
THE
INHERITANCE
by CBlack

Chapter One

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One late afternoon, in an estate on the shores of Lake Champlain...

A somber group of people gather to view a video of the last will and testament of Mildred Peabody, owner of the estate...

...AND NOW, TO MY HUSBAND, *HIRAM*...

HIRAM, WHO WAS A CONSTANT ***PAIN IN MY ASS*** FOR ***FIFTY-THREE YEARS*** OF MARRIAGE, I GRANT YOU ***ROOM AND BOARD*** IN MY FAMILY'S ESTATE, ALONG WITH A ***SEMI-COMFORTABLE LIVING ALLOWANCE***, UNTIL THE POWERS THAT BE ***FINALLY*** REMOVE ***YOU*** AS WELL FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

HOW A MISERABLE SOUL LIKE ***YOU*** COULD OUTLIVE ***ME***, I'LL ***NEVER KNOW.***

HMPH! FIGURED AS MUCH... THE OLD ***WITCH!***

MRS. PEABODY REQUESTED THAT THE **REMAINDER** OF HER WILL **ONLY** BE SHOWN TO **FAMILY!**

VERY WELL, MR. PEABODY!

THAT'D BE JUST **ME**, I GUESS! AND **LEO** HERE **STAYS** BECAUSE HE'S THE **CLOSEST** THING TO FAMILY I'VE HAD IN **YEARS!**

I **STILL** DON'T SEE **WHY** WE HAD TO COME TO THIS **DREARY** THING, MOTHER! ALL **WE** GOT OUT OF IT WAS A COUPLE OF **DUSTY OLD PAINTINGS!**

WE **CAME** OUT OF **RESPECT!** YOUR LATE **GRANDMOTHER** AND **MRS. PEABODY** WERE **FRIENDS** SINCE **CHILDHOOD!** IT WAS THE **LEAST** WE COULD DO!

YES, DON'T BE SUCH A **KVETCH,** HILLARY! MOTHER'S **ONLY** TRYING TO DO THE **RIGHT** AND **PROPER** THING! **RIGHT,** MOTHER?


GAWD, WHAT A SUCK-UP!
EXACTLY, RODNEY!

NOW, THE ***REMAINDER*** OF MY ESTATE WILL BE DIVIDED UP INTO ***THREE*** EQUAL PARTS. ***ONE*** PART GOES TO MY GRANDSON, ***WILLIAM***, AND ***ANOTHER*** PART GOES TO MY GRANDDAUGHTER, ***COURTNEY!***

I ***PRAY*** THAT AT LEAST ***ONE*** OF THEM WAS ABLE TO ATTEND THIS READING, BUT ***CONSIDERING*** THEIR DEMONSTRATED ***CONTEMPT*** FOR ME FOR SENDING THEM OFF TO ***BOARDING SCHOOL*** SHORTLY AFTER THEIR PARENTS DIED ***FIFTEEN YEARS AGO,*** I'M ***NOT*** COUNTING ON IT!

AND *THAT'S* WHERE THE *THIRD* PART OF MY ESTATE COMES INTO PLAY. MY *DEAR* AND LIFELONG FRIEND, *ANNABELLE GOLDSTONE*, AND I HAD ALWAYS *HOPED* THAT SOMEDAY EITHER OUR *CHILDREN* OR *GRANDCHILDREN* WOULD FIND A WAY TO *UNITE* OUR FAMILIES AS *ONE*.

SO, THE *FIRST* OF MY GRANDCHILDREN TO *MARRY INTO* THE *GOLDSTONE FAMILY* WILL BE *AWARDED* WITH THE *REMAINING THIRD* OF MY ESTATE.

I FIGURE IF *THAT* DOESN'T GET AT LEAST *ONE* OF THEM HOME, *NOTHING* WILL!

DID YOU HAVE ANY **LUCK** LOCATING YOUR **GRANDCHILDREN**, MR. PEABODY?

MY **SOURCES** FOUND WILLIAM **GALAVANTING** AROUND THE **MEDITERRANEAN!** I SENT HIM **WORD** OF HIS **GRANDMOTHER'S DEATH**, SO **HE** SHOULD BE HERE WITHIN THE **WEEK**!

AND YOUR **GRANDDAUGHTER?**

THEY **UNFORTUNATELY** LOST **TRACK** OF HER **MONTHS** AGO! WE HAVE NO IDEA **WHERE** SHE MAY BE, OR **HOW** TO GET IN TOUCH WITH HER!

WELL, IT **SEEMS** AS THOUGH YOUR GRANDSON **MAY** GET **QUITE** THE **WINDFALL!** A **CODICIL** TO YOUR WIFE'S WILL STATES THAT IF ONLY **ONE** GRANDCHILD SHOWS UP, HE OR SHE WILL GET **BOTH PARTS!**

BUT IF **NEITHER** SHOWS, **ALL ASSETS** ARE TO BE **LIQUIDATED** AND THE PROCEEDS **DONATED** TO THE **WORLD WILDLIFE FUND!**

WELL, I'M PRETTY DAMN **SURE** MY **GRANDSON** WILL SHOW UP AND DO **WHATEVER'S** NECESSARY TO CLAIM AT LEAST **HIS** AND THE **THIRD PART** OF THE ESTATE!


IN FACT, I CAN PRACTICALLY GUARANTEE IT!

A short time later, after everyone has left...

WILL *EVERYTHING* SOON BE READY TO GO, LEO?

DEFINITELY, SIR! MY MAN IN *ATHENS* HAS BEEN TAILING YOUR *GRANDSON* FOR A WEEK AND PLANS ON *SECURING* WHAT WE NEED *TOMORROW*!

HE'LL THEN *OVERNIGHT* THE *PACKAGE* SO YOU SHOULD HAVE IT IN NO MORE THAN *THREE DAYS*!

PERFECT!

I *HAVE* TO ASK AGAIN, SIR... ARE YOU *SURE* YOU WANT TO GO *THROUGH* WITH THIS?

I *KNOW* YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO LOOK OUT FOR ME, LEO, AND I *APPRECIATE* IT, BUT I'VE BEEN *PLANNING* THIS FOR *YEARS*... EVER SINCE I *FOUND OUT* WHAT *MILDRED* PUT IN HER *WILL!*

"FOUND OUT"... *HELL!* SHE PRACTICALLY *WAVED* IT IN MY *FACE*, THE *SADISTIC BITCH!* BUT *THAT* WAS HER *MISTAKE*... GIVING *ME* SO MUCH *TIME* TO SEARCH FOR THE *PERFECT* SOLUTION! AND *I FOUND IT!*

IT JUST SEEMS VERY... *RADICAL!*

WELL, IF **YOU'D** CALL DISCOVERING A **SPELL** THAT'LL ALLOW **ME** TO BECOME **YOUNG** AGAIN, **IMPERSONATE** MY **GRANDSON** AND CLAIM **MOST**, IF NOT **ALL**, OF MILDRED'S ESTATE **RADICAL**, WELL THEN... I GUESS **YOU'RE RIGHT!** HEH-HEH!

BUT SINCE MY ONLY **OTHER** OPTION IS TO WHITHER AWAY AND **DIE** IN **THIS** DISGUSTING **HUSK** OF A BODY, I'LL **GLADLY** TAKE **ANY RISKS** INVOLVED!

AND **ALL** IT TAKES TO MAKE IT HAPPEN IS A FEW **OUNCES OF BLOOD** FROM A **YOUTHFUL RELATIVE** AND **I'LL** HAVE A **SECOND CHANCE** AT LIFE WITH ALL THE **MONEY** AND **RESOURCES** I'LL **EVER** NEED!

BUT **WHAT** IF ONE OF YOUR GRANDCHILDREN DECIDES TO COME **BACK** HERE AFTER ALL?

WELL WE **KNOW** MY **GRANDDAUGHTER** WON'T! SHE THREW AWAY **ALL** CHANCES OF **THAT** WHEN SHE HOOKED UP WITH THAT **DRUG-DEALING** BOYFRIEND OF HERS!

NOW HE'S GOT HER **TURNING TRICKS** ON THE BACKSTREETS OF **PARIS** TO SUPPORT HER **DRUG HABIT!** **WORTHLESS CHILD!**


AND AS FOR MY GRANDSON, WELL... I'LL JUST MAKE SURE HE NEVER HAS ANY INCLINATION TO RETURN TO THE STATES!
NO MATTER WHAT I HAVE TO DO!

A few days later after the "package" has arrived...

THIS IS IT, LEO... MAKE OR BREAK TIME!

SIR, I HAVE TO ASK, ONE MORE TIME... ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING? IS IT SAFE?

I'M **WAY** BEYOND **CARING** IF IT'S **SAFE**, LEO! IF IT KILLS ME, **SO WHAT?** I'LL BE **DEAD** IN A FEW MONTHS **ANYWAY!**

AS FOR **KNOWING** WHAT I'M **DOING**, WELL... **WE'LL** KNOW IN A FEW MINUTES, **WON'T WE!**

YES SIR... I **GUESS** WE WILL!

AND I *HAVE* TO ASK, SIR... WAS THE RATHER... *LUDICROUS* ROBE *NECESSARY*?

NOT THAT I KNOW OF, BUT I *DO* LOOK PRETTY DAMN *IMPRESSIVE* DON'T YOU THINK?

OF *COURSE* YOU DO, SIR!

BESIDES, THERE'S *NO WAY* IN *HELL* I'M DOING THIS IN MY *JAMMIES!*

NOW, *PUSH* ME OVER TO THE MANTLE AND THEN *STAND BACK!*

Ring!!!
Ring!!!

I'LL GET THAT, SIR! NOW **PLEASE**, DON'T DO **ANYTHING** UNTIL I RETURN!

Ring!!

HMPH!


SORRY, LEO... BUT I'VE WAITED LONG ENOUGH AS IT IS!

OKAY... WILLIAM'S *BLOOD* GOES IN *HERE*...

AND THEN RECITE THE *INCANTATION*...

NIRE ODOLAREN ODOLA ... EMAN IEZAIEZU BIZITZA ...




DAG NABBIT! SOMETHING'S SURE AS HELL HAPPENING!

SIR! MR. PEABODY! THAT WAS MY CONTACT IN EUROPE! THERE'S BEEN A DEVELOPMENT! WE NEED TO WAIT...


OH NO...
IT'S WORKING, LEO! IT'S WORKING! I CAN FEEL IT! IT'S A LITTLE WEIRD, BUT I CAN TAKE IT!


I CAN FEEL MYSELF GETTING YOUNGER... STRONGER!


IT'S HAPPENING, LEO... JUST LIKE I KNEW IT WOULD!


WHY, I'LL BET I LOOK EXACTLY LIKE THE LITTLE TWIT!
HA, HA!!! MY PLAN IS ALL COMING TOGETHER!


IS IT DONE, LEO? AM I THE SPITTING IMAGE OF WILLIAM?
UMMM... NOT EXACTLY, SIR...

NOT EXACTLY? BUT I SHOULD...

WAIT! I... I CAN'T MOVE!

UMMM... SIR...?

I DON'T KNOW, LEO... IT'S STARTING TO FEEL... *DIFFERENT!*


YEAH, I... I DEFINITELY THINK SOMETHING ELSE IS HAPPENING!
SIR...!?

OH CRAP! I... I CAN SEE MY HAIR GROWING! WILLIAM DOESN'T HAVE LONG HAIR, LEO! WHAT'S GOING ON?

THE PHONE CALL, SIR...


WHAT ABOUT THE DAMN PHONE CALL, LEO?!
THERE WAS A LITTLE TROUBLE IN EUROPE...
TROUBLE?! WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MEAN...?!

OWW! WHAT THE HELL!?

IT... IT'S STARTING TO HURT... A LOT! WHY THE...?

UMMM... WELL...

I CAN'T **SEE** MYSELF, LEO!! WHAT'S **HAPPENING** TO ME?!


AARRRGGGHHHHHHH!!!
YOU SEE...


UUUUUGGGHHH!!!
OH, BUGGER...


AAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR?
HELL'S BELLS! THAT WASN'T AT ALL WHAT I...

WHAT THE...?! WHY DOES MY VOICE SOUND SO...?

AND WHY THE HELL DO MY HANDS LOOK SO...?

OH... DAMN IT, LEO! WHAT IN BLAZES HAPPENED TO ME?

I'M AFRAID IT APPEARS YOU'VE TURNED INTO YOUR GRANDDAUGHTER INSTEAD OF YOUR GRANDSON!

MY GRANDDAUGHTER?! HOW THE HELL DID THAT HAPPEN?!

IT MOST LIKELY HAS TO DO WITH THE PHONE CALL I JUST RECEIVED FROM EUROPE AND WHY I WAS TRYING TO GET YOU TO WAIT!

YOU SHOULD HAVE TRIED HARDER, DAMMIT!

WELL, I DID ASK YOU NOT TO DO ANYTHING UNTIL I RETURNED!

OKAY, FINE! THAT'S ON ME! BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PHONE CALL MADE YOU WANT TO WAIT? WHAT DID YOUR MAN SAY?

I REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR GRANDSON PERISHED IN A BOATING ACCIDENT SHORTLY BEFORE MY CONTACT WAS ABLE TO SECURE ANY BLOOD FROM HIM!

HE FELL OFF A YACHT AT SEA AND HIS BODY HAS YET TO BE RECOVERED!

SO IF HE **COULDN'T** GET ANY BLOOD FROM **WILLIAM**, DOES **THAT** MEAN **THIS** BLOOD WAS FROM...?

YOUR **GRANDDAUGHTER!** YES, SIR!

JESUS! WHAT A **CLUSTERFUCK!**

THE INSTRUCTIONS **YOU** GAVE ME, WHICH **I** RELAYED **VERBATIM** TO HIM, SAID YOU NEEDED THE **BLOOD** OF A YOUNG RELATIVE... **PREFERABLY** YOUR GRANDSON!

WHEN HE **COULDN'T** DO **THAT**, HE TRACKED DOWN YOUR **GRANDDAUGHTER** IN PARIS AND OBTAINED A SAMPLE FROM **HER** INSTEAD!

AND THE **RESULTS** FROM THAT **SUBSTITUTION** ARE **PAINFULLY OBVIOUS!**

YOU THINK?

IS THERE **ANY** POSSIBILITY OF YOU CHANGING **BACK**, SIR?

HUH?

I SAID, IS THERE ANY POSSIBILITY OF YOU CHANGING YOURSELF BACK?

CHANGE BACK? WELL... MAYBE, BUT WHY THE HELL WOULD I WANT TO DO THAT?

SINCE WILLIAM'S DEAD AND THERE'S LITERALLY ZERO CHANCE OF THE REAL COURTNEY EVER COMING BACK HERE, I'VE SUDDENLY ACQUIRED TWO-THIRDS OF MILDRED'S ESTATE!

I'M **YOUNG** AND I'M **RICH**, LEO! **THAT'S** WHAT I **SET OUT** TO **ACCOMPLISH!**

IF I **HAVE** TO BE A **WOMAN** TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN, WELL... I **GUESS** I'LL LEARN TO **LIVE** WITH IT!

AND **ALL THAT MONEY** WILL **SURE** MAKE IT **EASY!** HEH-HEH!

AND SINCE YOU **ALREADY** OWN THE **TWO-THIRDS** OF THE ESTATE YOU **WANTED**, YOU **WON'T** HAVE TO **MARRY INTO** THE **GOLDSTONE** FAMILY AFTER ALL! **EXCELLENT, SIR!**

HEY, YEAH... **THAT'S RIGHT!**

HMMM... BUT I SURE ***HATE*** SEEING THAT ***LAST THIRD*** GETTING ***WASTED*** ON A BUNCH OF LAZY-ASSED ***PANDAS!***

Three months later, a stranger pulls up to the Goldstone estate...








GOT 2 GO

Ding, dong!!

NO, REALLY... ***I'LL*** GET IT, HILLARY! ***HEAVEN FORBID*** YOU ***STRAIN YOURSELF*** GETTING UP OFF THE SOFA THAT'S ALMOST A WHOLE ***TWENTY FEET*** FROM THE DOOR! ***JESUS!***


WHOA! UMMM... HELLO! CAN I HELP YOU WITH ANYTHING?
YES, I'M LOOKING FOR ALICIA GOLDSTONE!


I'M COURTNEY ... COURTNEY PEABODY!

COURTNEY PEABODY? REALLY? WOW! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE WE WERE LITTLE KIDS!

YOU MUST BE RODNEY! IT HAS BEEN QUITE A WHILE, HASN'T IT?

YOU'VE CHANGED QUITE A BIT SINCE THEN, I'M HAPPY TO SAY!


SO... IS YOUR MOTHER AROUND?
NO, SHE ISN'T! BUT PLEASE COME IN ANYWAY!

THAT WOULD BE NICE... THANK YOU, RODNEY!

HMPH! THAT DIDN'T TAKE LONG! THIRTY SECONDS AND I'VE ALREADY GOT THE LITTLE TURD MESMERIZED!


GOOD TO KNOW THAT BEING TRAINED IN THE ART OF SEDUCTION FOR THE PAST THREE MONTHS WAS MONEY WELL SPENT!

THAT'S **HILLARY** IN THERE! DON'T WORRY IF YOU **DON'T** REMEMBER HER, **SHE** WON'T EVEN **ACKNOWLEDGE** US!

RIGHT, HILLARY?

HMPH!


HAVE A SEAT, COURTNEY! CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING?
A DRINK... A SNACK... A PIECE OF MY HEART? HEH-HEH!
GIGGLE! NO, THANK YOU, RODNEY!
UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T STAY LONG!

SO, WHAT BRINGS YOU BACK TO LAKE CHAMPLAIN?

I *HEARD* ABOUT THAT! I'M *SO SORRY!*

WELL, I WASN'T *PLANNING* TO COME BACK, EVEN *AFTER* WILLIAM DIED IN THAT *BOATING ACCIDENT* A FEW MONTHS AGO!

THAT'S *SWEET* OF YOU TO SAY, RODNEY!

BUT, WITH *GRANDFATHER* PASSING AWAY *LAST WEEK*, IT SEEMS *I'M* THE *ONLY SURVIVING MEMBER* OF THE FAMILY, WHICH MEANS THE *DAUNTING* TASK OF *MANAGING* MY GRANDMOTHER'S ENTIRE ESTATE FALLS *SOLELY* ON *ME!*

SIGH! AND TO BE HONEST, **I** HAVE **NO IDEA** WHAT I'M **DOING!**

I MEAN, THERE ARE **LAWYERS** AND **ACCOUNTANTS** THAT TAKE CARE OF THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF IT, BUT THERE ARE STILL A **MILLION DECISIONS** TO MAKE, AND I'M **TERRIFIED** OF DOING SOMETHING **WRONG!** I'LL SIMPLY BE **MORTIFIED** IF I **LOSE** ALL OF **GRANDMOTHER'S MONEY!**

THAT'S WHY I WAS **HOPING** TO TALK TO YOUR **MOTHER,** MAYBE **SHE** CAN GIVE ME SOME **ADVICE** SINCE I ASSUME **SHE'S** IN CHARGE OF THINGS IN **YOUR** FAMILY!

HEH, HAVE YOU **MET** MY MOTHER? SHE'D **COLLAPSE** UNDER THE **PRESSURE** OF BEING IN CHARGE OF **PLANNING** A **TRIP** TO THE **GROCERY STORE!**

I'M ACTUALLY THE ONE WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR **ALL** THE **FINANCIAL** AND **OTHER** DAY-TO-DAY **DEALINGS** OF OUR FAMILY!

OH! THEN I GUESS YOU'RE THE PERSON I CAME TO SEE AFTER ALL! *GIGGLE!*

AS IF I DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW THAT! HEH-HEH!

AND I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER! SO, PLEASE, ASK ME ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE! I'LL HELP YOU OUT IN ANY WAY I CAN!

OH, THAT IS SWEET OF YOU! I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GENEROUS OFFER!

I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS, BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, I HAVE ANOTHER APPOINTMENT I JUST HAVE TO KEEP! DO YOU THINK THERE'S SOME OTHER TIME WE COULD MEET? SOME TIME WHEN WE WOULDN'T BE SO RUSHED?

HOW ABOUT *DINNER... TONIGHT?* I KNOW A *GREAT* PLACE IN *BURLINGTON* WHERE WE COULD TALK *ALL NIGHT* IF WE WANTED!

IT'D *ALSO* GIVE ME A CHANCE TO *REACQUAINT* YOU WITH THE PLACE YOU *USED* TO LIVE!

C'MON, COURTNEY! WHAT DO YOU SAY?

I... I THINK I'D LIKE THAT *VERY MUCH,* RODNEY!

HOOK, LINE AND SINKER!


GREAT! HOW ABOUT I PICK YOU UP AROUND SEVEN?
THAT SOUNDS PERFECT, RODNEY! I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!




GOOD BYE, HILLARY! SEE YOU AROUND!
HMPH! WHATEVER...

Later, back at the Peabody estate...

ARE YOU IN HERE, UHHH... MISS?

COME ON IN, LEO! I'LL BE OUT IN A MINUTE!

I HAVEN'T BEEN IN YOUR CHAMBERS SINCE YOU **REMODELED!** IT'S MUCH, UHHH... **BRIGHTER!**

YEAH, I **MAY** HAVE GONE A LITTLE **OVERBOARD**, BUT I NEEDED TO WIPE AWAY **ALL TRACES** OF THAT **WRETCHED, DYING OLD MAN** WHO **USED** TO LIVE IN HERE!

GIVE ME A COUPLE OF WEEKS AND **I'LL** HAVE THE **WHOLE DAMN ESTATE** REDONE! WHEN I'M FINISHED, YOU'LL **NEVER** KNOW THAT A COUPLE OF **OLD FARTS** USED TO LIVE HERE!

SO, I TAKE IT *EVERYTHING* WENT *WELL* THIS AFTERNOON?

IT WENT *BETTER* THAN I COULD'VE *DREAMED*, LEO!

THE KID'S *ALREADY* ON THE *HOOK* JUST *WAITING* FOR ME TO *REEL HIM IN!*

IT'S *AMAZING* HOW *EASILY* A *SMILE* HERE AND *GIGGLE* THERE CAN TURN A MAN INTO A *SUBMISSIVE* PILE OF *GOO!*

AND IF OUR "*DATE*" TONIGHT GOES THE WAY I *EXPECT* IT TO, *I'LL* SOON BE THE *SOLE OWNER* OF THE *ENTIRE ESTATE!* HEH-HEH!

ARE YOU **SURE** YOU'RE NOT MOVING ALL THIS ALONG RATHER **QUICKLY?** YOUR WIFE'S WILL DIDN'T PUT ANY **TIME LIMIT** ON HOW SOON EITHER GRANDCHILD NEEDED TO **MARRY INTO** THE **GOLDSTONE** FAMILY!

PERHAPS IF YOU TOOK **MORE TIME**, AND PUT SOME MORE **THOUGHT** INTO IT...

MORE THOUGHT? HELL, **I'VE** BEEN PUTTING **THOUGHT** INTO THIS PLAN FOR **YEARS**, LEO! I'M **TIRED** OF **WAITING!**

I'VE JUST HAD TO ADJUST A FEW... ***PARAMETERS***... BECAUSE OF OUR LITTLE ***MISHAP*** A FEW MONTHS AGO, ***THAT'S*** ALL!

WELL, YOU'VE ***CERTAINLY*** ADJUSTED ***WELL***, MISS! I'LL GIVE YOU ***THAT!***

NO OTHER CHOICE, LEO! I'VE BEEN GIVEN A ***SECOND CHANCE***... AND I'M ***NOT*** GOING TO ***WASTE*** IT!

YOU CAN'T ***IMAGINE*** WHAT IT'S LIKE, LEO, TO SUDDENLY BECOME ***YOUNG*** AND ***VITAL*** AFTER ***WITHERING AWAY*** FOR YEARS IN THAT ***MISERABLE HUSK*** OF A BODY I ***USED*** TO HAVE!

I MAY NOT HAVE ***PLANNED*** ON BECOMING A ***WOMAN***, BUT SINCE I AM ONE I'M FINDING THERE ARE ***DEFINITE PERKS*** THAT ***I*** PLAN ON ***EXPLORING***... AND ***EXPLOITING!*** HEH-HEH!

AND NOT **ONLY** AM I NOW A **VERY ATTRACTIVE** YOUNG WOMAN, BUT I'M ALSO **EXCEEDINGLY RICH**, WHICH MAKES **ME** THE MARK OF **EVERY** HIGH SOCIETY **LOTHARIO** OUT THERE! THE **LAST** THING I WANT IS TO BE **CONSTANTLY HARASSED** BY **OVEREAGER SUITORS** WHEREVER I GO!

HELL, I **WOULDN'T** BE SURPRISED IF A **FEW** HADN'T **ALREADY** PICKED UP MY **SCENT** AND WERE **SNIFFING AROUND** SOMEWHERE ON THE GROUNDS!

IT'S ADDITIONAL **MOTIVATION** TO GET MYSELF "**MARRIED**" AND **OFF THE MARKET** AS **SOON** AS DAMN **POSSIBLE!**

BUT ARE YOU **REALLY** JUST GOING TO **SPRING** IT ON YOUNG GOLDSTONE... LIKE SOME **BUSINESS DEAL?**

DON'T BE **RIDICULOUS,** LEO... **MY** PLAN IS **FAR** MORE SUBTLE THAN **THAT**! AND AFTER MY **VISIT** THIS AFTERNOON, I'M **CERTAIN** IT'LL WORK!

YOU SEE, I'VE HAD LITTLE RODNEY **INVESTIGATED,** AND EVEN THOUGH HE'S **RICH** AND CONSIDERED **GOOD-LOOKING,** IN THAT SMARMY, **COUNTRY-CLUB** KIND OF WAY, THERE ISN'T EVEN A **SHORT** LINE OF **LADIES** TRYING TO TIE HIM DOWN!

THE **PRIVATE DICKS** SAY HE'S EITHER GOT SERIOUS **MOMMY ISSUES,** HASN'T **COME OUT** OF THE **CLOSET** YET, OR **BOTH!**

BUT **NOW**, I'VE GOT THE PROPER **TOOLS** TO DISCOVER THE **TRUTH!**

WHY DO YOU THINK I WENT TO ALL THE **TROUBLE** OF LEARNING TO **WALK**, **TALK** AND **ACT** THIS WAY? THE **GIRL** I'VE BECOME CAN GET A GUY TO DO PRETTY MUCH **ANYTHING SHE WANTS**... EVEN IF HE NEVER **DOES** GET A CHANCE TO **TASTE** THE **GOODS!**

WHATEVER THE CASE MAY BE, I'M GOING TO MAKE THE LUNKHEAD REALIZE THAT BEING MARRIED TO THE RICHEST GIRL IN FIVE STATES, WHO ALSO HAPPENS TO BE SOME SERIOUS EYE-CANDY, WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN SHUTTING DOWN ANY RUMORS ABOUT HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL!

BUT WHAT IF HE EXPECTS ***YOU*** TO PERFORM ALL THE, UMMM... ***EXPECTED DUTIES*** OF A ***WIFE?***

OH, THAT LITTLE ***SHIT*** WILL ***NEVER*** GET ANY OF ***THIS***, I ***PROMISE*** YOU ***THAT***! ON THE OUTSIDE CHANCE I ***CAN'T*** FINESSE MY WAY OUT OF SEX, I'LL JUST TELL HIM I'M ***GAY*** AND ***REMIND*** HIM THAT THIS IS ***ALL*** FOR ***SHOW!*** ALL ***LOOKING***, BUT ***NO TOUCHING!***

AND YOU ***THINK*** HE'LL ***GO*** FOR THAT?

HELL, THE WAY I FIGURE IT, WHEN HE SEES ME TONIGHT WEARING THIS LITTLE NUMBER, HE'D SAY "YES" IF I ASKED HIM TO CUT HIS OWN NUTS OFF AND FEED 'EM TO THE SQUIRRELS! HEH-HEH!

I WOULDN'T DOUBT IT FOR A SECOND, MISS!


Later that evening, at a secluded and romantic restaurant in downtown Burlington...


WELL, I HAVE TO SAY, THAT IF ALL GIRLS WHO GROW UP IN BOARDING SCHOOLS END UP LIKE YOU, THEN I'M ALL FOR IT! HEH-HEH!
THAT'S AWFULLY SWEET OF YOU TO SAY, RODNEY! *GIGGLE!*

I JUST **WISH** I'D PAID **MORE ATTENTION** TO MY **BUSINESS** AND **ECONOMICS CLASSES!** THEN I **WOULDN'T** BE SO **DEPENDENT** ON **OTHERS** TO TRY AND MANAGE MY **GRANDMOTHER'S ESTATE!**

YOU **KNOW** YOU CAN COUNT ON **ME** FOR **ANYTHING**, COURTNEY! **PLEASE** BELIEVE THAT!

OH, **I DO**, RODNEY! I **DO!** AND I **SOO** APPRECIATE THAT!

IT'S JUST THAT AFTER HEARING THE **DETAILS** OF GRANDMOTHER'S WILL, I JUST **ASSUMED** IT'D BE **WILLIAM** AND **HILLARY** SITTING AT A TABLE LIKE THIS INSTEAD OF **US**! BUT THEN **HE** DIED AND...


WAIT... WILL AND HILLARY? WHY ON EARTH WOULD THEY BE DOING ANYTHING TOGETHER? ESPECIALLY TALKING ABOUT FINANCES!
THE ONLY THING HILLARY KNOWS ABOUT MONEY MANAGEMENT IS HOW TO WHINE TO MOTHER WHEN HER CREDIT CARDS MAX OUT!

DON'T BE ***SILLY***, RODNEY! I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THEM DISCUSSING ***FINANCES***, BUT RATHER HAVING A ***ROMANTIC DINNER*** LIKE ***THIS*** AND, UH... MAYBE YOU SHOULD ***FORGET*** I SAID ***ANYTHING!***

NOW YOU ***KNOW*** I CAN'T ***POSSIBLY*** DO THAT, COURTNEY! IT'S ALREADY ***OUT THERE***, SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL ***TELL ME*** WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!

PLEASE... I THINK THAT ***SECOND*** GLASS OF WINE ***LOOSENED*** MY ***TONGUE*** A BIT ***TOO MUCH!***

COME ON! IT ***CAN'T*** BE ***THAT*** BAD!


I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GOING TO HATE ME!
NOT POSSIBLE! PLEASE... JUST TELL ME!
WELL... OKAY!

YOU KNOW HOW **YOUR** GRANDMOTHER AND **MY** GRANDMOTHER WERE **LIFE-LONG FRIENDS,** RIGHT?

SURE! THOSE TWO WERE **THICK AS THIEVES** BEFORE GRAMMY PASSED!

WELL... I GUESS THEY'D ALWAYS **HOPED,** SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE, THAT OUR FAMILIES WOULD EVENTUALLY **MARRY INTO EACH OTHER!**

SO **MUCH** SO THAT GRANDMOTHER PUT A **CLAUSE** INTO HER WILL STATING THAT IF ONE OF HER GRANDCHILDEN **MARRIED** INTO **YOUR FAMILY,** THEY WOULD RECIEVE THE **FINAL THIRD** OF HER ESTATE!

WOW! THAT'S QUITE A LITTLE CLAUSE! I CAN DEFINITELY SEE HILLARY JUMPING ALL OVER THAT IF SHE'D HAD THE CHANCE!

YOU MUST THINK I'M A HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE PERSON NOW! I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR SEEING ME AS SOME GOLD-DIGGER TRYING TO COLLECT MORE OF MY GRANDMOTHER'S MONEY!

BUT PLEASE BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THAT MARRIAGE IS THE LAST THING ON MY MIND! I'M INHERITING MY SHARE AS WELL AS WILLIAM'S, SO I'M PERFECTLY HAPPY LETTING THAT FINAL THIRD OF THE ESTATE GO TO CHARITY!

HEY, HEY, HEY! **SETTLE DOWN,** COURTNEY! I **KNOW** YOU DIDN'T **PLAN** ON US GETTING TOGETHER LIKE **THIS!** YOU STOPPED BY LOOKING FOR MY **MOTHER** AND **I** JUST **HAPPENED** TO BE THERE, **RIGHT?**

BESIDES, EVEN IF YOU **WERE** HOPING TO RECOUP THE **REST** OF YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S ESTATE, **WHO** COULD **BLAME** YOU? **YOU'VE** JUST **LOST** YOUR **ENTIRE FAMILY** AND ARE **TRYING** TO **HOLD ON** TO **WHATEVER** IT IS THEY LEFT BEHIND!

THAT... THAT'S **SO** VERY **SWEET** OF YOU TO SAY, RODNEY! YOU'RE SUCH AN **UNDERSTANDING** MAN!

AND IT'S **TRUE**, LOSING MY **ENTIRE FAMILY** HAS BEEN **DEVASTATING**, EVEN **HARDER** THAT I **THOUGHT** IT WOULD BE!

I'M **AFRAID** I'M FEELING A BIT **OVERWHELMED**! WILL YOU PLEASE **EXCUSE** ME FOR A FEW MOMENTS WHILE I GO **FRESHEN UP?**

OF **COURSE**, COURTNEY! TAKE **ALL** THE TIME YOU NEED!


YEAH! YOU JUST LET THAT LITTLE BOMBSHELL SINK IN WHILE WATCHING MY SPECTACULAR ASS WIGGLE AWAY FROM YOU! HEH-HEH!
AND, IF YOU'RE AS SMART AS I THINK YOU ARE, BUT NO SMARTER, YOU'LL PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER AND "SURPRISE" ME WITH YOUR VERY OWN PLAN THAT'LL GET ME EVERYTHING I WANT!


SO I'LL MAKE SURE TO GIVE HIM PLENTY OF TIME TO MULL THAT OVER WHILE I HAVE A CHAT WITH THE WAITER AND ORDER US ANOTHER BOTTLE OF WINE!
I'VE NEVER BEEN MUCH OF A DRINKER, BUT THIS NEW, YOUNG BODY DEFINITELY ENJOYS THE FINER THINGS IN LIFE!
INCLUDING A BOTTLE OR TWO OF THAT WONDERFUL $150 PINOT GRIS! *GIGGLE!*

'SCUSE ME...

HEY!

Bump!

WATCH WHERE YOU'RE WALKIN', YOU YOUNG WHIPPERSNAPPER!

A few minutes later...

SORRY THAT I TOOK SO LONG!

YOU'RE WELL WORTH THE WAIT, COURTNEY! BELIEVE ME!

THANK YOU, RODNEY! AND IF YOU DON'T MIND, I THINK I'D LIKE TO GO HOME NOW!

BUT... BUT WHY?

BECAUSE THE **SOONER** I GET HOME THE **SOONER** I CAN START **PACKING** FOR MY **RETURN** TO **EUROPE!** I'VE BEEN **DELUDING** MYSELF, THINKING **I** COULD **SOMEHOW** MANAGE MY GRANDMOTHER'S ESTATE!

I'M **OBVIOUSLY** TOO **INEXPERIENCED, EMOTIONAL** AND **SCATTERBRAINED** TO MANAGE **ANYTHING** MORE **COMPLICATED** THAN MY OWN **CHECKBOOK**... AS EVIDENCED BY MY **BEHAVIOR** HERE TONIGHT!

I'LL JUST HAVE THE **LAWYERS** MANAGE **EVERYTHING** WHILE **I** GO BACK TO MY OWN **SAFE** LITTLE **LIFE** IN EUROPE, WHERE I **BELONG!**

THAT'S **RIDICULOUS**, COURTNEY! **COMPLETELY** AND **UTTERLY RIDICULOUS!**

AND IF YOU'LL SIT DOWN AND **LISTEN**, I **THINK** I'VE COME UP WITH **ANOTHER OPTION** FOR YOU!

YOU... YOU HAVE? **WHAT IS IT?**


MARRY ME, COURTNEY!
WHAT?! YOU... YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
I AM, BUT PLEASE HEAR ME OUT BEFORE YOU ANSWER!


WELL... OKAY!
OH YEAH... I CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR THIS!

FIRST OFF, SINCE WE HARDLY KNOW EACH OTHER, I REALIZE THAT GETTING MARRIED SEEMS LIKE A CRAZY IDEA!

JUST A LITTLE...

BUT THIS WOULDN'T BE A REAL MARRIAGE! JUST A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE SO YOU CAN GET ALL OF YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S ESTATE...WHICH I THINK IS WHAT SHE REALLY WANTED!

BUT WOULDN'T THAT BE A LITTLE... DISINGENUOUS?


OUR GRANDMOTHERS WANTED TO BRING OUR FAMILIES TOGETHER, AND WE'D BE MAKING THAT HAPPEN! AND IT WOULD ALSO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO MANAGE THE ESTATE! WHO BETTER THAN YOUR "HUSBAND" WHO'S MANAGED HIS OWN FAMILY'S ESTATE FOR YEARS?
BUT I COULDN'T ASK YOU TO MAKE SUCH A NOBLE SACRIFICE BY MARRYING ME!
YOU'RE NOT ASKING, I'M OFFERING!

AND, TO BE **COMPLETELY** TRUTHFUL, THERE **IS** SOMETHING IN IT FOR **ME** AS WELL!

OH! WELL... YES, **OF COURSE!** IT WOULD BE ONLY **FAIR** THAT **YOU** HAVE ACCESS TO THE MONEY TOO! I MEAN, **CONSIDERING** WHAT ALL **YOU'D** BE GIVING UP, AND...

THAT'S **NOT** WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT! **I'VE** ALREADY GOT **PLENTY** OF MONEY, AND I'LL SIGN A **PRE-NUP** IF YOU WANT ME TO!

WELL AT **LEAST** THE LITTLE SHIT'S BEING UPFRONT AND **HONEST** ABOUT IT!

THEN **WHAT** COULD **YOU** POSSIBLY GET OUT OF THIS?

WELL, LET'S JUST SAY THAT **MOTHER'S** BEEN ON ME FOR **YEARS** TO FIND A **NICE GIRL** AND **SETTLE DOWN!** SOMETHING **I'VE** REALLY HAD **NO INTEREST IN AT ALL!**

NOT THAT I'M SOME **STEREOTYPICAL RICH PLAYBOY,** OR **ANYTHING** LIKE THAT! IT'S JUST THAT **I'VE** GOT A **PARTICULAR LIFESTYLE** THAT DOESN'T LEND ITSELF **EASILY** TO THE **WIFE AND KIDS SCENARIO!** IF YOU **KNOW** WHAT I MEAN?

OH, **YEAH!** I KNOW **EXACTLY** WHAT YOU MEAN, **FAIRY-BOY!** HEH-HEH!

BUT I'M **SURE** THAT **AFTER** SHE MEETS YOU, SHE'LL **AGREE** WITH ME THAT **YOU'RE** THE PERFECTLY **BEAUTIFUL CHOICE** TO BE HER NEW **DAUGHTER-IN-LAW!**

AND **TRUST ME,** IT **WON'T** BE DIFFICULT **AT ALL** TO HIDE THE **TRUTH** OF OUR "MARRIAGE" FROM HER!

SO... **WHAT** DO YOU **THINK,** COURTNEY? DO YOU **REALLY** WANT **ALL** THAT MONEY TO GO TO **FACELESS CHARITIES** OF YOUR **GRANDMOTHER'S** CHOICE WHERE IT'LL MOST **LIKELY** BE **WASTED** ON **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES?**

OR DO YOU THINK **YOU** COULD PUT THAT MONEY TO **BETTER USE?**

WOW! THIS KID'S A LITTLE MORE MERCENARY THAN I GAVE HIM CREDIT FOR! I'M IMPRESSED!

WELL... I'M EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT IT, BUT AFTER LIVING ON A VERY STRICT ALLOWANCE ALL THOSE YEARS, I FIND THAT I DO ENJOY HAVING A VAST AMOUNT OF MONEY AT MY DISPOSAL! AND THE NOTION OF HAVING EVEN MORE IS EXTREMELY ENTICING!

DOES THAT MAKE ME A TERRIBLE PERSON?

HARDLY! IT JUST MAKES YOU HUMAN!

AND I THINK YOU'RE THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD DO A LOT OF GOOD WITH ALL THAT MONEY!

YOU KNOW, I *REALLY* THINK I *COULD*... ESPECIALLY WITH *YOUR HELP!*

SO DOES *THAT* MEAN WHAT I *THINK* IT MEANS?

AND IF IT *IS*, WE SHOULD *PROBABLY* MAKE THIS LOOK *CONVINCING!*


OKAY, TIME TO CLOSE THIS DEAL! I DO BELIEVE I'VE REHEARSED MY PROPERLY GIRLISH REACTION ENOUGH TIMES IN MY HEAD THAT I'VE GOT IT DOWN PAT!


OH, YES!
YES I WILL MARRY YOU, RODNEY GOLDSTONE!
GIGGLE!


YOU READY TO REALLY SELL THIS?
WHY NOT? EVERYONE WATCHING EXPECTS US TO BE A LOVING COUPLE! *GIGGLE!*
YEAH... KNEW THIS WAS COMING! IT'S PART OF THE PACKAGE! SO I MIGHT AS WELL SUCK IT UP, GET OVER THE INITIAL SHOCK AND LET THE LITTLE SHIT KISS ME! *UGH!*
I DOUBT I'LL EVER GET USED TO IT!


Aww!!
Aren't they adorable!
Clap, clap, clap!!

Later, as the evening draws to a close...

SO WE'RE **AGREED** THAT A **THREE-WEEK ENGAGEMENT** SHOULD DO THE TRICK?

I DON'T SEE **WHY NOT!** ANYTHING **SHORTER** WOULD DRAW TOO MUCH **SUSPICION** AS TO WHY WE'RE **REALLY** DOING THIS!

AND IT **ALSO** GIVES US ENOUGH TIME TO WORK OUT THE **DETAILS** OF OUR "MARRIAGE"! LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND ALL THAT...

AND THE **PRE-NUP!** MAKE SURE IT'S **IRON-CLAD!** I DON'T WANT THERE TO BE **ANY DOUBT** THAT I'M IN THIS FOR **YOUR MONEY!**

OKAY, **IF** YOU **INSIST!**

YOU'RE MAKING THIS **TOO EASY** FOR ME! HEH-HEH!

UH-OH! LOOKS LIKE A PHOTOGRAPHER HEARD THE NEWS AND FOLLOWED US FROM THE RESTAURANT!


THEN WE'D BETTER KEEP UP *APPEARANCES*... DON'T YOU THINK?
ANYTHING TO KEEP IT REAL... *HONEY!*




GOT 2 GO


THERE... THAT OUGHTTA MAKE 'EM HAPPY!
UHHH... YEAH! YEAH, THAT SHOULD DO IT ALL RIGHT!
DAMN! THAT... WAS SOMETHING ELSE!


WELL, I SHOULD PROBABLY BE ON MY WAY! IF MOTHER HEARS ABOUT OUR ENGAGEMENT FROM ANYONE BUT ME, I'LL NEVER HEAR THE END OF IT!
BUT I'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW, BECAUSE I'M SURE SHE'LL BE DYING TO MEET THE GROWN-UP AND GORGEOUS COURTNEY PEABODY!

GOODNIGHT, COURTNEY!

UMMM... YEAH! G'NIGHT!


WHEW! DON'T KNOW IF IT'S THE WINE, THE KISSING OR A COMBINATION OF THE TWO, BUT I THINK TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT I GET AROUND TO FINALLY DOING A THOROUGH EXPLORATION OF THIS NEW BOD OF MINE!
'CAUSE I'M FEELIN' AN ITCH THAT DEFINITELY NEED SCRATCHING!

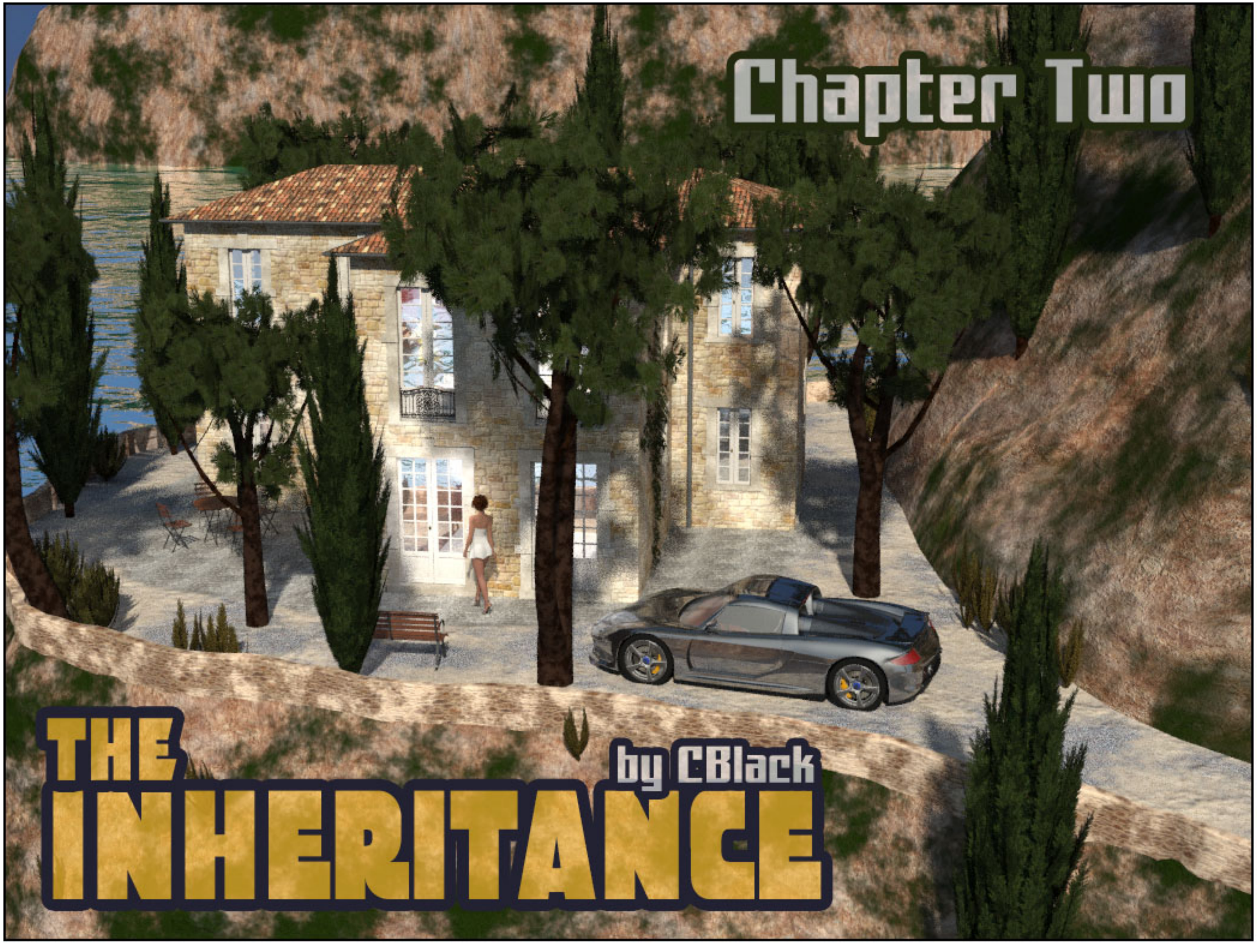

GOOD EVENING, MISS! HOW DID IT GO?
PERFECTLY, LEO! JUST PERFECTLY!
I DOUBT IT COULD'VE GONE ANY BETTER!

A FEW WEEKS FROM NOW, I'LL OWN EVERY BIT OF MILDRED'S ESTATE! JUST AS I'D PLANNED!

EXCELLENT, MISS!


I'M GOING TO GO AHEAD AND *TURN IN*, AND I'LL *PROBABLY* SLEEP *LATE!*
YES, MISS!


TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, I DEFINITELY DO NOT WANT TO BE DISTURBED UNTIL I GET MYSELF UP! GOT IT, LEO?
PERFECTLY, MISS!


Chapter Two
THE
INHERITANCE
by CBlack

A few days later, back at the Goldstone estate...


A who's who of local society has gathered for an engagement party...

RODNEY, **HOW** COULD YOU **POSSIBLY** KEEP THIS DELIGHTFULLY **LOVELY** YOUNG LADY A **SECRET** FROM ME **ALL THESE MONTHS?**

WELL, LIKE I **SAID**, MOTHER, UNTIL RECENTLY, **ALL** OF OUR **CORRESPONDENCE** WAS **SOLELY** THROUGH **EMAIL!**

OUR FIRST **FACE-TO-FACE** MEETING SINCE WE WERE **LITTLE KIDS** WAS **JUST** THE OTHER **DAY** WHEN SHE **SURPRISED** ME BY SHOWING UP ON OUR DOORSTEP!

AND IT ONLY TOOK A FEW HOURS TOGETHER ***AFTER*** THAT TO REALIZE HOW ***PERFECT*** WE ARE FOR EACH OTHER!

I ***KNOW*** THIS ALL SEEMS VERY ***IMPETUOUS*** OF US, MRS. GOLDSTONE! I DO ***SO*** HOPE WE HAVE ***YOUR BLESSINGS!***

GOODNESS, CHILD! ***ANYTHING*** THAT MAKES ***MY RODNEY*** HAPPY, MAKES ***ME*** HAPPY!

OF ***COURSE*** YOU HAVE MY BLESSINGS!


AND I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOU CALL ME MRS. GOLDSTONE EVER AGAIN! FROM NOW ON I'M MOTHER! GOT THAT, YOUNG LADY?
OF COURSE... MOTHER!
UGH! THAT'S GONNA TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO!

JUST **THINK**, HILLARY! YOU'LL **FINALLY** HAVE THAT **SISTER** YOU'VE **ALWAYS** WANTED! ISN'T THAT **WONDERFUL**?

YES... JUST WONDERFUL, MOTHER.

I'M **SURE** YOU TWO WILL BE THE **BEST** OF **FRIENDS**!

UH-HUH. BESTIES FOREVER, MOTHER.


RODNEY, HONEY, COME WITH ME! THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS WE NEED TO DISCUSS!
OF COURSE, MOTHER!

WELL, LET'S SEE IF **THIS** ONE CAN FORM **FULL SENTENCES!**

SO, I GUESS WE...

LET ME **STOP** YOU **RIGHT THERE!**

JUST SO WE CAN GET THIS OUT OF THE WAY... I NEVER WANTED A SISTER AND I'M NOT LOOKING FOR A NEW BFF! GOT THAT?

I FIGURED AS MUCH!

AND JUST BECAUSE MOTHER BOUGHT YOUR BULLSHIT STORY, DOESN'T MEAN I DO! AND AS LONG AS IT DOESN'T AFFECT ME, I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU AND RODNEY ARE UP TO!

I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND!


GOOD! SO JUST STEER CLEAR OF ME, OKAY... BESTIE?
GLAD TO ACCOMODATE... SIS!

HMMM! I **DO** BELIEVE I'LL START SPENDING **MORE** TIME **HERE** AT THE **GOLDSTONE ESTATE!** IT'LL ENABLE ME TO ENJOY MY **FAVORITE** NEW PASTIME... **PISSING OFF HILLARY!** HEH-HEH!

PLUS **THEY'VE** GOT A **POOL!** ALWAYS **WANTED** ONE, BUT THE **DAMN TERRAIN** AROUND **MY** ESTATE MADE THAT **NEXT** TO **IMPOSSIBLE!**

I SAW YOU AND HILLARY **CHATTING** AND **FIGURED** YOU NEEDED **ANOTHER** DRINK!

WHY, **THANK YOU,** HONEY!

SO... HOW'D IT **GO** WITH HER?

WELL, **YOU** KNOW YOUR SISTER MUCH BETTER THAN **I** DO! **HOW** DO YOU **THINK** IT WENT?

THAT BAD, HUH?

I'M **SORRY**! IT'S **NOT** YOU! SHE'S LIKE THAT WITH **EVERYONE!**

OH, DON'T **WORRY** ABOUT ME! **I** CAN HANDLE **HER!**

HMMM... THAT'S **GOOD** TO KNOW! **I'VE** BEEN DEALING WITH HER **FOUL MOOD** FOR **YEARS!** IT'LL BE NICE TO **FINALLY** HAVE AN **ACCOMPLICE!**

JUST **SAY** THE WORD, AND **I'M** ON BOARD... **HONEY!** *GIGGLE!*

BY THE WAY, THERE'S **SOMETHING** I NEED TO TELL YOU! SOMETHING I **SHOULD** HAVE TOLD YOU THE OTHER NIGHT **BEFORE** I PROPOSED TO YOU!

WELL, **WHATEVER** IT IS, YOU **KNOW** YOU CAN TELL ME! WE **ARE** GOING TO BE **MARRIED**, AFTER ALL!

THIS MUST BE WERE HE **FINALLY** TELLS ME WHAT I **ALREADY** KNOW! HEH-HEH!

GOOD! I'M... **GLAD** YOU FEEL THAT WAY!

HENCE, THE "**LIFESTYLE**" YOU MENTIONED THE OTHER NIGHT! BUT I HAVE A **STRONG** FEELING YOUR MOTHER **DOESN'T** KNOW!

I'M... **GAY**, COURTNEY! AND I'VE **KNOWN** IT AND **ACCEPTED** IT FOR **QUITE** SOME TIME NOW!

SHE MAY **SUSPECT**, BUT I GOT **VERY GOOD** AT **HIDING** IT FROM **HER** AND **EVERYONE** AROUND HERE FOR A LONG, LONG TIME!

I'VE **EVEN** BRIEFLY DATED A FEW **GIRLS** TO TRY AND THROW HER **OFF** THE SCENT! AND IT **WORKED**... TO A **POINT!**

AND **YOU** THINK OUR **MARRIAGE** WILL **CONVINCE** HER **ONCE** AND **FOR ALL**... AND **I AGREE!** THAT'S WHY IT'S A **WIN-WIN** FOR **BOTH** OF US!

BUT EVEN THOUGH WE'LL BE MARRIED IN **NAME ONLY,** WITH NO **EXPECTATIONS** OF ALL THE THINGS THAT MARRIED COUPLES **NORMALLY** DO, THIS IS **STILL** SOMETHING I **SHOULD'VE** TOLD YOU ABOUT **LAST NIGHT!**

NO... NO... I **TOTALLY** UNDERSTAND, RODNEY! IT'S **NOT** EXACTLY THE KIND OF THING YOU TELL A GIRL ON YOUR **FIRST DATE!**

GOOD! BECAUSE IT LEADS TO SOMETHING **ELSE** I THINK WE **NEED** TO **DISCUSS!**

YOU ARE A BEAUTIFUL, VIBRANT AND SENSUAL YOUNG WOMAN, COURTNEY! I DON'T WANT YOU TO DEPRIVE YOURSELF OF ANY NEEDS YOU MIGHT HAVE BECAUSE YOU'RE MARRIED TO SOMEONE WHO CAN'T FULFILL THOSE NEEDS!

OH, I DON'T THINK YOU REALLY HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT! I...

YOU MAY SAY THAT NOW, BUT IF YOU EVER CHANGE YOUR MIND, I WANT YOU TO FEEL FREE TO EXPLORE YOUR SENSUALITY... WITH ABSOLUTELY NO HESITATION!

IN FACT, I THINK WE SHOULD ADD A CLAUSE IN THE PRE-NUP THAT STATES THAT INFIDELITY CANNOT BE THE BASIS FOR ANY LEGAL SEPARATION OR DIVORCE!

HOW DOES THAT SOUND TO YOU?

WELL, IF THAT'S REALLY WHAT YOU WANT, RODNEY, BUT AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IT ISN'T NECESSARY!

MAYBE... MAYBE NOT! BUT I THINK IT'D BE GOOD TO HAVE IT THERE, JUST IN CASE!


UH-OH, MOTHER'S CALLING US OVER! I'LL DEAL WITH HER MYSELF SO YOU CAN TAKE A FEW MINUTES AND PROCESS ALL THIS!
UHH... THANKS, HONEY!

HOLY SHIT! WITH THIS KIND OF LUCK, I SHOULD BE PLAYING THE LOTTERY... NOT THAT I NEED THE CASH!

NOT ONLY DO I NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HIM SOMEDAY WORKING UP THE NERVE TO TRY AND GET ME INTO BED, BUT IT ALSO LEAVES MY OPTIONS OPEN FOR ANY FUTURE... EXPERIMENTATION ON MY PART!

NOT THAT I *HAVE* AN *IMPULSE* TO DO ANYTHING *MORE* THAN "SELF-EXPERIMENTATION" RIGHT NOW, BUT IT'S SURE *NICE* TO KNOW THAT IF I *EVER* GET THE *ITCH*, THERE'S NOTHING *STOPPING* ME FROM GETTING IT *SCRATCHED!*

STILL, IF BEING WITH SOMEONE *ELSE* IS *BETTER* THAN WHAT *I* EXPERIENCED THE OTHER NIGHT, I JUST *MIGHT* GET THAT "IMPULSE" *SOONER* THAN LATER! *HEH-HEH!*

HMMM... **SPEAKING** OF "SELF-EXPERIMENTATION", I HAVE **GOT** TO STOP LOOKING **SO DAMN GOOD** IF I WANT TO KEEP MY HANDS **OFF** MYSELF!

I REALIZE IT'S **PROBABLY** THE **WINE** THAT'S **AMPING UP** MY **LIBIDO**, BUT THERE'S **NO WAY** IN **HELL** I CAN HANDLE **THIS** PARTY WITHOUT A **HEALTHY BUZZ!**

GUESS I'LL **JUST** HAVE TO **AVOID MIRRORS** AND **CONTAIN MYSELF** UNTIL I GET **HOME!**

THEN AGAIN, AS **PREOCCUPIED** AS THESE **OLD FARTS** ARE WITH **THEMSELVES**, WOULD THEY **REALLY** MISS LITTLE OL' ME IF I SLIPPED AWAY FOR ABOUT **TWENTY MINUTES** OR SO?

I MEAN, **WHO'S** TO **SAY** THAT THE BRIDE-TO-BE **DIDN'T** GET ALL **FLUSTERED** BY ALL THE **ATTENTION** AND NEED TO **LIE DOWN** FOR A FEW MINUTES?

I SHOULD **PROBABLY** TELL **RODNEY** I NEED A **FEW MINUTES** TO **MYSELF** SO **HE** CAN MAKE SURE **NO ONE** COMES **BARGING IN** ON ME!

WOULDN'T WANT ONE OF THE **GUESTS** HERE TO CATCH THE BRIDE-TO-BE **FIDDLIN'** WITH HERSELF IN ONE OF THE **GUEST ROOMS!**


AND FOR SOME STRANGE REASON, RODNEY HERE INSISTS ON A SMALL, PRIVATE WEDDING!
I TOLD YOU, MOTHER, NOTHING FANCY! COURTNEY AND I JUST WANT TO KEEP IT SIMPLE! NO FUSS!

I'M **SORRY** TO INTERRUPT, MOTHER GOLDSTONE, BUT I JUST **HAVE** TO STEAL MY **FIANCÉ** AWAY FOR A FEW MINUTES!

UMMM... **PERSONAL** STUFF! *GIGGLE!*

WELL, **OF COURSE,** HONEY! BUT DON'T YOU TWO BE GONE **TOO** LONG! OKAY?

EITHER **YOU** STUDIED **THEATER** AT THAT **BOARDING SCHOOL** OF YOURS, OR YOU'RE JUST A **NATURAL BORN ACTRESS!**

A LITTLE OF **BOTH**, I GUESS! I DIDN'T LAY IT ON **TOO** THICK, DID I?

NOT AT ALL! THANKS TO YOU, **MOTHER** THINKS WE'RE AS **HAPPY** AS A COUPLE OF **RABBITS** IN **HEAT!** HEH-HEH!

WELL, **THAT'S** A DISGUSTING THOUGHT!

AHHH... YOUNG LOVE!

AND IF YOU'RE AS **GOOD** AN ACTRESS AS I **THINK** YOU ARE, I THINK I SEE A **PERFECT** WAY TO GET **UNDER HILLARY'S SKIN!**

REALLY? DO TELL!

PISSING OFF **HILLARY?** I THINK **MY NEEDS** CAN BE PUT ON **HOLD** FOR A **WORTHWHILE CAUSE** LIKE **THAT!** HEH-HEH!


SEE THAT GUY OVER THERE WITH HILLARY?
THE ONE DESPERATELY TRYING TO SPORT THE "BAD-BOY GOES PREPPY" LOOK?
EXACTLY! SHE'S GOT A MAJOR CRUSH ON HIM, AND...
...AND MESSING WITH HER CHANCES TO SCORE WITH HIM WOULD BE JUST TOO MUCH FUN TO PASS UP?


IT'S LIKE YOU READ MY MIND! HEH-HEH!
WELL, GREAT MINDS DO THINK ALIKE! *GIGGLE!*
SO, WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO, SIR?
SOMETHING LIKE THIS...




SO? WHAT DO YOU THINK?
DOES THAT SOUND LIKE SOMETHING YOU MIGHT HAVE SOME FUN WITH?


LET'S FIND OUT... SHALL WE?

THANK **GOD** YOU COULD MAKE IT HERE, DOUG! **I** WAS ABOUT TO **DIE** FROM THE ACUTE **BOREDOM** OF THIS **SO-CALLED** PARTY!

YEAH, THIS WAS HARDLY **MY** FIRST CHOICE **EITHER**, BUT MY **FOLKS** DRAGGED ME ALONG AND I'M **TRYIN'** TO GET ON THEIR **GOOD SIDE** THESE DAYS!

I MEAN, **HOW** THE HELL **ELSE** AM I GONNA COME UP WITH THE **CASH** TO FIX MY **FERRARI?** HEH-HEH!


UGH! WHAT DOES SHE WANT NOW?
HEY, HILLARY! MOTHER WANTS TO TALK TO YOU UPSTAIRS! SOUNDED PRETTY IMPORTANT!
SHE DIDN'T SAY! SHE JUST SAID NOW!

FINE! WAIT HERE, DOUG! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

NOT LIKE I HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO DO HERE!


SHIT! WISH I'D HAVE BROUGHT A COUPLE OF LINES OR AT LEAST A DOOBIE TO PASS THE TIME!


WHOA! THIS IS A NEW ONE!


OH YEAH! NOW THERE'S AN ASS I COULD SINK MY TEETH INTO!

DAMN!! WHY THE HELL AM I WASTIN' MY TALENTS ON SKINNY CHICKS LIKE HILLARY WHEN THERE'S EXTREME TALENT LIKE THAT WITHIN REACH? HEH-HEH!






HMMM...
LOOKS LIKE THE MUTE THEY HIRED TO GUARD THE WINE ISN'T DOING A VERY GOOD JOB!

HUH?! WHO... ME? HEY, I'M NOT GUARDIN' ANYTHING!

AH, HE DOES SPEAK! SINCE YOU WERE JUST STANDING THERE GAWKING AT ME WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING, I JUST ASSUMED IT WAS YOUR JOB!

HEY, I'D HAVE TO BE DEAD NOT TO BE STARIN' AT A GORGEOUS WOMAN LIKE YOU!

NOW THERE'S THE WIT AND BANTER I WAS LOOKING FOR WHEN I CAME BACK HERE!

WHY NOT? SURE BEATS THE SNOOZE-FEST GOING ON OUT THERE!

SO YOU WERE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE LIKE ME, HUH?

SO, YOU GOT **SUCKERED** INTO COMING TO THIS **OLD-LADY PARTY** BECAUSE OF YOUR FAMILY **TOO**, HUH?

YOU KNOW, YOU MUST NOT BE FROM **BURLINGTON**, 'CAUSE I'D **DEFINITELY** REMEMBER SEEING SOMEONE WHO LOOKED LIKE **YOU** AROUND HERE BEFORE THIS!

OH... **SOMETHING** LIKE THAT!

WELL, I'M **FROM** BURLINGTON **ORIGINALLY**, BUT I'VE BEEN **GONE** FOR **QUITE** SOME TIME!

I'M JUST TRYING TO GET **REACQUAINTED** WITH MY OLD HOME TOWN AND **HOPING** THERE'S A **LOT** MORE **INTERESTING** THINGS TO DO HERE THAN **VEG-OUT** AT SOME **"OLD-LADY PARTY"**, AS YOU SO **APTLY** PUT IT!

OH BABY, HAVE **YOU** COME TO THE **RIGHT** PLACE! **I** AM THE **PARTY MAN** IN **THIS** TOWN!

I KNOW WHERE THE **GOOD TIMES** ARE AND **HOW** TO **"PROCURE"** YOUR **PARTY NEEDS!** HEH-HEH!

*REALLY? THAT'S **VERY** INTERESTING!*


THE NAME IS DOUG RUTHERFORD! AND YOU ARE...?
COURTNEY... COURTNEY PEABODY!

PEABODY? ISN'T THAT THE PEABODY ESTATE WAY OUT OF TOWN ON THE LAKE?

YEAH, NOW I REMEMBER! THE OLD COUPLE THERE DIED AND LEFT EVERYTHING TO THEIR GRANDDAUGHTER!

COOL!

THAT'S THE ONE!

AND THAT WOULD BE ME!

BUT WAIT A SEC...! AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE ENGAGED TO...

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING BACK HERE?


OH, HI, HILLARY!
I SAID, WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING BACK HERE?
JUST GETTING TO KNOW DOUG HERE, THAT'S ALL!
THE ONLY GUY YOU NEED TO KNOW IS YOUR FIANCÉ OUT THERE!

SO WHY DON'T YOU **SASHAY** YOUR **ASS** BACK OUT **THERE** WITH **HIM**, WHERE YOU **BELONG?**

OKAY, HILLARY... **OKAY**! DON'T GET YOUR **PANTIES** IN A BUNCH!

BYE, DOUG! **NICE** MEETING YOU! I'M **SURE** WE'LL **RUN INTO** EACH OTHER AGAIN!

IT **IS** A SMALL TOWN AFTER ALL!

YEAH! LOOKING **FORWARD** TO IT!


OH YEAH! THAT... WAS FUN! AND MORE THAN A BIT AROUSING!

FROM THE **LOOK** ON **HILLARY'S** FACE, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE **VERY SUCCESSFUL!**

GOOD THING LOOKS **CAN'T** KILL! HEH-HEH!

OH YEAH! **DOUGIE** WON'T BE THINKING **MUCH** ABOUT **HER** FOR AWHILE! *GIGGLE!*

AND IT'S **OBVIOUS** YOU **ENJOYED** YOURSELF OVER THERE AS WELL!

MY SATISFIED **GRIN** GAVE ME AWAY, HUH?

WELL **THAT**, AND YOUR GENERAL, UHHH... **PERKINESS**, SHALL WE SAY!

MY **WHAT...?**


OH... DAMN! HOW EMBARRASSING!
WELL, SHIT! THIS IS SOMETHING I'VE NEVER HAD TO DEAL WITH BEFORE!

DON'T WORRY! THE PARTY'S WINDING DOWN, SO I'M SURE NO ONE WILL NOTICE!

WE'LL JUST PLAY UP THE LOVING COUPLE ACT FOR THE LAST FEW MINUTES SO IF THEY DO NOTICE, I'M SURE THEY'LL JUST ATTRIBUTE IT TO YOUR ANIMAL ATTRACTION TO ME! HEH-HEH!

OH, I'M SURE THEY WILL! *GIGGLE!*

AS LONG THEY DON'T KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU... HONEY!


AND WITH THE PARTY ENDING, I'LL BE ABLE TO HEAD HOME AND TAKE CARE OF MY.. PERKINESS!

That evening, back at the Peabody estate...

I WAS **DREADING** THAT PARTY FROM THE **SECOND** RODNEY **TOLD** ME ABOUT IT! I FIGURED IT'D BE, AT THE VERY **LEAST**, A TOTAL **SNOOZE-FEST** OR, AT THE **WORST**, A **DISASTER** THAT'D THROW MY **PLANS** INTO **CHAOS!**

BUT, AS IT TURNS OUT, IT WAS A **TOTAL GAS!** I GOT A CHANCE TO PUT **HILLARY** IN HER **PLACE**... SOMETHING **I'VE** BEEN WANTING TO DO FROM THE **SECOND** I **MET** HER... AND IN **DOING** SO, MET SOME RATHER... **INTERESTING** PEOPLE! HEH-HEH!

AH, THE **BENEFITS** OF BEING **YOUNG, RICH** AND **GORGEOUS!**


YOUR BATH IS READY, MISS!
THANKS, LEO! I WON'T BE NEEDING YOU ANYMORE TONIGHT!
YEAH, I THINK I'D LIKE YOU AT THE OTHER END OF THE HOUSE WHEN I START PUTTING THAT NEW HAND-HELD SHOWER NOZZLE TO GOOD USE!

OH, BUT BEFORE I FORGET, THAT WAS THE LAST BOTTLE OF THE DAGUENEAU! ORDER ANOTHER CASE OF IT TOMORROW, WOULD YOU?

VERY WELL, MISS!

FORGIVE ME FOR SAYING SO, MISS, BUT YOU SEEM TO HAVE DEVELOPED QUITE A TASTE FOR ALCOHOL SINCE YOUR, UMMM... CHANGE!

YOU WERE NEVER MUCH OF A DRINKER, EVEN BEFORE YOUR DOCTORS FORBADE IT!

TRUE! BUT MAYBE THAT'S BECAUSE I WAS NEVER EXPOSED TO THE REALLY GOOD STUFF!

MY FATHER ALWAYS DRANK ROCK-GUT WHISKEY, SO THAT'S ALL I WAS EVER ABLE TO SWIPE WHEN I WAS A KID! PROBABLY WHY I NEVER TOOK IT UP MYSELF, ESPECIALLY SINCE MILDRED WAS A TEA-TOTALER!

BUT THIS NEW, **YOUNG** BODY CAN **HANDLE** IT, **THAT'S** FOR SURE! SO IT'S **DEFINITELY** A PASTTIME I **PLAN** TO **INDULGE** IN!

I'D BE **REMISS** IF I DIDN'T POINT OUT THAT THE **REAL** COURTNEY WAS AN **ADDICT!**

I CAN'T **HELP** BUT **WONDER** IF YOUR **NEWFOUND** TASTE IN ALCOHOL **MAY** COME **WITH** THE **BODY!**

DON'T BE SUCH A **WORRY-WART,** LEO! I'M JUST A **FRESHLY-MINTED** YOUNG WOMAN WHO'S SOWING SOME **WILD OATS**, THAT'S ALL!

I'LL GET **BORED** WITH IT SOONER OR LATER AND SETTLE DOWN TO A MORE **RESPECTABLE** LIFESTYLE! **YOU'LL** SEE!

IF YOU **SAY** SO, MISS!


A little over one week later, a few days before the wedding, the traditional bachelor and bachelorette parties are about to get underway...

YOU KNOW YOU ***REALLY*** DIDN'T ***HAVE*** TO ORGANIZE THIS ***PARTY*** FOR ME, MOTHER GOLDSTONE! ***REALLY***, YOU DIDN'T!

I MEAN, I'M REALLY ***NOT*** THE ***BACHELORETTE PARTY*** KIND OF PERSON! BESIDES, EXCEPT FOR ***HILLARY***, I DON'T KNOW ***ANY*** OF THESE GIRLS!

CONSIDER IT JUST ***ONE*** OF MY ***MANY*** GIFTS TO YOU, COURTNEY DEAR! SINCE YOU'VE ONLY BEEN BACK HOME FOR A ***SHORT*** TIME, I THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE THE ***PERFECT*** OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SOME ***NEW FRIENDS!***

WHY, ***HILLARY*** EVEN ***OFFERED*** TO HELP ME PUT THE ***INVITATION LIST*** TOGETHER!

HILLARY HELPED TOO, HUH? THAT'S JUST... WONDERFUL!

OH, GREAT! A WHOLE EVENING STUCK WITH A GAGGLE OF HILLARY CLONES!

AND HERE I THOUGHT I'D POSTPONED MY DELIVERY INTO HELL! UGH!


OH, DON'T YOU GIRLS ALL LOOK ADORABLE!
THANKS, MRS. G!

YOU LOOK ABOUT AS EXCITED AS I AM ABOUT ALL THIS!

A WHOLE EVENING WITH HILLARY AND ALL HER FRIENDS... WHY WOULDN'T I BE EXCITED?

AND ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO LET THESE GUYS HAUL YOU OFF TO A STRIP JOINT?

GOT TO KEEP UP THE FRONT AND PLAY THE PART... AS ALWAYS!

SPEAKING OF **PLAYING THE PART**, I'D BETTER GO MAKE SURE I HAVE SOME **CASH!**

I HAVE A **FEELING** I'M GOING TO BE **NEEDING** IT TONIGHT! *SIGH!*

DON'T HAVE **TOO** MUCH FUN, HONEY! *GIGGLE!*

HMMM! LOOK WHO'S HERE!


WELL, WELL, WELL... IF IT ISN'T THE PARTY MAN HIMSELF?
SINCE YOU'RE PART OF THIS POSSE, SHOULD I BE A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT MY FIANCÉ TONIGHT?
OH, WE'LL BRING HIM BACK IN ONE PIECE! I PROMISE!

OF COURSE, HE *MIGHT* HAVE A FEW *STORIES* TO TELL IN THE MORNING... *IF* HE *REMEMBERS*, THAT IS! HEH-HEH!

I ALMOST *ENVY* HIM! FROM WHAT *LITTLE* I KNOW OF *HILLARY* AND HER CREW, I HAVE A *FEELING* I'M DESTINED FOR AN EVENING OF *CLIQUE-BASHING* OVER *MARTINIS* AT SOME SNOBBY LITTLE *COUNTRY CLUB!* *SIGH!*

WELL, IF IT **HELPS**, I **DO** KNOW THEY HAVE **SOMETHING** PLANNED THAT'S DEFINITELY **MORE** INTERESTING THAN THE **COUNTRY CLUB!**

THAT'S A **START**, I GUESS! BUT CONSIDERING HOW **HILLARY** AND I GET ALONG, I'VE A FEELING IT'S **STILL** GOING TO BE A **VERY LONG EVENING!**

THAT'S SOMETHING I COULD **DEFINITELY** HELP WITH... **IF** YOU'RE **INTERESTED**, THAT IS!

IF IT'LL MAKE THE NIGHT MORE ***ENTERTAINING***, THEN I'M ***VERY INTERESTED!***

OH, WHAT ***I'VE*** GOT ***HERE*** WOULD MAKE A NIGHT OF ***SCRABBLE*** WITH YOUR ***GRANDPARENTS*** FEEL LIKE THE ***GREATEST PARTY*** ON ***EARTH!*** HEH-HEH!


STEP INTO MY OFFICE AND LET ME SHOW YOU EXACTLY WHY THEY CALL ME THE PARTY MAN!

A couple of hours later, after a little bar-hopping and the obligatory exchange of raunchy gifts, the girls arrive at their final stop for the evening...

XXX

Studs

ALL RIGHT, LADIES... *HERE WE ARE!* I HOPE YOU'VE GOT A PURSE *FULL* OF *BILLS*, 'CAUSE YOU'RE *DEFINITELY* GOING TO *NEED* THEM IN *HERE!* *GIGGLE!*

WOO-HOO!

ALL RIGHT!

OH MY GOD! *REALLY?!* *GIGGLE!*

I *HATE* TO *ADMIT* IT, BUT THE EVENING *SO FAR* HAS BEEN... *TOLERABLE!* HELL, *ALMOST FUN!* NO DOUBT THANKS TO THAT LITTLE "*BUMP*" DOUG GAVE ME BACK AT THE HOUSE!

WOW! WHERE HAS *THAT* SHIT BEEN ALL MY LIFE?

MAN! IF ONE LITTLE SNORT OF THAT STUFF CAN MAKE ME FEEL THIS GOOD ABOUT SPENDING AN EVENING WITH HILLARY AND HER STUCK-UP FRIENDS, IMAGINE WHAT IT COULD'VE DONE TO THOSE FIFTY-THREE YEARS OF BEING MARRIED TO THE ICE QUEEN!

I HAVEN'T FELT ***THIS*** GIDDY AND CAREFREE IN YEARS... HELL, ***DECADES!*** HAVE TO REMEMBER TO ***THANK DOUG*** THE ***NEXT*** TIME I SEE HIM! *GIGGLE!*

NOW ***THERE'S*** A GUY WHO'S GOING TO THE ***TOP*** OF MY ***CONTACTS*** LIST!


OH, WOW!!
WOO HOO! NOW THIS IS ENTERTAINMENT!

HERE WE GO, LADIES! **RESERVED TABLE** FOR FOUR! **BEST SEATS** IN THE HOUSE FOR THE **BEST SHOW** IN TOWN!

I GET THE FEELING **YOU'VE** BEEN HERE BEFORE, HIL! *GIGGLE!*

WHY, **WHATEVER** WOULD MAKE YOU SAY **THAT**, SISSY? *GIGGLE!*

OH, **I** DON'T KNOW... MAYBE IT WAS THE **BOUNCER** KNOWING YOU BY **NAME?** *GIGGLE!*

Reserved

HOW ABOUT **YOU**, COURTNEY? EVER BEEN TO A CLUB LIKE **THIS** BEFORE?

NOT SINCE **V-E DAY**, BACK IN...

SAY **WHAT?!**

Reserved

OH, UH... I MEAN... I'VE **HEARD** ABOUT THEM, BUT I CAN **HONESTLY** SAY I'VE **NEVER** BEEN **INSIDE** ONE LIKE **THIS** BEFORE!

WELL, YOU'RE IN FOR A TREAT! **TRUST ME!**

HEY, HILLARY! IS **MOLLY** JOINING US TONIGHT? *GIGGLE!*

WOULD **I** BOOK US THE **BEST** TABLE HERE **WITHOUT** INVITING THE **LIFE** OF THE PARTY? **NEVER!**

UM... IF **ANOTHER** FRIEND OF YOURS IS JOINING US, AREN'T WE GOING TO NEED A **BIGGER** TABLE, OR AT **LEAST** ANOTHER CHAIR?

NOT WITH **THIS** PARTICULAR FRIEND! *GIGGLE!*

THESE ARE MOLLYS! LITTLE PARTY-FAVORS GUARANTEED TO MAKE ANY EVENING, NO MATTER HOW DULL, FEEL LIKE THE BEST NIGHT OF YOUR LIFE!

EVER TRIED ONE BEFORE, COURTNEY?

CAN'T SAY THAT I HAVE!

BUT I'M WILLING TO TRY *ANYTHING* ONCE!

ATTA GIRL!

PASS 'EM OUT, HIL! *GIGGLE!*


A short while later...
WOO-HOO! SHAKE THAT THING, BIG GUY!
BRING US THAT MONEY-MAKER, STUD!
OH, YEAH! COME TO MOMMA!


'CAUSE SHE'S GOT A BIG PRESENT FOR YOU!
JESUS! LISTEN TO ME! I SOUND JUST LIKE ONE OF THESE HORNY BROADS!
WELL, WHEN IN ROME... *GIGGLE!*

HEY COURTNEY, MIND IF I ***BORROW*** THAT ***GIFT*** I GAVE YOU EARLIER THIS EVENING?

I HAVE A ***FEELING*** I'M GONNA ***NEED*** IT AFTER HANGING AROUND ***THESE*** STUDS ALL NIGHT! ****ROWR!****

YEAH, CAN ***I*** HAVE ***MINE*** BACK, TOO? ***JUST*** 'TILL ***TOMORROW***, THAT IS! *GIGGLE!*

AND ***WHAT*** MAKES YOU THINK I ***WON'T*** BE USING THEM ***TONIGHT***, HMMM?

GET YOUR OWN, LADIES! *GIGGLE!*

AND I'M NOT ***BULLSHITTIN'*** THEM, EITHER! BETWEEN THE "***BUMP***", THE ***BOOZE*** AND ***ESPECIALLY*** THAT ***MOLLY***, I'VE ***NEVER*** FELT SO GODDAMN ***LIBERATED*** AND ***HORNY*** IN MY ***LIFE!***

HELL, I SURE HOPE LEO'S ***SOUND ASLEEP*** WHEN I GET HOME, 'CAUSE I ***MAY NOT*** MAKE IT ALL THE WAY TO MY ***BEDROOM*** BEFORE ***BREAKING OUT*** ALL MY NEW ***TOYS!*** *GIGGLE!*


SO, I UNDERSTAND ONE OF YOU LADIES IS A BACHELORETTE?
IT'S HER... IT'S COURTNEY!
YEAH, IT'S HER RIGHT HERE!
HUH?!


WELL THEN, WHY DON'T YOU STEP UP HERE WITH ME FOR MY VERY SPECIAL DANCE?
UMM... OKAY!
WOO-HOO!!
OH SHIT! THIS COULD GET AWKWARD!
GO GET HIM, COURTNEY!


DAMN! YOU'RE AWFULLY... SLIPPERY!
THAT'S WHAT SWEAT AND BODY OIL WILL DO TO YOU, GORGEOUS!

OF COURSE, I'VE A FEELING YOU'RE A LITTLE SLIPPERY AS WELL... AT LEAST WHERE IT COUNTS! HEH-HEH!

SHIT! HE'S NOT WRONG! MY PANTIES WERE ALREADY DAMP BEFORE HE DRAGGED ME UP HERE!

BUT NOW? THEY'RE PRACTICALLY SOAKED!


SO, HERE WE GO, HOT STUFF! HOLD ON!
OH MY GOD...
WHEEE! ATTA GIRL, COURTNEY!


YOU KNOW... GORGEOUS WOMEN LIKE YOU REALLY MAKE ME LOVE MY JOB!
CAN'T IMAGINE WHY! *GIGGLE!*
HOLY SHIT! HE'S RUBBING THAT MONSTER OF HIS RIGHT UP AGAINST MY PANTIES!

"GASP!" WH... WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH MY HAND?

I TOLD YOU THIS WAS A SPECIAL DANCE, BEAUTIFUL! SO JUST FOLLOW MY LEAD LIKE A GOOD GIRL!

OH MY GOD! I DIDN'T THINK YOU COULD DO THAT IN THESE PLACES!

YOU CAN IF YOU TIP THEM ENOUGH! *GIGGLE!*


CHRIST! WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ME? I'VE GOT MY HAND ON THIS GUY'S COCK AND I'M NOT FREAKING OUT!
ON THE CONTRARY, I'M... I'M...

GIGGLE!. I'M ***OVERTHINKING*** IT... ***THAT'S*** WHAT I'M DOING!

I'M IN A SITUATION ***ANY*** BEAUTIFUL, YOUNG AND EXCEEDINGLY ***HORNY*** YOUNG WOMAN WOULD ***LOVE*** TO BE IN! AND THAT'S ***EXACTLY*** WHO ***COURTNEY*** IS!

WHY ***NOT*** GRAB A LITTLE ***GUSTO***... OR IN ***HIS*** CASE, A PRETTY DAMN ***IMPRESSIVE GUSTO!*** *GIGGLE!*

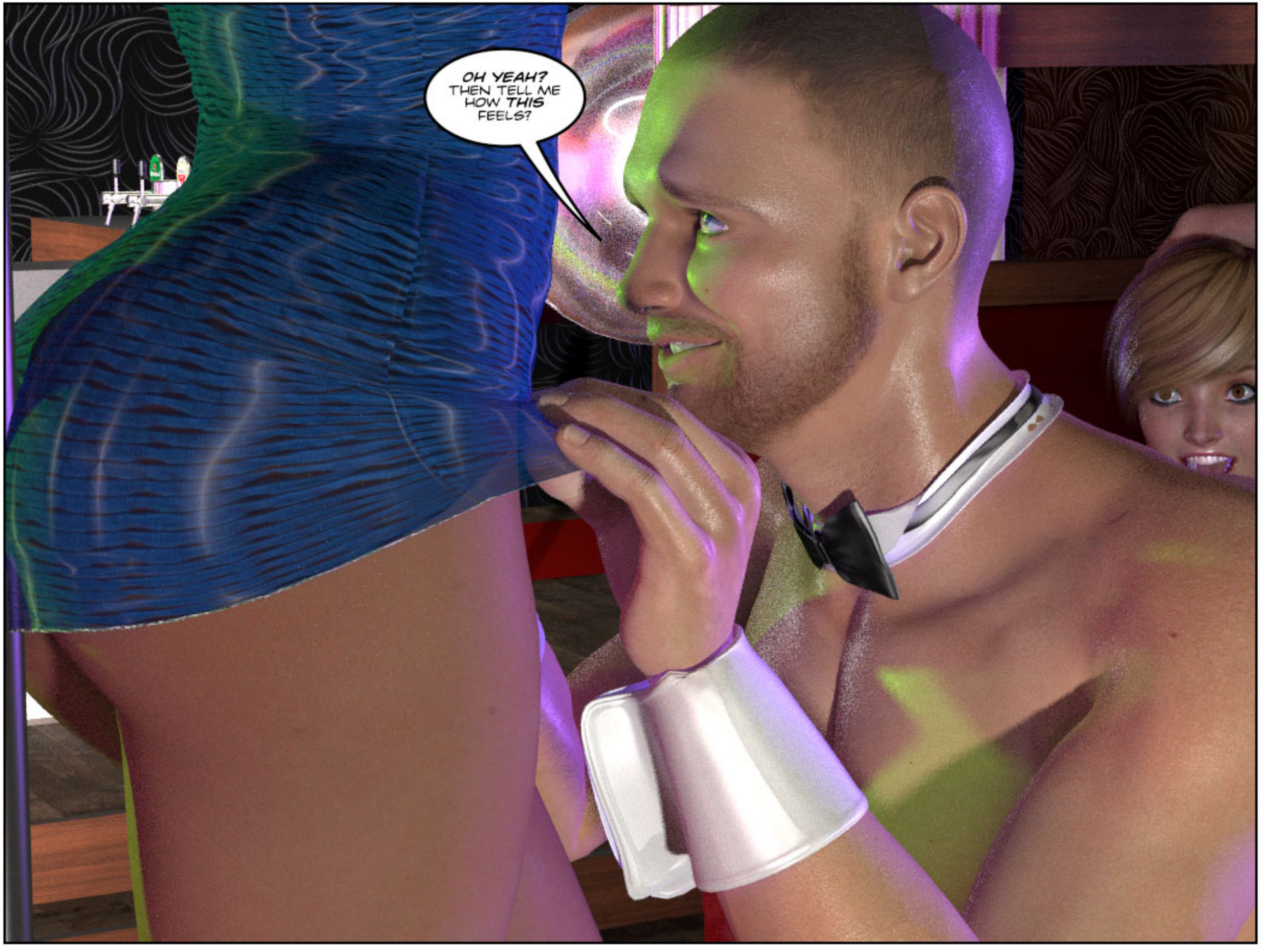

STAY RIGHT HERE, DARLIN'! JUST LIKE THIS!
THIS IS WHERE THE FUN STARTS!


YOU MEAN YOU'RE JUST GETTING STARTED? *GIGGLE!*


GASP!
OH, MOST DEFINITELY!


OH MY GOD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
YOU'LL SEE, HOT STUFF! YOU'LL SEE...


GIGGLE! THAT TICKLES!


OH YEAH? THEN TELL ME HOW THIS FEELS?


GASP!
WH... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!




HOLY SHIT!
OH MY GOD!
ME NEXT! OH GOD, ME NEXT!


OOOHHHH....
DAMN!

ENJOY THE *RIDE?* HEH-HEH!

OOOOO... YOU'RE NOT *STOPPING*, ARE YOU?

'FRAID I *HAVE TO* DARLIN'! *THAT'S* AS *FAR* AS I CAN GO *WITHOUT* GETTIN' *ARRESTED!*

BUT SEND YOUR *FIANCÉ* BY SOMETIME AND *I'LL* TEACH HIM HOW TO *FINISH* THE JOB *PROPERLY*! HEH-HEH!


IT JUST WOULDN'T BE THE SAME, HANDSOME! TRUST ME ON THAT!


THANK YOU FOR THE DANCE, M'LADY!
NO... THANK YOU!
HOLY SHIT! IF I WAS EVER GOING TO FINALLY GO NATIVE, THIS IS DEFINITELY THE KIND OF GUY I'D DO IT WITH!

WAS THAT AS **AWESOME** AS IT LOOKED, COURTNEY? DAMN, **I'M JEALOUS!**

THAT WAS **MIGHTY MARIO,** LADIES! NOW, **GIVE IT UP** FOR **NITRO NICO!**

Woo-hoo!!

YEAH, RIGHT NOW SHE'S **PROBABLY** THINKING TO HERSELF, "**RODNEY WHO?**" *GIGGLE!*


YOU ALL RIGHT, COURTNEY? YOU LOOK A LITTLE OUT OF IT!

'SCUSE ME, LADIES! GOTTA GO TO THE LITTLE GIRL'S ROOM!

BE BACK... IN A WHILE!


"LITTLE GIRL'S ROOM"! YEAH, RIGHT! *GIGGLE!*
WOW! SHE'S REALLY GONNA GO FOR IT! I'D NEVER HAVE THE GUTS TO DO THAT!


GEE, I SURE HOPE HER SUDDEN IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT SECOND MOLLY I SLIPPED INTO HER CHAMPAGNE! HEH-HEH!
Reserved

WHEW! THAT WAS ONE LONG SHIFT! BUT DEFINITELY WORTH IT!

OH, I AGREE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT!

WELL, **HELLO THERE,** MISS **BACHELORETTE!**

YOU KNOW, I COULD **SWEAR** WE HAD A **BOUNCER** OUT THERE!

OH, **YOU DID!** BUT HE'S A LITTLE **BUSY** COUNTING THE **VERY GENEROUS TIP** I GAVE HIM TO LOOK THE **OTHER** WAY!

SEXY


SO... WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, MISS...?
OH PLEASE... CALL ME COURTNEY!
OKAY, COURTNEY! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU? AS IF I DIDN'T KNOW!


OH, I WAS THINKING WE NEEDED TO FINISH OUR DANCE!
BECAUSE I'M PRETTY DAMN SURE THERE'S A BIG FINISH IN THERE SOMEWHERE!
UMMM... LOOK, GORGEOUS! AS MUCH AS I'D LOVE TO SHOW YOU THE BIG FINISH YOU WANT, IF MY BOSS FOUND OUT, I'D BE FIRED BEFORE I HAD MY SPEEDO PULLED BACK UP!

THEN I'D *BUY* THE PLACE AND *FIRE* HIS ASS!

JESUS! IS *THAT* HOW YOU RICH, SPOILED *SOCIALITE GIRLS* GET *WHATEVER* YOU WANT? WITH *MONEY?*

PRETTY MUCH!

YOU GOT A **PROBLEM** WITH THAT, BIG GUY?

CAN'T SAY THAT I **DO**, GORGEOUS!


THEN, LET'S DANCE, COWBOY!


HELL, IF I'M GONNA GET FIRED, IT MIGHT AS WELL BE 'CAUSE OF THE HOTTEST SPOILED SOCIALITE THAT'S EVER HIT THIS PLACE! HEH-HEH!


OOOOHH! IF YOU'RE GOOD ENOUGH, YOU MIGHT JUST END UP AS MANAGER, STUD!


BABY... GOOD IS THE ONLY WAY I KNOW HOW TO DO IT!
MMMMMMMMM!


OOOOHH! FEELS LIKE SOMETHING GOT A HELL OF A LOT BIGGER SINCE YOU WERE ON STAGE!
HOW COULD IT NOT WITH YOU HERE, GORGEOUS?

GASP! OH MY GOD! THAT FEELS SOOO...

BABY, YOU HAVEN'T FELT *ANYTHING* YET!


OH MY GOD!!!


OOOOOOHHHHHHH!!!

Meanwhile, back at the reserved table...

SO... THINK SHE'LL EVER COME BACK? *GIGGLE!*

ARE YOU ***KIDDING?*** ***THAT*** GUY IS SUCH A ***HUNK***, HE'D BE MY ***FIRST***, ***SECOND*** AND ***THIRD*** CHOICES BEFORE I'D CHOOSE ***RODNEY!***

UHH... NO OFFENSE, HILLARY!

NONE TAKEN! IN FACT, ***I*** DON'T BLAME COURTNEY ***ONE LITTLE BIT*** FOR WHAT SHE'S DOING! *GIGGLE!*

Reserved


SPEAK OF THE DEVIL! LOOK WHO'S BACK!

SHE LOOKS A LITTLE **WOBBLY**, DON'T YOU THINK, GIRLS? *GIGGLE!*

YEAH! AND THAT ***GRIN*** ON HER FACE TELLS ME IT ***ISN'T*** THE ***BOOZE*** THAT'S MAKING HER WALK LIKE THAT! *GIGGLE!*


SO COURTNEY... HOW WAS THE, UHHH... BATHROOM? *GIGGLE!*
YEAH! EVERYTHING GO OKAY IN THERE? *GIGGLE!*
Reserved


OH, IT WENT FINE... JUST FINE!
SO... WHAT'S NEXT?

Chapter Three

THE INHERITANCE

by CBlack

One week later, a small, private wedding takes place...

I AM **SO HAPPY** FOR YOU TWO! I **KNOW** YOU'LL HAVE A **WONDERFUL** TIME ON YOUR **HONEYMOON**! **MIAMI BEACH** IS ONE OF MY RODNEY'S **FAVORITE** VACATION SPOTS!

WELL, YOU **KNOW** I'LL DO **ANYTHING** TO KEEP **OUR RODNEY** HAPPY, MOTHER GOLDSTONE! *GIGGLE!*

AND IF ***THAT*** MEANS I HAVE TO FIND MY ***OWN*** FUN IN THE SUN WHILE ***HE'S*** GETTING HIS ***ROCKS*** OFF WITH HIS USUAL ***BUTT-BUDDIES*** DOWN THERE, THEN ***WHO*** AM ***I*** TO ARGUE?

TO THE **AIRPORT**, LEO! AND **WATCH** THE SPEED BUMPS... I DON'T WANT TO SPILL **ANY** CHAMPAGNE!

I THINK JUST "**MA'AM**" WILL SUFFICE FROM NOW ON, LEO!

YES, MISS... I MEAN, **MRS. GOLDSTONE!**

YES, **MA'AM!**

Limo


SO, DO I REALLY NEED TO ASK WHY YOU INSISTED WE SPEND OUR HONEYMOON AT YOUR MIAMI BEACH CONDO?
I THINK IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS! I WANTED TO CHOOSE A PLACE THAT WE COULD BOTH ENJOY WITHOUT BEING JUDGED BY THE FAMILY!
I CAN FREELY INDULGE IN MY PREFERRED LIFESTYLE WHILE YOU DO AS YOU PLEASE... WITH WHOMEVER YOU PLEASE!

BUT **I** DON'T KNOW **ANYONE** DOWN THERE! WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I CAN MAKE **NEW FRIENDS** SO **EASILY?**

FROM WHAT **HILLARY** TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR **BACHELORETTE PARTY,** I **REALLY** DON'T THINK MAKING FRIENDS IS A BIG **PROBLEM** FOR **YOU!** HEH-HEH!

I WAS **WONDERING** IF SHE TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT NIGHT!

OH, SHE TOLD ME **ALL** THE **LURID DETAILS** THE VERY NEXT DAY!

AND...?

AND SHE WAS **FURIOUS** WHEN I **DISMISSED** IT ALL AS "LETTING OFF SOME STEAM", OR "HAVING ONE LAST FLING", OR SOME OTHER **MEANINGLESS PLATITUDE!**

IT'S REALLY TOO BAD **YOU** COULDN'T HAVE SEEN HER FACE! SHE WAS **BEET RED** WITH **FRUSTRATION!** HEH-HEH!


AND JUST IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING, I DIDN'T GO OUT THAT NIGHT LOOKING FOR THAT KIND OF ACTION!
WHAT HAPPENED AT THAT STRIP CLUB SURPRISED ME MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, BELIEVE ME!

NO NEED FOR **ANY** EXPLANATIONS, HONEY! LIKE I **TOLD** YOU, I **WANT** YOU TO FEEL **FREE** TO **FULFILL** YOUR NEEDS IN **ANY WAY** YOU SEE FIT! **ESPECIALLY** WHILE WE'RE ON OUR **"HONEYMOON"**!

I KNOW **I** CERTAINLY WILL BE! HEH-HEH!


TO THE PERFECT HONEYMOON!
AND THE PERFECT MARRIAGE!

Later that afternoon at the Goldstone's Miami Beach cabana...


SO... WHAT DO YOU THINK? LIKE IT?
WHAT'S NOT TO LIKE? PRIVATE BEACHFRONT ON ONE SIDE AND ALL THE AMENITIES OF A LUXURY RESORT ON THE OTHER!
YOU ALL OWN A SWEET LITTLE SOUTHERN GETAWAY IN THIS PLACE!

ACTUALLY, **YOU'RE** THE OWNER OF THIS LITTLE **GETAWAY**, HONEY!

CONSIDER IT **MY** WEDDING PRESENT TO **YOU!**

MINE? REALLY? WON'T **HILLARY** RAISE A **STINK** ABOUT YOU JUST **GIVING** IT TO ME?

NEITHER HILLARY **NOR** MOTHER EVEN **KNOW** ABOUT THIS PLACE! ONE OF THE **PERKS** OF BEING THE **ONLY** PERSON IN THE FAMILY WHO **KEEPS TABS** ON THE **FINANCES!**

THE **ONLY** WAY **THEY'LL** KNOW I GAVE IT TO YOU IS IF **YOU** TELL THEM... AND **I** DON'T THINK YOU WANT TO DO **THAT!**

YES, IT'S A **WONDERFUL** PRESENT FROM MY VERY **THOUGHTFUL** AND **LOVING HUSBAND!** *GIGGLE!*

SO, ARE THERE **TWO** BEDROOMS OR DO WE NEED TO **DISCUSS** THE **SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS?**

THERE'S JUST THE **ONE** MASTER BEDROOM, BUT IT'S **ALL YOURS** SINCE **I** WON'T BE STAYING HERE!

YOU **WON'T?** WELL... WHERE **ARE** YOU STAYING?

I'VE RESERVED MYSELF A **SUITE** A LITTLE WAYS DOWN THE BEACH IN A HOTEL THAT CATERS TO **MY LIFESTYLE!**

THAT WAY WE'RE **BOTH** FREE TO ENJOY OUR "HONEYMOON" **ANY WAY WE LIKE** WITHOUT **CRAMPING** THE OTHER'S STYLE, SO TO SPEAK!

OF COURSE IF YOU NEED **ANYTHING** FROM ME OR **JUST** WANT TO GET TOGETHER FOR **BRUNCH** OR A **DRINK** SOMETIME, GIVE ME A CALL!

OTHERWISE, I'LL SEE YOU IN TWO WEEKS... **HONEY!**

AND JUST LIKE THAT, ***HE'S GONE!*** NOT THAT I'LL ***MISS*** HIM, BUT IT WOULD'VE BEEN ***NICE*** TO STICK AROUND ***LONG*** ENOUGH TO TELL ME ***WHERE*** EVERYTHING ***IS*** DOWN HERE!

GUESS I'LL ***JUST*** HAVE TO FIGURE IT ALL OUT ***ON MY OWN!***

OF COURSE **THAT** WON'T BE VERY DIFFICULT! **ONE** THING I'VE LEARNED SINCE BECOMING COURTNEY IS THAT **MOST** MEN, **EVEN RODNEY,** MY NEW **GAY** HUSBAND, WILL **FALL ALL OVER THEMSELVES** TO HELP OUT A **YOUNG, ATTRACTIVE WOMAN** IN "DISTRESS"!

I **SERIOUSLY** DOUBT EVEN **HE** WOULD'VE GONE THROUGH WITH THIS PLAN IF I **DIDN'T** LOOK LIKE **THIS!**

SO, I'VE GOT **TWO WHOLE WEEKS** TO HAVE AS MUCH **FUN** AS I **WANT**, HMM? I **HATE** TO **ADMIT** IT, BUT THE **MOST** FUN I'VE **EVER** HAD IN MY **LIFE** WAS THE BACHELORETTE PARTY **HILLARY** THREW FOR ME!

THE **INTENSITY** OF PHYSICAL SENSATIONS I EXPERIENCED THAT **ONE NIGHT** DWARFED **DECADES** OF ANYTHING I **EVER** FELT IN THAT BODY I **USED** TO HAVE... EVEN **BEFORE** IT GOT **OLD** AND **RIDDLED!**

AND YOU CAN **BET** MY SWEET ASS I WANT TO EXPERIENCE A LOT **MORE** NIGHTS LIKE **THAT!**

AND SINCE **NO ONE** DOWN **HERE** HAS EVER **MET** OR EVEN **HEARD** OF **COURTNEY PEABODY GOLDSTONE,** WHEN I STEP OUT OF THIS CABANA I CAN MAKE **WHATEVER** FIRST IMPRESSION **I WANT!**

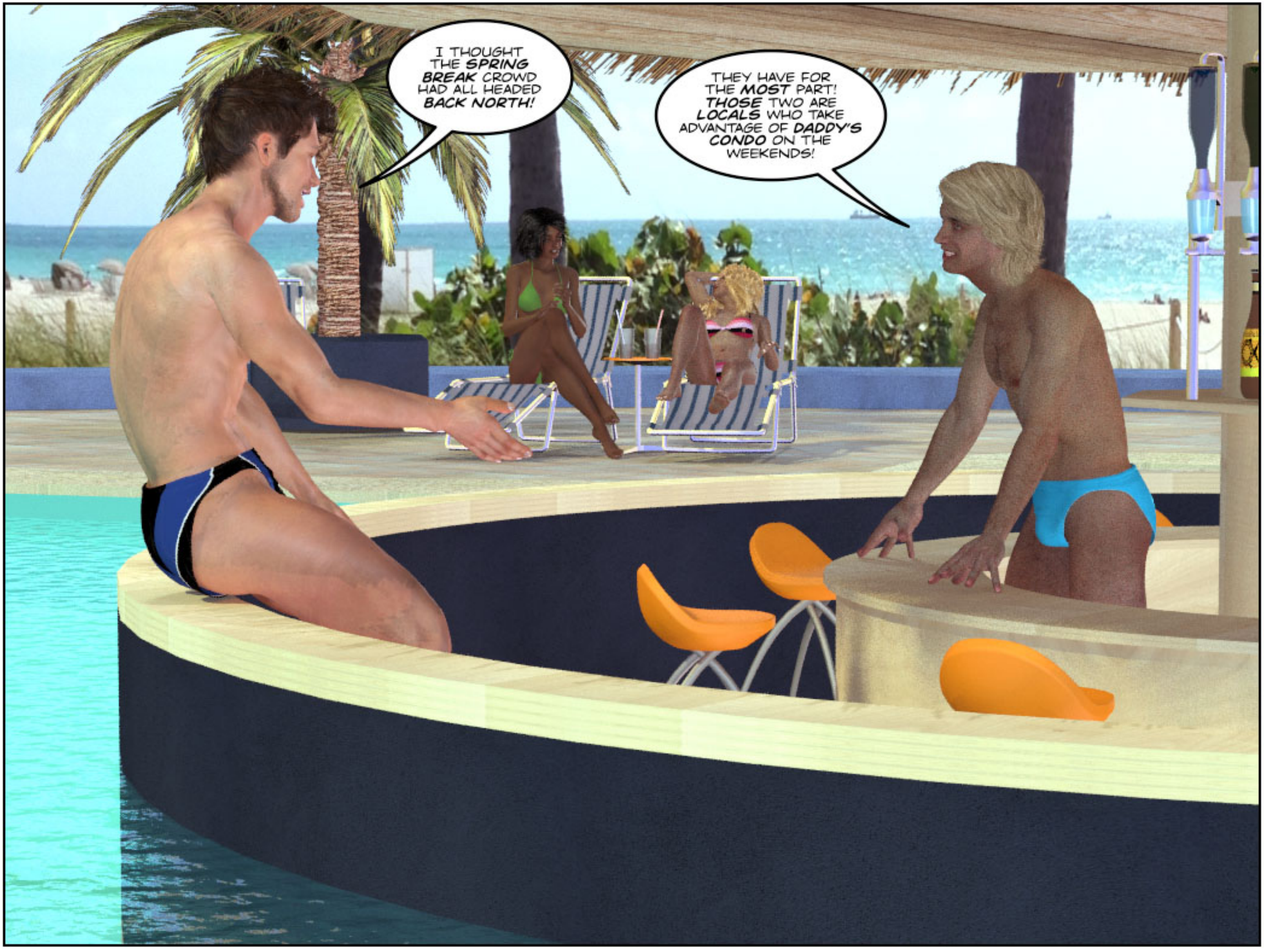
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HMMM... AND I THINK I SEE *JUST* THE PLACE TO DO IT! *GIGGLE!*

A short time later at one of the resort's pool areas...


HERE YOU GO LADIES!
THANKS, KYLE!
YEAH, THANKS! *GIGGLE!*


HEH, LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE STILL GOT A FEW YOUNG ADMIRERS HANGING AROUND THERE, KYLE!


I THOUGHT THE SPRING BREAK CROWD HAD ALL HEADED BACK NORTH!
THEY HAVE FOR THE MOST PART! THOSE TWO ARE LOCALS WHO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DADDY'S CONDO ON THE WEEKENDS!


WHAT ABOUT YOU? HOW'S BUSINESS GOING NOW THAT THE HERDS HAVE LEFT?
I ADMIT IT'S TAKEN A DOWNTURN, BUT I STILL HAVE MY REGULAR CUSTOMERS AS WELL AS THE OCCASIONAL WELL-HEELED VACATIONER WHO LIKES TO SPLURGE! HEH-HEH!


WHOA! SPEAKING OF WELL-HEELED!
HOLY SHIT!


WHEW! NOW THAT IS SMOKIN' HOT! IS SHE A GUEST HERE?
I DUNNO... NEVER SEEN HER BEFORE! BUT SHE IS DEFINITELY THE HIGH-CALIBER TYPE THAT CAN AFFORD PLACES LIKE THIS!
'SCUZE ME, PAL, WHILE I GO TO WORK! HEH-HEH!

GOOD AFTERNOON, MISS! AND WHAT CAN I GET YOU THIS LOVELY AFTERNOON?

OH, I'M FEELING VERY ***TROPICAL*** TODAY, SO WHY DON'T YOU WHIP UP YOUR ***BEST DAIQUIRI*** AND HAVE SOMEONE BRING IT OVER TO ME, WILL YOU?

OF COURSE, MISS! AND WHAT ROOM SHOULD I CHARGE IT TO?

ALL CHARGES SHOULD GO TO **GOLDSTONE**... COURTNEY GOLDSTONE... IN **CABANA NUMBER ONE!**

ANYTHING YOU SAY, MISS GOLDSTONE! I'LL HAVE THAT **RIGHT OVER** TO YOU!

AND **PLEASE** KEEP A **RUNNING TAB** SINCE I PLAN TO SPENDING A **GOOD DEAL** OF TIME HERE OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS!


DUDE! I AM GONNA ASK ONE HUGE FAVOR OF YOU!
NO WORRIES, BUDDY! I'M WAY AHEAD OF YOU! HEH-HEH!

I WASN'T SURE IF I'D **EVER** HAVE THE **GUTS** TO WEAR **THIS** SUIT WHEN I BOUGHT IT, BUT FROM THE **LOOKS** I'VE BEEN GETTING, IT'S **OBVIOUS** I HAVE THE **BOD** TO CARRY IT OFF!

AND NOW THAT I'VE SET A **PRECEDENT**, I THINK IT'S ONLY **FAIR** I **CONTINUE** TO **LIVE UP** TO THE **IMAGE** I'VE ESTABLISHED SO FAR!

I MEAN, I **DON'T** WANT TO **DISAPPOINT** MY NEW **ADMIRERS**, DO I? *GIGGLE!*


THIS "HONEYMOON" IS THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO DUMP ANY AND ALL REMNANTS OF HIRAM INTO THE COMPOST BIN ONCE AND FOR ALL!


AHHH! TIME TO FINALLY LIVE LIFE THE WAY IT WAS MEANT TO BE LIVED!




HERE'S YOUR DRINK, MISS GOLDSTONE!
BE A GOOD BOY AND PUT IT OVER HERE FOR ME, WILL YOU?
ANYTHING YOU WISH, MISS! THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR!


HMMM! REMIND ME TO COMPLIMENT THE HOTEL ON ITS CHOICE IN WAIT STAFF!
I DON'T ACTUALLY WORK FOR THE HOTEL! I WAS JUST HELPING OUT THE BARTENDER WHO'S A FRIEND OF MINE!


MY NAME IS TOM BOLTON! MIND IF I PULL UP A SEAT AND JOIN YOU?
I SUPPOSE... BUT DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO SIT? I WAS RATHER ENJOYING THE VIEW AS IS!

SO, IF YOU ***DON'T*** WORK FOR THE ***HOTEL***, WHAT WAS ALL THAT ***TALK*** ABOUT YOU BEING HERE FOR ***ANYTHING I WISH?***

JUST WHAT I SAID! I'M ESSENTIALLY A ***FREE-LANCE CONCIERGE*** WHO ***SPECIALIZES*** IN PROVIDING A VERY ***SELECT*** CLIENTELE WITH ***ALL*** THEIR ***ENTERTAINMENT NEEDS*** WHILE VACATIONING IN MIAMI!

I GET THE FEELING YOU'RE **NOT** TALKING ABOUT GETTING ME **FRONT ROW TICKETS** TO THE **LOCAL PRODUCTION** OF **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES!**

HARDLY... ALTHOUGH I **COULD** GET THOSE IF YOU **REALLY** WANTED THEM!

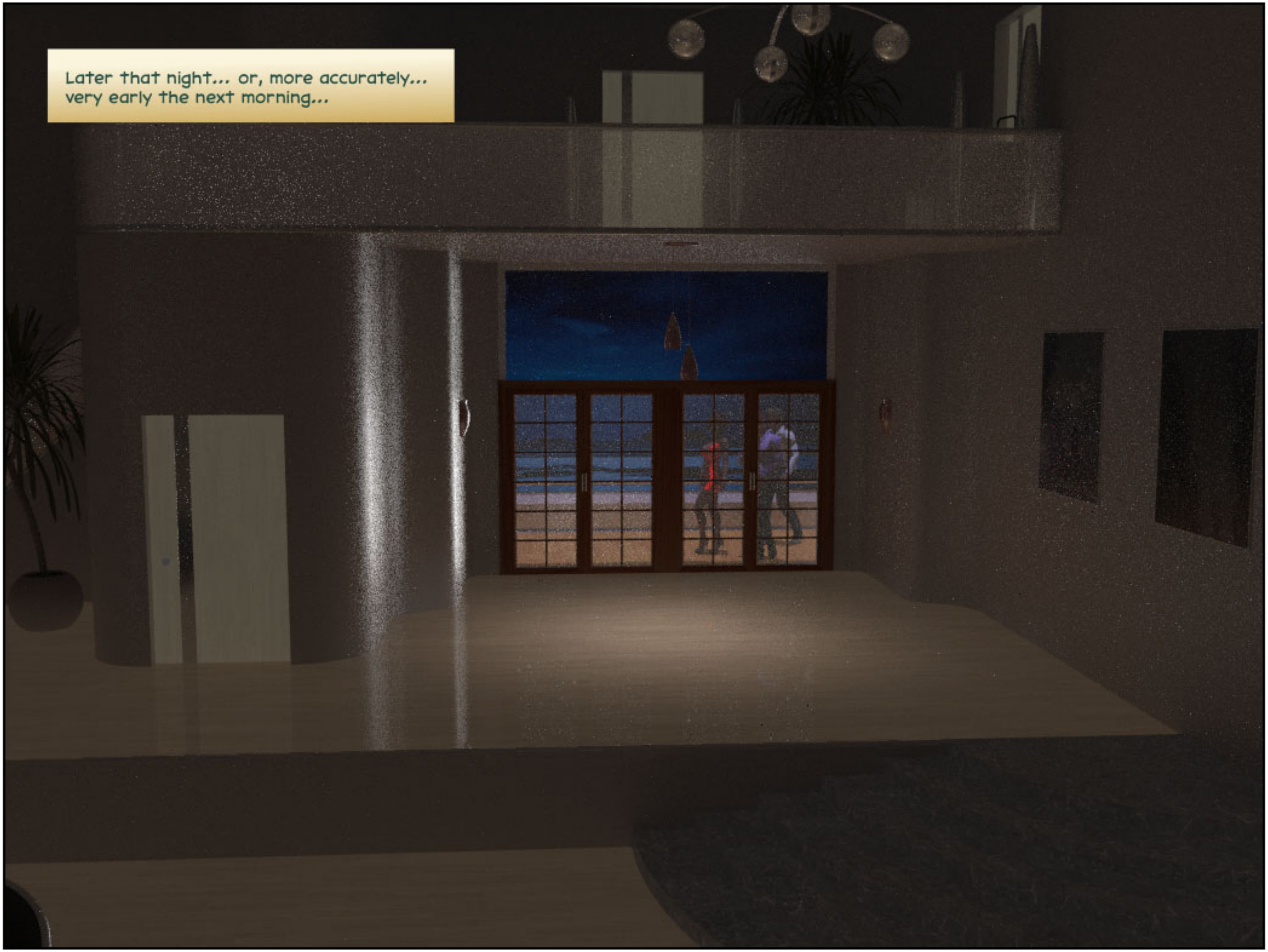
ACTUALLY, I TEND TO **SPECIALIZE** IN A MUCH MORE **HIGH-END** TYPE OF ENTERTAINMENT! THE **TRENDIEST** CLUBS, THE **HOTTEST** PARTIES...

AND EVERYTHING **ELSE** NECESSARY FOR THE **TRUE EXPERIENCE** I TAKE IT?

EXACTLY!

WELL MR. BOLTON, WE'RE **BOTH** IN LUCK, BECAUSE **I'M** A GIRL WHO **LIKES** TO **PARTY** AND **ISN'T** AFRAID TO SPEND A LITTLE **MONEY** TO DO SO! *GIGGLE!*


SO MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE WHILE WE DISCUSS MY ENTERTAINMENT NEEDS!


Later that night... or, more accurately...
very early the next morning...


THIS IS THE PLACE, BOYS! WADDYA THINK? *GIGGLE!*
DAMN NICE!
SWEET!


I JUST LOVE A TOWN THAT'S CIVILIZED ENOUGH TO KEEP THE BARS OPEN PAST TWO AM!
C'MON IN, BOYS, SO WE CAN KEEP THIS PARTY GOIN'!


WE HAVE THIS WHOLE PLACE TO OURSELVES TO DO WHATEVER WE WANT!
AND I SURE KNOW WHAT I WANT TO DO! *GIGGLE!*


HEY! YOU'VE STILL GOT YOUR PANTS ON! YOU BOTH DO! WHAT'S UP WITH THAT, BIG GUY? *GIGGLE!*
AS MUCH AS WE'D LOVE TO GET NAKED WITH YOU, GORGEOUS, WE'RE JUST KINDA AFRAID WE MIGHT BE TAKIN' ADVANTAGE OF YOU!
YEAH... YOU DO SEEM PRETTY WASTED!


SIGH! GIVE ME YOUR PHONE!
JUST GIVE ME YOUR DAMN PHONE! OKAY?
HUH? WHAT DO YOU NEED MY PHONE FOR?
YES, MA'AM!

AHEM! I, COURTNEY PEABODY GOLDSTONE, BEING OF SOUND MIND AND EXQUISITE BODY, DO HEREBY DECLARE THAT IF ONE OF THESE MAGNIFICENT SPECIMENS OF MANHOOD ISN'T FUCKING THE HELL OUT OF ME IN TEN MINUTES, I'M GOING TO GO BACK OUT AND FIND SOMEONE WHO WILL!


AND... SAVED!


THERE! THAT SHOULD CLEAR UP ANY MISCONCEPTION ABOUT WHO'S TAKING ADVANTAGE OF WHOM, IN CASE ANYONE EVER ASKS...


SO WHEN YOU BOYS DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO, FEEL FREE TO JOIN ME UPSTAIRS!


BUT DON'T WAIT TOO LONG, OR I MIGHT JUST START WITHOUT YOU!







Two weeks later...

HELLO?
COURTNEY?
ANYONE HOME?


EWWW! OBVIOUSLY THE CLEANING STAFF HASN'T HAD A CHANCE TO GET IN HERE YET TODAY!
THE PLACE IS A PIG STY!


CHUCKLE! SINCE I HAVEN'T HEARD A PEEP FROM HER OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS, I FIGURE THAT MY BRIDE HAS TAKEN MY ADVICE TO HEART AND HAS BEEN HEARTILY ENJOYING HERSELF!
I WONDER JUST HOW MUCH?

WHOA, DUDE! WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?

OUTSIDE, OF COURSE!

I DON'T SUPPOSE COURTNEY IS UP THERE SOMEWHERE?

YEAH, BUT SHE'S PRETTY *OUT OF IT*... IF YOU *KNOW* WHAT I MEAN! HEH-HEH!

PROBABLY *BEST* IF YOU CAME BACK *LATER*... WHEN THE *NEXT* PARTY STARTS!

LOTS OF PARTIES HERE, HUH?

OH *HELL*! *EVERY DAMN NIGHT* FOR THE PAST *WEEK* OR SO! THAT *CHICK* UPSTAIRS IS *AWESOME!*


HEY DUDE, WAIT UP! I NEED A RIDE BACK TO MY CAR!
THEN MOVE IT! I GOTTA GET TO WORK MYSELF!


LATER, DUDE! AND GOOD LUCK! NOT THAT YOU'LL NEED IT WITH HER! HEH-HEH!

GUESS THAT ANSWERS *THAT* QUESTION!

COURTNEY? COURTNEY, *HONEY?* TIME TO *GET UP!* WE HAVE A *FLIGHT* TO CATCH!

UGH! HAS IT BEEN TWO WEEKS ALREADY?

'FRAID SO, LOVE! AND OUR FLIGHT LEAVES IN LESS THAN THREE HOURS, SO YOU'D BETTER START GETTING READY!

I THOUGHT OUR FLIGHT WASN'T UNTIL *FOUR PM!*

TRUE! AND IT'S CLOSING IN ON *ONE-THIRTY* AS WE SPEAK!

MAYBE *I* SHOULD ORDER YOU SOME *BREAKFAST* WHILE *YOU* GET, UMMM... *CLEANED UP!*


NO! NO FOOD! I DON'T THINK I COULD KEEP IT DOWN!
JUST GIMME AN HOUR AND I'LL BE SHOWERED, PACKED UP AND READY TO GO!


'COURSE I'M NOT GONNA GET SHIT DONE WITHOUT A LITTLE PICK ME UP!
NOW WHERE THE HELL DID I LEAVE MY GOODIE BAG?

And, sure enough, just under one hour later...

TA-DAA! ALL PACKED UP AND LOOKING FABULOUS IN LESS THAN AN HOUR! JUST AS PROMISED!

FABULOUS, INDEED! IS THAT A NEW OUTFIT?

AS A MATTER OF FACT, *IT IS*... ALONG WITH PRETTY MUCH MY *ENTIRE WARDROBE!*

I HAD *SUCH* A GOOD TIME DOWN HERE THAT I CAN'T *HELP* BUT WANT TO TAKE AS *MUCH* OF IT HOME AS *POSSIBLE!*

WELL, I'M *GLAD* YOU...

AND IT'S *NOT* JUST THE *CLOTHES* EITHER!

THE **PEOPLE**, THE **LIFESTYLES**, THE VIBRANT **COLORS** IN THE ARCHITECTURE... I COULD **LIVE** DOWN HERE!

I'M **SURE** WE COULD **VISIT** AGAIN AS MUCH AS YOU'D **LIKE**, AND...

THAT'S WHY I'VE DECIDED ON A **WHOLE NEW DESIGN** FOR THE **BALLROOM** OF MY ESTATE! EVERY **INCH** OF IT WILL BE **GUTTED** AND **REDONE!**

BY THE TIME I'M DONE, **ALL** MY FRIENDS WILL **SWEAR** THEY WERE PARTYING IN **MIAMI BEACH!**

I WASN'T AWARE YOU **HAD** THAT MANY **FRIENDS** BACK HOME!

MAYBE NOT **NOW**, BUT CONSIDERING THE **QUANTITY** AND **QUALITY** OF **PARTIES** I PLAN TO THROW, **THAT** NUMBER WILL **SKYROCKET** IN **NO TIME!**

OH, AND I PLAN ON MAKING **EXTENSIVE** USE OF **YOUR** POOL, SINCE IT'S PRACTICALLY **IMPOSSIBLE** TO BUILD ONE ON THE STEEP TERRAIN OF **MY** ESTATE! I'M **SURE** HILLARY AND YOUR MOTHER WON'T MIND! *GIGGLE!*

NOW **WHERE** THE **HELL'S** THAT **BELL CAPTAIN?** THOSE BAGS **AREN'T** GOING TO MOVE **THEMSELVES!**

Several weeks go by, and Courtney's parties at her newly remodeled ballroom quickly become legendary...


WOW! I'D HEARD THE TALK ABOUT COURTNEY'S PARTIES, BUT... I HAD NO IDEA!


WONDER WHERE MY LOVELY WIFE IS... AND WHO SHE'S WITH? HEH-HEH!

As if on cue...

JUST TO LET *EVERYONE* KNOW, THE *VESTIBULE* IS NOW *AVAILABLE* FOR *ANY* AND *ALL* MORE... *INTIMATE* ENCOUNTERS!


JUST WORK AROUND THE STICKY SPOTS! *GIGGLE!*


OOOH! IT MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR LONG, THOUGH! HELLO THERE, TALL, DARK AND WELL-HUNG! *GIGGLE!*
WELL, HELLO THERE YOURSELF, GORGEOUS!


COULD I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU, MA'AM?
A LITTLE BUSY HERE, LEO! CAN'T IT WAIT?
I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD BE WISE, MA'AM!


SIGH!. ALL RIGHT THEN!
DON'T STRAY TOO FAR, HANDSOME! THIS WON'T TAKE LONG!

DON'T TELL ME, LET ME GUESS... YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT MY "BEHAVIOR!"

I WOULDN'T BE DOING MY JOB IF I WASN'T CONCERNED, MA'AM!

CONCERNED IS ONE THING, LEO, BUT YOUR CONSTANT SCOLDING IS GETTING PRETTY FUCKING TIRESOME!

I'M SORRY IF MY REMINDERS SEEM LIKE SCOLDING TO YOU, MA'AM! THAT ISN'T MY INTENTION!

CONTRARY TO ALL OUTWARD APPEARANCES, I AM NOT A SPOILED AND NAIVE LITTLE RICH GIRL, LEO! YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW THAT!

THEN WHY DO YOU INSIST ON BEHAVING LIKE ONE?

BECAUSE IT'S WHO "COURTNEY" IS! IT'S WHAT'S EXPECTED OF HER! AND, IT'S A HELLUVA LOT OF FUN!

I'VE GOT NINETY-FIVE DEPRESSING YEARS BEHIND ME! CAN YOU BLAME ME FOR ENJOYING THIS SO DAMN MUCH?

OF **COURSE** NOT, MA'AM! BUT IT JUST SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU **COULD** BE **LOSING CONTROL**... WHAT WITH THE EXCESSIVE **PARTYING**, **EXTREME** AMOUNTS OF **ALCOHOL** AND **OTHER** SUBSTANCES...

WHICH **THIS** NUBILE, **YOUNG** BODY CAN HANDLE **NO PROBLEM!**

WHICH BRINGS UP THE TOPIC OF YOUR SEXUAL... **ESCAPADES!** I **DO** HOPE YOU'RE AT **LEAST** USING **PROTECTION**, MA'AM!

WHENEVER FEASIBLE, LEO! ***WHENEVER FEASIBLE!*** *GIGGLE!*

SIGH!. THIS **RECKLESS** BEHAVIOR IS **EXACTLY** WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT, MA'AM! AND I JUST...

AND **I'M** JUST **SICK** AND **FUCKING TIRED** OF **HEARING** ABOUT IT, LEO!

THIS IS WHO I **AM** NOW! AND IF **YOU** CAN'T **LIVE** WITH THAT FACT, THEN **MAYBE** IT'S TIME FOR **YOU** TO **RETIRE!**

I WOULD **NEVER** EVEN **ENTERTAIN** THE THOUGHT OF **LEAVING** YOU, MA'AM! **ESPECIALLY** WHEN YOU **NEED** ME AS MUCH AS I **BELIEVE** YOU DO!


THEN I'D BETTER NOT HEAR ONE MORE DISAPPROVING WORD FROM YOU, LEO! OR YOUR "RETIREMENT" MAY NOT BE VOLUNTARY!
YES... OF COURSE, MA'AM!


WELL, WELL! I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THAT EXCHANGE WAS ABOUT, BUT IT DEFINITELY LOOKED INTENSE!

NOW... WHERE ***WERE*** WE, HANDSOME? *GIGGLE!*

SOMEWHERE RIGHT ABOUT ***HERE*** I BELIEVE! HEH-HEH!

I'M SOMEWHAT **SURPRISED** TO SEE **YOU** HERE... **SIR!**

AND WHY WOULD **THAT** BE, LEO? IT'S **MY WIFE'S** PARTY... IN **HER** HOUSE! WHY **SHOULDN'T** I BE HERE?

ALTHOUGH I'M WELL ***AWARE*** OF THE ***ARRANGEMENT*** YOU TWO HAVE REGARDING YOUR "***MARRIAGE***", I FIND IT ***PECULIAR***, IF NOT DOWNRIGHT ***TWISTED***, THAT ***YOU*** CAN STAND BY AND ***WATCH*** HER ***BEHAVE*** THE WAY SHE DOES!

YOU ***ARE*** HER ***HUSBAND***, AFTER ALL, AND I WOULD ***THINK*** ALL THIS WOULD REFLECT ON ***YOUR*** FAMILY AS WELL!

WELL, ***CONSIDERING*** HER LIFESTYLE IN ***PARIS*** BEFORE SHE RETURNED HERE, I REALLY ***DON'T*** THINK THERE'S ANYTHING ***I*** COULD DO OR SAY TO ***CHANGE*** HER BEHAVIOR!

IT'S ***WHO*** SHE ***IS***, LEO, AND ***I'VE*** ACCEPTED THAT!


BUT IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT, FEEL FREE TO TAKE IT UP WITH HER!
WHEN SHE COMES UP FOR AIR, THAT IS! HEH-HEH!

RODNEY **KNOWS** ABOUT **"HER"** LIFE IN **PARIS**? THAT **PROVES** THAT HE'S **UP** TO SOMETHING! CONSIDERING WHAT **FEW** DETAILS **WE** KNOW ABOUT THE **REAL** COURTNEY'S LIFE OVER THERE, I'M CONFIDENT **MY** COURTNEY WOULD **NEVER** BRING IT UP AND DISCUSS IT ON HER **OWN!**

THAT MEANS HE'S HAD HER **INVESTIGATED!** MAYBE EVEN **BEFORE** PROPOSING TO HER! AND THE FACT THAT HE **BELIEVES** THAT SHE'S AN **EX-ADDICT** AND **STILL** ALLOWS HER TO **BEHAVE** THIS WAY TELLS **ME** THAT **HE** HAS **NO CONCERN WHATSOEVER** FOR **HER** WELL-BEING!


I KNOW SHE WARNED ME ABOUT SPEAKING TO HER ABOUT HER BEHAVIOR, BUT... I REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY CHOICE!
Oooo

A while later...


THANKS FOR THE PICK-ME-UP, DOUGIE! STAY CLOSE BY IN CASE I NEED YOU AGAIN! *GIGGLE!*
DON'T I ALWAYS? HEH-HEH!


I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!
HEY THERE, HUBBY-POO! GLAD TO SEE YOU FINALLY MAKE IT TO ONE OF MY PARTIES! HAVING FUN?
I WAS UNTIL YOUR MAN-SERVANT CONFRONTED ME EARLIER!
LEO?! WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM WITH LEO?

WELL, I REALLY **DON'T** WANT TO GET HIM INTO **TROUBLE**, BUT HE MADE SOME RATHER **INSULTING** ACCUSATIONS TOWARD ME!

ACCUSATIONS? WHAT **ABOUT?**

HE **INSISTED** THAT I HAD **NO REGARD** FOR **YOUR WELL-BEING** IN ALLOWING YOU TO **EXPRESS YOURSELF** THE WAY YOU DO!

IN FACT, HE **EVEN** IMPLIED THAT **I** WAS **PUSHING** YOU INTO WHAT **HE** CALLED **"UNSEEMLY AND SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR"** IN ORDER TO **TAKE CONTROL** OF **YOUR LIFE**... AND **YOUR MONEY!**


SIGH! I TOLD HIM I WAS FED-UP WITH HIS COMPLAINING OF MY BEHAVIOR TO ME, BUT NOW THAT HE'S ACCUSING YOU OF SOMETHING LIKE THAT? WELL...
I DON'T WANT TO TELL YOU HOW TO RUN YOUR HOUSEHOLD, BUT ARE YOU SURE LEO IS A GOOD FIT FOR YOU? I MEAN, HE WAS AFTER ALL YOUR GRANDFATHER'S MAN-SERVANT FOR ALL THOSE YEARS!
WHAT DOES HE KNOW ABOUT SERVING A VIBRANT YOUNG WOMAN SUCH AS YOURSELF? HMMM?

WELL, I THINK I'D BEST LEAVE **BEFORE** HE **CONFRONTS** ME **AGAIN** AND MAKES A **SCENE** THAT COULD EMBARRASS **YOU!**

STOP BY TOMORROW AND WE'LL HAVE **LUNCH** BY THE POOL! I'M SURE **MOTHER** WOULD **LOVE** TO SEE YOU!

SHIT! I KNOW LEO'S NEVER LIKED RODNEY, BUT I DIDN'T THINK HE'D ACTUALLY GET IN HIS FACE LIKE THAT!

HE HASN'T DONE ANYTHING LIKE THAT IN YEARS!

I MEAN, I GET IT THAT MY NEW LIFE HAS FORCED HIM TO MAKE SOME ADJUSTMENTS, BUT THAT'S WHAT HE'S PAID FOR!

MAYBE RODNEY'S ***RIGHT***! MAYBE ***I'D*** BE BETTER OFF WITH ***SOMEONE*** WHO CAN ***BETTER*** ATTEND THE ***NEEDS*** OF A ***YOUNG, SEXY SOCIALITE*** LIKE ***ME!***

HMMM... THAT ***DANCER*** FROM MY BACHELORETTE PARTY ***IMMEDIATELY*** COMES TO MIND! *GIGGLE!*

GOD! LISTEN TO ME! I REALLY ***HAVE*** BECOME ***QUITE*** THE LITTLE ***SEX-KITTEN,*** HAVEN'T I?


AND LOVING EVERY FUCKIN' MINUTE OF IT! *GIGGLE!*

I'M **SORRY**, MA'AM! I **KNOW** YOU ASKED ME TO **REFRAIN** FROM SPEAKING WITH YOU ABOUT SUCH THINGS, BUT I REALLY **MUST** TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR **HUSBAND!**

NO, LEO! YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO TALK TO ME ABOUT ANYTHING!

NO IT'S NOT, LEO! BECAUSE AS OF RIGHT NOW, YOUR DUTIES IN THIS HOUSEHOLD HAVE COME TO AN END!

BUT MA'AM, I FEEL IT'S MY DUTY TO...

MA'AM?!

I'M LETTING YOU GO, LEO! AND I WANT YOU OUT OF HERE FIRST THING IN THE MORNING! GOT IT?!

I... I...


WHATEVER YOU WISH... MA'AM!


PERFECT! THE LAST SPEED-BUMP TO MY PLAN HAS BEEN REMOVED!


NOW IT'S FULL SPEED AHEAD! HEH-HEH!

Chapter Four

THE INHERITANCE

by CBlack

A week or so later back at the Goldstone mansion...

I'M **SORRY** I HAD TO **BOTHER** YOU, RODNEY, BUT SHE'S HAVING **ANOTHER** ONE OF HER **WRETCHED BACCHANALIAS!**

CAN'T **YOU** DEAL WITH IT, MOTHER? **I** NEED TO GET TO THE **AIRPORT!**

THE WOMAN WON'T LISTEN TO A **WORD** I SAY, SO I WAS HOPING **YOU** MIGHT BE ABLE TO... **DO SOMETHING!**

COURTNEY WON'T LISTEN TO **ME** EITHER! SHE **WON'T** LISTEN TO **ANYONE!**

ARE THINGS REALLY *THAT* BAD BETWEEN YOU TWO?

I'M AFRAID *SO*, MOTHER! SHE'S *NOT* THE GIRL I *THOUGHT* SHE WAS WHEN WE GOT MARRIED!

I'VE BEEN *WONDERING* ABOUT THAT! ALL THE *DRINKING* AND *PARTYING* AND... WELL, I THINK SHE *MIGHT* EVEN BE USING *DRUGS!*

SIGH!. YES, *I'VE* NOTICED AS WELL, MOTHER! HILLARY AND I *BOTH* HAVE!

BUT **WHY** IS SHE SUDDENLY **ACTING** THIS WAY? SHE SEEMED LIKE SUCH A **DECENT** GIRL WHEN WE MET!

WELL, IT TURNS OUT COURTNEY HAS A **HISTORY** WITH **DRUG ABUSE!** ALTHOUGH SHE **ASSURED** ME THAT SHE WAS **TOTALLY REHABILITATED**, I'M AFRAID THE **STRAIN** OF **LOSING** ALL HER **FAMILY** AND SUDDENLY BEING SO **RICH** HAS CAUSED HER TO **RELAPSE!**

THEN ISN'T **THIS** THE **WORST** POSSIBLE TIME FOR **YOU** TO LEAVE TOWN? **WHY** CAN'T YOU **POSTPONE** YOUR TRIP AND **HELP YOUR WIFE?**

BECAUSE SHE'S **BEYOND** MY HELP, MOTHER! BUT REST ASSURED, I'VE FOUND SEVERAL **WELL-RESPECTED FACILITIES** THAT **CAN** HELP HER! THEY'VE PRODUCED **REMARKABLE RESULTS** FOR CASES LIKE **COURTNEY'S!**

Crash!!

WHOOPS! GUESS WINE GLASSES **DON'T** BOUNCE AFTER ALL! *GIGGLE!*.


C'MON, DOUGIE! LET'S HIT THE POOL!
RIGHT BEHIND YOU, GORGEOUS... I MEAN, COURTNEY!


HEY THERE, MOTHER GOLDSTONE! COME JOIN US BY THE POOL!
I'M SURE YOU'VE GOT ONE OR TWO SLINKY BIKINIS UPSTAIRS YOU CAN SLIP INTO! *GIGGLE!*
UM, NOT RIGHT NOW, DEAR!
NO PROBLEM! MORE POOL FOR US!

LAST ONE IN HAS TO MAKE THE MARGARITAS! *GIGGLE!*

SIGH!. YOU'RE SUCH A **GOOD** MAN FOR PUTTING UP WITH THAT, HONEY!

I DON'T LIKE SAYING IT, BUT YOU'RE **WAY** TOO **GOOD** FOR **HER!**

DON'T WORRY, MOTHER! I'LL BE BACK IN A WEEK AND AFTER THAT, I **PROMISE** YOU'LL **NEVER** SEE **THAT** KIND OF BEHAVIOR FROM HER **EVER AGAIN!**


YOU HAVE A SAFE TRIP, HONEY! AND CALL ME EVERY NIGHT!
DON'T I ALWAYS, MOTHER?


YOU KNOW, EVEN THOUGH I KNOW YOU'RE JUST PLAYING HER, IT'S STILL DISGUSTING TO WATCH!
THEN DON'T WATCH AND JUST KEEP YOUR FACE BURIED IN YOUR PHONE, LIKE YOU ALWAYS DO!


SO, NOW THAT EVEN MOTHER'S FULLY AWARE OF WHAT A DRUGGED-OUT MESS THAT WIFE OF YOURS IS, CAN WE FINALLY GET RID OF HER?
JUST A COUPLE MORE DAYS! I WANT TO MAKE DAMN SURE I'M SEEN DOWN IN MIAMI WHEN IT HAPPENS! WHAT ABOUT YOUR ALIBI?
OH, I'M LEAVING FOR THE HAMPTONS TOMORROW! SO I'M SET AS WELL!

NICE OF DOUG TO "**VOLUNTEER**" HIS ASSISTANCE IN OUR PLAN... WHETHER HE **KNOWS IT** OR **NOT!** HEH-HEH!

THAT **DOUCHEBAG** DESERVES **WHATEVER** HE **GETS!** HE HASN'T LOOKED AT ME **ONCE** SINCE YOU BROUGHT THAT **SKANK** INTO THIS HOUSE!

NOW, NOW, DEAR SISTER! HE'S SERVED A VERY **USEFUL** PURPOSE IN GETTING HER TO **FALL OFF THE WAGON** SO **SPECTACULARLY!**

AND, OF COURSE, **HE'LL** GET THE **BLAME** WHEN SHE **FATALLY OVERDOSES** LATER THIS WEEK!

COULDN'T HAPPEN TO A NICER GUY! HMPH!

IT'S TOO BAD **MOTHER** WILL MOST LIKELY BE THE ONE TO **FIND** HER, BUT HER **STATEMENT** TO THE **POLICE** WHILE WE'RE **BOTH** OUT OF TOWN WILL BE **INSTRUMENTAL** IN **SOLIDIFYING** OUR **ALIBIS!**

I'M **SURPRISED** YOU'D PUT OUR MOTHER THROUGH **SUCH** AN **ORDEAL!**

HEY, **WHATEVER** IT **TAKES** TO GET **CONTROL** OF THE **PEABODY FORTUNE** AND ADD IT TO OUR **OWN**, SIS! HEH-HEH!


Later that same day, across the country in an LA office...
THANKS FOR STAYING LATE AND FINISHING UP THE MORTON PROJECT, VIRGINIA!
NOT A PROBLEM, MR. SLOANE! THIS PROJECT WAS MY BABY AND I WANTED TO GET IT DONE BEFORE I WENT ON VACATION!


WELL, AS USUAL, YOU DID A GREAT JOB! ENJOY YOUR VACATION, VIRGINIA! YOU'VE EARNED IT!
THANK YOU, MR. SLOANE! I PLAN TO!






I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND WHY YOU INSIST ON COLORING YOUR HAIR! IT USED TO BE A BEAUTIFUL BLONDE COLOR, JUST LIKE YOUR MOTHER'S!
GASP!. WHO THE...?!

HMPH! **YOU**!! I COLOR IT SO I **WON'T** BE **REMINDED** OF HER... AND WHAT **YOU** DID TO HER!

JUST **WHAT** ARE **YOU** DOING HERE?

I THOUGHT THAT WOULD BE **OBVIOUS**... I WANTED TO SEE MY **DAUGHTER!**

WELL I THOUGHT *I'D* MADE IT *OBVIOUS* THAT I *DON'T* WANT TO SEE *YOU!*

I *UNDERSTAND* YOUR FEELINGS, GINNY, BUT...

HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY UNDERSTAND ANYTHING ABOUT ME? EXCEPT FOR TWO OR THREE POP-UP VISITS OVER THE YEARS, YOU'VE BEEN OUT OF MY LIFE SINCE I WAS SIX! AND I WANT TO KEEP IT THAT WAY!

I KNOW IT'S BEEN A LITTLE ROUGH FOR YOU, HONEY!

A LITTLE ROUGH?! ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

MY FATHER "**DIES**" WHEN I'M **SIX**, WHICH SENDS MY **MOTHER** ON A **SLOW, DOWNWARD SPIRAL** INTO AN **ALCOHOL-FUELED DEPRESSION** ENDING WITH HER **DEATH** THE **DAY AFTER** MY **NINETEENTH BIRTHDAY!**

BUT, OF COURSE, IT TURNS OUT YOU **DIDN'T REALLY DIE** IN THAT PLANE CRASH, AS YOU SO **THOUGHTFULLY** SHOWED ME THE DAY **AFTER** MOTHER'S **FUNERAL!** YOU **FAKED IT** TO GET AWAY FROM SOME MYSTERIOUS "**BUSINESS-ASSOCIATES**" YOU **REFUSE** TO TELL ME ABOUT!

I DID IT TO **PROTECT** YOU AND YOUR MOTHER!

YEAH, **I'VE** HEARD **THAT** BEFORE, AND I'M **SICK AND TIRED OF HEARING IT!** CAN'T YOU **PLEASE** JUST **STAY OUT OF MY LIFE... FOREVER?**

I... *I WILL*, GINNY! I *PROMISE* THAT AFTER *THIS* VISIT, YOU'LL *NEVER* SEE OR HEAR FROM ME *EVER AGAIN!*

AND I *KNOW YOU* DON'T *OWE* ME ANYTHING, BUT... I *NEED* A *FAVOR* FROM YOU *FIRST*! A RATHER *BIG FAVOR!*

I *KNEW* THERE'D BE A CATCH! *FINE!* WHAT DO YOU NEED? *MONEY*? HOW MUCH?

IT'S **NOTHING** LIKE THAT! YOU SEE, MY **EMPLOYER**, THE PERSON I'VE BEEN WORKING FOR FOR THE LAST **TWENTY YEARS**, IS IN **DIRE TROUBLE** AND **NEEDS** MY **HELP!**

BUT I **CAN'T** DO IT **ALONE!** AND **YOU'RE** THE **ONLY** PERSON I **TRUST** WHO CAN HELP ME!

SIGH! **OKAY**, I'LL **LISTEN**, BUT **ONLY** BECAUSE **THIS** IS THE **VERY LAST TIME** I'LL SEE YOU! **THATS THE DEAL!** WHETHER I HELP YOU OUT, **OR NOT!**

FAIR ENOUGH!

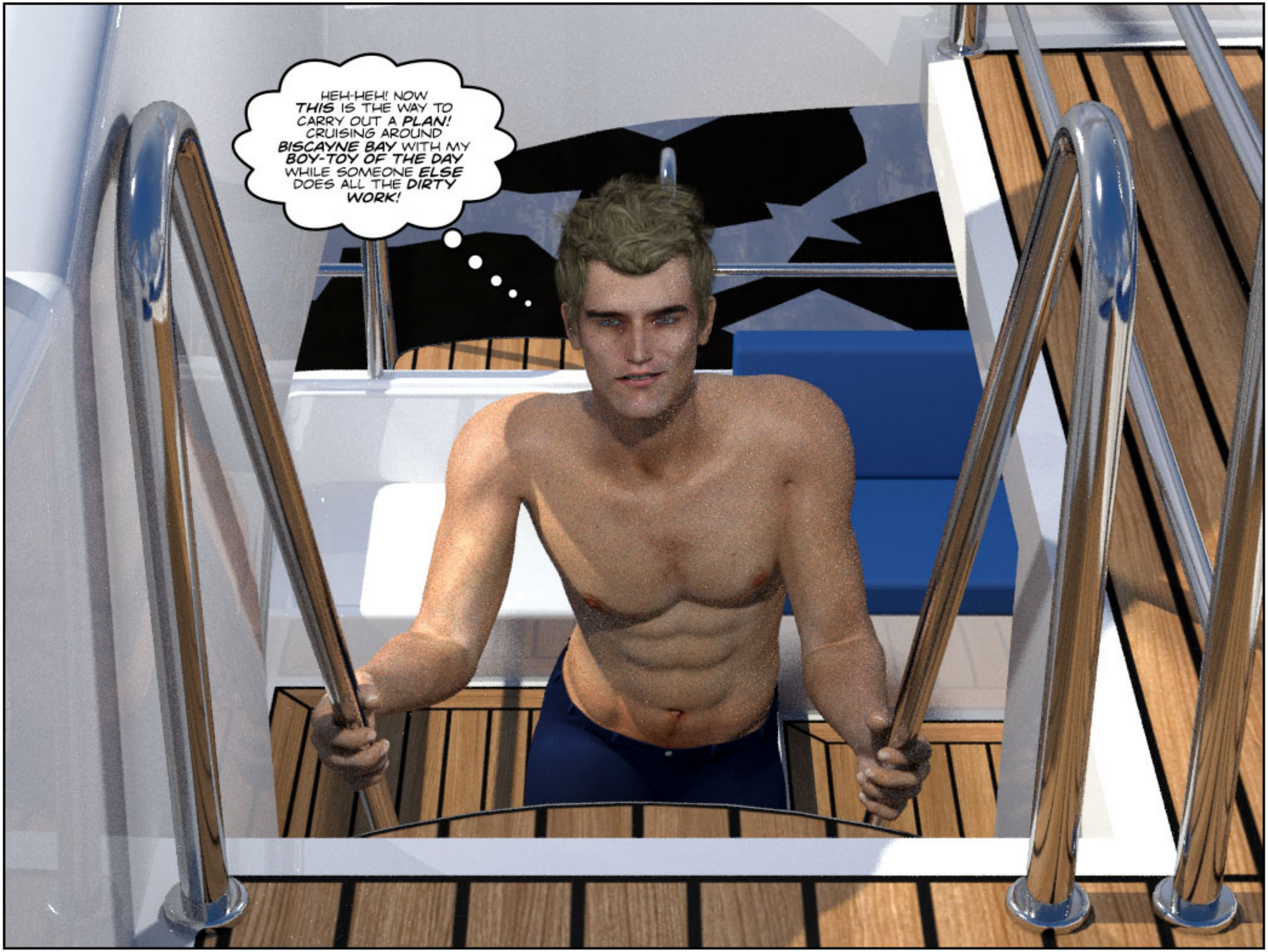
BECAUSE AFTER LISTENING TO MY PLAN, YOU'LL ***UNDERSTAND*** THAT ***NO MATTER WHAT*** YOU DECIDE I'LL ***NEVER*** BE ABLE TO COME ***VISIT*** YOU ***EVER AGAIN!***


The next day, at a Miami Beach marina...


At the very end of one of the more exclusive piers...

WHY DON'T YOU GO **RELAX** ON THE DECK WHILE **I** FINISH **LOADING** EVERYTHING, RODNEY!

SOUNDS GOOD! A LITTLE **NAP** IN THE SUN AND THEN I'LL BE **READY** FOR OUR LITTLE **PRIVATE CRUISE** AROUND THE BAY! HEH-HEH!


HEH-HEH! NOW **THIS** IS THE WAY TO CARRY OUT A **PLAN!** CRUISING AROUND **BISCAYNE BAY** WITH MY **BOY-TOY OF THE DAY** WHILE SOMEONE **ELSE** DOES ALL THE **DIRTY WORK!**


AHHH! LIFE IS GOOD!

An hour or so later a few miles from shore...

YAWN! HOW LONG WAS I NAPPING?

WOW! I CAN BARELY SEE THE CITY!

HOW FAR OUT ARE WE, CARL?

OH, ABOUT FIVE MILES! A HEALTHY SWIM... AS LONG AS YOU CAN AVOID THE SHARKS!

WHAT THE...?! YOU?! HOW DID YOU...?!

WHERE'S CARL?!

ENJOYING A MORE **LUCRATIVE** BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT THAN THE ONE **YOU** OFFERED HIM!

YOU REALLY **SHOULDN'T** BE SO **CHEAP** WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR **PAID ESCORTS!**

SO JUST **WHAT** DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING **ABDUCTING** ME LIKE THIS?

FORMER EMPLOYER, YOU MEAN! SHE **FIRED** YOU **DAYS** AGO! **REMEMBER?**

YOU AND I ARE **LONG OVERDUE** FOR A **TALK** ABOUT **YOUR WIFE** AND **MY EMPLOYER!**

A **DRUG-INDUCED TIRADE** FROM MISSUS COURTNEY **DOESN'T** ABSOLVE ME FROM THE DEBT **I OWE** TO THE **PEABODY FAMILY!** I'VE SERVED THEM FOR **YEARS** AND AM **NOT ABOUT** TO **WALK AWAY** WHEN THE **LAST** MEMBER OF THE FAMILY NEEDS **MY** HELP!

HEH! YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO OFFER MUCH HELP FROM JAIL! BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL BE GOING AS SOON AS YOU STEP FOOT ON SHORE!

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT, KIDNAPPING IS A FELONY, AND THERE WERE PROBABLY A HALF DOZEN SECURITY CAMERAS AT THE MARINA THAT TAPED YOU BOARDING THIS SHIP!

I COUNTED EIGHT ACTUALLY! BUT I'M WILLING TO ACCEPT ANY PUNISHMENT AS LONG AS I CAN KEEP YOU FROM INFLICTING ANY MORE HARM ON MISSUS COURTNEY!

ME? HARMING MY LOVELY NEW WIFE? YOU ARE QUITE DELUSIONAL, AREN'T YOU!


ACK!!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THE... THE SHARKS!! PULL ME BACK IN!!

NOT UNTIL YOU CUT THE CRAP AND START TELLING ME THE TRUTH!

OKAY... OKAY!! ANYTHING! JUST DON'T DROP ME!!

COUGH, COUGH! YOU'RE INSANE!!

QUITE POSSIBLY! SO IF I WERE YOU, I'D BE VERY CAREFUL IN FORMING MY NEXT RESPONSE!

OKAY, I'LL MAKE A **DEAL** WITH YOU! I'LL TELL YOU **EVERYTHING** IF YOU TAKE US **BACK** TO SHORE!

I **WON'T** EVEN CALL THE **POLICE** WHEN WE GET BACK! **I PROMISE!**

I'LL TURN US BACK TOWARD SHORE, BUT **YOU** NEED TO START TALKING **NOW!**

ALL RIGHT, WELL... YES, I KNEW THAT COURTNEY HAD A DRUG PROBLEM BEFORE I MARRIED HER! I WAS COUNTING ON HER FALLING OFF THE WAGON SO I COULD GET CONTROL OF HER ESTATE!

I'VE MADE A FEW BAD INVESTMENTS THAT MOTHER DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT! AN INJECTION OF PEABODY MONEY WOULD WIPE OUT ALL THOSE DEBTS... AND LEAVE US WITH PLENTY LEFT OVER!

YOUR FAMILY HAS PLENTY OF MONEY! WHY GO AFTER THE PEABODY ESTATE?

BUT YOU **DIDN'T** JUST **WAIT** FOR HER TO "FALL OFF THE WAGON" ON HER OWN, **DID YOU?**

WHAT CAN I SAY? I GOT **IMPATIENT** AND HAD A FRIEND MAKE THE DRUGS **EASILY** AVAILABLE TO HER!

WITH HER **TOTALLY** OUT OF CONTROL LIKE SHE'S BECOME, **I** CAN GET **POWER OF ATTORNEY** WHILE **SHE'S** RECUPERATING **INDEFINITELY** IN A **TREATMENT FACILITY!**

SO YOU'D **DESTROY** A YOUNG WOMAN'S LIFE **JUST** TO GET HER **MONEY?**

I'M NOT **PROUD** OF MYSELF, BUT **DESPERATE PEOPLE** DO **DESPERATE THINGS!**

THEN **WHY** AREN'T YOU BACK **THERE** HAVING HER **COMMITTED** INSTEAD OF TAKING AN EXTENDED VACATION **HUNDREDS** OF MILES AWAY?

A VERY **VISIBLE** VACATION THAT GIVES YOU A **SOLID ALIBI** IN CASE **SOMETHING** HAPPENS TO HER BACK HOME?


YOU'RE PRETTY SMART... FOR A MAN-SERVANT!

SO, **YES**... THIS TRIP **IS** MY ALIBI, AND **HILLARY** HAS HER **OWN**, SO WE'LL **BOTH** BE **FREE** AND **CLEAR** OF **ANY** CHARGES WHEN YOUR **PRECIOUS** COURTNEY **DIES** FROM AN "**ACCIDENTAL**" **OVERDOSE** OF **PURE, UNCUT** COKE THAT MY UNWITTING "**FRIEND**" WILL SUPPLY HER WITH HER!

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE HER **KILLED**?!

OF COURSE! **THAT** WAY HER **ENTIRE ESTATE** BECOMES **MINE**! NO **MUSS**, NO **FUSS** AND NO **TEDIOUS** POWER OF ATTORNEY TO DEAL WITH!

IT DOESN'T REALLY **MATTER**, BECAUSE, LIKE I SAID, IT'S **HAPPENING** TWO DAYS FROM NOW AND **YOU CAN'T STOP IT!**

YOU DON'T **ACTUALLY** THINK I'M GOING TO **LET** YOU **LEAVE** THIS BOAT NOW, DO YOU? **NOT** AFTER WHAT YOU'VE JUST **TOLD** ME!

YOU **UNDERESTIMATE** ME!

NO, YOU **OVERESTIMATE YOURSELF!** THE **POLICE** WILL **SURELY** BE **WAITING** FOR US AS **SOON** AS WE COME TO SHORE AND **I'LL** MAKE CERTAIN THEY THROW **YOU** IN A HOLE **SO DEEP** YOU'LL **NEVER** SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY **AGAIN!**

IT'LL MAKE A **GREAT** STORY IN THE **PAPERS**! "DISGRUNTLED BUTLER KIDNAPS EX-EMPLOYER ON THE HIGH SEAS!" **HAW!!**

WELL, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, **I'D** PLANNED ON **MY** STORY **ENDING** RIGHT **HERE** ON **THIS BOAT!**

BUT **YOUR** STORY WILL **END** HERE AS WELL! THUS **ENSURING** MISSUS COURTNEY'S **SAFETY** IN THE FUTURE!

WHAT?! YOU... YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT!! EVEN IF YOU KILL ME, SHE STILL DIES! I'VE SEEN TO THAT!!

AND, HOPEFULLY, I'VE SEEN TO THAT AS WELL!



Early the next day, an unexpected visitor arrives at the Peabody Estate...

Ring!!

HOLD YOUR HORSES! I'M COMING!!

PROBABLY ANOTHER STRAGGLER FROM LAST NIGHT'S PARTY.. LEFT THEIR UNDERWEAR LYING AROUND SOMEWHERE! UGH!


CAN I HELP YOU?
YES, I'M LOOKING FOR LEO SAXTON! I WAS TOLD HE WORKS HERE!
I'M AFRAID HE DOESN'T ANYMORE! WHY ARE YOU LOOKING FOR HIM?


BECAUSE I'M HIS DAUGHTER, VIRGINIA!


GINNY? OH MY GOD, I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU! GET YOUR ADORABLE SELF IN HERE!

BUT OF COURSE WHY **SHOULD** I RECOGNIZE YOU? THE **LAST** PICTURE I **SAW** OF YOU WAS FROM ABOUT **FIVE YEARS AGO** AND YOU HAD **DARKER HAIR** THEN, IF I REMEMBER!

YES, I'M ON **VACATION** AND THOUGHT I'D TRY MY **ORIGINAL** COLOR FOR A CHANGE!

WELL **BLONDE** LOOKS **GREAT** ON YOU! **I** SUGGEST YOU **KEEP IT!**

WHERE ARE MY MANNERS? WOULD YOU LIKE A DRINK?

UM, NO... IT'S A LITTLE EARLY FOR ME! THANKS, ANYWAY!

YOU SOUND JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER!

SO HE'S NOT HERE THEN?

NO, I'M SORRY! WE HAD A, UHHH... DISAGREEMENT AND HE, UMMM...


OH, HELL! I WAS A STUPID BITCH AND FIRED HIM!
FIRED HIM FOR DOING HIS JOB AND LOOKING AFTER ME!
PROBABLY THE STUPIDEST THING I'VE EVER DONE, AND BELIEVE ME, I'VE DONE A LOT OF THEM!


AND BECAUSE I SENT HIM AWAY I'VE ALSO SPOILED A TOUCHING REUNION BETWEEN YOU TWO!
I KNOW HE WOULD'VE LOVED TO SEE YOU!
WELL... MAYBE, BUT...

SO YOU **HAVE** TO LET ME MAKE IT UP TO YOU BY BEING MY **GUEST** HERE FOR THE **REST** OF YOUR VACATION!

OH, BUT I DON'T WANT TO **IMPOSE**...

IT'S **NOT** AN IMPOSITION SINCE **I'M INSISTING! SO THERE!** WHERE'S YOUR LUGGAGE?

I, UHHH... WAS JUST PLANNING ON A **QUICK** VISIT, SO I DIDN'T BRING ANY!

WELL THEN, WE'LL JUST **HAVE** TO TAKE YOU **SHOPPING**, WON'T WE? I'D LET YOU BORROW SOME OF **MY** THINGS, BUT I **DON'T** THINK WE'RE THE **SAME SIZE!**

OH, WE'LL HAVE TO GET YOU A **SWIMSUIT** AS WELL SINCE I'M THROWING A **POOL PARTY** AT MY **HUSBAND'S** HOUSE LATER TODAY! **YOU'LL** HAVE A **BLAST, I PROMISE!**

WELL OKAY, BUT...


THIS'LL BE SO GREAT HAVING SOMEONE ELSE IN THE HOUSE FOR A CHANGE... ESPECIALLY ANOTHER GIRL! GOD, YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW EMPTY THIS PLACE CAN BE WHEN YOU'RE ALL ALONE!
C'MON, GINNY! I'LL SHOW YOU TO YOUR ROOM!

OKAY, WELL... THAT WAS A LOT EASIER THAN I THOUGHT IT'D BE!




Later that afternoon...
Woo-hoo!
Splash!!


HEY GINNY! WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' HIDING WAY OVER THERE IN THE SHADOWS?
THE PARTY'S OUT HERE IN THE SUNSHINE! C'MON OUT AND MINGLE!
I WILL... EVENTUALLY!

I'VE JUST NEVER **BEEN** TO A PARTY LIKE **THIS** BEFORE! IT'LL TAKE ME A LITTLE BIT TO WORK UP THE **COURAGE** TO GO "**MINGLE**", LIKE YOU SAID!

WELL **HELL**, WE'VE GOT **PLENTY** OF **LIQUID COURAGE** AT THE BAR, SO **HELP YOURSELF!**

AND IF **THAT'S** NOT **YOUR** CUP OF TEA, THERE ARE **OTHER** KINDS OF "**COURAGE**" FLOATING AROUND, **IF** YOU CATCH MY **DRIFT**! *GIGGLE!*

HMMM... I JUST **MAY** TAKE YOU UP ON THAT!

AWESOME! I'M PLANNING ON HOOKING UP FOR **THAT VERY THING** A LITTLE **LATER** WITH MY MAN **DOUG** WHO'S **RIGHT** OVER **THERE!** FEEL **FREE** TO GO ON OVER AND...


OOOO! WHO'S THAT STUD MILES BROUGHT WITH HIM? CATCH UP WITH YOU LATER, GINNY!

SIGH! SHE HAS THE **ATTENTION SPAN** OF AN OVER-CAFFEINATED **COCKER SPANIEL!**

OH WELL, I GUESS **NOW'S** AS GOOD A TIME AS **ANY** TO **INTRODUCE** MYSELF TO **DOUG!**

AND IF THIS IS TO GO THE WAY I *WANT* IT TO, I'D *BETTER* MAKE THE *RIGHT* IMPRESSION!

HI THERE! YOU MUST BE DOUG!

WELL IT MUST BE MY LUCKY DAY, BECAUSE I AM DOUG! AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?


MY NAME'S VIRGINIA! BUT MY FRIENDS CALL ME GINNY!
WELL... GINNY, I DON'T THINK I'VE SEEN YOU AROUND HERE BEFORE!
OH, I DON'T LIVE AROUND HERE! I'M JUST IN TOWN FOR A FEW DAYS VISITING COURTNEY!
A FRIEND OF COURTNEY'S, HUH? YOU LIKE TO PARTY AS MUCH AS SHE DOES?

AS MUCH AS? *GIGGLE!* WHERE DO YOU THINK SHE LEARNED HOW TO PARTY?

NO SHIT! WELL, DARLIN', YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT MAN!

I KNOW! COURTNEY SAID YOU ARE THE MAN TO HOOK UP WITH!

IN *MORE* WAYS THAN *ONE!*

WHEW! GORGEOUS, I *LIKE* YOUR **STYLE!** LET'S YOU AND ME GO FIND SOME **SECLUDED** PLACE INSIDE TO GET THIS PARTY *ROLLIN'!*

JUST WHAT I WAS *HOPING* FOR!


THIS ROOM LOOKS LIKE IT HAS EVERYTHING WE NEED! WADDYA THINK, GINNY?
PERFECT! THEN YOU CAN SHOW ME WHAT YOU'VE GOT!


OH, I'LL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO SHOW YOU EVERYTHING I'VE GOT, HOT-STUFF!
TEMPTING! *GIGGLE!* BUT I PERFORM SO MUCH BETTER AFTER A LITTLE TASTE... OR TWO!
IF IT PUTS YOU IN THE MOOD, THEN I'M RIGHT THERE WITH YOU, DARLIN'! HEH-HEH!

IF **THIS** STUFF **HERE** DOESN'T SEND YOU **OVER THE MOON,** THEN **NOTHING** WILL! HEH-HEH!

HMMM... SOUNDS **INTRIGUING!** BUT WHAT ABOUT THE **OTHER ONE** YOU'VE GOT THERE?

OH, **THAT** ONE'S A **SPECIAL ORDER** FOR **COURTNEY!**

REALLY? WHAT'S SO **SPECIAL** ABOUT IT?

DUNNO! MY **SUPPLIER** SENT IT OVER WITH **EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS** TO SAVE IT FOR **COURTNEY ONLY!**

I GUESS **SHE** MUST'VE CONTACTED HIM AND PLACED AN ORDER **HERSELF!**

BUT **THIS** IS **EVERYTHING** SHE ORDERED, **RIGHT?**

YEAH, **THAT'S** ALL OF IT... **WHATEVER** IT IS!


GOOD! THAT'S ALL I NEEDED TO KNOW!


TIME FOR A VISIT WITH MY MAIN PARTY MAN, DOUG!
PRETTY SURE I SAW HIM AND GINNY HEADED FOR THE STUDY TOGETHER!


KIND OF SURPRISED SHE ACTUALLY TOOK ME UP ON THE DOUG OFFER!
GUESS SHE'S NOT AS MUCH LIKE LEO AS I THOUGHT SHE WAS!

WHAT THE...?!

Crash!!

OOF!!


DOUG?! ARE YOU OKAY? WHAT HAPPENED? WHO...?!
OOOOHHHHH!!

KEEP HER AWAY FROM ME!

NOT A PROBLEM... AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU!

GINNY?!

FUCK THIS SHIT! I'M OUTTA HERE!

WHAT THE HELL, GINNY?

WISE CHOICE!


SORRY ABOUT THE MESS, COURTNEY, BUT THAT GUY WAS DANGEROUS AND HAD TO GO!
SO YOU JUST THREW HIM THROUGH THE DOOR? JUST LIKE THAT?
I LEARNED MARTIAL ARTS WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG, SO IT WAS PRETTY EASY!


AND WHEN YOU HEAR WHAT I HAVE TO TELL YOU, YOU MIGHT WANT TO THROW HIM THROUGH ANOTHER DOOR YOURSELF!
THIS I'VE GOTTA HEAR!


LEO VISITED ME A FEW DAYS AGO AND ASKED ME TO COME KEEP AN EYE ON YOU BECAUSE HE WORRIED ABOUT YOU BEING HERE ALONE!
SOUNDS LIKE LEO!
TRUE, BUT I INITIALLY SAID NO! HE LEFT ME YEARS AGO AND I DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM!
UNDERSTANDABLE! BUT... WHAT CHANGED YOUR MIND?

THIS VIDEO HE SENT ME YESTERDAY!

ONCE YOU SEE IT, YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHY I COULDN'T STAY AWAY... NO MATTER HOW I FELT ABOUT HIM!

OKAY... LET'S SEE...


WHAT THE...? HE'S WITH RODNEY? IN FLORIDA? WHAT THE HELL'S HE...?

YOU'RE PRETTY ***SMART***... FOR A ***MAN-SERVANT!***

SO, ***YES***... THIS TRIP IS ***MY ALIBI,*** AND ***HILLARY*** HAS HER ***OWN***, SO WE'LL ***BOTH*** BE FREE AND CLEAR OF ***ANY*** CHARGES WHEN YOUR PRECIOUS COURTNEY ***DIES*** FROM AN ***"ACCIDENTAL" OVERDOSE*** OF ***PURE, UNCUT COKE*** THAT MY UNWITTING ***"FRIEND"*** WILL SUPPLY HER WITH!

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE HER ***KILLED?!***

OF COURSE! ***THAT*** WAY HER ***ENTIRE ESTATE*** BECOMES ***MINE!*** NO ***MUSS***, NO ***FUSS*** AND NO TEDIOUS ***POWER OF ATTORNEY*** TO DEAL WITH!

****GASP!****

KILLED?! WHY THAT LITTLE SHIT! WHEN HE GETS BACK I'LL HAVE HIM AND THAT SKANKY SISTER OF HIS ARRESTED FOR...

Boom!!


WAIT! WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?! WHERE'S THE REWIND ON THIS DAMN THING?


AND HOPEFULLY I'VE SEEN TO THAT AS WELL!
NO! DON'T! OOF!!
Boom!!

AS YOU CAN SEE, YOU **DON'T** HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HAVING RODNEY **ARRESTED!** MY **FATHER** SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN CARE OF THAT **FOR** YOU!

BUT... **LEO?**

SORRY!


YOU STAY IN HERE WHILE I GO SHUT DOWN THE PARTY! WHEN EVERYONE'S GONE, I'LL TAKE YOU HOME!


YOU SURE YOU'LL BE OKAY UNTIL I RETURN?
UH-HUH...


SOB!
OH... LEO!

The next day...

POLICE

PROTECT & SERVE

POLICE

911


Ring!!

YES? CAN I HELP YOU?

I'M LIEUTENANT STRATFORD AND THIS IS OFFICER JENKINS!

WE NEED TO SPEAK WITH COURTNEY GOLDSTONE!

I'M AFRAID SHE CAN'T COME TO THE DOOR RIGHT NOW! PERHAPS IF YOU...


IT'S ALL RIGHT, GINNY! I'LL SEE THEM!

I'M COURTNEY GOLDSTONE! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, LIEUTENANT?

I'M AFRAID I HAVE SOME **BAD NEWS** FOR YOU, MA'AM!

IT'S ABOUT YOUR **HUSBAND...**

A while later, after the police have gone...

SO... THEY, UMMM... FOUND YOUR HUSBAND'S BODY?

WHAT WAS LEFT OF IT!

THE **EXPLOSION** DIDN'T LEAVE **MUCH**, BUT THE POLICE ARE **CONFIDENT** THEY'VE MADE A **POSITIVE I.D.** OF HIS REMAINS!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

OH **SURE**! WHEN THEY **TOLD** ME, I **FAKED** A **SHOCKED LOOK** AND FORCED A FEW **CROCODILE TEARS**... YOU KNOW, THE WHOLE **DISTRAUGHT WIDOW** THING!

SO DID THEY TELL YOU **WHY** THEY THINK THE BOAT EXPLODED? DO THEY **THINK** IT WAS AN **ACCIDENT?**

CONSIDERING THE WAY THEY WERE **QUESTIONING** ME ABOUT **MY RELATIONSHIP** WITH YOUR FATHER, **NOT LIKELY!**

WHAT DID YOU **TELL** THEM ABOUT HIM?

THAT I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE I **FIRED** HIM OVER A **WEEK** AGO BECAUSE HE **COULDN'T** GET ALONG WITH MY **NEW HUSBAND!**

AND THEY **BELIEVED** YOU?

WHY NOT? I SAID IT WITH THE MOST ***SINCERE*** LOOK ON MY FACE I COULD ***MUSTER!***

OF COURSE, I DON'T THINK EITHER ONE ***EVER*** LOOKED AT MY ***FACE*** ONCE! ***CAN'T*** IMAGINE ***WHY!***

HMMM... SO ***THAT'S*** WHY YOU CAME TO THE DOOR WEARING ***NOTHING*** MORE THAN, WELL... ***THAT!***

I'M IN **MOURNING**, GINNY! HENCE THE **BLACK** UNDERWEAR! GET YOUR MIND **OUT** OF THE **GUTTER** AND HAVE SOME **RESPECT** FOR THE **DEAD**, WILL YOU?

HMPH, OF COURSE!

EVEN IF THE DEAD **IS** THAT **SLIME MOLD HUSBAND** OF MINE!

I'D EVEN DRINK A **TOAST** TO THE **ASSHOLE'S DEMISE**, BUT MY GLASS **SEEMS** TO HAVE EMPTIED ITSELF!

DO ME A **FAVOR** AND GET ME A GLASS OF THE **DAGEUNEAU**, WOULD YOU, GINNY?

SIGH!. OF COURSE, COURTNEY!


SO, SINCE THEY DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT FINDING MY FATHER'S BODY, ARE THEY ASSUMING HE'S DEAD AS WELL?
NOT IF THEY'RE SMART!
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

CONSIDERING YOUR FATHER'S **HISTORY**, HE'S WAY TOO **SMART** AND WAY TOO **TOUGH** TO LET HIMSELF GET **BLOWN UP** FOR SOMETHING AS **SIMPLE** AS DEFENDING **MY** HONOR, SUCH AS IT IS!

HE HAD A WAY OUT! **YOU**, BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE, SHOULD **KNOW** HOW **GOOD** HE IS AT **HIDING** WHEN HE WANTS TO!

I GUESS YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT! SO, DO YOU THINK HE'LL ***EVER*** SHOW UP SOMEDAY... MAYBE TO JUST SAY ***GOODBYE***, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

OH, NO ONE WILL ***EVER*** SEE ***LEO SAXTON*** AGAIN! HE'S ***SEEN*** TO THAT!

BESIDES, I'M PRETTY SURE HE'S ***ALREADY*** SAID HIS GOODBYES TO HIS ***ESTRANGED DAUGHTER!*** WHEN HE CAME TO SEE YOU, ***RIGHT?***

UMM, ***YES***... I GUESS HE ***DID!***

WELL THERE'S **REALLY** NO NEED FOR YOU TO!

YOU KNOW, I DON'T THINK I'VE ACTUALLY **THANKED** YOU YET FOR **EVERYTHING** YOU'VE DONE FOR ME THESE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS!

OF COURSE THERE IS! YOU FLEW **ACROSS THE COUNTRY** TO AID A PERSON YOU **DIDN'T EVEN KNOW**... AT THE REQUEST OF A **FATHER** YOU BLAME FOR THE **DEATH** OF YOUR **MOTHER!**

THAT'S PRETTY DAMN **REMARKABLE,** IF YOU ASK ME!

I'M JUST **GLAD** I WAS ABLE TO HELP OUT!


I KNOW YOU PROBABLY DON'T WANT TO HEAR THIS, BUT YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER! WILLING TO PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE AND DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO HELP SOMEONE IN NEED!
EVEN KICKING A LITTLE BUTT WHEN NECESSARY! *GIGGLE!*
WELL, I GUESS A LITTLE BIT OF HIM DID RUB OFF ON ME!


OH, MORE THAN A LITTLE, I'D SAY!
WHEN THE POLICE SHOWED UP THIS MORNING, YOU WERE RIGHT THERE AT THE DOOR DEFLECTING THEM... JUST LIKE LEO ALWAYS DID!
WELL I JUST THOUGHT YOU'D WANT YOUR REST, AND...

AND OUT OF **ALL** THOSE WINE BOTTLES IN THAT CABINET OVER THERE, **YOU** FOUND THE DAGEUNEAU **WITHOUT** GIVING IT A **SECOND LOOK!**

JUST LIKE **LEO** ALWAYS DID!

I... I **KNOW** MY WINES, AND **RECOGNIZED** THE BOTTLE AND...

OH, **DON'T** GET ME **WRONG**... GINNY! **I'M** NOT **CRITICIZING**, I'M **APPLAUDING EVERYTHING** YOU'VE **DONE** FOR ME!

WELL, I'M **GLAD** YOU **APPROVE**, BUT I **REALLY** THINK IT'S TIME FOR ME TO...

BUT I **DO** HAVE **ONE QUESTION** THAT'S BEEN **BUGGING** ME!


HOW THE HELL DID YOU GET SOMEONE WHO'S HATED YOU FOR SO LONG TO GIVE YOU A SAMPLE OF HER BLOOD?
GASP! I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!


I MEAN, A SAMPLE OF BLOOD? WHERE ON EARTH DID YOU COME UP WITH SOMETHING SO... SO...



SIGH! SINCE I PROMISED TO **STAY AWAY** FOR THE **REST OF HER LIFE,** SHE DIDN'T CARE OR ASK **WHAT** IT WAS FOR!


HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN?
FOR SURE? ABOUT THREE SECONDS! SUSPECTED? SINCE I SOBERED UP THIS MORNING AND STARTED PUTTING ALL THE PIECES TOGETHER!


IT WAS A PERFECT PLAN! I'M JUST SORRY YOU HAD TO GIVE UP SO MUCH TO CARRY IT OUT!
WELL, LEO SAXTON HAD TO DISAPPEAR! AND IF YOU COULD MAKE THE ADJUSTMENT TO A WOMAN, I THOUGHT I PROBABLY COULD AS WELL.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!


YOU GAVE UP YOUR DAUGHTER FOR GOOD THIS TIME! ARE YOU OKAY WITH THAT?
NO... BUT, IT'S SOMETHING I HAD TO DO AND SOMETHING I'LL HAVE TO LIVE WITH FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!

I'M **SORRY** YOU HAD TO DO THIS... **FOR ME!** IF **ONLY** I **HADN'T**...

HADN'T **WHAT? STRIVED** TO LIVE YOUR **NEW LIFE** TO THE **FULLEST? NO ONE** CAN **FAULT** YOU FOR **THAT**, MISSUS COURTNEY!

I DON'T **REGRET** MY DECISION! **YOU'RE** SAFE NOW! THAT'S **ALL** THAT MATTERS!

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'D BEST **LEAVE** BEFORE **ANYONE** COMES **LOOKING** FOR ME!

WHOA THERE, **YOUNG LADY!** JUST **WHO** THE **HELL** DO YOU **THINK** IS GOING TO COME **LOOKING** FOR YOU?

NO ONE AROUND **HERE** KNOWS OF **ANY** LINK BETWEEN **YOU** AND **LEO! I** DIDN'T INTRODUCE YOU AS HIS **DAUGHTER** AND I'M PRETTY DAMN SURE **YOU** DIDN'T EITHER!

WHAT.. **WHAT** ARE YOU SAYING?

YOU ONCE TOLD ME YOU'D **NEVER** ENTERTAIN THE **THOUGHT** OF **LEAVING ME**... **ESPECIALLY** WHEN I **NEEDED** YOU!

OR WAS **THAT** JUST **BULLSHIT?**

OF **COURSE** NOT, MA'AM! **BUT**...!

BUT **NOTHING!** IT **JUST** SO HAPPENS I **SUDDENLY** HAVE AN OPENING FOR A **PERSONAL SECRETARY/ CONFIDANTE**, AND I CAN'T THINK OF **ANYONE** MORE QUALIFIED THAN **YOU!**

DO YOU **REALLY** THINK THAT'S SUCH A **GOOD** IDEA?

YOU'VE KNOWN ME FOR ALMOST **TWENTY YEARS,** LEO! **NO ONE** KNOWS ME **BETTER** THAN **YOU DO!**

AND THE FACT THAT YOU'RE A **STRIKINGLY LOVELY** YOUNG **WOMAN** NOW MAKES YOU EVEN **MORE QUALIFIED!**

YOU CAN BE MY **MORAL COMPASS** WHILE **I** TEACH YOU HOW TO BETTER **EMBRACE** YOUR NEW-FOUND **FEMININITY!** *GIGGLE!*

AND KNOWING **YOU** AND YOUR **"CONNECTIONS"**, I'M **SURE** IT WON'T TAKE YOU LONG TO CREATE A **NEW IDENTITY** FOR YOURSELF, **IF** YOU HAVEN'T **ALREADY!**

UMMM, AS A MATTER OF FACT... IT'S **RACHEL DONLEVY,** 26, FROM WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND!


THEN IT'S SETTLED! WELCOME TO THE FAMILY, RACHEL!
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, MISSUS COURTNEY!
SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT! BUT PLEASE TRY AND SAY IT WITHOUT CALLING ME "MISSUS" OR "MA'AM" ALL THE GODDAMN TIME!
I'LL TRY, MA'AM... I MEAN, COURTNEY!

ATTA GIRL! NOW, AFTER YOU'RE DONE UNPACKING, I NEED YOU TO STRAIGHTEN UP THE LIVING ROOM!

IT'S STILL A MESS AFTER MY LAST LITTLE SOIRÉE!

SIGH! OF COURSE... COURTNEY!

BUT THEN I **STRONGLY** SUGGEST YOU HAVE A **NICE LONG TALK** WITH YOUR NEW **"MORAL COMPASS"!**

A few days later...

Bam, Bam, Bam!!!

Bam, Bam, Bam!!!

I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE, YOU MURDEROUS BITCH! ANSWER THIS GODDAMN DOOR!

SIGH!

Bam, Bam, Bam!!


CAN I HELP YOU?
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
I'M RACHEL! I WORK FOR MRS. GOLDSTONE!

WELL, **RACHEL**... TELL THAT **SLUT** BOSS OF YOURS TO **QUIT HIDING** AND GET HER **ASS** OUT HERE **RIGHT NOW!**

OR HER **SISTER-IN-LAW'S** NEXT STOP IS THE **POLICE DEPARTMENT!**


AS A MATTER OF FACT, SHE SAW YOU PULL UP AND INSTRUCTED ME TO HAVE YOU JOIN HER IN THE STUDY!
IT'S RIGHT THIS WAY!


I KNOW WHERE IT IS, GODDAMN IT!

THERE YOU ARE, YOU... YOU BITCH!

GOOD TO SEE **YOU TOO**, HILLARY! HOW WAS THAT NICE LONG, **CONVENIENT** VACATION OF YOURS?

DON'T YOU **DARE** TRY TO **CHANGE THE SUBJECT!** MY BROTHER'S **DEAD** AND IT'S **YOUR FAULT!**

MY FAULT? **REALLY?** PLEASE... **ENLIGHTEN ME!**

YOU SENT THAT **GOON** OF YOURS TO **KILL HIM** SO **YOU** COULD GET **ALL HIS MONEY!**

SIGH!. I **REALLY** DON'T HAVE **TIME** FOR THIS, HILLARY!

YOUR BROTHER'S **WAKE** IS THIS EVENING AND I **STILL** DON'T HAVE A **REPUTABLE** DJ!

A DJ!? FOR A WAKE?! WHAT KIND OF THOUGHTLESS HARPY ARE YOU?


THOUGHTLESS? I'M WEARING BLACK, AREN'T I? AND I'VE SPARED NO EXPENSE IN TRACKING DOWN ALL OF POOR RODNEY'S CLOSEST FRIENDS!
WHICH, WHEN YOU GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT, WASN'T VERY DIFFICULT SINCE HE DIDN'T HAVE MANY!


THAT DOES IT! I'M CALLING THE POLICE AND HAVING YOUR SKANKY ASS THROWN IN JAIL!
NO... I DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING TO DO THAT, HIL!
OH REALLY? AND WHY NOT?
BECAUSE OF SOMETHING YOUR DEAR, DEPARTED BROTHER SAID... RIGHT BEFORE HE DIED!
SHOW HER, RACHEL!


GLAD TO, MA'AM!
SHOW ME WHAT? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TRYING TO PULL? I...

SO, YES... THIS TRIP IS **MY** ALIBI, AND **HILLARY** HAS HER **OWN**, SO WE'LL **BOTH** BE FREE AND CLEAR OF **ANY CHARGES** WHEN YOUR PRECIOUS COURTNEY **DIES** FROM AN "**ACCIDENTAL**" OVERDOSE OF **PURE, UNCUT COKE** THAT MY UNWITTING "**FRIEND**" WILL SUPPLY HER WITH!

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE HER **KILLED?!**

OF COURSE! **THAT** WAY HER **ENTIRE ESTATE** BECOMES **MINE**! NO MUSS, NO FUSS AND NO TEDIOUS POWER OF ATTORNEY TO DEAL WITH!


GASP!


SO... WHAT'S YOUR PLAN? YOU'VE ALREADY GOT RODNEY'S MONEY, NOW YOU'RE GONNA USE BLACKMAIL TO GET WHAT'S LEFT OF MINE TOO?
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, HIL, I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT THE MONEY!
THEN JUST WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

NOTHING! ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!

SO MUCH NOTHING THAT I DON'T EVEN WANT TO KNOW THAT YOU EXIST!

I WANT YOU SO FAR REMOVED FROM MY LIFE THAT IF I EVEN ACCIDENTALLY HEAR SOMEONE TALKING ABOUT YOU, I'LL USE THIS VIDEO TO HAVE YOU THROWN IN JAIL!

ARE YOU KIND OF GETTING THE GIST OF WHAT I'M SAYING HERE?

UH... YEAH! I THINK I DO!


FABULOUS! THEN RACHEL HERE WILL SHOW YOU OUT!
OH, AND TELL YOUR MOTHER I WON'T BE COMING BY FOR ANY VISITS! TOO MANY PAINFUL MEMORIES AND ALL THAT! BLAH, BLAH, BLAH...


AND BEFORE YOU GO, MISS GOLDSTONE...

LET ME **STRESS** THE **IMPORTANCE** OF **FOLLOWING** MISSUS COURTNEY'S **RECOMMENDATIONS!**

FOR IF **YOU** DECIDE **NOT** TO **HEED** THEM, THE **POLICE** WILL BE THE **LEAST** OF YOUR **WORRIES!**

DO **YOU** GET **MY** GIST, AS WELL?

Y... **YES!** I... I THINK I **DO!**


EXCELLENT! HAIL AND FAREWELL, MISS GOLDSTONE!

IS SHE GONE?

MOST DEFINITELY! AND I DON'T THINK YOU'LL EVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HER EVER AGAIN!

PERFECT! NOW THAT THE GOLDSTONES ARE OUT OF MY LIFE, I CAN CONCENTRATE ON MORE IMPORTANT THINGS... LIKE FINDING A GODDAMN DJ!


ON THE TOPIC OF IMPORTANT THINGS, I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS MY, UHHH... MY ATTIRE!
WHAT ABOUT IT?
DO I REALLY HAVE TO WEAR SUCH TIGHT AND REVEALING OUTFITS... EVEN WHEN WE'RE AT HOME?

I KNOW I **DON'T** HAVE TO **REMIND** YOU, RACHEL, THAT AS **MY** PERSONAL ASSISTANT, **EVERYTHING** YOU **DO** OR **SAY** IS A **DIRECT REFLECTION** ON **ME!**

THAT **ESPECIALLY** INCLUDES YOUR **APPEARANCE!** WHEN PEOPLE SEE **YOU,** IT SHOULD **REFLECT** THE IMAGE I **MYSELF** WANT TO **PROJECT!**

AND I THINK WE **BOTH** KNOW **EXACTLY** WHAT **KIND** OF IMAGE **I PREFER** TO PROJECT! *GIGGLE!*

I **UNDERSTAND**, MA'AM! BUT **YOU'VE** BEEN **COURTNEY MUCH** LONGER THAN **I'VE** BEEN **RACHEL!**

I WAS **HOPING** YOU'D GIVE ME A LITTLE **MORE TIME** TO **ACCLIMATE** BEFORE THRUSTING ME **HEADLONG** INTO **YOUR** VERSION OF **FEMININITY!**


COULD I AT LEAST WEAR SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE DIGNIFIED FOR THE WAKE THIS EVENING?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, RACHEL, I DO HAVE SOMETHING MORE APPROPRIATE THAT I'D PLANNED ON YOU WEARING THIS EVENING!


OH, THANK YOU, MA'AM!

SIGH!. I **REALLY** SHOULD HAVE SEEN **THIS** COMING!

OH **RACHEL!** I THINK I SEE A FEW **EMPTY** CHAMPAGNE GLASSES OVER THERE!

ON MY WAY, MA'AM!

WOOF! WHERE'D YOU FIND THAT HOT LITTLE NUMBER?

SETTLE DOWN, STUD! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU LATER! *GIGGLE!*

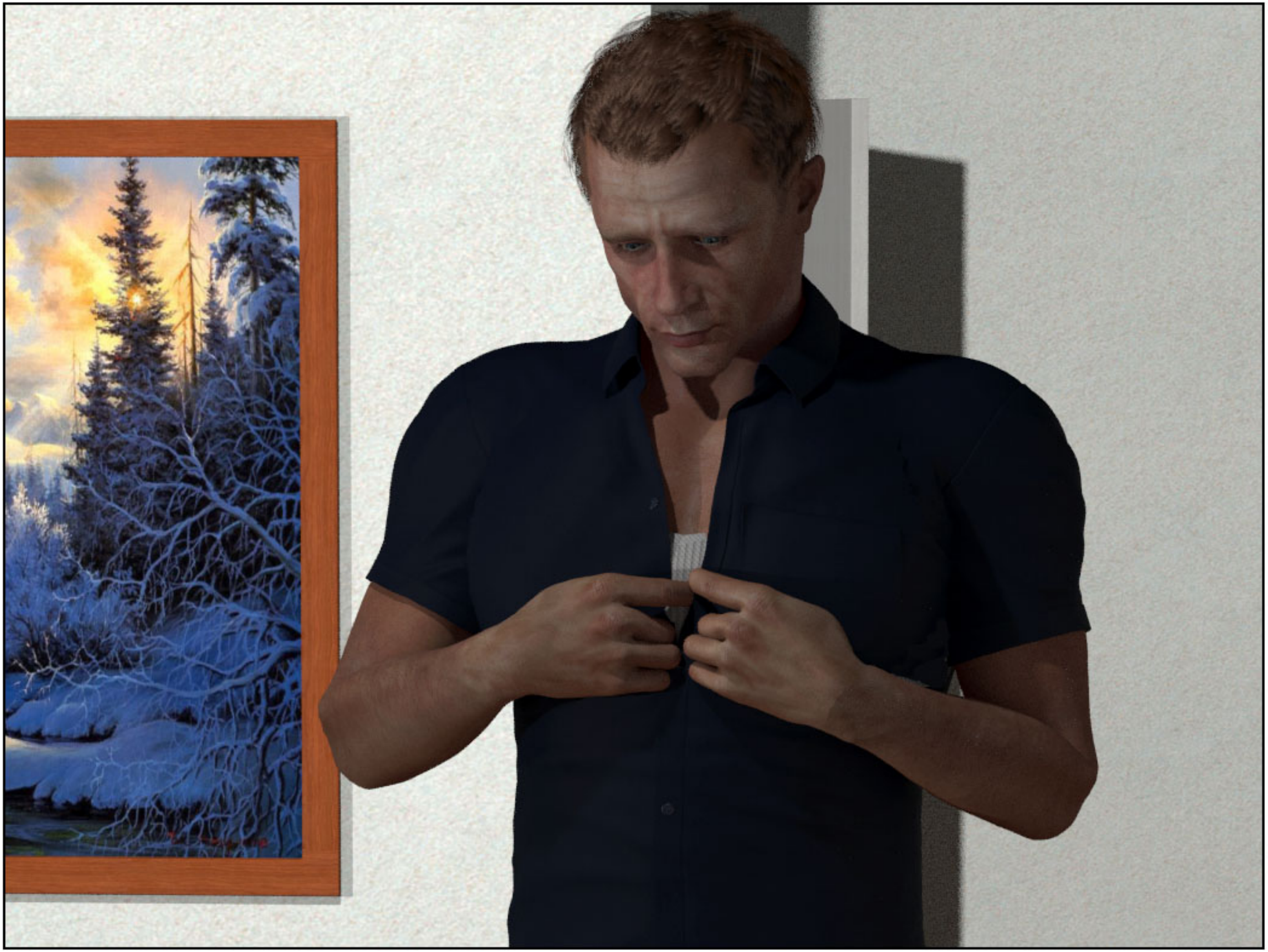

I FEW MORE SECONDS ON THAT BOAT AND I COULD HAVE AVOIDED ALL THIS! *GRUMBLE!*

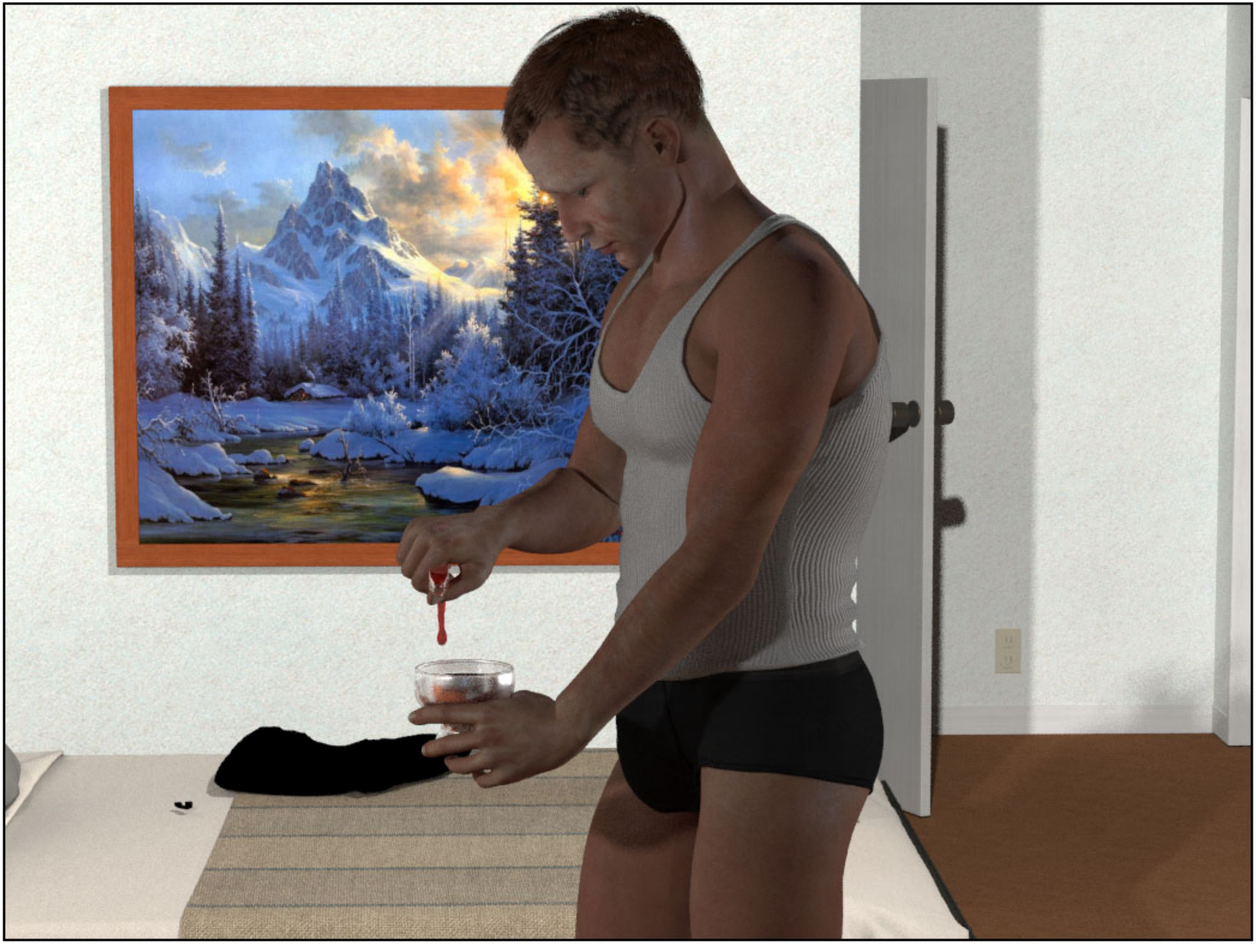
SIGH! THIS IS DEFINITELY **NOT** HOW I ENVISIONED SPENDING MY **RETIREMENT YEARS!**

The END


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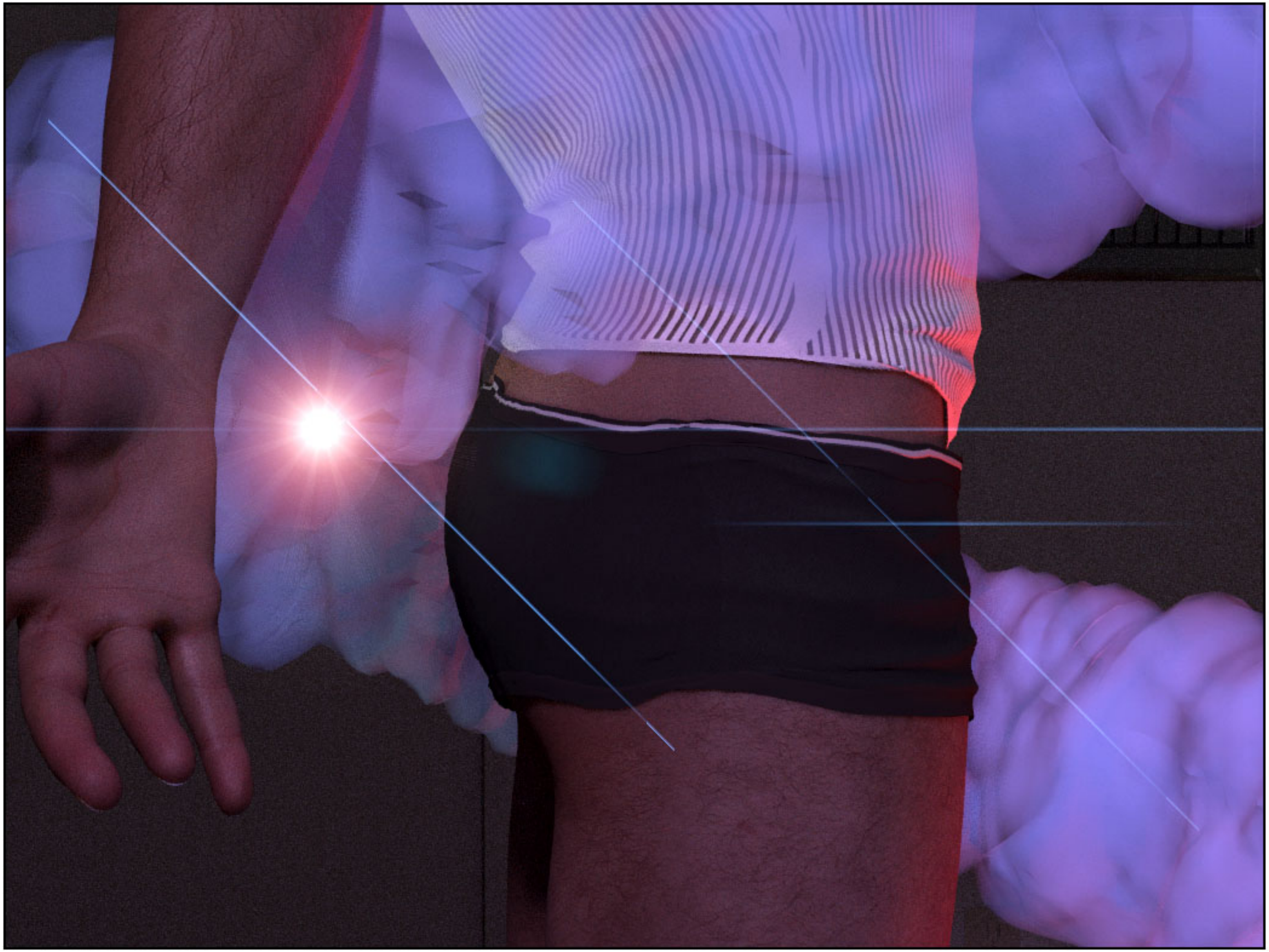


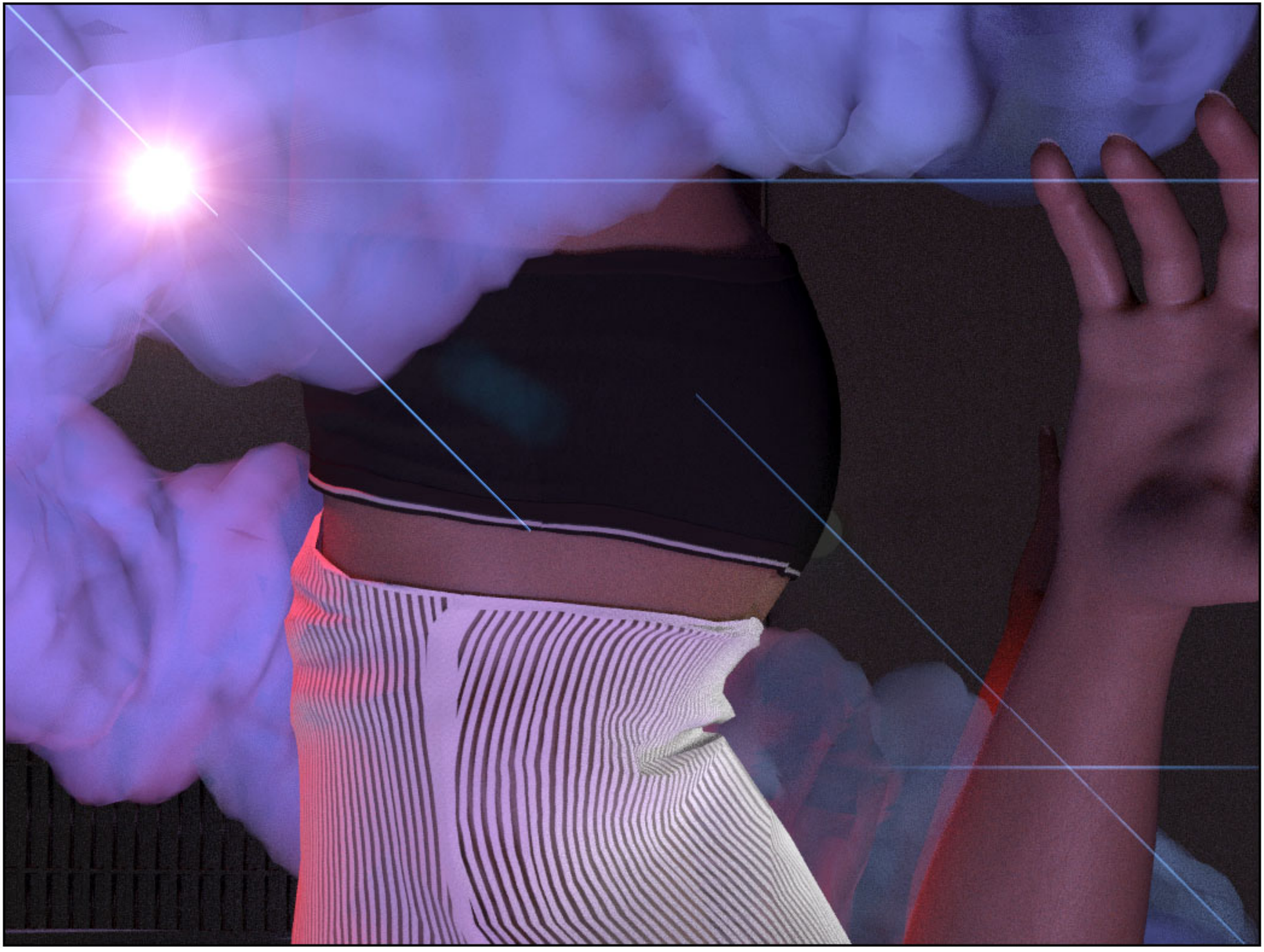


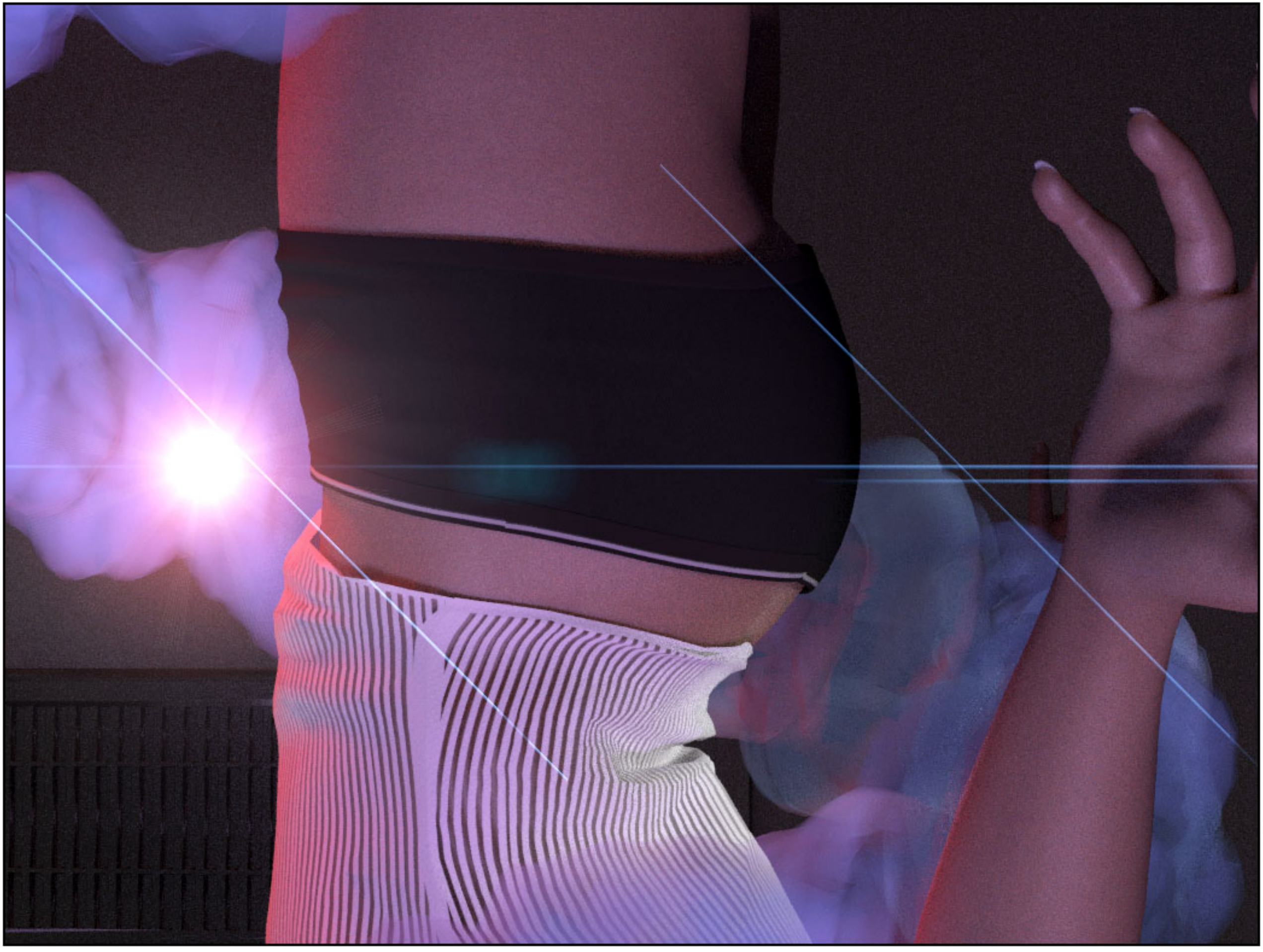


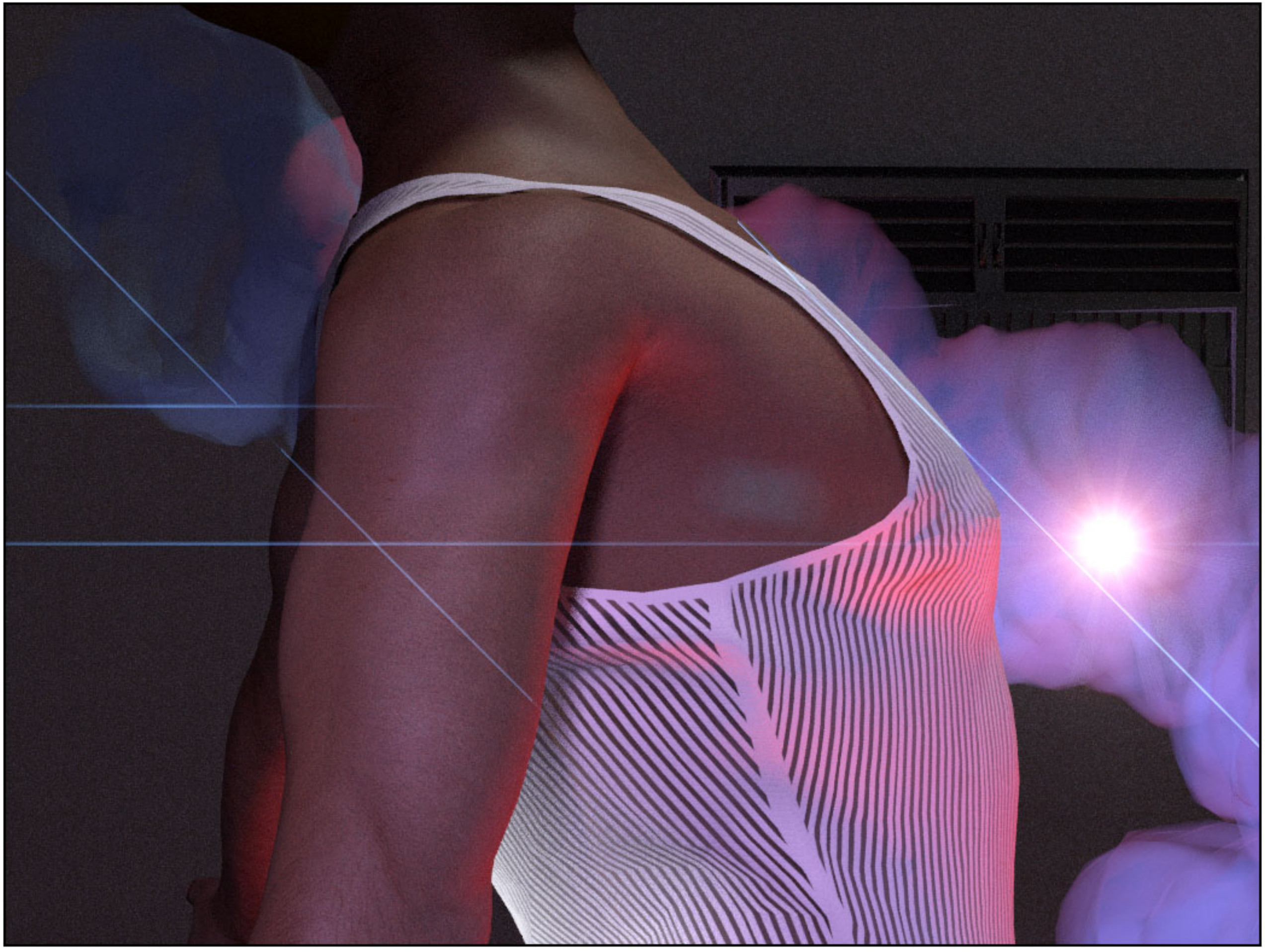


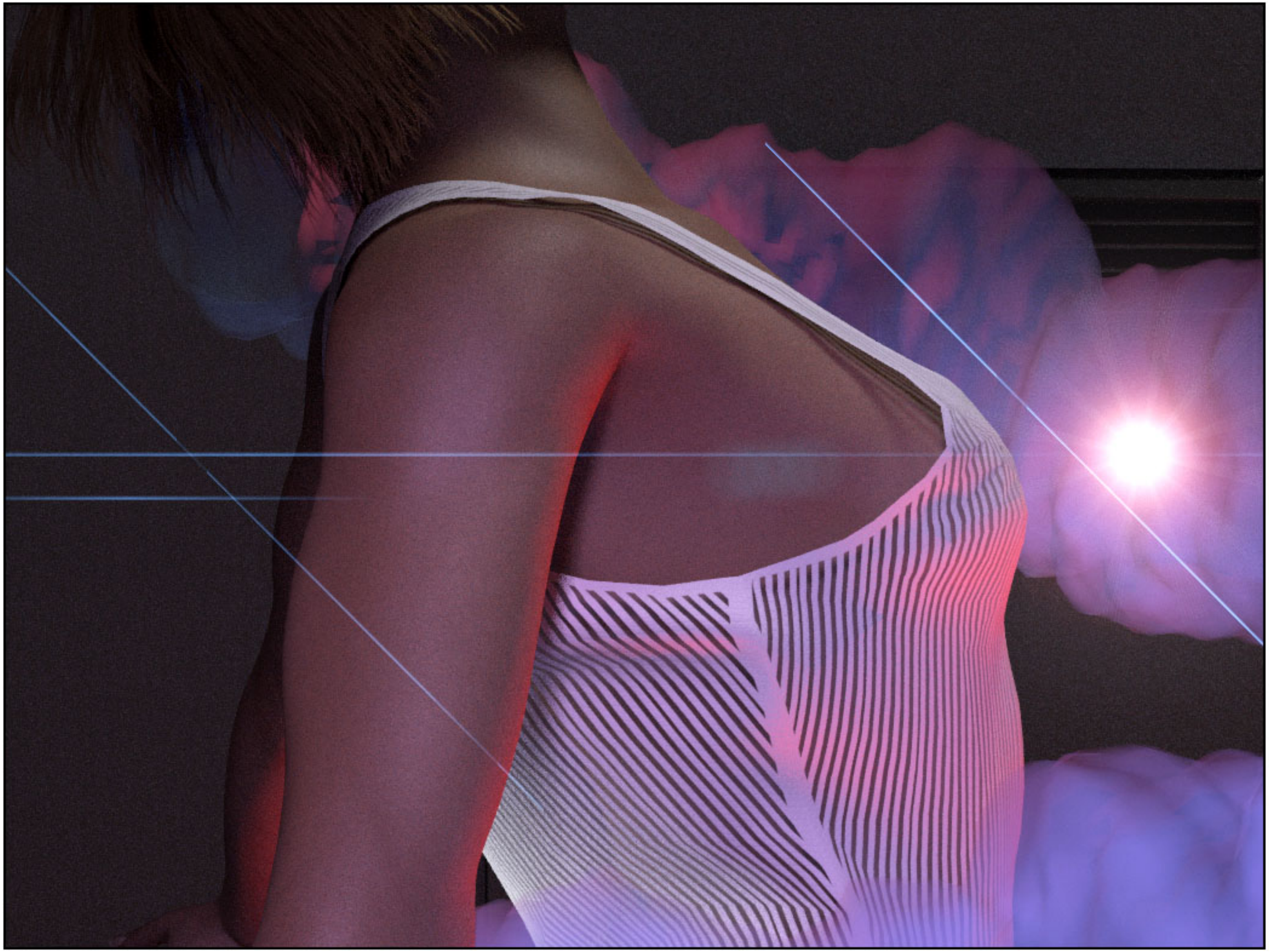


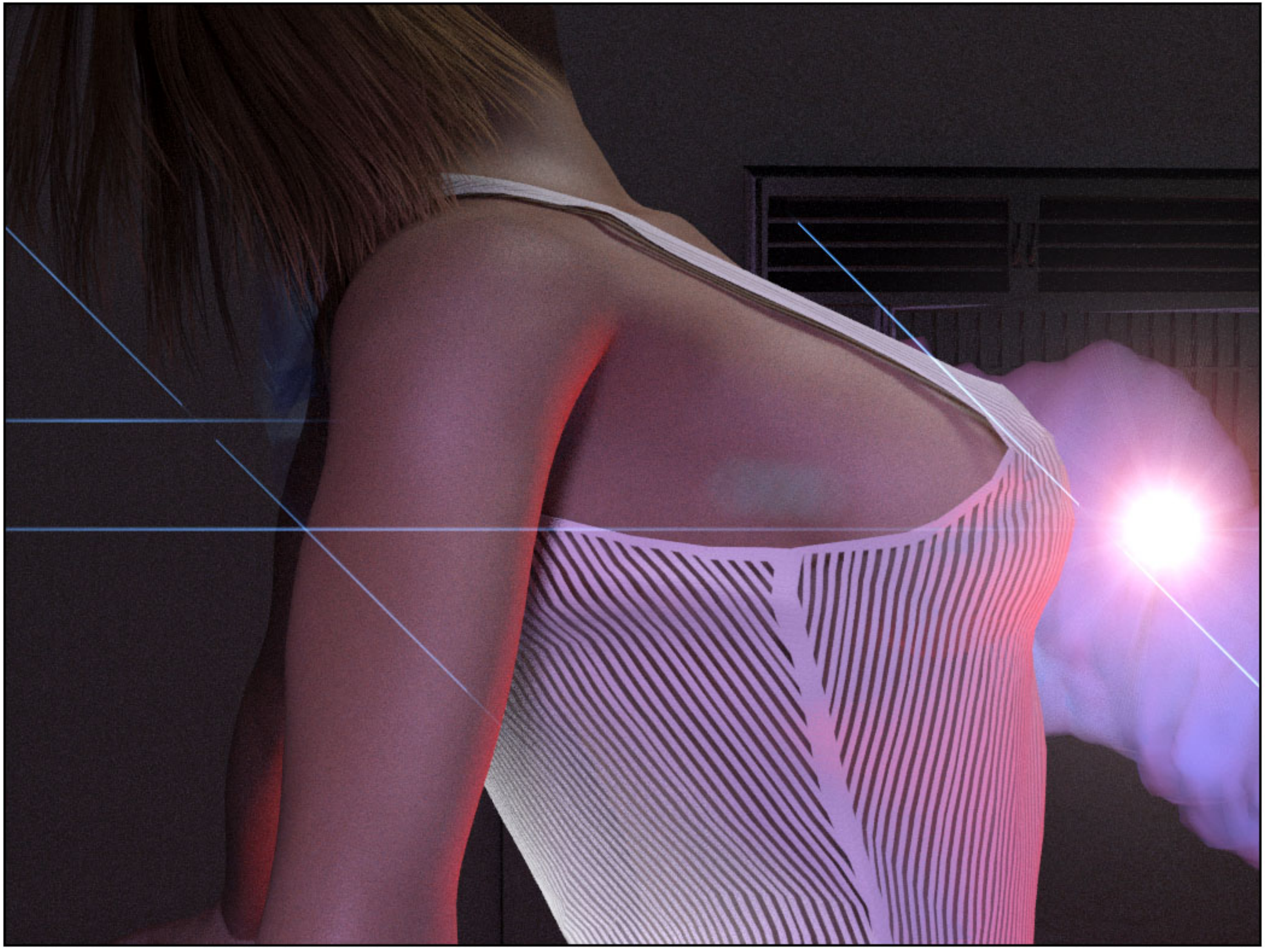






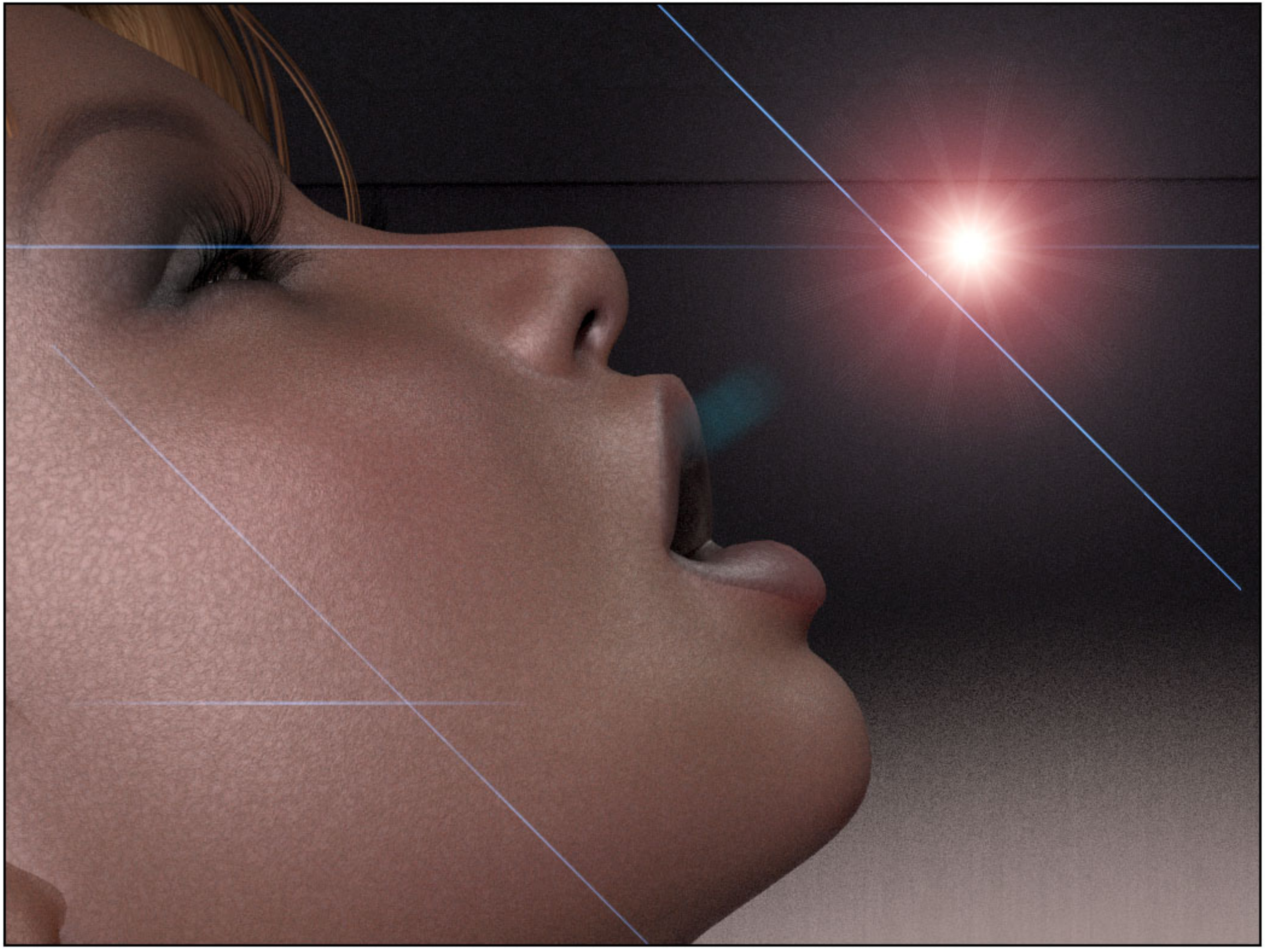


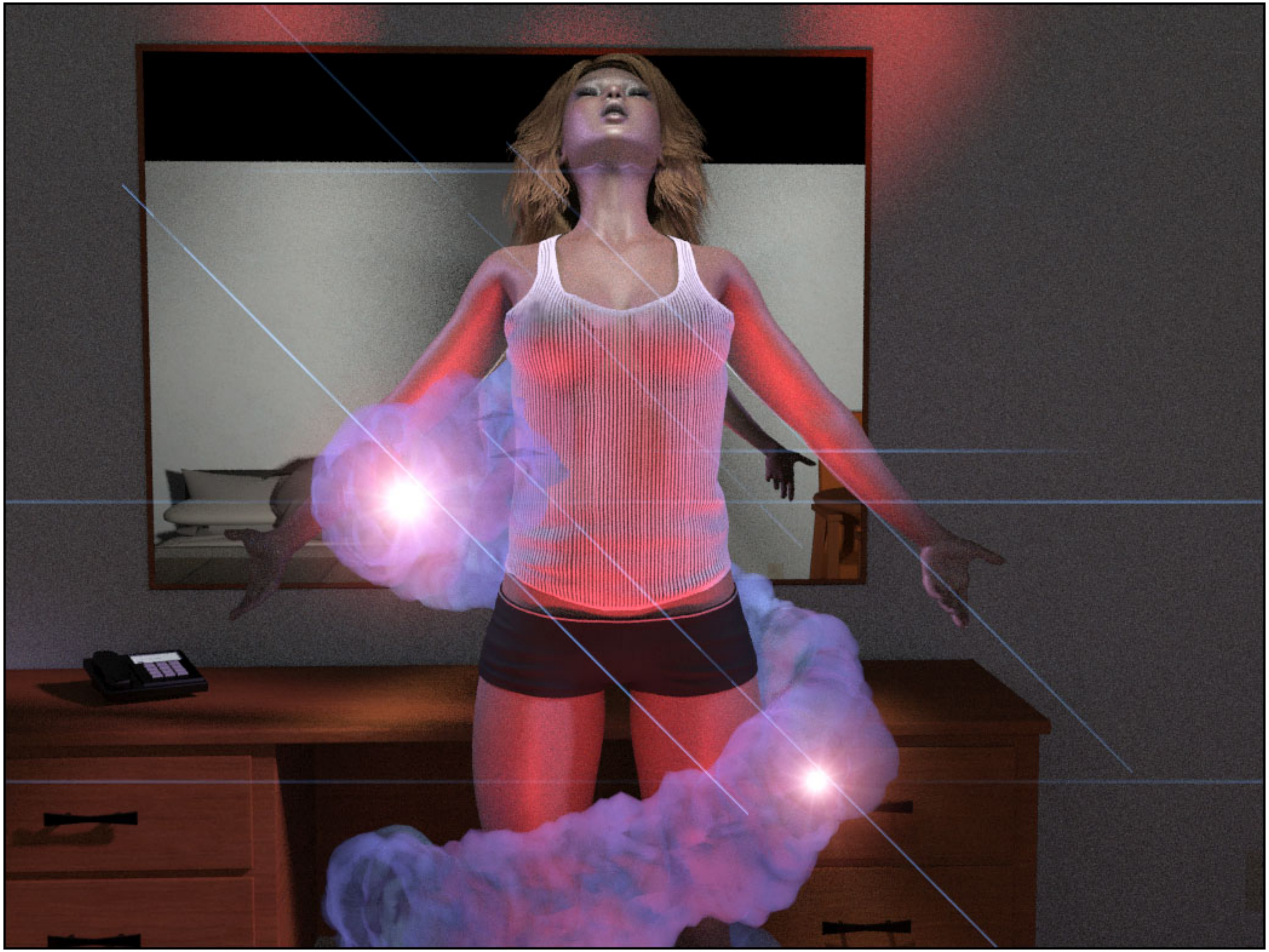





















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