an appointment. Supposedly, it's already paid for."

Shar narrowed her brow as her mouth fell open slightly. "No! Don't tell me you're my two thirty?"

"Ruby Lovewell?" Robbie muttered with a sarcastic smile on his heavily made-up face before groaning and clutching his midsection.

"Oh my God! No way!" Shar announced, bringing her long purple nails up to cover her mouth. "Robbie, Are you sure about this? Do you know what this appointment is for?"

"I don't care," he replied, moaning in pain. "Something about a new look. Fillers or something. Please, Shar. Just do it. I need the pain to go away!"

Breathing deeply, Shar shook her head. "Ok, Robbie. If you're positive this is what you want, follow me. But I have to warn you. What I'm about to do can't be easily reversed!"

=====

Still not sure which had been worse. The stabbing pains in his stomach or the piercing ones as Shar repeatedly injected him in the face and lips with a needle?

"Are we done?" He asked in a shaky voice, seeing Shar walk away.

“Yes, you can sit up now,” She replied, flashing him a weak smile. “Do you want to see?”

“No,” Robbie firmly announced while gingerly getting to his nylon-clad feet. “I just need my phone.”

“It’s over here with your shoes,” Shar replied while pointing.

Grunting, Robbie plodded over, wincing as he glanced down to see the torturous high-heeled shoes tucked neatly beneath the table.

“Urgh... my face feels so weird, and my lips are all numb,” he mumbled as he stopped in front of Shar and gently touched his face. Looking down at the feminised man, Shar placed her hands on her hips and smiled.



“The feeling will return in a few hours, and the redness will disappear. Just try to take it easy for the rest of the day,” she answered in a soothing tone.

“Sure, Take it easy,” Robbie mumbled as he opened the camera on his phone. “You say that like I have any kind of free will. I don't know if you've noticed but...” Robbie didn't finish his sentence as he was silenced by the sight of his puffy face covered in red dots on the phone's screen.

“Oh my God!” he screamed out in shock. “What have you done?”

=====

There was once again a stillness surrounding the breakfast table as Shar and Robbie ate in silence. The swelling on Robbie's face had settled down, and the feeling had returned, but the mental trauma it had caused would take a lot longer to recover from.

As he devoured his meagre portion of granola, Robbie's mind was fixated on the bizarre nature of his situation. What did this Agatha woman want? And what did she have to gain by torturing him? Take yesterday, for example. After sending her a selfie to prove he had gone through with the facial fillers, he was given an address. This led him to a local dog shelter, where, as instructed, he handed over the sixteen pounds he had made begging. In return, he was handed an envelope containing his tonic for the day. When Robbie questioned the man working there, he seemed completely oblivious to his situation. He said that a man had dropped off the padded envelope earlier that day and that if he passed it on to a man dressed as a schoolgirl, the shelter would receive a generous donation.

Halfway through his breakfast (at the exact same time as the previous day), Robbie's phone suddenly rang. Plucking it from the table with his pink-nailed hands, the exhausted man groaned loudly before answering the call, once again putting it on speaker.

“Morning, Cutiepie,” Agatha sang out in a high-pitched voice that made Robbie's blood boil. “And what a beautiful morning it is. The sun is shining, and the sky is clear. Are you ready for your next challenge?”

“No,” Robbie said as he pursed his larger lips together before looking down at them in disgust. “Can, we please stop this? Come on Agatha! Hasn’t this gone far enough?” he pleaded. “You’ve already ruined my face.”

“Ruined!” Agatha shot back. “I’d say improved. And those changes are on you. I warned you there would be a forfeit if you failed yesterday’s challenge. Sixteen pounds! Those poor little pooches! But don’t you worry, I added the rest. Those cute little pups got their thousand pounds.” Lost for words, Robbie looked over at Shar, who shook her head slowly from side to side and shrugged her shoulders.

“Anyway, now that you know I’m not messing about here. Fail today’s challenge, and the consequences will be far worse!” Agatha warned. “So, let’s get on with things, shall we? Today, we’ll start easy. Make your way to the shopping centre, you know the one. When you get there, put in the earpiece, and wait by the fountain for further instructions.”

Hearing Agatha hang up, Robbie looked across at Shar once more and felt sick. “So, I guess you’ll be wanting a lift then?” Shar said before shaking her head and breathing out through her nose.

=====

An hour later, with his gaze fixed downwards, Robbie sat cross-legged on edge of the fountain, staring at his skirted legs. Having had enough of the stares from the shoppers flooding by, he was trying to block them out. Even if the sight of a pink stiletto dangling from the end of his baby smooth leg was more than a little unsettling.

He had complained about the outfit when Shar helped him dress that morning, but after getting a lecture about losing every other item of clothing she had lent him, he didn’t really have a leg to stand on. He needed her help, and she didn’t need to provide it. So, here he was in the school skirt from the previous day, minus the tights, and the same pink, ankle-breaking pumps he had worn to the nightclub. On top, he wore a blue T-shirt and a pink cardigan, two items Shar told him she didn’t mind if he lost.

As the agonizingly slow minutes ticked by, Robbie couldn't help but think about the consequences of failing another challenge. It was hard to imagine anything worse than the facial fillers he'd received the previous evening, but then again, he also remembered the self-assured way Agatha spoke earlier. One thing was for sure, he had no intention of finding out what she had planned.

"Hey Lazybones, break times over," Came a familiar voice in Robbie's ear. "Get up. It's time to play."

"Where am I going?" Robbie replied as a passing man looked down at him oddly.

"Sephora," Agatha cheerfully said. "Up on the second floor. You can't miss it."

With a sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach, Robbie rose to his high-heeled feet and trudged forward. Reaching the escalator, he carefully stepped on, already feeling an ache in the arches of his feet. "What do I have to do when I get there?" the nervous young man asked, not really sure if he wanted to know.

"Well, that depends," Agatha said smugly down his ear.

"On what?" Robbie shot back as he looked anxiously at the approaching end of the escalator.

"On whether or not you bothered to do your makeup today," Agatha replied as Robbie delicately disembarked from the moving staircase. "Well, did you?" She probed. "And don't lie to me now. Any lies you tell will be harshly punished."

After thinking for a moment, Robbie sighed loudly. "I didn't," he mumbled as he clicked along loudly towards the multinational retailer of personal care and beauty products.

Agatha tutted loudly. "Oh, shame on you, girl! Going out without your face on. Well, from now on, there's a new rule. You're not to be seen in public without a full face of makeup. Mistress' orders." Scoffing, Robbie decided not to give her the satisfaction of a reply, biting his tongue as he entered the brightly lit store filled with unknown beauty products.

"And seeing as you're currently breaking that rule, let's fix that, shall we?" Agatha said in a smarmy voice. "First challenge today. Walk up to one of the girls working here and ask for a makeover."

“What! A makeover!” Robbie exclaimed angrily, stopping dead in his tracks.

“Come on. Haven’t you got better things to do than torment me like this?”

Hearing Agatha giggle, Robbie closed his eyes and took a deep breath to calm himself. “Oh, Blondie, you are funny,” she said while trying to catch her breath.

“And to answer your question, no! There is nothing more important to me right now than tormenting you. So, let’s get you looking all pretty, shall we? I’m thinking a dark eye and a pink lip.”

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“So, what do you think?” the woman who had just plastered Robbie’s face in makeup asked.

“Thank her, and tell her you love it,” Agatha said in his ear.

“I love it,” Robbie repeated, repulsed by the image of the painted, botoxed face staring back at him. “Thank you.”

“Aww, you’re very welcome, sweetie,” the smiling woman replied. “The products I used just amplify your beauty. Would you like to purchase any of them?”

“Tell her you’ll take them all,” Agatha stated in his ear.

“I’ll buy them all,” Robbie said, still mesmerised by the feminine face in the mirror.

“Oh, really. Great!” the saleswoman announced, obviously happy and surprised at the same time. “I’ll just go bag them up for you. I’ll be right back, ok?” She added before scurrying off.

Perched on a tall stool in the centre of the busy store, Robbie looked around, feeling like a mannequin on display. Clambering down, he tottered up one of the aisles to escape the looks. “Oh, I bet you look precious,” Agatha chimed out.

“You’ll have to send me a selfie so I can see.”

“You know I have no money to pay for any of this gunk?” Robbie nervously stated as he looked around. “What am I supposed to say when that woman finds me?”



“Yeah, that could be a problem,” Agatha said with a chuckle. “Especially since you have no money to pay for the makeover either. Better make a run for it, I reckon.”

“Run? As in run out?” Robbie replied aghast. “In these shoes!”

“Yep,” Agatha instantly answered. “Oh, but before you do that. There's the next part of your challenge to complete. Pick out a new nail colour and take it with you.”

“You mean, steal it?” Robbie shrieked in surprise. “I can't do that!”

“Oh, Baby girl. It's always can't and won't with you, isn't it?” Agatha firmly replied. “I'm afraid this is a non-negotiable part of today's challenge. So shut up and do it or fail. The choice is yours, sweetie. But I'd decide quickly if I were you. That girl will be back soon, and I'm sure the police won't be far behind her!”

=====

Feeling a familiar throbbing headache starting to return, Robbie gazed down at his freshly painted nails as the pungent smell of the baby blue polish filled his nostrils. Considering it was his first attempt at painting his finger and toenails, he hadn't done a bad job. Agatha told him to take his time, and after locking himself inside a toilet cubicle, he had done just that, savouring every moment of solitude where he didn't have to be out in public feeling embarrassed.

“Ok, time's up, Barbie. I hope you're done?” Agatha hollered down the earpiece.

Looking down at his shiny blue nails that had been dry for a while, Robbie rolled his eyes and shook his head from side to side. “Yeah, I'm done,” he unenthusiastically replied.

“Good. Then chop, chop, girl. It's time to move,” Agatha said. “Tell me, did you bring your handbag with you today?”

“Urm... No,” Robbie answered, remembering Agatha warning him against lying.

“Really! You’re such a ditz for forgetting something so important like that,” Agatha mocked. “Well, we’ll have to change that. Where are you going to keep your girly possessions without one?”

“I... this skirt has pockets,” Robbie blurted out. “There’s plenty of room for what I need.”

Agatha burst out laughing. “There it is again, that sense of humour of yours. But seriously, you need a bag. You have thirty minutes to get one. It has to be a cute one too. In a light colour with a strap that goes over the shoulder.”

“And how do you expect me to do that with no money?” Robbie moaned as he exited the stall, only to flinch as he caught sight of his feminine reflection in the mirror.

“That’s up to you, sweetie,” Agatha replied. “Get someone to buy it for you or repeat the trick you pulled with the nail polish. Send me a picture when you’re done, ok? Tick tock.”

“Come on, there must be something else you want instead,” Robbie moaned.

No reply came. “Agatha, are you listening to me? Agatha!” He screamed in frustration. “Son of a bitch!”

=====

“Oh, what a cute purse!” Agatha squealed down Robbie’s ear as he sat by the fountain twiddling his thumbs. “How did you get it?”

“You know how,” Robbie angrily growled.

“Why would I ask if I knew?” Agatha said mockingly. “And even if I do. I want to hear you tell me about it.”

Scoffing loudly, Robbie folded his arms under his sensitive breasts. “Fine, I stole it! I put it over my shoulder and walked out of the store! Is that what you want to hear? Robbie shouted in a deep masculine voice that caused a few heads to turn his way.

Agatha tutted five times, “Oh, how terrible of you. But tell me. Did you enjoy it? Did you get a little thrill down there in your knickers?”

Balling his fists in anger, Robbie sighed in frustration. In truth, the act of shoplifting had caused a rush of adrenaline to course through his veins. But he wasn't about to tell Agatha that. “What's next?” He asked, wanting to change the subject.

“Oh, when did you become such an eager beaver?” Agatha said before chuckling. “Well, if you're so keen to get going, let me grant your wish, little princess. Next, we continue shopping. I know how much girls like you love shopping.”

“You mean more stealing?” Robbie moaned.

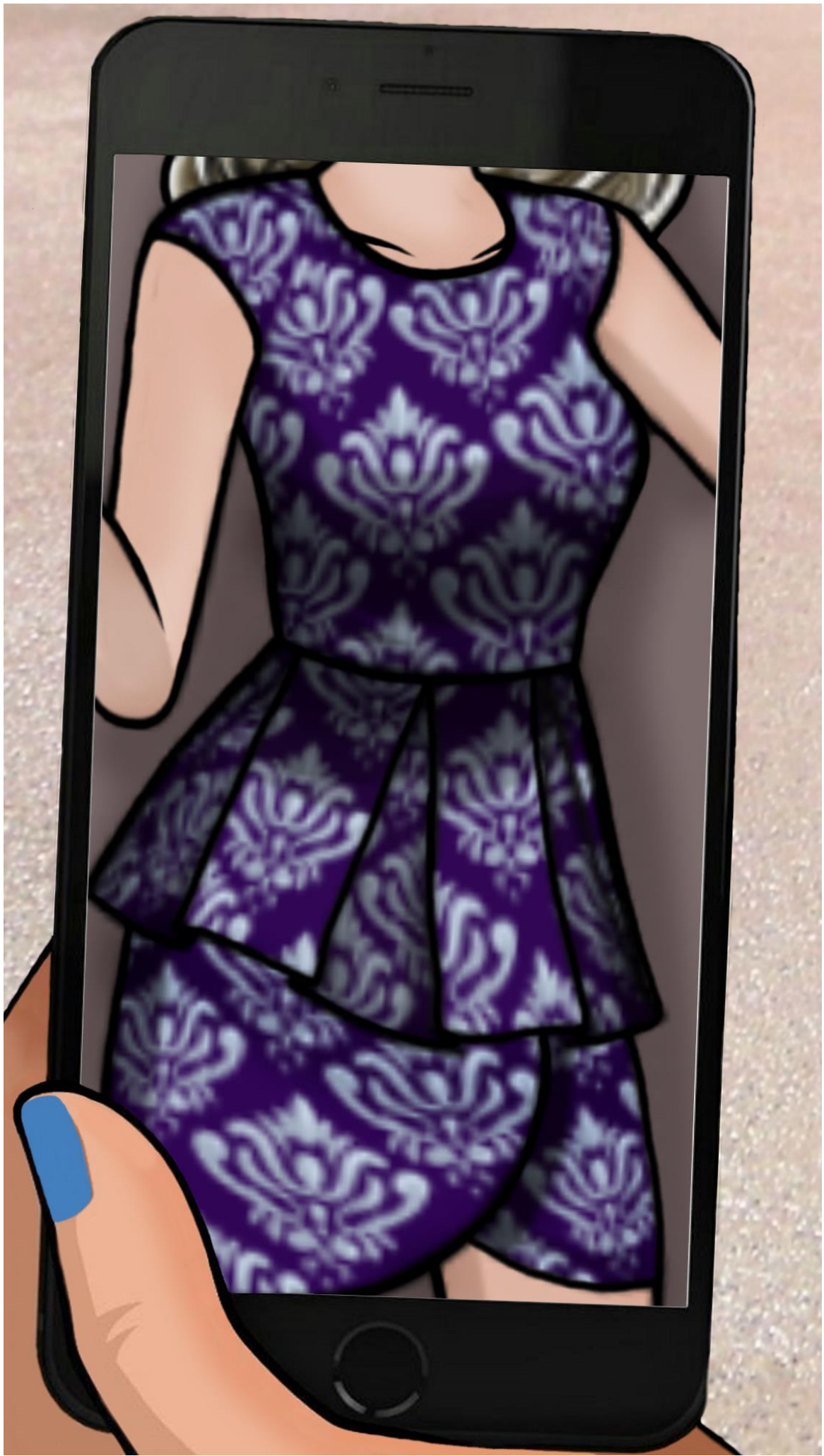
“I guess I do,” Agatha cheerfully replied. “After all, It seems to come very naturally to you.” She added, leaving Robbie speechless.

“Anyhow, let's hop to it, shall we?” she added, breaking the silence. “First stop Poundland. Where I hear, everything isn't a pound these days. Crazy, right?”

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Two hours later, An exhausted Robbie stood in a clothing store changing room, surrounded by discarded clothes and shoes. Next to him, hanging from a hook on the wall, was the pilfered handbag from earlier. No longer empty, it now contained an assortment of stolen paraphernalia. Which included a pack of hair bands, a pair of hoop earrings, a roller to remove fluff from clothing, and a pair of kitchen scissors.

Holding up his phone, making sure his head was out of the frame, Robbie snapped a picture of the tight body-hugging garment he had just struggled to zip up. Looking down at the patterned peplum dress on the screen, he shook his head, finding it hard to believe that it was his curvaceous body it was encasing.



Pressing send, he watched as the embarrassing picture made its way through cyberspace to Agatha.

There was then a moment of pause before she spoke down his ear. “Warmer. I like the style more than the others, but you’re still cold.”

Sighing loudly, Robbie placed the palms of his hands to his forehead. Having played along with the hot/cold dress-up game for the last hour, he was now thoroughly fed up. Gathering up the assortment of discarded clothing into a pile, Robbie mentally prepared himself for another trip out onto the shop floor. There he would pick out ten new items of clothing (which he had discovered was the maximum number allowed in the changing rooms at one time) before bringing them back to try on, only for Agatha to tell him they were all wrong.

“Come on, at least, give me a clue,” Robbie moaned, “I’ve tried on so many different combinations, I’ve lost count.”

“A clue! Agatha chimed out in a jolly tone. “I tell you what. If you tell me how much you love being my life-size Barbie doll and beg me to make you look even prettier, I’ll give you your clue.”

“You can’t be serious?” Robbie stated in a toneless voice while shaking his head.

“You’re the one who wants a clue,” Agatha shot back cheerfully. “I’m happy to continue the game. I’m sure you’ll get there eventually.”

Feeling the piercing pain behind his made-up eyes and remembering the disapproving gaze from the woman outside the changing room each time he reappeared with another armful of clothes, Robbie slumped his tired body down onto the bench. “Fine, I love being your Barbie doll. And I can’t wait for you to make me even prettier.” He announced in a high mocking voice.

Agatha giggled. “Aww, really? That’s so sweet. Well, if that’s what your sissy heart desires, I’ll try my best to make your wish come true.”

“Whatever! Can you just give me that clue already?” Robbie said while shaking his head and scowling.

“Sure thing, Dolly. What colour are your nails?” Agatha announced.

“Blue,” Robbie answered while looking down at his disturbingly shiny digits.

“Exactly, now find me a cute matching dress and shoes,” Agatha said before chuckling again.

“And when I find them. Then what?” Robbie questioned, almost at the point of quitting the challenge.

“Then, you cut off the security tags with the scissors you stole earlier before walking out of the store all confident in your pretty new outfit. You’re done shopping after that, so you can go and show your friend the Samaritan your haul.”

“Great,” Robbie muttered as he slumped further back against the wall. "Just great."

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Shaking his head to indicate that he wasn’t in the mood for questions, Robbie clomped in loudly through the door of Beauty by Shar. Locking eyes with the salon owner, she momentarily opened her mouth as if to speak, only to resist the urge. She then watched in amusement as the femininely dressed man minced over to her waiting room sofa and collapsed onto it.

“Lost another outfit then, I see,” Shar jested as she walked over to join him.

“Don’t,” Robbie replied, gripping the sides of his pounding head as he looked up at the ceiling. “I’ve had one hell of a morning.”

“Well, how about I make you a coffee, and you rest up for a bit?” Shar said, patting the crossdressed boy on the leg before motioning to stand.

“A coffee and some of those biscuits from the other day would be amazing,” Robbie said as he turned to look at the beauty shop owner. “But unfortunately, there’s no time to rest. This isn’t a social call.”

“Oh, this is going to be good,” Shar said as she sat back down and made herself comfortable. “Do I even want to know?”

Sitting up, Robbie smoothed out the flared skirt beneath his pantied backside before crossing his legs mid-thigh. “Can you do something with my hair for me?” He asked while pouting.

“Your hair?” Shar asked, sounding surprised. “Again?”

“Yeah,” Robbie replied before turning away sheepishly. “I messed up earlier, and now Agatha’s making me do it.”

“You failed your challenge?” Shar blurted out as her eyes widened.

“No,” Robbie shot back as he placed his hand on his belly to try and ease the uncomfortable cramping pains emanating from there. “I had to tell her I wanted to look prettier, and now she’s making me get my hair done.” He added as he went red in the face. “She wants curls and for me to cover the part you shaved. A damsel in distress look, she said.”

With her mouth gaping, Shar paused to stare at the pathetic-looking man beside her, wearing a lacey blue dress and strappy high-heeled sandals. A few seconds passed as she appeared to think before she finally spoke. “It’ll have to be extensions above the ear. And hairpieces glued directly to the skin below,” she announced with a nod.

“So, you’ll do it?” Robbie enthusiastically said as he swivelled his head to look her directly in the eyes.

Shar rolled her eyes before smiling and nodding her head. “I suppose so,” she announced. “I guess I’ve come this far with you. Let’s see this thing through to the end together, shall we?”

Suddenly feeling overwhelmed with emotion, Robbie felt his eyes tearing up.

“Thank you, Shar,” He said while wiping at his eyes. “Thank you.”

“Hey, don’t get all sappy on me now,” She said while leaping to her feet. “How about I make that coffee, then we’ll see what we can do, ay? If you can pull yourself together, I’ll even bring out the whole biscuit tin!”

“Deal,” Robbie said, wiping again at his eyes. “I’m ok, really.”

=====

With annoying blonde hair fluttering about in front of his painted face, Robbie's eyes widened as a van pulled up at the curb. "I think he's here," he announced. "Are you going to tell me what's going on now?"

After leaving the salon, with even more blonde hair than when he'd arrived attached to his head, Robbie made his way across town by bus to an address given to him by Agatha. When he arrived, he was told to wait outside a house and that a man would join him shortly. Stood in a leafy green neighbourhood on the edge of the city, he had waited forty-five minutes. And after three-quarters of an hour of radio silence, where he'd teetered on wobbly legs, trying to stop the wind from lifting his flowing skirt, Robbie felt as though he was about to pass out from exhaustion.

"Not yet, my little kleptomaniac," Agatha said, finally answering him. "Where would be the fun in that? Has he seen you?"

"Yes, and he's getting out of his van! What do I do?" Robbie anxiously replied.

"Wave him over and smile," Agatha replied, "It's time to complete today's challenge."

Doing as he was told, Robbie stumbled slightly on his heels but caught himself just before he fell over. Trying to regain his composure, he Straightened the top of his dress and faked a smile.

"Alright there, love?" the approaching man cheerfully announced as he bounded up the path. "Are you the one who called for a locksmith?"

"Tell him you are," Agatha announced in his ear. "Tell him that you've lost your keys and you can't get into your apartment."

"Yes," Robbie mumbled quietly as his voice began to betray him. He couldn't quite believe what he was being told to do, but needing the relief that only Agatha's tonic seemed to bring, he obeyed. "My keys must have fallen out of my purse somewhere when I was out, and now I'm locked out," he said in a high-pitched voice.

"I see," the balding man replied, looking Robbie up and down. "You got any ID on ya? You know, to show that you live here."

Expecting to hear Agatha speak but receiving nothing but silence, Robbie stuttered. “Err... no. I err... lost my purse too. I’m not sure what happened to it.”

“How are you planning on paying me if you don’t have your purse?” the tradesman asked, giving the skirted man a sceptical look.

“Can’t you just send me a bill in the post?” Robbie announced, thinking fast. “You know where I live, right?”

“Sorry, love. That’s not how I work. And without any ID, It would be breaking and entry,” the locksmith said, shaking his head. “Can’t do it, I’m afraid.”

“Oh, no,” Agatha teased in Robbie’s ear. “Looks like you’re losing him. “Better think fast, Blondie. Try offering him something. Perhaps s

ask if he’ll do it in exchange for putting them plump lips of yours to work.”

“No way, I’m not doing that!” Robbie screamed out in a deep tone, causing the man opposite him to jump slightly.

Coughing, Robbie looked over at the locksmith and smiled. “Sorry, I mean you have to do it,” he said in a much more feminine-sounding voice. “Please, Sir. I have nowhere to go. Look at me! Do I look like a criminal?” He added as he began to tear up.

“Well, erm... No,” the man awkwardly replied while scratching behind his ear and looking away.

“Then, please, I’m begging you. I just want to get into my house and change out of these shoes. Have you any idea how painful it is to walk around in heels this high all day?” Robbie said between sobs.



Shaking his head, the locksmith breathed out a heavy sigh. “No, and I guess, just this once, I could make an exception. I suppose you’ll be wanting the locks changed and a new set of keys?”

Hearing Agatha say yes in his ear, Robbie nodded. “Alright, I’ll get my tools from the van,” The man said, feeling uncomfortable when faced with a crying woman. “Back in a jiffy, ok?”

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Twenty minutes later, now alone in a strange house, Robbie stood motionless, taking in his surroundings. “Wow, that was one hell of an Oscar-worthy performance there,” Agatha said while chuckling, “I’m impressed, Barbie. I really thought you were going to get down on your knees and suck that man dry.”

“Shut up!” Robbie screamed, finally breaking. “Just shut your mouth! Whose house is this? And what the hell am I doing here?”

“Wow, someone’s got their knockers in a twist,” Agatha replied before laughing even louder. “The good news is, today’s challenge is over, and guess what? You passed. Yay! So, why don’t you take off those sexy sandals and put your feet up? You’ve earned it, you little diva.”

“And what happens when the owner comes home?” Robbie angrily spat.

“Oh, don’t worry about that, you stropky little madam,” Agatha teasingly replied. “That’s not going to happen. From now on, this is your new home. So, like I said, put your feet up and get comfortable. Your reward for today’s hard work will be delivered to the door shortly.”

“What do you mean, my new home?” Robbie blabbered, feeling very confused. Looking around the darkened Livingroom he now found himself in, his tired mind struggled to comprehend what was happening. Wiping a fallen tear from his cheek as he plodded over towards a comfortable-looking armchair, he hated the fact that he was crying again (having not entirely faked the waterworks show for the locksmith). “Agatha, why are you doing this to me?” He asked in a sad, quiet voice as he almost fell into the chair.

Agatha laughed. “You’ll find out soon enough, sweetcheeks. For now, rest up and get used to your new home. We’re done for today.”

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Waking up in an unfamiliar room, Robbie sat up to try and stretch the knots from his stiff back. Scared that the house owner might return, he had endured a restless night on the sofa, reasoning that he could bolt out the backdoor if someone suddenly showed up.

On the glass coffee table in front of him lay three items, the earpiece, his phone, and an empty glass vial. As promised, the temporary cure for his infliction had been delivered to the door. It arrived less than a minute after his conversation with Agatha ended. It also arrived with a loud bang that caused Robbie to almost jump out of his skin. When he recovered from the surprise knock on the door, he looked over to see the padded envelope that had just been thrust through the letterbox. Jumping to his high-heeled feet, he had run to the window, but he was too late! Whoever had delivered the envelope was long gone.

Reaching over, Robbie picked up his phone to check the time but found it dead. Tossing it back onto the table, he picked up the earpiece and placed it into his ear. “About time you woke up, Blondie,” Agatha’s voice instantly rang out. “You’re not ignoring me, are you?”

“Trying to,” Robbie groaned, reaching up to rub the sleep from his eyes, only to coat his fingers in dark eye makeup.

“Well, that’s not a very smart idea now, is it? Agatha announced. “Without me, you're toast, sugabuns.”

“Yeah, yeah,” Robbie moaned. “I’m here now, aren’t I? My phone ran out of battery.”

Agatha tutted. “Silly, girl. Always charge your phone. In fact, look around for a charging cord and plug it in right now. And for being so stupid, I'm adding a speedbump to today's challenge.”

“What!” Robbie exclaimed. “That’s not fair! You didn’t tell me I had to charge it!”

“I also didn’t tell you to wipe your arse after using the toilet,” Agatha shot back.

“Don’t be such a ditz, Barbie. try using a little common sense. Phones need charging. Now, hurry up and do it before I make today’s challenge even worse for you.”

Annoyed, Robbie got to his feet and started searching the apartment. It didn’t take him long to locate a phone cord, finding one sitting next to the bed. “Whose house is this anyway?” Robbie said as he plugged in his mobile.

“I told you,” Agatha replied. “Yours! The old owner is gone and isn’t coming back.”

“How can you be so sure?” Robbie asked as he sat down on the bed, already feeling exhausted before the day had even begun. “Unless you poisoned them too?” he added in a half-joking tone.

“Something like that,” Agatha answered, causing Robbie's eyes to widen. “Anyway, enough chit-chat. Let’s get started. We’re already behind schedule today, thanks to you, lazybones. First order of the day. A scavenger hunt around your new house. What I need from you is some form of ID card and a bank card. You have twenty minutes.”

“And if I can’t find them?” Robbie asked as he scanned around the femininely decorated room.

“Then you fail, babygirl, and we go straight to today's forfeit,” Agatha said mockingly. “Happy hunting.”

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“Ok, got them,” Robbie panted as he tried to catch his breath. After rushing around for the last ten minutes, he had finally located what Agatha wanted in one of the bedroom draws.

“What have you got?” Agatha asked.

“A passport, a driver’s license, and two bank cards,” Robbie said. “Who’s Ruby James,” he added as he opened the passport to see the name.

“You are silly!” Agatha replied before giggling.

“What are you talking about?” Robbie shot back. “Are you insane?”

“Not at all. Did you know there were over two hundred thousand reported cases of identity fraud in the UK last year?” Agatha stated. “So, Ruby, it’s time to get dressed and face the world. But first, your speedbump. For not charging your phone, you need to find another outfit that matches your nails. But to make things more interesting, you can’t wear any of the items you wore yesterday. If there is nothing in the house, you can get what you need from the shopping centre. You’re headed there anyway to visit your friendly neighbourhood beauty woman.”

“The beauty salon again?” Robbie moaned. “Why do I have to go there again?”

“Well, Ruby. You don’t quite look like your passport picture now, do you?” Agatha announced down his ear. “But don’t worry. We’ll fix that. Don’t forget to do your makeup before you go out. I’ll be expecting a picture in the usual spot by the fountain. Full face and a pretty blue outfit. Heels and a skirt or dress, ok? Oh, and just for fun, get someone to take the picture for you. You have ninety minutes.”

“Yeah, sounds super fun,” Robbie muttered, closing his eyes as he locked his fingers behind his head and shook it from side to side.

=====

“You want me to make you look like her,” Shar announced in surprise as she looked down at the picture page of the passport Robbie had just handed her. “Do you think I’m a plastic surgeon or something?”

“No. I just... Oh, I don’t know, Shar,” the frustrated, crossdressed man replied. “She told me to ask you. I’m just trying to get through the day here.”

Shaking her head, Shar smiled. “Yeah, ok, sorry. I guess we could try a few things. You do have a similar shaped face and nose. And with a heavy layer of makeup, you might fool most people as long as they only glanced at this.”

“Sure, whatever you think,” Robbie said with a heavy sigh. “As long as it’s not permanent or anything,”

“Permanent!” Shar exclaimed. “No, of course not. All beauty treatments these days need redoing eventually. Returning customers equals money.”

“Ok, what’s first?” Robbie asked, slowly nodding his head.

“Tanning,” Shar excitedly said. “I think I have a spare bikini or two in the back. We’ll get you changed and into the booth for a spray.”

Robbie gulped before taking a deep breath. He knew his dwindling masculine appearance was about to take another hit. He just hoped his new look wasn't going to be anything too drastic.

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“Here you are,” Shar said as she passed Robbie a mug of coffee.

“Thanks,” he replied while reaching over to take the hot drink from her outstretched arm.



Catching a glimpse of his reflection in the mirror, he slowly shook his head from side to side. His skin was now darker than it had ever been. Even darker than the time as a kid when his parents took him on a two-week holiday to Tenerife. And his shade of skin colour wasn't the only thing to have changed in the last two hours. After being assaulted by wax strips and a pair of tweezers, his eyebrows were thinner and more defined than ever, now matching the picture in the passport more closely. Below, his eyes also looked different. The changes were much more subtle than the ultra-feminine arches above them, but his lashes were definitely darker and seemed to curl upwards after Shar had given him what she called a lash tint. Not liking the image in the mirror, he looked away and scoffed. At least, physically, he felt better. With no aches or pains, the effects of the poison hadn't seemed to of presented themselves yet that day.

“Take ten minutes, and then we'll get started again,” Shar said as she picked up her own coffee and took a sip.

“We're not done yet?” Robbie groaned, “I thought we were done.”

“Not yet, honey,” Shar said with a smile. “I've still got to finish your lashes. Then I suppose you'll be wanting me to do your makeup, right?”

Robbie went to speak but stopped himself. What was the point of arguing? Shar was only trying to help, and she was right about his makeup. After the mess he'd made that morning, and the scolding he received from Agatha as a result, he really needed her help or risked getting punished. “Uh-huh. Thanks,” he muttered while forcing his bloated lips into a smiling position.

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“Hey, that's not too bad,” Shar said with a smile on her face. “A little too much blush perhaps, but you look a hundred times better than you looked this morning with that clown face.”

“Thanks, I guess,” Robbie answered in a gloomy voice. Instructed by Shar, he had just done his own makeup in the style of her choosing, and now staring at the

result, it was hard to believe it was the same face he had been looking at most of his life. But that was the point, right? It was supposed to look different.

Curled and styled, his long blonde hair, once again, framed his darkened face. A face that looked different from when he walked in. Not drastically different, but enough! The delicately arched brows screamed girl! But it was perhaps the eyelash extensions below that drew the attention. Long, dark, and curling upwards, the monstrous things fluttered wildly in front of his vision, annoying the hell out of him in the process.

“You’re a natural, I’d say,” Shar said, praising the young man. “Now, I’ve bagged up all the products you just used and put them in your little blue purse. A little more practice, and you’ll easily be able to recreate this look.”

“Great, just what I want to hear,” Robbie moaned as he batted his long lashes, hoping they might fall out if he tried hard enough.

“It was a tight fit, but I managed to fit all the products in there,” Shar announced as she placed his purse onto the counter in front of him. “Well, apart from your phone. You’ll have to carry that, I’m afraid.” She added before chuckling a little as she passed it over.

Taking the phone from her, he instinctively turned it on to see a new message notification. Opening it, it read, “put in the earpiece.” He didn’t need to read the name above to know who it was from. Reaching over, he picked up the earpiece and popped it into his ear. “Now, you really are ignoring me,” an annoyed-sounding Agatha remarked. “Perhaps, you need to be reminded who’s the boss in this relationship.”

“What! No, I wasn’t,” Robbie stammered. “I was just in the salon, doing the changes you asked for. I’m done now. I can send you a picture if you want?”

There was a moment of silence before Agatha burst out laughing. “I’m just fucking with you. Blondie. I know where you are,” she said as an unimpressed Robbie dropped his shoulders and pouted. “But I do want a picture. Before you leave, get your friend to snap a few pics and send them through.”

With Robbie refusing to speak, Agatha (after another moment of silence) continued the conversation. “Ok, fine. If you’re ready. Time to move on. The next stop is a five to ten to minute walk. Well, it would be if you hadn’t decided to wear

such tall heels today. I respect how a girl like you needs to look good, but rather you than me," she added before chuckling. "I'll send you the address. And no cheating now, you hear? You walk over there in your sexy pumps. I'll know if you cheat."

"It was the only blue pair that Ruby girl had in the house," Robbie complained, "Can I change them? My feet are killing me."

"No, this is what you get for making me wait this morning," Agatha replied, lecturing the pathetic-sounding man. "And remember, they are your shoes now, Ruby. So, get dressed and get moving."

Biting his tongue, Robbie resisted the urge to argue further. "Fine, send the address." He said in a depressingly sad voice.

"Just did," Agatha replied as his phone beeped almost simultaneously. "Now, hurry. You need to be there in thirty minutes."

Puffing out his cheeks, Robbie folded his arms and looked up past his thick lashes to see Shar smiling down at him. "Problem?" She asked.

"No," Robbie groaned. "No problem."

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With each mincing step accompanied by a loud clicking sound, Robbie felt incredibly nervous as he tottered down the supermarket aisle. Looking down at his phone, he reread the list of items that Agatha had sent him. Bread, milk, cereal, the usual household essentials. For once, her suggestion to go food shopping wasn't something he was opposed to. He had hardly eaten anything in the last few days, and with barely any food in his new house, the thought of a decent meal sounded very appealing. Even as the pains and cramps were starting to return.

Nothing on the list was going to be difficult to find. But the challenge would be conjuring up the courage to pay using Ruby James's card. The contactless limit was a hundred pounds, but if he was asked for a pin, he was screwed. And that's if he could even get the card out of his bag to start with. Given the length of the horrific

claws-like nails now sprouting from the end of each of his fingers, the previously simple task no longer seemed so trivial!



He was finding it hard to hold his phone! How was he supposed to do anything more delicate, like prising a small plastic card from a purse full to bursting with cosmetics? But somehow, he would have to get used to his new nails as the acrylic was now dry and firmly bonded to his real nails below. Grimacing as he wiggled the impractically long nails and wondered if he could have done anything differently in the nail salon to avoid the outcome.

Arriving at the address given to him by Agatha just in time, he walked into the nail salon on tired wobbly legs feeling completely out of place. Following Agatha's instructions, he told the receptionist he was Ruby James and was instantly seated in front of a nail technician. The young brunette introduced herself before confirming with him what he wanted doing that day. It seemed that instructions had already been given when the appointment was made, and as the words she said meant nothing to Robbie, he just agreed. The only thing he did have a choice in was the colour. Embarrassed and annoyed, he told the woman to just do what was popular, thinking that if he had to have his nails done, at least they wouldn't stand out as much if they looked on-trend.

Oh, how wrong he was. He wished he could go back and ask for neural tone instead of the bright fire engine red he had ended up with, but now it was too late!

"Come on, Barbie. Stop admiring your nails and hurry up," came the voice of Agatha down the earpiece. "You've done surprisingly well so far today. It would be such a shame to fail the challenge over a little grocery shopping now, wouldn't it?"

Robbie knew she was right, even as a voice in his head urged him to sit down and rest his aching body. Wondering if she could actually see him or had just made a lucky guess, he stuck his long, red-nailed middle finger in the air and pushed out his tongue. "Give me a break, will you?" he moaned. "I've only just arrived."

"Ohh, did I touch a nerve, princess?" Agatha replied before laughing.

Stamping his high-heeled pump so hard he almost broke the heel, Robbie breathed in deeply. "I'm moving, ok?" he said in a frustrated tone. "The sooner this day ends, the better," he added as stumbled forward.

"You've got ten minutes until the next bus. Miss it, and you're walking," Agatha warned. "Oh, and who said anything about the day being over!" She added with an evil chuckle. "We're far from done today, my silly little bimbo!"

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Feeling mightily relieved that the bank card in his possession had gone through when he tapped it against the contactless scanner at the supermarket register, Robbie had stumbled out of the store to make his bus with seconds to spare. Stepping on with his arms full of bags, the bus driver hadn't even asked for payment! But that act of kindness was a rare moment in an otherwise miserable day.

Back in what was supposedly now his house, Robbie looked at his reflection in the full-length mirror and groaned. He was trying to find an outfit to wear out that night but having tried almost every acceptable combination Ruby owned (and not liking any of them), it was now decision time.

The instructions from Agatha had been vague, which only added to his anxiety. He was to make his way to a bar downtown to meet a man called Jimmy. And What he had to do when he got there was anyone's guess. All he knew was that this Jimmy guy was going to rate him on how sexy he looked. A five out of five rating meant he would be receiving a full vial of liquid that night. Four out of five meant eighty percent of his usual dose. And so on. It seemed a cruel twist to the already twisted game he was being forced to play. But as much as he wanted to throw on a pair of jeans and some trainers, given how bad he felt, shakes, cramps, stabbing pains, he needed a high score!

To make matters worse, there were conditions he needed to meet. Full makeup, at least two items of clothing that matched the colour of his new nails, and shoes with a four-inch heel or higher. Knowing that points would be deducted for each missed, Robbie scanned his reflection from head to toe. "Fuck it," he said aloud, sick of trying on some stranger's clothes. "This will do."

Grabbing a pair of flat shoes, he sat down on the bed to change out of the ridiculously tall but sexy boots he was wearing. He'd have to put the stiletto heeled footwear back on when he arrived at the bar, but at least for now, he planned to be comfortable. Well, as comfortable as a straight man can be while wearing a little red bustier top and a tight black miniskirt. At least he had Ruby's car at his disposal. He had found the keys in a bowl by the front door earlier, and with Agatha not giving any specific instructions on how he was supposed to travel to the

meeting place, he planned to take full advantage of what he considered to be, a stroke of genius on his behalf.

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Having found a parking space, Robbie slipped his aching feet back into the ankle-breaking boots from earlier. Feeling his calf muscles painfully stretch, he now regretted choosing the knee-length red boots but also knew he'd have to live with his decision.

Retrieving a lipstick from his purse, he awkwardly managed to unscrew the cap despite his long nails getting in the way. He then looked into the rear-view mirror as he puckered up to apply a generous coat to his inflated lips. Suddenly he paused! In a moment of clarity (after living most of the day on autopilot), he felt disgusted at what he saw before him. Shaking his head at the sissy in the mirror, he angrily closed the lipstick and tossed it back into his purse before clambering out of the car.

Thankfully, it was a short walk to the bar, and upon entering, he was relieved to find the place almost empty. With no idea what the man he was meeting looked like, Robbie trotted over to the bar and took up an empty stool. When approached by the barman, he ordered a straight whisky, knocked it back, and quickly ordered another before settling in for what he hoped wouldn't be a long wait.

“Ruby?” A man announced from behind.

Upon hearing his new name being called out in a deep voice, Robbie turned.

“Jimmy?” He nervously replied as he looked the muscular man up and down.

“Yeah. That's me,” the smiling man replied. “I've got us a table in the corner. We can talk there in private. It's over here,” he added as he pointed to the far side of the room.

Hesitantly, Robbie got to his high-heeled feet. “So, do you like my outfit?” he said, feeling ridiculous for asking.

“Yeah, you look great,” Jimmy replied as he looked the feminised man up and down.



“Like five out of five, great?” Robbie asked as he wiggled his upper body to try and ease the pain in his shoulders and abdomen.

“Uhm... yeah, as I said, babe, you look great. But let’s talk at the table, yeah?” Jimmy replied, extending his arm for Robbie to take.

“Sure,” Robbie said, grabbing his drink from the bar before tottering past the larger man.

Arriving at the table in question, Robbie sat down before proceeding to wriggle around for a few seconds. Failing to find a comfortable position (due to the tightness of his skirt), he gave up and looked over at Jimmy through his thick extended lashes.

There was a few moments of uncomfortable silence before a frustrated Robbie spoke. “So... why are we here?” he asked, leaning back on his chair to create as much distance as possible between him and the hulking man opposite.

“Oh, yeah, I have a message to give you,” Jimmy said while nodding his head.

“Ok,” Robbie slowly replied, elongating the words while twirling his long-nailed fingers in the circular motion, gesturing for the man to hurry up. “What is it?”

“Oh, sorry,” the muscular man replied, “I’m a little nervous. I’m not used to doing stuff like this, you know?”

“What stuff?” Robbie asked, pushing his thighs together and shuddering as the strange sensation of nylon on nylon sent a shiver down his spine.

“Going into costume shops and salons. Attending secret meetings, like this one,” Jimmy said while extending his arms with his palms facing upwards. “It’s like I’m living out a movie.”

“You did all that?” Robbie bellowed out as he angrily leaned forward over the table. “So, you’re in on it. You’re working with her?”

“Calm down, babe,” Jimmy replied as he leaned back. “You’ve got it all wrong. I had no choice.”

“No choice?” Robbie screamed as he slammed his fist onto the table. “Explain yourself?”

Taking a deep breath, Jimmy looked away glumly. “Well, It all started a few days back when I got a message saying my dog had been kidnapped. Of course, the first thing I did was run out back to check. And to my horror, I found a note stuck to Rover’s kennel, and he was gone.”

“Rover?” Robbie announced in a skeptical voice. “Not a very original name for a dog.”

“Really?” Jimmy hollered back. “I tell you my best friend was taken, and you respond by critiquing my choice of name. Pretty heartless of you that Ruby.”

“Ok, sorry,” Robbie said in a softer voice after another moment of silence.

“Please, continue your story.”

“Ok, apology accepted,” Jimmy said, leaning forward once more. “As I was saying. I found a note saying if I ever wanted to see my Rover again, I’d have to follow the instructions given to me.”

“So, you’re not working with Agatha, then?” Robbie shot back, testing the man.

“Agatha? Who’s Agatha?” The man replied while pulling a confused face.

“The woman giving you the instructions. Her name is Agatha!” Robbie said, pulling a confused face himself.

“She told me her name was Jane,” Jimmy said while scratching his head. “But to answer your question. No! I’m not working with anyone. I’m just trying to get my Rover back.”

“Ok, I’m sorry,” Robbie said, shaking his head. “As you can see, I’m not acting or feeling like myself right now.”

“What do you mean?” Jimmy asked, again looking confused as he stared over at the tarted-up man across the table.

Robbie sighed. “Oh, never mind. But you know? Perhaps we can help each other out.”

Jimmy’s eyes widened. “Oh yeah! How so?” he asked with a smile.

“Well, first off, when this Jane woman you spoke of asks you how sexy I looked tonight, give me top marks, ok?” Robbie replied, feeling ashamed and silly as he said the words. “Then, if we swap numbers and keep each other in the loop. Perhaps we can help each other out.”

As his smile broadened, Jimmy took a piece of folded paper from his pocket.

“Deal,” He announced. “But first, I need you to listen carefully. I still have to give you the information about your new job. I’ve got it all written down here.”

“My new job!” Robbie exclaimed in shock. “What do you mean new job?”

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“What’s she doing here?” Robbie thought as he peered through the peephole.

“How did she find me?”

His thoughts were interrupted by the visitor knocking again. “Robbie, it’s me, Shar. I know you’re in there. Can I come in?”

Lifting his right arm, he fumbled with the latch. “Son of a…” The feminised man muttered, still struggling to adapt to the bright red acrylic talons attached to his fingertips.

Using the inside of his thumb and forefinger, he finally managed to get it unhooked before swinging open the door.

“Good morning, babes,” Shar sang out as she strode past the half-naked man without waiting for an invitation. “Wow, this place is nice. This décor is so cute. It’s a bit dark in here, though. Let’s let some light in and air the place out a little, shall we?” she said as she flung open the living room curtains and proceeded to open the window behind.

As Robbie’s tired eyes winced from the bright light, he desperately tried to work out what was happening. He had just woken up on the sofa, and his brain was still playing catch up.

“Love the PJs, by the way,” Shar said as she pottered about the living room, plumping up cushions and arranging ornaments. “But you really need to start removing your makeup before bed, babes. it’s really bad for your skin, you know?”

“Shar! What are you doing here?” Robbie cried, throwing his arms up into the air.

Stopping dead in her tracks, Shar turned and smiled. “Oh, yeah, sorry. I should have explained. Agatha called. She gave me this address and said I had to come over to help you get ready for work.”

“And you agreed? Just like that?” Robbie asked as he tried to pull down the oversized T-shirt, he had worn to sleep in as it barely covered half of his plump bottom.

“Well, no, but after she threatened to burn down my salon, what choice did I have?” Shar replied, pulling a sad face. “At first, after losing my Aunt in that awful car crash, I didn’t even want the place. But now, It’s all I have to remind me of her. I can't lose it, Robbie!”

“Didn’t you say she died in a boating accident?” Robbie asked as he screwed up his makeup-covered face.

“Yeah, a boating accident. That’s what I said.” Shar shot back.

“No, you said car,” Robbie replied, turning his head to one side, and curling his thick top lip.

“No, I definitely said boat,” Shar angrily replied while folding her arms. “I think I know how my own Aunt died, Robbie. “Why are you being so aggressive anyway? Thanks to you, I’m also stuck taking orders from this mad woman now.”

Concluding that his tired mind must have misheard her, Robbie lowered his head in shame. “I’m sorry, Shar” he muttered. “I’m so on edge at the moment, I don’t know what I’m doing half the time. I mean, look at me! Look at what that bitch has done to my body!”

“I know, honey,” Shar replied in a sympathetic voice. “But look on the bright side. At least you make an attractive woman. There are plenty of men out there that wouldn’t pass half as well as you do.”

"Err... I guess." Feeling embarrassed, Robbie changed the subject. “So, anyway, you said you were here to help me get ready for work. Did Agatha tell you what she’s making me do?”

“A little,” Shar replied. “She told me some of the details but not all. But why don’t I put the kettle on, and you can fill me in? After that, I’ll help you with your hair and makeup.”

Letting out a heavy sigh, Robbie ran his fingers through his extended blonde hair.

“Sure,” he sullenly replied. “Why the hell not?”

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Feeling as though his heart was about to burst through the front of his fitted blazer, Robbie clicked his way up the front steps of the Grand hotel. With his stride restricted by the tight pencil skirt wrapped around his pantyhosed thighs, he took tiny mincing steps as he approached the large, intimidating entrance.

“Good morning. You must be Miss James?” A Lady announced as Robbie entered, taking the skirted man by surprise.

“Urm... yes. But how did you know that?” Robbie asked, looking puzzled.

The woman smiled. “Well, the hotel uniform was a bit of a giveaway. And given that you’re the only new employee starting this month. I put two and two together,” The woman answered before chuckling loudly. “I’m Pamela, head receptionist here,” she added, extending her immaculately manicured hand. “I’ll be your line manager. So, if you ever have any issues. Big or small. You will bring them to me.”

“Err... Ruby,” Robbie slowly stuttered as he took the woman's hand and gave it a gentle shake. “Nice to meet you, Pamela.”

“Likewise, Ruby. Now, if you’d like to follow me, we’ll get you set up for your first day,” Pamela said while smiling broadly. "We're really excited to have you here. It's rare to find someone with as years of experience as you."

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Scanning the lobby from his position behind the front desk, Robbie slowly shook his head as a lock of long, blonde hair fell in front of his heavily made-up face. Pushing it away while being careful not to scratch himself with his dangerously long nails (Something he had done many times over the past twenty-four hours), he puffed out his cheeks before slowly breathing out. He had been thrust into some stressful situations recently but being sat behind the front desk of the Birmingham branch of the Grand Hotel, just like he used to, day after day back in London was almost too bizarre to comprehend.



Everything around him seemed so familiar, but at the same time, so different. From the wood-panelled desk to the abstract art decorating the walls, the interior of the lobby was an exact copy of his hotel in London. The only difference, it seemed, was him!

To make matters worse, all morning, he had been thinking back to his last shift in the London branch and the guilt he felt. That day he had (as usual) been sitting

adjacent to a young girl called Carla. And also, as usual, he had spent most of his shift admiring her magnificent body. Filing out her uniform to perfection (the same uniform he now wore), she had tapped away on her keyboard with her long, sexy nails, occasionally turning to ask him some foolish question. Her flirtatious nature and her barbie doll looks had driven him crazy that day. To the point, where he'd told his girlfriend, Holly, that her own style was boring. He remembered thinking, at the time, why couldn't she be more like Carla! Oh, how ironic it now was that he was the one who looked more like Carla. In fact, as terrifying as it was to admit, he now looked like an even more bimbofied version of her!

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“So, Ruby, how do you like it here so far?” Pamela asked Robbie as she leaned over the lobby desk.

“Erm... it's great,” Robbie replied, looking up while forcing a smile.

“Well, you seemed to have taken to it like a duck in water,” Pamela said, smiling back. “I know you've worked in some big hotels before, but even so, it usually takes people a few days to get used to our system.”

“Well, it's easy when you've done it for years,” Robbie thought as he pushed a strand of blonde hair from his face.

“Oh, err... thanks,” he replied. “I'm Just trying to do a good job.”

“Well, you are definitely doing that, young lady” Pamela enthusiastically replied. “And I love how you look after your appearance. Image is very important to us here at the Grand. But, saying that, those nails of yours are a little long. You might want to think about shortening them.”

Having fumbled with the keyboard and mouse all morning, Robbie Looked down at his hands in frustration. “Urm... yes, ok, Pamela, I can do that,” he replied, trying not to show his embarrassment.

“Liar, liar, panties on fire,” came the voice of Agatha in his ear. Ignoring her Robbie continued grinning at Pamela, hoping she would go away.

“Perfect,” Pamela chimed out. “Well, you seem to have everything under control here. So, I’ll leave you to it for a while. You’ve got my number if you need me.”

“Ok, thanks, Pamela. Will do.” Robbie said before watching Pamela turn and walk away.

“Why didn’t you tell her how much you love your nails and how a Barbie doll like you can’t possibly live without them?” Agatha said in a mocking tone.

“What! and get fired?” Robbie groaned while scratching his knee through his thick, itchy tights. “I’m sure you’d love that, right? Then what? Another forfeit?”

“Oh, so touchy today,” Agatha replied while chucking, “No, you’re right. Whatever you do, don’t get fired, or it’s game over, sweet cheeks.”

Groaning, Robbie shook his head. “What am I doing here anyway?” he asked in an annoyed tone. “What have you possibly got to gain from doing all this to me?”

“Oh, Ruby, are you not happy to be back at work?” Agatha mocked. “I thought you’d be thrilled to be back in your old job?”

“Happy! Are you insane? This is so fucked up,” Robbie whined.

“Now, now, watch your language, young lady. I can assure you that I’m not insane. You’ll understand one day, but for now, I need you to walk over to the front door. A special guest is arriving, and I need you there to greet them.”

“A guest! Robbie exclaimed. “Who? What guest?”

“You’ll find out when you get there,” Agatha replied. “Now, get going, princess.”

Feeling the muscles in his lower legs uncomfortably stretch, Robbie slowly lifted himself back onto his high-heeled feet. “Fine,” he muttered as he set off, trotting across the lobby floor.

“At least tell me how long I have to work here,” he asked while looking down at his skirted legs clicking loudly in time with his mincing steps.

“No more questions now, dollface” Agatha replied. “It’s time to work your charm.”

Robbie was about to ask what she meant by the comment but was instead distracted by a horrifying sight walking through the Grand entrance. “Ruby, is that you?” Came the voice of James Hemingsworth.

“James!” Robbie exclaimed. “What are you doing here?”

Stopping in front of the feminised man, James looked puzzled. “This is where I’m staying. Didn't I mention t the other day?” He replied before raising an eyebrow. “But I didn't realise you worked here? Why didn’t you mention it earlier?”

“Tell him that you do escort work on the side and that your boss doesn’t know about it,” Agatha said down his ear.

“I... err... just started here today,” Robbie stuttered. “My other job is a secret, you know? My boss wouldn’t like it if she found out.”

“Oh, I see,” James answered, nodding. “Well don’t worry. I won’t tell on you.” There was a moment of awkward silence before James cleared his throat. “Well, anyway, It’s lovely to see you again. You are looking as beautiful as ever. More so, perhaps! Did you change your hair?”

“Thanks,” Robbie muttered, feeling incredibly uncomfortable. “I got a little work done.”

“Tell him he looks handsome,” Agatha commanded down his ear. “Tell him you want to get down on your knees and...”

“Shut up!” Robbie mumbled as he shook with rage.

“What was that?” A confused-looking James asked.

“Oh, nothing,” Robbie quickly answered. “I was just clearing my throat.”

“Oh, ok,” James said while smiling. “So, I was wondering. Are you working tonight?”

“Urm... no,” Robbie blurted out without thinking.

“I see. Well, perhaps you would accompany me for dinner later?” James asked as his smile became broader.

“Agree,” said the voice in his ear, but unfortunately, Robbie missed the command as his body chose that moment to sneeze loudly.



"Bless you," James said while he rummaged around in his pocket. Producing a handkerchief, he offered it to Robbie.

"Thank you," Robbie replied, accepting the handkerchief before wiping his nose. "And thank you for the offer, James, but I'm afraid I can't tonight. I have... err... a... an appointment."

"An appointment?" James asked with a suspicious look in his eye. "What kind of appointment? If you don't mind me asking?"

"Uhm... it's... tanning," Robbie blurted out, not quite sure where the idea came from.

"Well, that shouldn't take all night," James replied. "How about we meet afterwards? I know this amazing little restaurant in the city. They have the best..."

"And a facial," Robbie announced, butting in. "And I need to get my nails done. My boss made a comment about them earlier, and I don't want to make a bad impression."

For a few seconds, the pair looked at each other, neither knowing what to say, until Robbie, unable to take the silence anymore, spoke up. "Well, it was nice seeing you again, James. But I really must get back to work now. Bye." Turning, he tottered away, moving as quickly as possible on his stiletto heels without looking back.

"Tanning! A facial! Really?" Agatha spat down his ear. "I told you to go out with him. But, fine! If you'd rather pretty yourself up instead. You've got it, Blondie!"

Feeling as though he was about to pass out, Robbie turned a corner and slumped against a wall. "What! No! I didn't mean that. I panicked. I just needed to get away before I fainted."

"Well, tough shit, girly! You've failed today's challenge," Agatha angrily announced. "Finish your shift and head to your friend's salon. I'll arrange the appointment you want so badly."

Robbie wanted to argue but couldn't muster the strength. Every muscle in his body was aching. With the room spinning, he closed his heavily made-up eyes and let out a heavy sigh. He knew he had fucked up, and now he'd have to face the consequences.

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Clomping in through the beauty salon door, Robbie caught Shar's eye and instantly knew she had been expecting him.

"You're early!" She announced as she flashed him a smile.

"Early!" Robbie shot back. "What time was I supposed to get here?"

"Not for another thirty minutes," Shar replied after looking up at the clock on the wall. "But that's ok. The sooner we get started, the sooner we can get out of here, I guess."

"Nothing about this is ok," Robbie moaned as he trotted over towards the counter. "I'm slowly dying from poison. I've just been forced to work a full shift at the hotel in a skirt and heels. And now God knows what procedures you're about to do to me! I take it Agatha has been in touch?"

"Yes, she called earlier and gave some very specific instructions," Shar replied while nodding. "She also made some quite scary threats about what would happen if I didn't do what she asked."

Sighing loudly, Robbie shook his head. "I know. It's a mess. Let's just get on with it, shall we?"

=====

Thirty minutes later, Robbie lay on his back, looking up at the ceiling. Lifting his arm up in front of his face, he could definitely tell it was darker. "Well, that's the tanning over with," he thought as he twisted his long-nailed hands back and forth. "Now, it's time for the facial, I guess. God, I'm an idiot. Why couldn't I just have said I was going to a dentist appointment? It's all this girly crap. It's affecting my mind."

"Ok, close your eyes," Shar announced as she moved towards his face with a cotton pad.

"I remember this," Robbie moaned. "You're doing my eyelashes again, aren't you?"

“You know, I can’t tell you,” Shar replied while placing the cotton pad under Robbie’s right eye. “The final look has to be a surprise. Agatha’s orders. I didn’t cover all the mirrors up for fun, you know?”

“Fine!” Robbie groaned as Shar took another cotton pad before repeating the procedure on the other eye. “I’ll stop asking. But talk to me about something. Everywhere aches, and I somehow get the feeling this isn’t going to be quick.”

“Sure. What would you like to know?” Shar said as she started brushing through Robbie’s long thick lashes.

“Anything!” Robbie replied, reaching down to grab his thigh in an attempt to stop his leg from shaking. “Tell me about your boyfriend. You mentioned him once before. Where did you guys meet?”

“Oh... well... that’s a boring story. You don’t want to hear about that.” Shar replied as she continued to separate his lashes.

“I do,” Robbie pleaded. “Please, Shar. I need something to take my mind off things.”

Shar scoffed loudly. “Fine! Well, we met what seems like a lifetime ago before he went to work on the oil rigs. Our eyes met across a bar, and the rest, as you say, is history.”

“So, he worked on oil rigs before he joined the military?” Robbie asked.

“Erm...yeah, exactly,” Shar replied. “It’s sometimes tough with him always being away, but I’ve gotten used to it.”

“That must be tough,” Robbie said. “I’m sorry to hear that. I had a girlfriend not too long ago, but I messed things up. She was a great girl, and I was an asshole. Always pestering her to dress sexier and wear more makeup. I wish I could turn back the clock. I would appreciate her for who she is now that I know how much of a pain in the backside all this beauty crap can be.”

“Aww, that’s sweet,” Shar cooed. “Well, when we get out of this mess you should tell her what you just said.”

“What? While looking like some freakish shemale Barbie?” Robbie shot back. “I can’t let her see me like this. I’d die from the humiliation.”

“Well, if you think things are bad now. Wait until we’re done here tonight,” Shar mumbled under her breath.

“What as that?” Robbie asked, not hearing what she said.

“I said. Things are probably not as bad as you think. But first, we need to get through tonight. And I can’t work with you yapping on. Here let me pop in my earpods for you. A little music will help you relax.”

Robbie wanted to argue but lying on his back dressed in a revealing robe, he felt very vulnerable. "It'll be over soon. Then I can get my tonic," he thought as he felt something slide into his ears before the sound of loud pop music began to play. "Just a few more hours, then the pain will be gone!"

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"Here drink this," Shar said, revealing a vial of liquid from her closed palm. Transfixed on the terrifying sight before him, Robbie failed to hear her. He hadn't yet looked in a mirror with the ones in the salon still covered, but he already knew he wouldn't like what he saw. Looking past thick dark lashes that felt twice as heavy as earlier, Robbie looked down at his half-naked body. Having just put on the outfit Shar had produced after finishing his makeover, he sat motionless, staring down in utter disbelief at a skimpy top housing the breasts he wasn't supposed to have and a micro miniskirt that made his long-tanned legs look like they extended forever. But as embarrassing as the outfit would be to wear, it was his shoes that he was having a hard time excepting.

Leaning forward to get a better look at the mega platform pumps, sporting what must have been a seven-inch stiletto heel, Robbie brushed a lock of blond hair away from his heavily made-up face with an acrylic nail that matched the colour of his killer shoes.

"Hey! Do you want this or not?" Shar said in a louder voice.

Managing to peel his eyes away from the hot pink monstrosities that his aching feet had been crammed into, Robbie glanced up at Shar as his eyes lit up. "Mwyt tonic," he said through his thick rubbery lips. The words muffled due to their gigantic size. "You had thith the whole time?"

"Sorry, doll," Shar replied. "Just following orders. You understand, right? This is only half a dose, though. Agatha said it would take the edge off, but you need to go to this address and meet a man named Jimmy to get the other half," she added as she passed Robbie the vial of liquid and a piece of paper.

Annoyed, Robbie snatched the vial. Quickly opening the top, he pressed it against his bloated, pink lips before pouring the sickly liquid down his throat. When done, he looked down at the address written on the paper before his heavy-lidded eyes shot over to his intimidating footwear. "You could hath given me thith earlier. Why did you make me thit here in pain thith whole time?"

“Wow, talk about ungrateful,” Shar announced. “After all, I’ve done, this is how you react. You haven’t even thanked me.”

“Thanked you! for what? for thticking needleth in my fathe. You didn't have to go tho exthreme. My lipth are tho big now, I can thee them when I look down. You've ruined my fathe!”

“Get out!” Shar roared, following a moment of silence.

“Get out!” she screamed again as she menacingly moved towards Robbie. “Go on, get out!”

Robbie quickly jumped to his high-heeled feet, and after stumbling slightly, he managed to find his balance. “Fine, thuck you,” he yelled as he snatched the handbag Shar had given him from the table. Then, without looking back, he tettered towards the door with as much grace as a duck on a frozen pond.

Storming through the door and out into the deserted shopping centre, the furious man angrily minced along, trying to ignore the pain in his feet and wondering why Shar had suddenly acted like such a bitch. That is until he caught sight of his reflection in a shop window out the corner of his eyes. Stopping dead in his tracks, Robbie turned as his bloated lips fell open slightly.



“Oh my God!” he wailed as he brought his freshly painted pink claws up to examine his transformed face. “What the hell hath thhe done to me?”

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The journey to the bar where he was to meet Jimmy was not a fun one for young Robbie. On the street, people stared as the scantily clad man minced on by while trying to keep his footing. On the bus, he tripped twice! Once when getting on and once when alighting. Both times a group of teenage girls giggled and made nasty comments about the bimbonised man. By the time he got to the meeting spot, he was so exhausted Jimmy had to help him over to the sofa where the two men now sat.

“So... Uhm... how are you doing?” Jimmy asked Robbie, who sat in a trance-like state to his left.

“Great,” Robbie sarcastically replied. “Couldn’t be bether.”

Sucking in air through gritted teeth, Jimmy smiled. “That bad, huh? Well, if you want to talk about it, I’m here. Sometimes it helps to get these things off your chest.”

“I’d kill to get two parthicular thingth off my thetht,” Robbie scoffed. “Know any good thurgeonth?”

“What?” Jimmy asked, looking confused.

“Oh, never mind,” Replied a frustrated Robbie while shaking his head and pouting. “Ith you really want to help. You can give mwe my thonic now.”

“Sure,” Jimmy said before reaching into his pocket to reveal a vial. “Here you go.”

“Really!” Robbie excitedly exclaimed as he extended his long-nailed hand.

“What’th to thtop me from taking thith and leaving?”

“If that’s what you want to do. I won’t stop you,” Jimmy replied while shrugging his shoulders. “I did my part in coming here. What you do is up to you. If you don’t want to listen to my message, there’s not much I can do about it, right? But what happens tomorrow? Won’t you need more of this stuff?”

With a shake of his head, Robbie plucked the vial from Jimmy's hand and downed it in one. "Fine," he announced once done. "What ith thith meththage you have for me?"

"Oh, yeah. The message." Jimmy said as he retrieved his phone. "I've got it written here. Hang on. Ah, yeah. Here we go. Ruby is to go into James Hemingsworths hotel room tomorrow without being seen. Once inside, Ruby is to replace all the apples in the bowl in the centre of the room."

When he finished reading, Jimmy looked over to see Robbie staring at him with a bewildered look on his face. "Replathe the appleth?" The fat-lipped man announced. "Replathe them with what? And how am I thuppothed to go into hith room without anyone theeing me?"

"With these," Jimmy said while reaching behind his back. Robbie watched as he produced a plastic bag with what looked like apples inside. "Here," Jimmy added as he passed the bag over to Robbie. "Put them in your handbag and remember to take them to work tomorrow."

Feeling the contents of the bag only confused Robbie further. "They're appleth. Thhe wantth me to replathe appleth with appleth! What the hell ith wrong with that crazy bitth? thith ith madnethth!" he shrieked as he dropped the bag onto his mini-skirted lap and threw his bare arms in the air.

"Hey, I know as much as you," Jimmy announced while his eyes darted around the room. "I just want my Rover back, ok? That dog's like a son to me. So please, just put them in your bag and stop making a scene."

Seeing that his little outburst had caused a few heads to turn in their direction, Robbie cringed with embarrassment. "Ok, I'm thorry," he said as he reached around to unclip the top of his handbag before placing the apples inside. "If you knew the day I'd had. No, make that week! in fact, my whole life righth now ith like one nether ending nithtmare. Thometimeth I think about jumping in front of a buth and jutht ending it."

"Hey, don't talk like that!" Jimmy forcefully said. "I know things seem pretty bad right now, but you'll get through this. You're a young attractive woman with her whole life ahead of her."

“Athractith,” Robbie scoffed as he brought a long pink nail up to poke at his puffy, swollen bottom lip. “Look at what the bittth did to me. You find thith atrtractith?”

“Well... they don't look that bad. And if you suck on...” Jimmy said before Robbie cut him off.

“Thtop, pleathe,” Robbie yelled out before crossing his arms across his augmented chest and looking away in disgust.



“What's wrong?” A surprised-looking Jimmy announced as he lifted his arms with the palms facing up. “I was just saying that if you suck on an ice cube the swelling might go down a little. That’s what my old boxing coach would say after I'd taken a right hook to the kisser.”

“I... Uhm... thorry.” Robbie said, looking back at the larger man embarrassed. “I thought you were going to thay thomething elthe.”

“What did you think I was going to say?” Jimmy asked while scratching his head.

“Oh, never mind,” Robbie quickly replied while going red in the face. “Anyway, you never anthwered my earlier queththion. How am I thuppothed to get into the man'th room without being theen?”

For a moment, Jimmy went quiet, occasionally humming out loud as he thought. “Well, it beats me,” he finally said, shrugging his shoulders. “But you work there, right? Just swipe a keycard and put on a disguise or something. It can't be that difficult, right?”

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Having been awoken by someone hammering on the front door, Robbie slowly opened it to see Shar glaring at him with her arms folded.

“Thhar! what are you doing here?” A tired-looking Robbie announced.

“It's not by choice. I can tell you that,” A surly-sounding Shar replied while shaking her head.

“Oh, I thee,” Robbie replied. “So Agatha thent you?”

“Exactly,” Shar replied. “So, can I come in?”

After inviting her in, the pair made their way to the kitchen, where Shar decided to brew up a pot of coffee. As she potted about there was an eery silence in the kitchen as Robbie watched her with a blank expression on his Botoxed face.

When done, Shar placed a mug of coffee in front of Robbie and took up a seat on the opposite side of the table.

“So, maybe I overreacted a little yesterday,” She said while pursing her lips. “I shouldn’t have shouted at you the way I did.”

Looking down at his huge, puffy lips, Robbie sighed. “I wath angry and emothional and took it out on you,” he said. “I’m thorry. You’ve been thuth a big help throughout all of thith crazinethh.”

“Apology accepted, sweetie,” Shar replied before smiling. “You know, we need to stick together. This crazy bitch Agatha is out of control. In fact, this whole situation is out of control. We need to put a stop to it.”

“Couldn’t agree more,” Robbie announced as he struggled to thread his long pink acrylic nails through the handle of his mug. “But what can we do?”

“We stay alert and look for an opportunity to strike back, but in the meantime, we keep communicating,” Shar said before pausing to take a sip of her coffee. “Have you heard from her today?”

“No,” Robbie replied while shaking his head. “But I’ve been given a miththion.” He then proceeded to tell Shar about his meeting with Jimmy and how he was tasked with breaking into James Hemingsworth’s room.

“How strange,” Shar announced after listening carefully to Robbie’s story. “A bag of apples? It sounds as if she’s just messing with you now?”

“I know, right?” Robbie exclaimed. “It’th tho bizarre, but I get the feeling thhe hath thome thort of mathterplan.”

“Masterplan?” Shar said, tilting her head to one side. “Like what?”

Robbie pouted and exhaled through his nose. “I don’t know,” he replied.

“Perhaph thhe wantth me to get caught and arretthted. What did thhe thay to you thith morning?”

“She just said to come over here and assist you with whatever you need today,” Shar said with a shrug of her shoulders. “Nothing about a masterplan, I’m afraid.”

Robbie sighed loudly while shaking his head. “Ok, tho I guethth I have no thoithe but to do what thhe wantth!”

“Any idea how you’re going to get in and out without being seen?” Shar asked.

Robbie nodded. “Well, I’ve worked in the Grand for yearth and I know their thytthem. Tho, making a key card for the room thouldn’t be a problem, but getting in without being thhen will be difficult. There’th no reathon for front dethk thtthaff to go to the upper floorth. If anyone thaw me it would be a problem.”

“So you need a disguise?” Shar happily announced. “That way you could walk straight in, and nobody would bother you, right?”

“I guethth,” Robbie mumbled. “But it hath to be good enough to trick my colleagueth. I don’t know what would work, looking like thith!”

“You just go to work as usual and leave that part to me, ok?” Shar said while smiling. “After all, giving people new looks is kind of my thing, and I have an idea.”

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“Thhar, I’m not thure about thith?” Robbie said as looked at himself in the rear-view mirror of the beautician’s car.

“Which part?” Shar replied from the driver’s seat.

“All of it! couldn’t you have come up with thome thort of dithguithe that didn’t involve me wearing thix-inth heelh and a mini-thkirt?” Robbie moaned.

“Come on, Robbie,” Shar replied, rolling her eyes and the words. “This has the best chance of working, and you know it. Those nails and lips aren’t going anywhere, so what better way to disguise yourself than as a rich socialite brat? I bet you get women like that checking in all the time, right?”

“Well, yeah,” Robbie mumbled while playing with the ends of his wig. “But what if thomeone recognitheth me?”

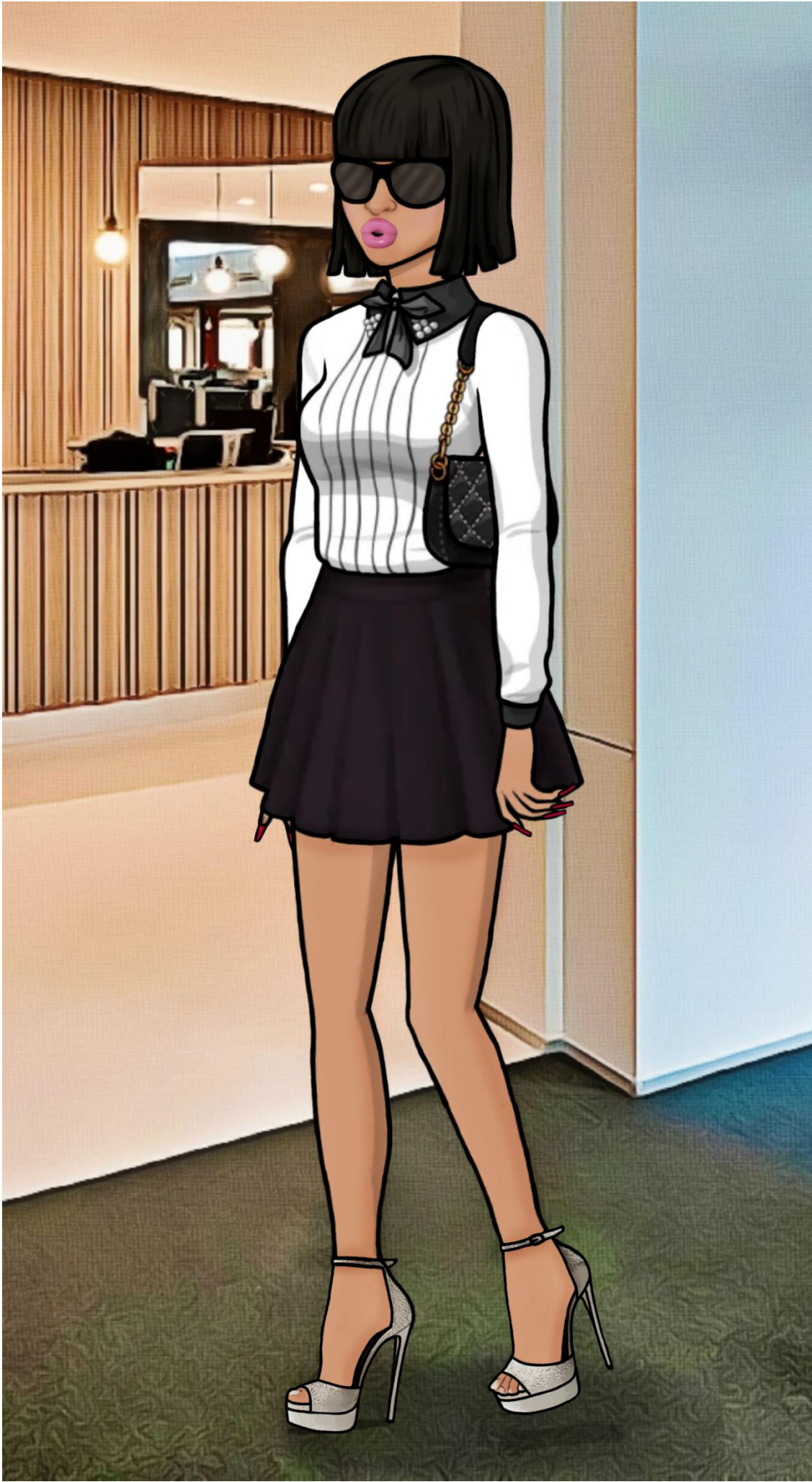
“Nobody’s going to recognise you behind those sunglasses and that fake nose I stuck in place. And besides, Ruby’s gone home for the day, right? That means no one will expect her to be around with her shift over.” Shar replied with a tut. “Just

strut through the lobby with attitude. Would you go up and ask someone like that, what they were doing or where they were going?”

“Probably not,” Robbie quietly replied. “But thtrutting ithn’t exactly going to be eathy in thethe thhoeth,” he added while looking down at the thin spindly stiletto heels attached to his strappy sandals.

“You’ll be fine,” Shar shot back. “You walked much further in those pink platforms yesterday, and they were just as high. Now, you should hurry before this James guy comes back. I’ll be here waiting to give you a lift home when you’re done.”

With the plan already in motion and Shar’s promise to call him if she saw a middle-aged man in a suit approaching the hotel, Robbie reluctantly hopped out of the car and wobbled towards the Grand hotel’s entrance. Entering the lobby, the terrified, cross-dressed man held his head high just like Shar told him to as he tried to keep his nerves in check.



Thankfully, nobody bothered him as he clicked through the lobby. Or when he stood looking shifty as he waited for the lift to arrive. Once inside, he tapped the keycard he had made earlier against the scanner and pressed the fourth-floor button without incident.

Robbie let out a sigh of relief as the lift started its slow ascent. "So far, so good," he thought, surprised that Shar's plan had worked so well. Now all he had to do was hold his nerve and get in and out of the room as quickly as possible. Well, as quickly as one can while wearing perilously tall high-heeled sandals.

As the lift pinged, he shuddered while catching a glimpse of his feminised image in the reflective metal doors. "Look at the state of me," he thought while watching the image of a leggy, pouting princess split in half to be replaced by a carpeted hallway. "In and out, Robbie," he muttered to himself while stepping out to feel his stiletto heel sink slightly into the plush carpeted floor. "Look confident. You're just a woman going to her hotel room."

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With his tanned arm shaking like a leaf, Robbie unzipped his purse to retrieve the key card, swivelling his neck one way and then the other as he searched. Finding the coast clear, he took a deep breath before placing the card into the reader. With his heart beating like a drum in his enhanced chest and his breath held, time seemed to stand still for a moment. Until there was a beep followed by a green light. "Bingo," Robbie muttered before flinging open the door and rushing inside.

After quietly closing the door, Robbie turned and slumped against it. Taking a moment to catch his breath, he scanned his surrounding through thick spider-leg eyelashes. And there it was, his target. Without wasting time, the feminised man quickly strutted towards the fruit bowl in the centre of the room as a familiar click-clack sound filled his ears. Unzipping his bag once more, the skirted young man was now running on adrenaline as he delved inside to retrieve the package jimmy had given him. Opening it, he peered inside before counting five apples. In the fruit bowl, there were only four!

"Err... Agatha. I think we have a problem," He announced in a shaky voice.

“What is it, blondie?” a voice in his ear instantly shot back. “Don’t tell me you broke a nail.”

“No! I didn’t break a nail,” Robbie replied in an annoyed tone. “There are only four apples in the bowl, and the package has five. What do I do?” There was a moment of silence before Agatha burst out laughing.

“Oh my God,” she said between fits of laughter. “You really are a scatterbrain these days, aren’t you, Barbie?”

Pouting, Robbie listened to her chuckle as his blood began to boil. “Can you stop laughing?” He spat angrily. “Just tell me what you want me to do, will you? James could be back any minute.”

“Oh, and I bet a girl like you would just love that, right?” Agatha said while still chuckling. “Oh, Mr. Hemingsworth. I seem to have accidentally wandered into your room. I’m such a naughty girl! Won’t you please punish me?” Agatha mocked in a ditzy-sounding voice.

“No!” Robbie firmly stated while stamping his high-heeled foot. “I’m only here because of you! You did all this to me! I don’t want any of this!”

“Aww... Did I touch a nerve again, princess? I seemed to remember a time not too long ago when you tried to persuade your girlfriend to dress sexier for you. Isn’t how you look now what you had in mind?”

Robbie’s Botox-filled lips fell open as he gasped in surprise. “How do you know that?” he asked in a panicked voice. “What does this have to do with Holly?”

“Complete your tasks, and perhaps I’ll tell you,” Agatha replied. “There are four apples in the bowl. So take four out of the bag and replace four apples.”

“No! Robbie shouted while folding his arms. “I’m not doing what you want until you tell me what you mean by that comment.”

“Suit yourself,” Agatha replied. “But when Mr. Hemingsworth finds you in his room, you’re on your own.”

“Argghh... Robbie screamed. “This is so, unfair! What did I ever do to deserve this?”

“Complete the task, and you’ll find out,” Agatha calmly replied. “Oh, and before you leave, I have one more thing I need you to do.”

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With aching muscles and shaking legs, Robbie anxiously scanned the large room. Struggling to hold his flute of champagne in his long-nailed hand, his darkly lined eyes studied the well-dressed people surrounding him as he wondered what the hell was going on!



Somehow, he now found himself wearing a little black dress in the middle of an art gallery. And if that was hard enough for his male mind to comprehend, he was there on a date with James Hemingsworth!

With Shar helping him get ready, he once again looked like an overdone diva. By this point, he was past caring what she did to him. He hadn't even protested as she lightened and straightened his hair! Supposedly, a sleek and sophisticated look was needed to fit in, in such esteemed company. But after doing his makeup and dressing him in an outfit that she claimed was designer, Robbie felt anything but sophisticated. He felt like a clown.

Now alone, for the first time all evening, Robbie wondered what was worse. Feeling vulnerable as he stood alone trying to ignore the wandering eyes scanning up and down his nylon-clad legs? Or having to cling to James Hemingsworth's side as he whisked him around the room, showing him off like arm candy?

"Ok, I'm alone," Robbie whispered after checking he was out of earshot of the other guests.

"How's the date going, sugarlips? Agatha announced in his ear. "I sense a budding romance blossoming."

"It isn't a date!" Robbie muttered. "You know I'm only here because you made me write that note and leave it in his room."

Agatha laughed. "Yeah, lucky he called the number you left and not the police, eh? That would have been interesting to watch."

Robbie sighed. "Yeah, that would have been hilarious. Anyway, He went off to talk with those butchers perth he knows. You had to tell you when I was alone, and I'm alone."

"Great work, Agent Snowflake," Agatha mocked. "What are you doing right now? Are you blending in?"

Flabbergasted by the question, Robbie looked down at his delicate-looking body, encased in the most feminine of garments. "Blending in!" He exclaimed angrily. "You've made me look like a human-sized Barbie doll! I'm standing here drinking champagne getting lustful threats from the men and angry glares from their wives! How do you expect me to blend in?"

“Champagne, you say?” Agatha asked. “Where did you get that from?”

“Jameth gave it to me, but why doeth that matter? did you not hear what I jutht thaid?” Robbie asked in disbelief.

“Yeah, yeah, calm down, dolly,” Agatha stated. “Boo hoo, poor you. Now, pull yourself together and go to the third-floor bathroom.”

“The bathroom? Why?” Robbie asked, looking over at the intimidating set of stairs at the far end of the room before looking down at his screaming feet.

“No time to explain,” Agatha firmly said. “Get moving or tonight’s tonic will be a very small portion.”

Sighing loudly, Robbie shook his head, which he instantly regretted as a sharp stabbing pain across his forehead. “Fine,” he angrily muttered as he forced his feet to shuffle forward. “I’m going! I’m going!”

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Arriving on the third floor, Robbie paused to catch his breath. Feeling his calf cramping up, the flustered young man ran his hand down the back of his smooth nyloned leg as the disturbing sensation of his breasts jiggling threatened to throw him off balance.

“Psst,” came a male voice, startling the skirted man. Looking to his left, Robbie saw Jimmy with his head hanging out of the men’s bathroom.

“Psst, Ruby! Over here!” he said in a hushed voice while gesturing with his hand for Robbie to come over.

Straightening up, Robbie quickly tottered over. “Jimmy!” He exclaimed in a surprised voice. “What are you doing here?”

“I’ll explain inside,” Jimmy shot back. “Come on! Quickly before someone sees us!”

“Err... I...” Robbie muttered, hesitating for a second while looking down at his slinky black dress. A crazy thought had just pooped into his feminised head, one telling him that women weren’t allowed in the men’s bathroom!

“What’s wrong?” Jimmy asked, seeing Robbie’s reluctance to enter.

“How long hath you got?” Robbie quipped, feeling stupid for his earlier thought. He had used the men’s bathroom all his life, and no matter how he may now look on the outside. On the inside, he was still a man. “Move out the way then, will ya?” he added before brushing passed the larger man standing idly in the doorway.

Stopping in the centre of the room, Robbie wasted no time slipping off his shoes, letting out a sigh of relief in the process.

“What are you doing?” Jimmy asked, pulling a confused face. “We have to be quick. I can’t be seen here with you.”

“Hey, give me a break, will ya?” Robbie barked. “Have you any idea how muth pain theth thhoeth have cauthed me tonight? no! of courthe, you don’t! I bet you wouldn’t latht thirty thecondth in health thith high.” The outburst left Jimmy speechless, who made an expression somewhere between a smile and a grimace.

“Oh, forget it,” Robbie frustratedly announced. “What are we doing here anyway?”

“You need to make sure James invites you back to his room later,” Jimmy blurted out.

Robbie’s full-lipped mouth fell open in shock. “What! No!” He gasped. “I can’t do that. I’ve done everything thhe’th athked, but... I can’t... thhe can’t expect me to do that.”

“You have to do it!” Jimmy forcefully said. “It’s the endgame. If you do what she wants tonight. You get your antidote, and I get my Rover back. We get to move on with our lives.”

“Thhe thaid that?” Robbie shot back.

"Yes," Jimmy replied. "Do what she wants tonight, and it's over. We'll be free. That's what you want, right?"

"Of courthe," Robbie instantly replied while sounding very emotional. "But... I can't thleep with him, jimmy. I jutht can't!"

"And you won't have to," Jimmy announced, stepping forward. "We promised to look out for each other, and I intend to keep that promise. When you get him back to the room, give him this," he added, reaching into his pocket and revealing a bag of white powder.

Confused, Robbie screwed up his face. "What ith it?" he asked, staring at the bag.

"Sleeping powder," Jimmy confidently announced. "When Agatha told me about her plan earlier. I went out and got this. Just pop it in his drink, and he'll be out like a light."

"It won't kill him, will it?" Robbie asked as he carefully took the bag from Jimmy, pinching it between the long nails of his thumb and index finger. "And where did you get thith from?"

"No, it won't kill him and don't worry about where I got it from. Just use it, and everything will be ok, I promise." Jimmy said as he reached over to clasp the stem of the champagne flute in Robbie's left hand. "May I?" he asked. "My throat is as dry as the Sahara."

"Erm... no, go ahead," Robbie said, releasing the glass to focus all his attention on the small plastic bag in his right hand.

After downing the remaining champagne in one gulp, Jimmy smiled. "Thanks, I needed that," he said before looking at his wrist. "Ok, you better be getting back. I'll be outside the hotel later in case anything goes wrong. Call me later once you've put him to sleep, ok?" he said before turning to leave.

"Jimmy, wait!" Robbie announced.

"What is it?" Jimmy asked, looking confused as he turned back to face Robbie.

Thrusting his feminine body forward, Robbie flung his arms around Jimmy. "Thank you," he said as he squeezed him tightly. "Thank you."

The hug lasted a few seconds until Jimmy pulled back. "Hey, we're in this together, remember? We just need to get through tonight, and then all this will be over, ok? He announced with a nod.

“Ok,” Robbie squeaked as he nodded back before watching Jimmy turn and leave.

Alone in the bathroom, Robbie shuffled over to the mirror to check his makeup. With no touch-ups needed, he quickly turned away from his stomach-turning reflection. “Is this really the end?” he thought as he slipped his aching feet back into his torturous shoes. “Please, let it be over.”

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“Thank you for thuth a lovely evening, Jameth,” Robbie nervously said as he teetered in front of James’ room.

“Oh, no need to thank me, my dear. I’ve had a wonderful evening.” James replied. “And thank you for walking me to my door. As unconventional as it is, I appreciate the sentiment.”

“All part of the thervithe here at the grand hotel,” Robbie quipped before letting out a nervous giggle.

“Ah... yes. Of course,” James said as he grinned back. “Well, I’d love to invite you in, but I have a very important and busy day tomorrow. Perhaps we could meet up after and...”

Interrupting the older man, Robbie launched himself forward before pressing his pillowy lips into James’. It was a last resort and repulsed him to the core, but he needed to do something. He needed things to go back to normal, and tonight was his chance to end it.



Closing his eyes, Robbie tried to imagine it was Holly he was kissing, but that was a tough sell given James' rough chin. Suddenly he felt a hand on his left breast. It cupped his bosom, sending a shiver down his whole body before he gasped and pulled back as a finger pinched his sensitive nipple.

"Tho, what were you thaying about an early night?" Robbie said, feeling sick to his stomach but hiding his true feelings by batting his long lashes and trying to look seductive. "Thurely you have time for a nightcap?"

The right side of James' lips curled into a smile. "Go on then, my dear," the excited man announced as he reached down to caress Robbie's plump backside. "There's always time for a nightcap."

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The next day

"Interview continued at four fourteen pm. In attendance. Myself, Detective Munroe, my colleague Detective Henry and the defendant. For the record, the defendant has decided to forgo his right to an attorney," Detective Munroe said before nodding at Robbie across the table. "Can you please state your name for the record,"

"Robbie Thteven Owen," Robbie mumbled as he struggled to hold back the tears.

"Where are the diamonds? Mr. Owen," Detective Henry firmly asked, getting straight to the point.

"I've already told you," Robbie shot back. "I don't know anything about any diamondth!"

Detective Henry smiled. "I find that hard to believe, Mr. Owen. You impersonate a hotel employee to get close to the owner of one of the biggest diamond dealerships in the world. Drug him and expect us to believe you knew nothing about the robbery? Sounds a bit far-fetched, don't you think?"

“I wath poithoned!” Robbie exclaimed. “I had to work there and go out with him. I did it to get the anthidote.”

“So, you admit to stealing the diamonds?” Detective Munroe asked, jumping into the conversation.

Robbie closed his eyes and took a deep breath. “No! that'th not what I thaid. I didn't thteal any diamondth!”

“But you did drug Mr Hemingsworth in his hotel room?” Detective Munroe shot back.

“I wath told it wath thleeping powder,” Robbie replied. “I didn't want to thleep with him.”

“Who told you it was sleeping powder, Mr. Owen?” Detective Henry asked before narrowing his brow and staring menacingly over the table.

“Jimmy!” Robbie exclaimed. “Jimmy told me.”

Pausing for a second, Detective Henry consulted his notes. “How did you meet this Jimmy? He asked while clicking his pen.

“Agatha made me meet him in a bar. Thhe wath controlling him too. Thhe kidnapped hith dog, Rover!” Robbie said, realising how crazy he sounded as he saw Detective Munroe give Detective Henry a look. “It'th the truth. You have to believe me, pleathe.”

“Try to calm down, Mr. Owen,” Detective Henry calmly said. “We're all here to get to the truth. So, let's go back to last night, shall we? You seduced Mr. Hemingsworth and convinced him to let you into his room before...”

“I didn't thedutte him,” Robbie said, interrupting the detective's flow.

“So, Mr. Hemingsworth didn't tell you he wanted an early night?” Detective Henry said while reading through his notes. “You didn't kiss the victim and ask him for a nightcap?”

“I... I...” Robbie mumbled as a tear ran down his cheek.

“As I was saying. You seduced Mr. Hemingsworth and convinced him to let you into his room. Things got heated, and you took him to the bedroom. A bottle of

wine was opened, and you slipped in what you thought was sleeping powder. Does this sound correct so far?"

Robbie nodded his head and shuffled his pantyhosed legs under the table.

"Mr. Hemingsworth then falls unconscious. What happened next?" Detective Henry asked.

"It wath tho thudden. He jutht collapthed onto the floor. The thound wath tho loud that I panicked and called Jimmy" Robbie frantically answered.

"Please, continue Mr. Owen," Detective Munroe said while nodding his head. "What happened next?"

"Jimmy came to the room, and I let him in," The crossdressed man said while bowing his head in shame. "He thaid that I had given Jameth too muth of the thleeping powder and that I needed to keep an eye on him while he cleared away any evidenthe."

"And you didn't find this strange or suspicious?" Detective Munroe asked while tilting his head to one side.

"I wath thcared!" Robbie sniffled. "I panicked and did what he athked. When I came out of the room ten minuteth later, he wath gone!"

"That's when you called the ambulance?" Detective Munroe asked.

"Yeth," Robbie mumbled, suddenly realising that he had never told Jimmy the room number, but he had found the room anyway. "Wait a minute!" he shrieked. "It wath him! he mutht have done it!"

"Done what, Mr. Owen?" Detective Henry asked.

"Taken the diamondth!" He screamed. "It mutht have been him. He knew where I wath without me telling him. And he took all the evidenthe. The earpiethe, the appleth!"

Silence fell upon the room after the outburst. The only sound to be heard was Detective Henry adding to his notes. "You don't belieth me!" Robbie exclaimed loudly. "Pleathe, It' th the truth you have to believe me. Thothe crazy people did thith to me. They turned me into a freak!"

“I think it's time we took a break,” Detective Munroe announced, seeing Robbie in distress. “Interview terminated at four twenty-two pm.”

“I wath poithoned!” Robbie shouted towards the two detectives as they stood up. “They made me look like a thlut. Pleathe, you can’t leave me like thith. I’m a man! I need thome male clotheth. I need you to help me!”

Shaking his head, Detective Munroe turned to look at the panda-eyed sissy across the table. “Your blood work came back clean, Mr. Owen. You weren’t poisoned. We also looked into the beauty salon you claim did all these procedures to you. All we found was an empty, boarded-up lot. According to the security guard on duty. It’s been empty for months.”

Falling into stunned silence, Robbie stared at Detective Munroe in disbelief. Nodding, the man looked at his partner before they both stepped out of the room to leave Robbie in a state of shock.



In the corridor outside the interview room, Detective Munroe stopped before turning to look at his partner. “So, what do you make of that?” He asked, shaking his head.

“Got ourselves a crazy one, I reckon,” Detective Henry replied while closing his notebook. “We should get someone in to assess him.”

“Yeah, I agree, but that’s one hell of a story, right?” Detective Munroe shot back while scratching his head. “If it’s all the ranting of a looney, where are the diamonds?”

“Hmm... you got me there, partner,” Detective Henry answered while stroking his beard. “But diamonds or no diamonds, you don’t actually believe his story, do you? You’re telling me someone abducted him and changed his body to look like a woman to coerce him into the biggest diamond heist of the century? I don’t have all the answers here, but that’s just insane!”

“Yeah, you’re right,” Detective Munroe replied before chuckling loudly. “Call the shrinks in and get in touch with his next of kin. We’ll take another look at things once the report comes back.”

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Meanwhile, somewhere on a Caribbean Island, Rochelle and Mona (once known as Shar and Agatha) discuss the events of the last few weeks.

“Are you going to be like this all day?” Rochelle asked a miserable-looking Mona

“Like what? The blonde-haired woman shot back.

“Sulky, distant, miserable,” Rochelle answered while shaking her head.

Mona breathed out heavily through her nose and looked over at Rochelle. “I feel bad, alright.” She firmly said. “I think we went too far this time. I mean, did he really deserve what we did to him?”

“Hey, you’re the one who picked him,” Rochelle shot back. “Don’t you remember what you said to me after hearing him talk to his girlfriend on the street?”

“I haven’t forgotten,” Mona said with a huff. “He was a pig and had just the look we needed. But Shell, what we did... It was too much!”

“Oh, come on, you know as well as I do he’ll never go to jail. Without the diamonds, the police will never get a conviction.” Rochelle answered in a jovial voice.

“And you know that’s not what I meant,” Mona replied while folding her arms. “This feminisation stuff has to stop. It gets more extreme with every job.”

Rochelle rolled her eyes before quietly chuckling. "Oh, like it doesn't turn you on. The thought of that loser turning back up at his ex's doorstep, looking like the bimbo he once wanted her to be. It has a sort of poetic justice, don't you think?"

"Yeah, maybe," Mona said, turning her back. "But that doesn't matter. I can't do this anymore, Shell. That was my last job. For real this time. I'm out!"

"Out!" Rochelle said in a mocking voice. "Yeah, right. You love this life as much as I do. We've got a buyer for the diamonds flying in tomorrow who's going to pay us a cool four million. Would you rather go back to your office job? Wasting your life away in that cubicle! Day in, day out until your bitter and old."

Mona huffed. "No, but why go on? We have enough money now to retire. Let's stop now before we get caught. There were too many things that could have gone wrong with this job. It's just not worth the risk anymore."

"Name on!" Rochelle shot back.

"Ok, what if he'd gone to another beauty salon that day in the shopping centre?" Mona quickly replied.

"It was the closest one. Think how embarrassed he would have felt dressed as a Lolita maid," Rochelle said with a chuckle. "He was never going to wander far."

"Ok, fine," Mona tutted as she placed her hands on her hips. "But what about the stuff you were slipping in his coffee every day. If you'd messed up and given him too much or too little. He would have realised he hadn't been poisoned, or worse, you could have killed him!"

"Your so cute when your angry," Rochelle replied, chuckling as she placed her hand on Mona's bikinied backside.



“Hey, I’m serious,” Mona said, trying to act tough. “There are so many things that could have gone wrong. Where would we be now if they had? In jail?”

“Baby, you worry too much,” Rochelle cooed, reaching up to rub her girlfriend's back. “You know I would never have let anything happen to you. If anything went

wrong, there was plan B, C, D, all the way to Z. If anything, it was your brother who almost ruined things. What kind of idiot uses his real name on a job and Rover? Really? Could he not have come up with something more believable? Perhaps we should drop him from the next job.”

“Hey, don’t be mean,” Mona said while pouting. “You know he’s the only family I have. And he did a great job. He got the fingerprints from the glass, didn’t he? He got into the safe and even removed the cameras we placed in those apples. I can’t imagine doing the next job without him.”

“So, there will be a next job then?” Rochelle said, smiling.

Smiling back, Mona shook her head. “Maybe, but no surgery this time. And no Botox.”

Rochelle chuckled loudly. “Those lips were a bit much, weren’t they? Perhaps we could calm down a bit. But then again, that doctor still owes me a favour. It would be a shame not to use him.”

“You’re terrible,” Mona said before chuckling along with her girlfriend.

“You know it, Baby,” Rochelle replied, stepping forward to wrap her arms around Mona, “And that’s exactly why you love me,” She added before leaning in for a kiss.

The End